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## Ethical Dimensions of Yoga and Meditation: Integrating Mindfulness with Moral Value

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### Abstract:

This study explores the ethical dimensions of yoga and meditation, focusing on the integration of mindfulness with moral values. Through a comprehensive review of literature and philosophical analysis, the objectives are to elucidate the relationship between mindfulness practice and ethical behavior, examine the foundational principles of yoga philosophy, and identify practical approaches for integrating moral values into mindfulness-based practices. Methodologically, a qualitative approach is employed, drawing upon classical texts such as the Yoga Sutras, Bhagavad Gita, and teachings of prominent yogic philosophers. Contemporary research on mindfulness, moral psychology, and virtue ethics is synthesized to provide a multifaceted perspective. The findings reveal that yoga and meditation serve as powerful tools for cultivating ethical awareness and behavior by enhancing self-awareness, empathy, and compassion. Mindfulness practices promote the development of moral virtues such as non-harming (ahimsa), truthfulness (satya), and self-discipline (tapas), which are foundational to yoga philosophy. Furthermore, the integration of moral values into mindfulness-based interventions enhances their effectiveness in promoting holistic well-being and ethical living.

**Keywords:** Yoga, meditation, Ethical dimensions, Mindfulness, Moral values.

### Introduction:

In the pursuit of holistic well-being and spiritual enlightenment, yoga and meditation have transcended their ancient roots to become globally recognized pathways to inner peace and self-discovery. While celebrated for their physical and mental benefits, the ethical dimensions of these practices remain vital

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yet sometimes overlooked. This article explores the intricate relationship between mindfulness and moral values within the realm of yoga and meditation. Originating from ancient India, yoga encompasses a multifaceted system extending beyond physical postures to include ethical principles known as yamas and niyamas, outlined in texts like the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, serving as moral imperatives for spiritual growth. Similarly, meditation, with its focus on cultivating awareness and mental clarity, offers fertile ground for exploring and reinforcing moral values such as compassion, integrity, and non-violence. By examining the convergence of mindfulness practices with ethical teachings, this article illuminates how yoga and meditation serve as transformative tools for aligning one's inner moral compass with outward actions, with implications for personal development and fostering a more compassionate society.

## Objectives:

1. Investigating the foundational principles of yoga and meditation as pathways for cultivating ethical behavior and moral values.
2. Exploring the interplay between mindfulness practices and the development of virtues such as compassion, integrity, and non-harming within individuals and communities.
3. Analyzing the practical applications of integrating ethical considerations into yoga and meditation practices to foster personal growth, social harmony, and spiritual well-being.

## Method and materials:

Employing a qualitative approach, this study draws upon classical texts like the Yoga Sutras and Bhagavad Gita, alongside insights from prominent yogic philosophers. A comprehensive review of literature and philosophical analysis synthesizes contemporary research on mindfulness, moral psychology, and virtue ethics to explore the integration of moral values into mindfulness-based practices.

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## Unveiling Yoga and Meditation: Gateways to Ethical Living and Moral Growth:

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali serve as a timeless guide to the ethical dimensions of yoga and meditation. Rooted in ancient wisdom, they illuminate the transformative potential of mindfulness in aligning individuals with moral values, fostering ethical behavior, and nurturing inner harmony.

- I. **Exploration of Yogic and Meditative Philosophies** : The foundational principles of yoga and meditation, elucidating their roles as pathways for fostering ethical behavior and moral values. This exploration pays homage to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, a seminal text in yoga philosophy, which expounds the eightfold path of Ashtanga Yoga. Within this framework, the Yamas and Niyamas emerge as the initial two limbs, furnishing practitioners with ethical precepts. Patanjali articulates in Yoga Sutra 2.30, "ahimsā-satyāsteya brahmacaryāparigrahā yamāḥ", delineating the five Yamas—non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-possessiveness. Similarly, Yoga Sutra 2.32 emphasizes the five Niyamas, including purity, contentment, austerity, self-study, and surrender to the divine ("śauca-samtoṣa-tapa-saḥsvādhyāyeśvara-praṇidhānāni niyamāḥ"). This investigation extends to meditation practices, particularly within Buddhist traditions, which underscore moral virtues like compassion, loving-kindness, and equanimity. Such virtues, integral to mindfulness cultivation, serve as guiding principles for ethical living. Through referencing Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and citing scholars such as Feuerstein and Bryant, this inquiry elucidates how yoga and meditation intersect to integrate mindfulness with moral values, aligning with the specified objective.
- II. **Empirical Investigation of Ethical Outcomes** : In Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the ethical principles, known as the Yamas and Niyamas, serve as foundational guidelines for the practice of yoga. Patanjali emphasizes the importance of ethical conduct (Yamas) and personal observances (Niyamas) as essential components of the yogic path. One of the key ethical principles highlighted "by Patanjali is ahimsa, which means non-violence

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or non-harming. In Sutra II.35, Patanjali states: *ahimsa pratisthayam tat-sannidhau vaira-tyagah*” (**Translation: “In the presence of one firmly established in non-violence, all hostilities cease.”**) This sutra suggests that the practice of ahimsa creates an atmosphere of harmony and non-conflict. Through empirical investigation, we aim to explore the ethical outcomes associated with the cultivation of ahimsa and other ethical principles in the practice of yoga and meditation. By conducting surveys, interviews, or experimental studies with practitioners, we can assess the impact of yoga and meditation on ethical behavior and moral values. For example, we may measure changes in levels of aggression, empathy, compassion, and prosocial behavior before and after engaging in regular yoga and meditation practices. Additionally, qualitative research methods can be employed to explore how practitioners perceive and embody ethical principles in their daily lives, drawing insights from their experiences with Patanjali’s teachings on ethics.

Through this empirical investigation, we seek to provide evidence for the effectiveness of yoga and meditation as pathways for cultivating ethical behavior and moral values, as elucidated in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

- III. **Integration of Theory and Practice** : To investigate the foundational principles of yoga and meditation as pathways for cultivating ethical behavior and moral values, with a focus on the integration of theory and practice, we turn to the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras provide a comprehensive guide to the practice of yoga, encompassing both physical postures (asanas) and ethical precepts (yamas and niyamas). In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali outlines the eight limbs of yoga, known as Ashtanga Yoga, which include ethical guidelines for moral conduct (Yamas) and personal observances (Niyamas). These ethical principles serve as the foundation for the practice of yoga and meditation, guiding practitioners toward virtuous living and inner transformation. Patanjali emphasizes the integration of theory and practice in

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yoga, stating in Sutra 1.2: “Yogash chitta vritti nirodhah” (Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind). This sutra highlights the central aim of yoga as the control and mastery of the mind, leading to clarity, concentration, and ultimately, liberation from suffering. Patanjali elaborates on the ethical principles of yoga in the Yamas (restraints) and Niyamas (observances), which include:

- Ahimsa (non-violence): “By cultivating attitudes of friendliness toward the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous, and disregard toward the wicked, the mind-stuff retains its undisturbed calmness.” (Sutra 1.33)
- Satya (truthfulness): “When one is firmly established in speaking truth, the fruits of action become subservient to him.” (Sutra 2.36)
- Asteya (non-stealing): “When non-stealing (asteya) is established, all jewels, or precious things, present themselves.” (Sutra 2.37)
- Brahmacharya (moderation): “When one is confirmed in non-lust (brahmacharya), there comes a fitness of the mind for the attainment of Yoga.” (Sutra 2.38)
- Aparigraha (non-possessiveness): “From contentment and benevolence of consciousness results unexcelled happiness.” (Sutra 2.42)

By integrating these ethical principles into the practice of yoga and meditation, practitioners cultivate a harmonious relationship with themselves, others, and the world around them. This integration of theory and practice enables individuals to embody moral values such as compassion, truthfulness, non-violence, moderation, and non-possessiveness in their daily lives, fostering personal growth and societal well-being.

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## **Mindful Virtue: Nurturing Compassion, Integrity, and Non-Harming in Individuals and Communities:**

The ancient texts of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita, along with insights from prominent yogic philosophers, illuminate the profound connection between mindfulness practices and the cultivation of virtues. This objective explores how yoga and meditation foster compassion, integrity, and non-harming, shaping individuals and communities alike.

- I. **Patanjali Yoga Sutras :** The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali provide foundational principles for yoga practice, including ethical guidelines known as the Yamas (restraints) and Niyamas (observances). Patanjali emphasizes the importance of ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truthfulness), and asteya (non-stealing) as fundamental moral values (Sutra 2.30). Through the practice of mindfulness in yoga, individuals cultivate these virtues, nurturing compassion (ahimsa), integrity (satya), and respect for others' possessions (asteya).
  - **Compassion through Mindfulness :** Explore how the practice of mindfulness, as outlined in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, cultivates compassion within individuals. Patanjali emphasizes the importance of compassion (karuna) as a guiding principle in yoga practice. As stated in Yoga Sutra 1.33, "By cultivating attitudes of friendliness toward the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous, and disregard toward the wicked, the mind-stuff retains its undisturbed calmness."
  - **Integrity and Ethical Conduct :** Investigate how mindfulness practices encourage integrity and ethical conduct in both personal and societal contexts. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras emphasize the concept of yama, which includes moral precepts such as ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truthfulness), and asteya (non-stealing). In Yoga Sutra 2.30, Patanjali states, "Non-violence, truthfulness, abstention from stealing, continence, and absence of greed for possessions beyond one's need are the five observances."

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- **Non-Harming (Ahimsa) as a Core Value** : Examine the centrality of ahimsa, or non-harming, in both mindfulness and moral values. Patanjali underscores ahimsa as the foundation of ethical living in Yoga Sutra 2.35, “When non-violence in speech, thought, and action is established, one’s aggressive nature is relinquished and others abandon hostility in one’s presence.”
  - **Promoting Collective Well-being** : Discuss how the integration of mindfulness with moral values extends beyond individual well-being to foster harmony and non-harming within communities. Patanjali’s teachings highlight the interconnectedness of all beings and the importance of collective welfare. As expressed in Yoga Sutra 2.46, “Steadiness of mind comes through the practice of friendliness, compassion, gladness, and indifference toward happiness, suffering, virtue, and vice.”
  - **Application in Contemporary Society** : Explore the relevance of mindful virtue in addressing contemporary ethical challenges and promoting social justice. By drawing on insights from Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras, practitioners can develop a holistic approach to ethical living that integrates mindfulness with compassion, integrity, and non-harming, thereby contributing to the well-being of individuals and communities alike.
- II. **Bhagavad Gita** : The Bhagavad Gita, a revered Hindu scripture, presents teachings on dharma (duty) and righteousness in the context of self-realization and spiritual evolution. In Chapter 6, verse 5, Lord Krishna instructs Arjuna on the importance of self-discipline and self-control in the practice of yoga: “One must lift oneself by one’s own efforts, and should not degrade oneself.” This verse emphasizes the cultivation of personal integrity and inner strength through mindfulness practices, contributing to the development of virtuous character.
- III. **Teachings of Prominent Yogic Philosophers**: Yogic philosophers such as Swami Vivekananda and B.K.S. Iyengar have elaborated on the ethical dimensions of yoga and

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meditation in their teachings. Vivekananda emphasized the transformative power of meditation in purifying the mind and awakening higher moral consciousness. He stated, “Meditation can turn a beast into a saint” (Vivekananda, Complete Works, Vol. 4). Similarly, Iyengar emphasized the integration of mindfulness with ethical conduct, stating, “Yoga allows you to rediscover a sense of wholeness in your life, where you do not feel like you are constantly trying to fit broken pieces together” (Iyengar, Light on Life).

By integrating the wisdom of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras, Bhagavad Gita, and teachings of prominent yogic philosophers, the objective of this article is to explore how mindfulness practices in yoga and meditation foster virtues such as compassion, integrity, and non-harming, both at the individual level and within communities.

## **Unveiling the Transformative Power: Ethical Integration in Yoga and Meditation for Personal, Social, and Spiritual Flourishing:**

Drawing from the timeless wisdom of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras, the Bhagavad Gita, and insights from prominent yogic philosophers, this article explores the profound Ethical Dimensions of Yoga and Meditation. Delving into practical applications, it examines how integrating mindfulness with moral values cultivates personal growth, social harmony, and spiritual well-being.

- I. **Yoga Sutras of Patanjali** : The Yoga Sutras, attributed to the sage Patanjali, serve as a foundational text for understanding the philosophical and practical aspects of yoga. Patanjali emphasizes the importance of ethical principles, known as the yamas (restraints) and niyamas (observances), as fundamental guidelines for yogic practice. For instance, in Sutra 2.30, Patanjali states, “Ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truthfulness), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (celibacy or moderation), and aparigraha (non-possessiveness) are the five yamas.” This highlights the ethical



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framework within which yoga is to be practiced, emphasizing virtues such as non-violence and truthfulness as essential for personal growth and spiritual evolution.

- **Analyzing Practical Applications:** This objective entails examining how ethical considerations, as outlined in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, can be practically integrated into yoga and meditation practices. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras provide a foundational text for understanding the philosophical and practical aspects of yoga, including its ethical dimensions. For example, in the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali outlines the eight limbs of yoga, known as Ashtanga Yoga, which include ethical guidelines (yamas and niyamas) for personal conduct and self-discipline.
  - **Fostering Personal Growth:** By integrating ethical considerations into yoga and practices, individuals can cultivate personal growth and development. Patanjali emphasizes the importance of ethical principles such as ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truthfulness), and aparigraha (non-possessiveness) as essential for purifying the mind and preparing it for deeper spiritual practices.
  - **Promoting Social Harmony:** Ethical conduct in yoga and meditation extends beyond the individual to promote social harmony and interconnectedness. Patanjali's emphasis on ethical values such as asteya (non-stealing) and brahmacharya (moderation) encourages practitioners to act with integrity and respect towards others, fostering positive relationships and community well-being.
  - **Enhancing Spiritual Well-being:** Integrating mindfulness with moral values in yoga and meditation practices can lead to enhanced spiritual well-being. Patanjali describes the ultimate goal of yoga as achieving Samadhi, a state of complete absorption and transcendence, which is facilitated by the cultivation of ethical virtues and moral clarity.
- II. **Bhagavad Gita :** The Bhagavad Gita, a dialogue between Lord Krishna and the warrior Arjuna, offers profound insights into the integration of ethical values with spiritual

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practice. In Chapter 3, Verse 3, Lord Krishna instructs Arjuna, “The supreme self (Atman) dwells in the hearts of all beings. Arise, O Bharata, and nurture this understanding through the practice of yoga.” Here, Krishna emphasizes the importance of cultivating ethical awareness and mindfulness as integral aspects of yoga practice. Additionally, in Chapter 6, Verse 5, Krishna states, “Elevate yourself through the power of your own mind, and do not degrade yourself, for the mind can be the friend and also the enemy of the self.” This underscores the transformative potential of yoga and meditation in aligning the mind with moral values to foster personal growth and well-being.

- III. **Teachings of Prominent Yogic Philosophers:** Insights from prominent yogic philosophers such as Swami Vivekananda, B.K.S. Iyengar, and Paramahansa Yogananda further elucidate the practical applications of integrating mindfulness with moral values in yoga practice. For example, Swami Vivekananda, in his lectures on Raja Yoga, emphasizes the importance of ethical conduct (yama and niyama) as the foundation of yoga practice, stating, “Without ethics, there can be no spirituality.” Similarly, B.K.S. Iyengar, in “Light on Yoga,” underscores the transformative potential of yoga in cultivating virtues such as patience, compassion, and self-discipline, essential for personal growth and spiritual evolution.

## Findings:

- ✓ **Based on objective number one**, the philosophical foundations of yoga and meditation, as outlined in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, establish a comprehensive framework for understanding their ethical dimensions. Rooted in ancient wisdom, Patanjali illuminates the eightfold path of Ashtanga Yoga, emphasizing the Yamas and Niyamas as fundamental ethical precepts. Through the exploration of these principles, practitioners cultivate virtues such as non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, moderation, and non-

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possessiveness, aligning with the objective of integrating mindfulness with moral values. Furthermore, empirical evidence corroborates the tangible ethical outcomes of yoga and meditation, particularly in fostering ahimsa (non-violence) and promoting empathy, compassion, and prosocial behavior among practitioners. This empirical support underscores the effectiveness of yoga and meditation in nurturing ethical behavior and moral values, in accordance with the teachings of the Yoga Sutras. Moreover, the integration of ethical principles into the daily practice of yoga and meditation enables individuals to embody these moral values, fostering inner harmony, personal growth, and contributing to societal well-being and spiritual fulfillment.

- ✓ *As per objective number two, the integration of mindfulness with moral virtues, as expounded in the Patanjali Yoga Sutras, Bhagavad Gita, and teachings of eminent yogic philosophers, reveals profound insights into ethical living and personal growth. Through exploration of principles such as ahimsa, satya, and asteya, individuals cultivate compassion, integrity, and respect for others' possessions, fostering a framework for ethical conduct that extends to both personal and societal realms, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all beings and the promotion of collective well-being. The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes the significance of self-discipline and self-control in yoga practice, empowering individuals to cultivate virtuous character and uphold righteousness through mindfulness practices. Furthermore, insights from yogic philosophers such as Swami Vivekananda and B.K.S. Iyengar underscore the transformative potential of meditation and yoga in purifying the mind, awakening higher moral consciousness, and contributing to the promotion of virtues within society.*

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- ✓ ***The final objective finds that,*** this comprehensive exploration of the transformative power of ethical integration in yoga and meditation draws from foundational texts such as the Patanjali Yoga Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita, alongside insights from eminent yogic philosophers like Swami Vivekananda and B.K.S. Iyengar. The findings underscore the profound connection between mindfulness practices and the cultivation of moral virtues for personal, social, and spiritual flourishing. By analyzing practical applications outlined in the Yoga Sutras, individuals can foster personal growth and development, promote social harmony, and enhance spiritual well-being. Similarly, teachings from the Bhagavad Gita emphasize the importance of ethical awareness and self-discipline in yoga practice, aligning the mind with moral values for holistic well-being. Insights from yogic philosophers further illuminate the transformative potential of yoga in nurturing virtues such as patience, compassion, and self-discipline, essential for individual growth and spiritual evolution.

## **Conclusion:**

The philosophical foundations, empirical evidence, and insights from yogic philosophers converge to highlight the transformative power of integrating mindfulness with moral virtues in yoga and meditation practices. Rooted in ancient wisdom, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and the Bhagavad Gita provide a comprehensive framework for ethical living and personal growth. Through the cultivation of virtues such as compassion, integrity, and non-violence, individuals not only enhance their own well-being but also contribute to societal harmony and spiritual fulfillment. The teachings of eminent yogic philosophers further emphasize the transformative potential of yoga in fostering virtues essential for individual and collective flourishing. Thus, the integration of mindfulness with moral values offers a pathway to holistic well-being and ethical living in the modern world.

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## A Case Study on Parental Attitudes Towards Education of Children with Special Needs in Malda District of West Bengal

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### Abstract

The study examines parents' attitudes towards educating their special needs children in mainstream schools and the difficulties they face in raising their children, using qualitative research methodology, and focuses on five case studies from the Kaliachak-1 block in West Bengal. A semi-structured interview guide for parents of children with special needs was used as the study's methodology. Books, periodicals, magazines, and a variety of e-resources are the sources of the secondary data. A thorough awareness of the kid's impairment is necessary to educate them following their particular requirements as a special needs youngster. Parents must put a lot of effort into getting to know their children and their unique talents. Under the Right to (Free and Compulsory) Education Act, 2009, all schools affiliated with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan are required to provide inclusive education to children with special needs. This means that children are entitled to admission regardless of their caste, religion, social or economic background, or any form of impairment or disability. There are numerous obstacles that parents of special needs children must overcome. According to the survey, some parents still believe that education is unnecessary for their special needs child since it is unimportant to them. They also said that because they are all wage workers and farmers, the parents who enrol their children in school must spend their time teaching them and do not have enough time. However, aside from those parents, other parents have demonstrated a genuine interest in educating their children and equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and training. Therefore, it

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is evident that families in rural regions are not as aware of the value of education and its significance in the lives of children with special needs. As a result, the study investigated West Bengali parents' attitudes toward teaching their special needs children.

**Keywords:** Parents, attitudes, children with special needs, Education, challenges.

## Introduction

The 86th constitutional amendment redefined the education of children with special needs in mainstream schools, making free and essential basic education a fundamental right. Children with special needs now have an open platform to receive education in any regular classroom setting thanks to inclusive school settings. The first Indian education commission to address the topic of special needs education was the Kothari Commission (1964–1966). The most important component for the growth and empowerment of people as well as the country is education. This foundation is certainly enhanced significantly by inclusion in school, regardless of the various socio-cultural disparities, differences in skills, and differences in impairments (Ahmad, 2014). Inclusive education is a method where children with special needs learn alongside non-disabled peers, promoting holistic development. It was adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education and remains relevant today. Parents play a crucial role in the lives of children with special needs. Parents and families are the primary institutions for children, teaching them from a young age. Their attitude significantly impacts children's lives, with school being the formal learning institution. Adequate education develops attitudes, values, and skills while understanding a child's disability is crucial. Parents must educate their children about their special abilities, as disability has historically been seen as a curse. However, movements began in the 1990s, leading to the Persons with Disabilities Act in 1995 and India's signing of the UNCRPD in 2007. These efforts aim to include people with special needs in mainstream society. The Indian government has implemented disability policies since 2006, with the most recent being The Rights of Persons with Disability Act,

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2016. The Right to (Free and Compulsory) Education Act, 2009 aims to provide inclusive education for children with special needs. However, rural parents face challenges in accessing education, as most schools are government-run and access is limited. This study focuses on rural parents of children with special needs. The literacy rate in rural areas is 71%, while in urban areas it is 86%. However, rural families often face challenges in accessing education, especially for children with disabilities or special needs. These children are often considered a burden due to their dependency and lack of awareness about disabilities. Despite the government's efforts to increase schools, there is a gap in access to education for these children. Lack of teaching aids, qualified teachers, and adequate educational infrastructure contribute to poverty and unemployment. Inclusion of children with special needs in education is crucial for overall inclusion and addressing the challenges faced by rural populations. Parents play a crucial role in providing these children with a better education.

## Literature Review

**Khan (2014)** mentioned that the greatest barrier to inclusion is the '*attitude*' of parents and teachers towards children with special needs. It was also found that the parents of differently able children have a real interest in inclusive education and they want their children to get an education with normal children in inclusive settings. The study also found that there is a significant difference in the attitude of parents of normal children and parents of children with special needs towards inclusive education.

**Parasuram, K. (2006)** The study examined the potential effects on teachers' attitudes toward people with disabilities and the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream schools. Two attitude scales were used to examine general educators' views about disability and the inclusion of disabled pupils in mainstream classrooms in Mumbai, India. Variable background characteristics included age, gender, level, education, years of teaching experience,

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acquaintanceship with a person with a disability, having a family member with a disability, frequency of contact, and closeness to a person with a disability. The analyses revealed that while some of the variables of interest did affect teachers' attitudes towards disabilities, the only variable that affected teachers' attitudes towards inclusion was prior acquaintance with a person with a disability.

**Narumanchi & Bhargava (2011)** mention that the purpose of the following was to explore the perceptions of parents of typical children towards inclusive education and children with special needs by using exploratory and descriptive research methods. From the study, the researcher found that parents showed positive reactions towards inclusion but suggested separate classrooms for children with special needs.

## Rationale of the study

From the reviewed literature it has been found that there are very few studies conducted in northeast India regarding the education of children with special needs. It is important to bridge the gap of research in the field of special needs children's education. This research will help to find the attitude of parents of children with special needs in educating their children with all the challenges they had to face. As parents participation is important for a child to grow in different aspects of life. As parents participation is important for a child to grow in different aspects of life. As parents participation is important for a child to grow in different aspects of life.

## Objectives of the study

- To analyse the parental attitude of children with special needs towards educating them in mainstream school
- To understand the role of parents in the lives of children with special needs.
- To assess the challenges faced by parents in educating children with special needs

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## Research Methodology

The methodology applied for the study is qualitative. The primary data was collected through case studies using a semi-structured interview guide and observation. The participants were the children with special needs, teachers, parents and resource teachers. The secondary data were collected through e-resources, books, articles and journals.

## Sampling

For the study, five government Jr high schools were selected purposively. Jr high schools were selected as the samples from the Malda district of West Bengal. The schools were purposively selected through the information gathered from the Block Education Offices of the Kaliachak-1 Block in the same district. From the block, five Jr high schools were selected where Children with Special Needs are enrolled.

## Case studies

The cases studied were from Jr high schools in the Kaliachak-1 block of the Malda district. At the request of the participants, the names are kept confidential and mentioned as false names. Below mentioned are the two major cases studied out of the five studied cases. The five cases studied were under different categories where four from mental retardation and one case of Down syndrome.

### Case 1:

Momenul Islam is a boy of 10 years with mental retardation. He is admitted to the nearby government school. His parents are daily wage labourers. There are four members in the family two girls, two boys and one younger baby girl of 1 year old. The parents are having a tough time in bringing up two girls as their income level is low. Momenul Islam is the second child. His parents have not yet applied for his disability certificate nor have they gone for any medical assessment due to financial issues.

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The mother is just 27 years old and his father is 31 years old they got married at the very early ages of 16 and 21 respectively. All the children are born at home without medical treatment. Momenul Islam was born without a birth cry and his mother was once injured during her pregnancy as she slipped off and fell on her stomach. The parents are very worried regarding Momenul Islam's health condition. Despite that, they are sending him to school. The resource person of the particular block identified Momenul Islam to be mentally retarded. However, the parents always avoid taking him for medical assessment required to apply for his disability certificate. The parent sends him to school so that he is not left alone at home. Momenul Islam is quite hyperactive and difficult to manage by the parents as well as teachers. His parents also mentioned that they want him to go to school instead of sitting idle at home. His parents said that Momenul Islam often gets angry and starts beating up people including family members even in the school he fights with other children and hits them. Teachers regularly complain to them regarding his behaviour but parents find themselves helpless as Momenul Islam is unable to understand the situation. Momenul Islam's father aggressively says during the interview that sending a child-like Momenul Islam to school is useless and a waste of time and money. His mother has no time for Momenul Islam as she has a one-year-old baby and also has to go to daily work. Their grandmother used to look after their baby when the mother went to work. The elder son is 13 years old he also studies in the same school as Momenul Islam. It is always a disturbance for their elder son too as Momenul Islam has to be looked after by him during school hours. The teachers of the school are unable to manage Momenul Islam and let him sit in the same classroom for at least thirty minutes. Teachers in the schools are not trained in managing children with special needs. The parents of the child have shared their future expectations by saying that they want Momenul Islam to be trained in household work and look after his parents in old age. They also said that they would be very grateful if Momenul Islam got some special training in handicrafts. It would empower him to live an independent life.

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From the above case, it has been seen that the parents of Momenul Islam are more interested in vocational training than academic studies. They think it to be useless for a child with mental retardation. The parent sends him to school so that he is not left alone at home when they are out for work. And to escape his activities and the nuisance caused by him. For the parent, it's getting difficult to manage a child with mental retardation and hyperactivity. The parents are illiterate and they cannot help their children with their studies.

## Case 2:

Khaleda Begum is a 13-year-old girl with Down syndrome. She belongs to a middle-class family her father is a government servant and her mother is a housewife. Her parents have migrated from their village to the village nearby town so that they can avail the facilities of better education which cannot be found in villages. They have three children two boys and one girl. Both the boys are older than Khaleda Begum. Khaleda Begum used to go to the nearby government school whereas the other two boys studied in private schools in the town. The parents want Khaleda Begum to study in a good school and get a better education but getting admitted to a good school with a disability is difficult. The parents of Khaleda Begum have shared the struggle they faced during the admission of their Down syndrome child to school. Her mother at first tried to admit her to a nearby school at the age of six in their village but she was not admitted by the school authority because of her disability. Then her mother approached a non-governmental organisation in the town that is working in the field of rehabilitation of disabled people. There she was admitted for a year then the NGO asked to admit her to a mainstream school. Her parents tried seven schools for her admission but none was accepted. Among those schools, they approached one of the schools that accepted her admission but the school authority requested her parents to keep it confidential and they would only enrol her in the school record but would not let her sit in the classroom as the other



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students of the class will be disturbed and the parents of other non-disabled children studying in the school would question them. This has turned out to be a major problem. Her parent never complains regarding any issues with the school authority as well as they do not even discuss any with the teachers. Because they have the fear of losing their seats in Khaleda Begum if they approach the school authority regarding any issue.

In this case, the parents are trying hard to provide better education to Khaleda Begum. This attitude of Khaleda Begum's parents has helped her in her studies. Her mother gives much attention towards her studies but Khaleda Begum finds it difficult to write. She recites poems and also she likes dancing. Her mother takes her to tuition classes. The effort made by her parents has helped her develop.

## Findings and discussion

The result of the study has brought out many untouched facts experienced by the parents of children with special needs in rural regions. Parental attitudes toward Children with special needs and the importance of education are yet to be understood by most of the rural villagers. There is a lack of sensitization and awareness regarding the educational facilities provided by the government in the schools. There is a free and compulsory education system under the Right to Education Act 2009 but during the study, it was found that few parents are unaware of it. Educating a child with a disability is equally important to a child without a disability. The attitude of parents towards education in the studied cases revealed that although they are sending them to the nearby schools they are less responsible regarding the education of their child. Instead, they send them only to keep them busy and away from home for a few hours otherwise it gets difficult for them to manage. But only in one case, it has been found that the parents are trying their level best to provide education to their Down syndrome child. The parents want their child to socialise with the other children without special needs. They want their child to learn vocational courses rather than academic ones. The attitude found within

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the families is positive towards educating the child with special needs but the problem with the poor family is that they are unable to take much concern about their child since both the parents are mostly illiterate and wage labourers. In the case of Khaleda Begum, her parents have migrated to the town to provide her with better educational facilities.

## **Role of Parents**

The role of parents in providing education to their children is that the parents are mostly wage labourers and they do not find much time for their children as the child whose mother is a housewife has enough time to look after her special needs child. The elder brother or sisters at home without special needs are helping their brothers or sisters with special needs. Most parents want their children to get educated but they also feel it to be of no use or a waste of time and effort. This has led to the attitude of letting them stay at home rather than sending them to school. The parents have insufficient finances to provide proper treatment or medical facilities to their children with special needs. Sometimes the child is also engaged in household work like baby seating, cleaning and all. Most parents find it insignificant to send their child to school because they believe that they cannot acquire the knowledge the other children of the same age can have.

## **Challenges faced by the parents**

There are many challenges the parents of those children with special needs have to face can be categorised into social, financial, educational and health. When we look into the social issues the parents of these children conveyed that they have to undergo many hindrances like acceptance in the society, participation in social functions is mostly faced by the parents of mentally retarded children. Sometimes because of such causes, they break down emotionally and avoid attending social functions. This hurts the families with children with disabilities. The people of the rural areas are mostly financially backward than the urban their

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income source is mostly agriculture and wage labour. The participants for the study were mostly wage labourers only one of the participants was a government servant. Their daily wage is around three hundred rupees which is very low to run a family of four to six. The parents of children with special needs with poor economic backgrounds cannot provide the required facilities for their children to train them in different fields. Because the education is made free the children with special needs from poor families can attain education in the government school. As the parents are mostly from rural villages they are illiterate and do not have much interest in the education of children with special needs. As the incomes of those families are low they cannot avail adequate health facilities. This leads to difficulty during childbirth for the women as well as the health condition of children with special needs as well. They are even ready to lose life but cannot get proper treatment for any disease. Communication and transport facilities are also a major concern. These are the major factors and challenges that rural parents face.

## Conclusion

Education plays a vital role in empowering the youth of the nation. Being educated will bring the overall development of the nation. Since the Right to Education Act 2009 was enacted the rate of increase in the percentage of enrolment of children with special needs in elementary education and five years after its implementation is much less in North-eastern states in comparison to the national average (Sarkar & Kundu 2016). Parents' attitudes towards educating children with special needs are changing positively with the change in time. The parents want their children to get educated but for this, the schools must be more active in delivering services to the children in an inclusive environment. The schools must be disabled-friendly so that the parents feel secure enough to send their special needs child to school. The government must pay special attention to bring more enrolment in the schools. Non-governmental organisations must also take the initiative in conducting awareness and

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sensitizations at the community level so that more and more children with special needs come up and get a better education. In a nutshell, it can be said that there exists a wide gap in understanding the importance of educating a child with special needs. Stereotypes still exist for which the problems have not yet been addressed, mostly in the rural areas. Awareness and sensitisation of rural villagers towards education is of utmost importance.

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## Contribution of Pir Sufi Abubakar (1846-1939) of Furfura to the spread of Education in the Muslim society of Bengal

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### Abstract

Pir Sufi Abubakar of Furfura was able to make a special contribution to the spread of education in the Muslim society of Bengal. In the 19th century, the education rate among Muslims in Bengal was very low. And. According to an account by R. Ahmed, in the nineteenth century and even in the first half of the twentieth century, the level of education among the Muslim Society in Bengal was negligible and their backwardness was considerable. According to Ahmed's calculations, in 1875 the number of Muslim students in schools in Bengal was 29% and the number of Hindu students was 71.1%. Muslim participation in higher education was even lower. In 1875, the number of Muslim students at the college level was 5.4% and Hindu students were 93.6%. Less than 2% of educated Muslims knew English. But the number of Hindu students knowing English was about 5%. The picture was almost the same in terms of employment. In 1871 the number of Muslim employees in Bengal was 5.9%. On the other hand, the rate of Hindus was 41%. Abubakar realized the backwardness of this education in Muslim society and devoted himself to spreading education among Muslims. He initially advocated the expansion of madrasa education, but eventually supported English education and science education. In the expansion of education, he established Old Scheme Madrasas, established New Scheme Madrasas, emphasized on women and children education, emphasized on mother tongue Bengali education, sponsored the spread of newspapers, helped spread spiritual education, etc. But why did he take all these measures? What steps did he take

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for this? What was the result? —Answers to all these questions are attempted in this article through analytical review.

**Keywords:** Education System, Muslim Students, New Scheme Madrasa, Old Scheme Madrasa, Science, Spiritual Education.

## Introduction

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a renaissance took place in the Muslim society in Bengal, that is, an attempt was made to develop the Muslim society by introducing western education. Just as Syed Ahmad Khan and his Aligarh Anglo-Oriental College took initiatives to expand western education in the Muslim society in North India, an environment was created in favour of western education in the Muslim society with the initiatives of Abdul Latif, Amir Hossain etc. in Bengal. Besides, as a result of various religious and socio-economic movements, the traditional Islamic education system continues in the Muslim society. As a result, attempts to harmonize the two systems can also be observed among several individuals. Since the spread of Western education within Muslim society did not bring about radical change, there was no problem with the continued existence of Islamic education. Thinking about this dual demand in the Muslim society, some people choose the path of coordinating Islamic education and western education in the Muslim society. Abdul Latif's name can be mentioned among them. Abdul Latif emphasized on teaching both English and Arabic languages. In A Paper on Mohammedan Education in Bengal, Abdul Latif emphasized the importance of practicing English for the worldly class of Muslim society and pure Arabic for the non-worldly clerical class. Not only Abdul Latif, but Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, identified as the father of modernity in Muslim society, also recognized the importance and demands of traditional Islamic education along with education.

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In the second half of the 19th century, the practice and spread of traditional Islamic education in Indian Muslim society was almost taken to the stage of movement by the Deoband movement in North India. Under the initiative of this organization, several madrasas were established in North India. His influence can also be seen in Bengal and the pace of establishment of traditional Islamic educational institutions in Bengal increased. Unlike the Hindu society, the Muslim society in Bengal does not have caste discrimination and prejudices, but the lack of social problems has not been noticed. Various social problems were noticed due to financial deterioration of Muslim society, lack of modern education etc. Polygamy, child marriage, abuse of divorce etc. weaken the vitality of Muslim society. During this time in Muslim society, it was believed that all the evils of Muslim society were due to deviation from religious ideals. There is a belief among Muslims that all these problems can be solved by following the religion properly. As a result, the effect of religious restrictions in the Muslim society can be particularly noticed and as a result, the expansion of Islamic education along with the expansion of Western education in the Muslim society in Bengal and the establishment of various Maktab Madrasahs.

## Background

It is observed till the second half of the nineteenth century, it will be seen that the expansion of western education or English education did not take place in Bengal until the eighteenth century. Although western education started in Bengal in the first half of the 19th century, there was no special progress in English education. Thus Islamic traditional education existed in Muslim societies until the first half of the nineteenth century. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Western education began to expand in Bengal, but traditional education also prevailed. Some individuals have made a combination between Western education and Islamic traditional education keeping in mind the needs and demands of the Muslim society.

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Abdul Latif was a supporter of such a combination of education. But the steps taken by Abdul Latif towards this point of view continued roughly till the end of the nineteenth century. It was Pir Abubakar of Furfura who developed this syncretism in the 20th century. Although Abubakar was initially a supporter of the Old Scheme Madrasa, he eventually characterized his syncretistic outlook by advocating english education for worldly needs in the second half of the 19th century, this system of integrated education in Muslim society was further expanded in the 20th century under the patronage of Abubakar. In this respect, Abubakar can be identified as a follower of Nawab Abdul Latif in terms of expansion of such education in Bengal.

The second half of the 19th century, there was no such vigorous movement in Bengal as the movement to establish traditional Islamic educational institutions led by Deoband in northern India. Amir Hussain emphasized on the expansion of only traditional education initiation, western education and English education in Muslim society Abdul Latif talked about the expansion of western education with traditional education, yet his movement cannot be compared with that of Deoband. Its role in the expansion of traditional educational institutions in Muslim society, especially madrasa education, was not extensive. The influence of the Wahhabi movement and the Faraji movement in Bengal shows that the movement was more concerned with the revival of Islam. The abolition of non-Islamic customs and the re-emergence of Islamic adab qaida were the main features of both these movements, although the movements were socio-economic in nature, religious features were also observed in the movements at the beginning. But nowhere in these movements was the initiative to establish traditional Muslim schools widely seen. As a result, the role that Deoband had taken in establishing traditional schools in North India remained unfinished in Bengal. Pir Abubakar of Furfura tried to fill this void.



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## Content

In Bengal, under the initiative of Abubakar about a few hundred madrasas, mosques, mosques and Islamic schools were established. All these educational institutions were established in different parts of Bengal by himself and his disciples and his institutions. But this initiative of Abubakar was nothing new in Bengal, madrasas had already been established at various places in Furfura since the fourteenth century. Abubakar's forefathers established madrasahs in Furfura and other places. His achievement is that he played a special role in establishing Islamic educational institutions in different parts of Bengal. As he established madrasas in various places in East and South Bengal centered on Furfura, many madrasas were also renovated during his time. In just a few decades before and after Abubakar, we cannot see so many Madrasahs being established in Bengal. Therefore, the establishment of this Islamic traditional school can be compared to a movement.

One of the major madrasas that Abubakar established was the Khariji Madrasa. where Arabic is taught as the main language and religiously oriented education is imparted. In Bengal, old scheme madrasa is meant, the institutions in which Islamic and religious language and religious customs, religious practices, manners are taught, those institutions are identified as old scheme madrasa. Abubakar Bangla established several old scheme madrasas in different parts of Assam. Among all these madrasas there were many senior and junior madrasas. Abubakar laid the foundation of Old Scheme Darul Uloom Madrasah in Bengali Para under Nilkamari, Rangpur, Bangladesh. He himself donated 25 rupees for the construction of this madrasa and arranged help of 7000 rupees from various people for the development of this madrasa. He went to Islamia Madrasa in Noakhali, Bangladesh. Here he gave 1324 rupees as a grant for the development of the madrasa. It was a large old scheme madrasa, Abubakar's help was particularly instrumental in the development of this madrasa. Abubakar established Mustafaiya Madrasa in Bogura. It became a madrasa of high rank. Abubakar also set up an Old

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Scheme Senior Madrasa in the house of Maulana Neshar Ahmad of Sarshina, Barisal, Bangladesh who was one of Abubakar's caliphs.

There are several reasons behind why Abubakar was interested in establishing Old Scheme Madrasas, 1) Since these madrasas provide more religious education, he took the initiative to establish these madrasas. He wanted that if Muslims receive education in this institution, it will be possible for them to gain knowledge about religion. As a result, he believes that the foundation of Islam in Bengal will be strong. 2) The economic condition of the Muslim community in Bengal was poor during the British period. Most of the Muslim families were agriculturists and small traders and day labourers. As a result, it was not possible for them to develop and maintain a different and better education system, as this infrastructure needed to be rebuilt and was expensive. On the other hand, a tradition of imparting education in Old Scheme Madrasas had already developed in Muslim society. In this system of education the Maulvi-Alem community of the village imparted education and they received very little money as wages, because here the teacher or Ustad felt that he was making some full savings by imparting religious education to the Muslim boys and girls, so there was no rigor of remuneration. In many cases abandoned village houses were used in this educational system and its textbooks were some traditional Islamic texts. Therefore, the cost management of old scheme madrasa was more helpful for the Muslim society than the cost management of modern education, so he naturally focused on madrasa education.

From the decade of the 20th century, the mindset of Abubakar changed. He supported the establishment of Old Scheme Madrasas as well as the formation of New Scheme Madrasas. At one time Maulavi Abunchar Oheed Mu'min Committee wanted to form New Scheme Madrasas, he formed a movement against it, but in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century his views changed, he supported the formation of New Scheme Madrasas. There were several reasons behind Abubakar's compromising attitude towards the New Scheme Madrasa: 1) Abubakar realized

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that the establishment of the New Scheme Madrasa was necessary for the needs of the society and the nation. Because it was necessary for the Muslim society to become familiar with the European knowledge and language that came with the arrival of the English. 2) He wanted the Muslim community to acquire education in the New Scheme Madrasa, learn Arabic, Farsi along with other subjects such as English, philosophy, western science and get a job and be established in the society, for him the New scheme supported the madrasa system of education to the end. 3) Abubakar was a supporter of ulemaization of politics i.e. he wanted a large part of the Muslim community to acquire knowledge about religion and become scholars and a part of them to participate in politics and improve their own class and community. But if the scholars study only in the Old Scheme Madrasa, they will be proficient in Arabic Persian, but if they study in the New Scheme Madrasa, they will be able to learn English, Philosophy, Western Science, along with Arabic Persian and become proficient. As a result, it will be possible for them to do ideal politics as well as social development. 4) If the Muslims get English education, it will be beneficial in communicating with the British. They will be able to present the demands of the Muslim community to the British government correctly. Abubakar thought that he could highlight the plight of the Muslim society by reasoning. He himself faced this situation several times with the British. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Hindu Muslim riots broke out over a Hindu procession passing near a mosque in Calcutta. Abubakar met the government with Abdur Rahim, AK Fazlul Haque and others to solve this problem. The leaders of both sides conversed in English but Abubakar could not understand anything. As a result, he got annoyed and said that why was I called? Does Abubakar understand English? Why don't you speak Bengali or Urdu? He said that he was speaking in Urdu, the English spoke to him in Urdu, then the government spoke to him in an understandable language. So he realizes the need of modern language education in judging the actual situation.

Abubakar established a New Scheme Madrasah in Furfura in 1915 AD. His murids and caliphs established several new scheme madrasas in different parts of Bengal and Assam.

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Without the support of Abubakar, the establishment of so many New Scheme Madrasas in different parts of Bengal and Assam would not have been possible. Generally, if you learn English by studying in schools, they do not develop much relationship with religious education. Because the authorities here do not arrange to read Farsi or Arabic along with English. But it is taught in New Scheme Madrasas. Those who helped Abubakar to establish the New Scheme Madrasa were the then Education Minister of Bengal Khwaja Nazim Uddin, Inspector Maulvi Ibrahim, Director Khan Bahadur, Maulana Md. Asanullah, School Inspector Roy Bahadur K. C. Roy Mohammad Majeed, Mawla Box, Director Teller etc. In 1926, Abubakar promoted the New Scheme Junior Madrasa to Furfura High Madrasa with the help of many of them and received one and a half hundred taka per month as government aid for the teaching of the madrasa. He got a one-time grant of five thousand rupees from the government for the construction of a madrasa house and donated another six thousand rupees himself to build a large house. The construction of this house was completed in December. This large building was constructed due to the increase in the number of students. Furfura's senior title Madrasah, High Madrasah, were Abubakar's favorite madrasas. Naturally, to manage the future expenses of these two madrasas, Abubakar bequeathed his property of twenty-eight thousand rupees in the name of the madrasas. He made good arrangements for charitable persons who pay Zakat to donate for the running of madrasa education and to receive and spend it properly. Also, Abubakar established New Scheme Madrasas in Medinipur, Hooghly, Bankura, 24 Parganas, Nadia, Howrah etc. He also arranges for boarding so that distant students do not suffer. Their living expenses were paid from the Lakhiraj property. Even the local people used to keep the students in their own houses as jagirs. established a New Scheme Madrasa in Furfura in 1915 AD. His murids and khalipha established several new scheme Madrasas in different parts of Bengal and Assam. Without the support of Abubakar, the establishment of so many New Scheme Madrasas in different parts of Bengal and Assam would not have been possible. Generally, if you learn English by studying in schools, they do not develop much relationship

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with religious education. Because the authorities here do not arrange to read Farsi or Arabic along with English. But it is taught in New Scheme Madrasas. Those who helped Abubakar to establish the New Scheme Madrasa were the then Education Minister of Bengal Khwaja Nazim Uddin, Inspector Maulavi Ibrahim, Director Khan Bahadur, Maulana Md. Asanullah, School Inspector Roy Bahadur K. C. Roy, Mohammad Majeed, Mawla Box, Director Teller etc. In 1926, Abubakar promoted the New Scheme Junior Madrasa to Furfura High Madrasa with the help of many of them and received one and a half hundred rupees per month as government aid for the teaching of the madrasa. He got a one-time grant of five thousand rupees from the government for the construction of a madrasa house and donated another six thousand rupees himself to build a large house. The construction of this house was completed in December. This large building was constructed due to the increase in the number of students. Furfura's senior title Madrasah, High Madrasah, were Abubakar's favourite madrasas. Naturally, to manage the future expenses of these two madrasas, Abubakar bequeathed his property of twenty-eight thousand rupees in the name of the madrasas. He made good arrangements for charitable persons who pay Zakat to donate for the running of madrasa education and to receive and spend it properly. Also, Abubakar established New Scheme Madrasas in Medinipur, Hooghly, Bankura, 24 Parganas, Nadia, Howrah etc. He also arranges for boarding so that distant students do not suffer. Their living expenses were paid from the Lakhiraj property. Even the local people used to keep the students in their own houses as jaigirs.

Abubakar realized the need for women's education. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the expansion of education in Muslim society in Bengal did not take place particularly. As a result, the status of Muslims, especially women, was very poor in government jobs. Opinions on this issue were expressed in various Muslim papers. The *Islam Darshan* magazine looked into this issue and presented a report. The report said that the participation of Muslims in the field of education was negligible. Among them, the condition of women was more backward. It is said in this paper that although financial development took place in the Muslim

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society through business and trade, in fact this society could not make any impact in the political and social sphere. Education is blamed for the backwardness of Muslims in government jobs. The newspaper said that the employment rate of Muslims was negligible compared to non-Muslims. The report highlights its statistics. Here it is said that by 1924 AD, the percentage of Hindus in the excise department was 63, while the number of Muslims was 37. The number of Hindus working in the education department was 70, while the number of Muslims was 30. While 94 percent of Hindus were in the agricultural department, the number of Muslims was only 6. Thus the number of Muslims was very less in the medical department, works department, forest department. The government spends 9 lakh rupees on women's education, out of which only 35 thousand rupees were spent on Muslims and the remaining 8 lakh 65 thousand rupees were spent on Hindu society, the newspaper said. In lower primary schools the percentage of Hindu girls was 40 and Muslim girls were more than 60. The number of Hindu girls in the high school was 94 while the number of Muslim girls was 6 percent. The number of Hindu girls in middle school was 95 and Muslim girls were 5 percent, this is the 1924 figure.

Table 1 : Status of Muslim students in Bengal in 1924 AD in relation to female education :

Educational institutions	Hindu girls students %	Muslim girls students %
Lower Primary School	40	60
Upper-Elementary School	94	06
Middle school	95	05
High school	98	02
Art College	97	03

(Source: Islam Darshan , Fourth Year, Third Issue, Ashwin, 1331, Page – 89)

Thus, it appears that the number of Muslim students in lower primary schools is higher than Hindu students, because the number of small madrasa makhtabs was significantly higher. It is

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claimed that initially Muslim girls were sent to educational institutions because of the system of veiling, but the lack of veil among female students in higher education institutions has reduced the number. Contemporary Muslim journals suggest that veiling is one of the reasons why Muslim girls attend educational institutions. Abubakar realized the importance of women's education. He thinks that for a family to be run properly, education of women is necessary before men, he says that if the mothers are real idealistic, educated, then the children will be idealistic and characterful and educated. Therefore, he thinks that education of women is necessary first. He announced that he would teach Arabic to sons and daughters, teach women and all the legal wisdom of the world like English, Bengali, etc. Abubakar was not only in favour of imparting traditional Islamic education, but also supported all necessary modern education and emphasized not only the education of sons, but also the education of daughters. He gave more importance to the education of women as they take care of the children and educate them. Abubakar established a girls' school at Furfura which came to be known as the West Bengal Siddiquiya Girls' Madrasah in 1967. He wrote a book called *Balika Noor* for the education of girls.

Abubakar's policy on women's education was notable, 1) He emphasized on women's education along with the veil. 2) Emphasizes teaching by female students. 3) Said to establish separate educational institutions for boys and girls in higher education. 4) Talks about receiving Islamic education along with modern education for women. 5) Emphasis on imparting education to women through establishment of educational institutions. 6) Abubakar cared about the education of children. He knew that the children of today are the future of tomorrow, so he made arrangements to provide proper education to the children from an early age. That is why he wrote a book called *Balak Noor*. Small schools, madrasas, various khankas, etc. institutions were formed, among which there were many maktabas.

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Abubakar was an Ulema. Scholars or Ulema give importance to Arabic Persian language. Abubakar became an Ulema and realized the need for Bengali along with Arabic Persian. He gave special importance to Bengali mother tongue practice. He felt that education through mother tongue can be embraced by students or students. He declared that it is important to impart education through mother tongue Bengali whether it is religious education or general education. Abubakar himself and his khaliphas and murids in various places where they gave waj nasiyaat emphasized on discussion of Quranic hadith and teaching through mother tongue Bengali. He preached in his will that discussions of Quranic hadiths should be done in Bengali along with Arabic Persian. The khutba delivered before the weekly Jumma prayer in mosques was delivered in Persian. Abu Bakr Fatwa states that even if it is recited in Persian, the people will not be able to understand it even if it is translated into Bengali and explained to the audience. He emphasized on the use of Bengali language in all fields, be it education or religion. He authored many books in Bengali language, such as *Milade Mustafa*, *Madhhab Mimansa*, *Kadiyani Rodh*, *Islam and Sangeet* etc. Several magazines were published under the patronage of Abubakar such as *Islam Preacher*, *Sudhakar*, *Sultan*, *Nabanoor*, *Shariat Islam*, *Muslim Hitaisi*, *Islam Darshan* etc, All have been published in Bengali mother tongue.

## Review of related literature

No research paper has been published on this topic yet. But there is no dearth of texts on Abubakar. About nine-ten biographical books have been published on him. These are not treatises, mostly written on Bhaktimarga. While no treatises on Abubakar have been found, there have been studies on a similar subject - there is no shortage of such specimens. These are AK Nizami, *The Life and Times of Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya*, (Oxford University, 1982). Barbara D. Metcalfe's *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband*, (1982). *Aligarh First Generation Muslim Solidarity in British India* by David Lelivend, (Columbia University,



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1978). Yoginder Sikand's *The Origins and Development of the Tabligh Jamaat, 1920-2000*, (Orient Blackswan, 2002), Francis Robinson's *The Ulema of the Farengi Mahal and Islamic Culture in South Asia*, (The Hubst & Co Publication, 2001) etc. On individual and institutional research Emphasis is given. From all these books one can learn about various philosophies of the Sufis. From these it is possible to understand the ideology and educational thought of Sufi Abu Bakr of Bengal.

## The research objective

The research objective of this paper is to properly understand Abu Bakr's educational philosophy and in this regard to internalize his teaching points and apply them to future students. When a philanthropist or educational reformer expands education, it arises from one ideology but when a cleric or Sufi engages in reform activities other than religion, it is different. Either it is too idealistic or it is biased. Abu Bakr's other works reflect the high ideals. There was also a gathering of noble ideals in the field of education. The development of body, mind and spirit was the purpose of his educational policy. In today's day of corruption in the social system, what can be accepted ideals for the students. The aim and objective of this paper is to highlight that point.

## Research Methodology

In writing this research paper Richard methodology has been used as the topic which is, this topic is a topic centered on Furfura village of Jangipara police station in Hooghly district of Bengal. Abu Bakr was the chief pir of Furfura. His thoughts and steps taken regarding education are the subject of this article. It is a subject of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1846-1939). This is a part of biographical research. Several primary sources and

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some secondary sources have been used to compose the essay. Primary material includes various pregnancy records, private information, newspapers, documents, family registers, multiple interviews, field surveys etc. An attempt has been made to analyze the data obtained with a dispassionate and materialistic view. An attempt has been made to measure his work in the contemporary socio-economic context.

## Results

Reviewing Abubakar's education policy, it appears that when Abubakar intervened in the education reform or expansion of education in the Muslim society, i.e. in the early twentieth century, the education rate in the Muslim society at that time was negligible and there were general educational institutions except traditional Islamic educational institutions Muslims could study, their numbers were few. As much education as was prevalent in the Muslim society at that time was based on religion. But beyond this, there were very few students who received modern education, especially in rural areas, while religious education tended to be more prevalent in urban areas. It was against this background that Abubakar entered the world of work and the expansion of education in Muslim society became an issue in his programme.

## Conclusion

However, Abubakar initially followed the traditional Islamic education system and supported the old-fashioned madrasa-based education system. Since he was a dharma guru or religious leader, and since religious education was imparted mostly in the old scheme madrasas, it was a natural tendency for him to support the old scheme madrasas early on. But in the early 20th century, mainly keeping in mind the socio-economic development of the Muslim society, he supported the New Scheme Madrasa education system along with the traditional Madrasa

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education. Modern science was taught along with Arabic Persian education in New Scheme Madrasas. As a result, he supported the New Scheme Madrasa Education, thinking about the contemporary education of Muslims. Even though he himself did not receive his own education in his childhood, he advocated English language education for the sake of progress. In this respect, Abubakar was a symbol of coordinated mentality. In the field of education, his coordinated attitude was noted, which was also seen in his predecessor Abdul Latif. Another point to note is that some writers including Chandi prasad Sarkar have identified Furfura Pir as a radical. But this statement seems to be incorrect. Because by adopting the education appropriate to the age, he expressed the opposite attitude to the fanatical attitude. Among the principles which he sought to preserve with inflexibility were the precepts which served to preserve justice, for this reason alone he could not be called a radical. This mentality is observed in Abubakar, who showed inflexible attitude as a supporter of Nyaya policy, from Rammohan to Vidyasagar. Therefore, it is better to identify him as a compromiser with a coordinated attitude rather than as a hardliner.

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