

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan; an Evaluation of Organizational Capabilities

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Abstract

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan performed on two fronts; firstly literary and secondly institutional work. Literary work was his fondness while administrative work commenced for the progress of Muslim community. He had management and communication skills developed due to genetic impact, joining government job and observing surrounding environment. He persuaded unreconciled Muslim community to adjust itself to the new circumstances which had appeared after the revolt of 1857 and for this purpose he assembled the people, drew rules and regulation, introduced by-laws, made constitution, arranged the machinery and established a chain of associations and institutions. His institutions emerged with a new structure in the sub-continent. As a secretary of institutions he succeeded because, when he saw something that he felt needed to be done, he set about doing it and kept undeterredly at it until it was done. The objectives of this study are to explore the motives behind the formation of institutions and to examine Syed Ahmad's untiring effort and policies to modernize these institutions. It was Syed Ahmad's institutional framework which broke the stagnation of Muslim community and acquainted them with the new order of British era even changed the course of history. Present study revolves around Syed Ahmad's organizational capabilities.

Keywords: Syed Ahmad, British era, institutions, funding, teamwork, policy matters, decision power.

Introduction

Syed Ahmad (1817-1898) emerged as a key leader of the Indian Muslim community in the aftermath of the War of Independence of 1857, who exerted a defining influence on Indian Muslims by creating the eager to run parallel to the modern world. He abandoned the Mughal India's concept of egalitarian mass education and adopted instead Britain's pragmatic policy of advanced education.

During his youth, Syed Ahmad was a literary personality. He had a keen interest in oriental literature, and for a long time he used his pen just to write about theology, old buildings or other antique topics. In 1848 when he was compiling the *Aaein-i-Akbari*, Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib famous poet of Urdu, wrote, "put aside the Aaein, and examine the life of the Englishmen their style, their manner, their trade, their system and their art."¹ Suerly Ghalib shaked Syed Ahmad to rouse but even after his advice Syed Ahmad did not become so much conscious. However, the 1857 revolt changed his attitude. He was convinced that British had come to stay in India and that their supremacy, along with that of the Western way of thinking could not be challenged in any foreseeable future. He remarked that 'India had been a widow and she chose England as her husband'.²

After defeating independence war, generally Muslims were humiliated and to justify the cruelty of the British, one of their historians James Outram (1803- 1863) outlined the war of independence of 1857 as a big conspiracy of the Muslims to overthrow the British power, so a gulf created between British ruler and Muslim community. This situation had been felt and narrated by the British themselves. 'The truth is, that our system of public instruction, which has awakened the Hindus from the sleep of centuries, and quickened their inert masses with some of the noble impulses of a nation, is opposed to the traditions, unsuited to the requirements and hateful to the

religion of the Musalmans.’³ On the other hand, Muslims did not cooperate with the British and kept themselves aloof due to their political traditions, social customs and religious beliefs. They could never be brought to admit that sound and useful learning existed in any language except Arabic and Persian.

In such situation Syed Ahmad came on the forefront for the Muslim community. He was a realist and conscious of the fact that the countries of Europe had developed economically as a result of the acceptance of sciences and the new techniques. He clearly understood that in the new era, for the survival and progress it became necessary to imbibe British institutional format through which the Great Britain got the title ‘the Empire on which sun never sets’. It was a challenging task, and only Syed Ahmad responded this challenge and got ready to bring radical changes in the institutions of India according to new era. He planned a comprehensive institutional programme and for the success two conditions were necessary ‘money and power of organization. The latter Syed Ahmad brought in abundance; the former was wanting’.⁴

Factors leading to Organizing Aptitude

Syed Ahmad was born in the hawaili (mansion) of his maternal grandfather Khwaja Fariduddin who was known for his administrative abilities, persuasive powers and a very strong common sense which helped him in diplomatic negotiations.⁵ He performed British embassy’s tasks in different countries successfully and remained the finance minister of Mughal Court. Khwaja Fariduddin died in 1828 when Syed Ahmad was only 11 years old, but the grand old of the family had already contributed his share to the building up of the character and habits of his grandson. The next hereditary factor in developing Syed Ahmad’s character was the influence of his mother Aziz-un-Nisa Begum, a lady of exceptional abilities. There are many advices and examples of sacrifices which Syed Ahmad recalled and said that ‘mature mother is better than a teacher’. According to Syed Ahmad’s biographer Hali, he inherited most of his qualities from his maternal side.⁶ So maternal training

was a key factor which prepared Syed Ahmad as an administrator. Then the next factor was his entrance in the service of the East India Company in 1838 just after his father's death. He was only twenty two years of age when he was forced to take upon his young shoulders the responsibility of looking after not only himself but also his family. In order to learn the system of work, he made himself useful at the court of the Delhi Sadr Amin, who happened to be his mother's sister's husband.⁷ He remained in British Service from 1838 to 1876, entered as Sirishtedar then posted as naib munshi (administrative assistant), Munsif (subjudge) and Sadr Amin (chief revenue collector). By joining government service Syed Ahmad attached with 'government offices that marked any administrative center'. Here he was trained to distribute the work among different units under the shadow of command and coordination. Membership in the *kacahri* meant belonging to a wider world.⁸ Syed Ahmad also established broad relationships with people throughout northern India in the wake of his transfer from station to station, so he became enriched in communication skill and the especial effect of government service was that through it Syed Ahmad got official patronage due to saving the lives of English people during mutiny in Bijnor where he was posted, consequently Syed Ahmad got advantage of his favour in the coming years for the uplift of Muslim community. During government job he continued his literary work and wrote many books but the work that made him known even in European countries was *Asar-us-Sanadeed* which was partly an archaeological history and partly a biographical encyclopedia of contemporary personalities of Delhi. This book won him international fame and in recognition, Syed Ahmad was made an honorary member of the 'Royal Asiatic Society' in 1864.⁹ This was also an experience to understand the format of association. Then the most powerful single factor which was deliberately adopted by Syed Ahmad was his visit to England (1869-70). This visit was multipurpose. After passing a long period he claimed his main purpose had been "obtaining an insight into the English system of education".¹⁰ During this visit Syed Ahmad's activities in England were of keen observation, learning, and probing. He looked at everything from the angle of an educator. He visited

the universities of Cambridge and Oxford and made a detailed study of their organization, residential system, traditions, teaching arrangements and buildings etc. It was here that he formulated his future plans and chalked out the details on which he had to model the halls and hostels, the class-rooms and the lecture –theatres of the MAO. College. From England, Syed Ahmad wrote to Maulvi Mahdi Ali known as Nawab Mohsin ul Mulk:

“If you had come here you would have seen how education is carried on, how children are taught, how knowledge is acquired and how a nation attains a position of honour.”¹¹

In England, by visiting the educational institutions he learnt the whole management process consisting of (i) Planning (ii) Organizing (iii) Directing (iv) Controlling. And the importance of other elements related to institutions was also explored upon him such as rules and regulation, meetings, funding, budget, journal, newspaper and correspondence etc. With the combination of all mentioned factors Syed Ahmad’s administrative skills flourished.

Foundation of various Institutions and Associations

Muslim India never detached from education. During Mughal period education was imparting in all disciplines and ‘this educational system produced philosophers, mathematicians, thinkers, traditionalists (muhaddithin), physicians, jurists, poets, writers and sufis. Strangely enough, all these variegated products came out of a single system.’¹² But this institutional framework flew like a straw in front of the British hostile incursion. Syed Ahmad pondered the situation and decided that to adjust the Indians and especially Muslims to the realities of new life, the institutions should be up-to-date and system of institutions should be based on superstructure. He selected Aligarh as the centre of his educational activities because this

place was accessible for other cities due to railway link and its climate was suitable.

He founded seven organizations named: Scientific Society (1863), British Indian Association (1866), Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College(MAO.College) (1877), Muhammadan Civil Service Fund Association (1883) The Muhammadan Educational Conference (MEC)¹³(1886), The Indian Patriotic Association (1888), The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association (1893). But he was the Secretary and driving force behind the three famous institutions- Scientific Society, MAO. College and MEC. The remaining organizations were short termed due to problem of time consuming and lack of funds.

Scientific Society

‘Scientific Society’ was founded on 9th January 1863 at the residence of Syed Ahmad in Ghazipur.¹⁴ Its purpose was to translate European knowledge into Urdu. Syed Ahmad became its Secretary. In 1864, Syed Ahmad was transferred to Aligarh, with that Society also shifted in Aligarh. The organizational structure of the ‘Scientific Society’ had two wings, Executive Council and Directing Council. Executive Council was governing body whose members were the permanent residents of Aligarh, comprised of president, vice-presidents, secretaries and treasurers. Directing Council was subordinate body. Its members spread out in different parts of India, its assignments were selection of books to be translated and the selection of languages in which translation had to be done.

Syed Ahmad derived this system from East India Company which also had two wings Court of Director which made all policies and General Court was subordinate body. Syed Ahmad was much impressed by the British administrative system and adopted it for his own organizations. ‘The Scientific Society’ was considered as the first modernist organization of Indian Muslims.

Educational Committees

After establishing 'Scientific Society' Syed Ahmad's curiosity about the system of British education was increased and he observed it at the actual institutions in England. On his return from England, he formed a committee consisting of men interested in the education of Muslims known as '*The committee of khwastagaran-i-Taraqqi-i-Talim-i-Musalmanan-e-Hindustan*', i.e 'A Committee for the better diffusion and advancement of learning among the Muhammadans of India' at Benares. He was elected its secretary. The Committee probed the causes of downfall of education in Muslim community. Its report was published under the title: *Translation of the Report of the Members of the Select Committee for the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning Among the Muhammadans of India*. The most important finding of this committee was that it was necessary for the Muslims to make their own arrangements for education if they were to acquire Western knowledge while at the same time preserving their own oriental heritage. This report also outlined a scheme for the establishment of a college for the Muslims. In the meeting of Committee held on May 12, 1872 he presented the report of the select committee and members accepted prescribed method of education. Then Syed Ahmad informed that to be executed this project money in million would be required. So he urged to form another committee to collect subscription. This committee was called 'Majlis-e- Khazan-ul-Bazaat-ul-Tasees Madrassa-tul-Uloom-ul-Muslimeen (The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College Fund Committee) Syed Ahmad was its Honorary Life Secretary. Committee resolved to prepare a detailed plan for the collection of funds without loss of time.¹⁵ Syed Ahmad got the Fund Committee registered under the Registration of Societies Act 21 of 1860. The College Fund Committee was the supreme governing body dealing directly with finance, basic policies, building construction and public relations. This Committee gave existence to the MAO. College at Aligarh.

M. A. O. College

This institution was established to provide a model instruction. The foundation stone laying ceremony of the College was performed by Lord Lytton, the Viceroy and Governor General of India on January 8, 1877.¹⁶ This institution rapidly flourished under Syed Ahmad's secretaryship. MAO. College was an institution where new generation was to foster and through this generation Syed Ahmad wanted to create environment which he observed in London's institutions and to fulfill his wish he arranged modern education and provided European staff for the College. He gave up translation method which was started with 'Scientific Society' and moulded his strategy according to Macaulay's¹⁷ educational policy. He appreciated Macaulay's thoughts except religion 'in my opinion Lord Macaulay was better wisher of India than any governor general or viceroy, who decided that European sciences and knowledge should be taught in English language for Indians'.¹⁸ So teaching of College was in English and curriculum was Western one with additional religious instruction of Islam. During Syed Ahmad's life its principal and teachers of English department were British especially there was a dominant influence of Theodore Beck on this institution who remained Principal of the College for fifteen years till his death in 1899. To arrange British staff Syed Mahmud son of Syed Ahmad was the right hand because he had extensive contact with Britishers.

For the management of the College, four sub- committees were formed.

1. The Committee of Directors of Instruction in languages and secular learning- with Sir William Muir, Lieutenant Governor as its Patron; Mr. Deighton, Principal Government College, Agra as its President, and Syed Ahmad as its Vice President. This Committee was life and soul of College. It made

- decision on course of study and scholarship allocation.
2. The Managing Committee- was the most active committee, under the presidentship of Maulvi Muhammad Karim, Deputy Collector. Some Hindus were also its members. Maulvi Samiullah Khan co-founder of the institution was the secretary of both these Committees. Generally matters such as finance, salaries and fees, expansion of the staff, rules of admission and alternations in the boarding house arrangements would be discussed in the Committee.
 3. The Committee on Sunni Theology.
 4. The Committee on Shia Theology.

The members of the last two committees were nominated by the two sub-committees of 7 members each, formed by the College Fund Committee in consultation with the religious scholars. Syed Ahmad was not associated with them.¹⁹

He devoted himself for the construction of College building after gaining the land which was also a challenging task. Then he got approval of maps. Reports were published about the construction of classrooms, halls, boarding house and mosque. He would stand all day long in the heat of the sun and supervise the work of masons and carpenters give instructions for stone carving and at the end of the day himself make payments to the labourers. W.W. Hunter, President of the Education Commission of 1883, who chose Aligarh as one of the meeting places for the Provincial Committee of the Commission, visited the College, and was greatly impressed with the extant and magnificence of the College plan. He remarked: 'The building itself will, when complete, bear comparison with any educational institution in the world, and in extent and magnificence of proportion, more than rivals the venerable piles at Oxford or Cambridge'.²⁰ In the appreciation of the College H.A.R. Gibb remarked that "the first 'modernist' organization in Islam". Syed Ahmad dedicated his time, money and energy for MAO. College which was an imaginative educational experiment intended to develop into a character-building residential institution. The College produced a unique

community of alumni and Aligarh became the educational capital of Muslim India.

The Muhammadan Educational Conference

It has been mentioned above that in the meeting of the Committee for the Better Diffusion and advancement of Learning held on May 12, 1872 during which 'The College Fund Committee' was emerged, Syed Ahmad said that 'the Committee for the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning should be permanent'. But the Committee became inactive in the presence of 'The College Fund Committee'. In spite of that, it seems that Syed Ahmad did not forget that committee and he remained committed even after passing fourteen years and it was the revival of that committee with a new name 'The Muhammadan Educational Conference' inaugurated on 27 December 1886 in Strachey Hall of Aligarh College. 'It was the logical culmination of Syed Ahmad's educational programme, which commenced the establishment of the Moradabad and Ghazipur schools in 1863'.²¹ Syed Ahmad worked as Secretary of the Conference which held regular annual session in the last three days of closing year in various districts. The Conference was practically expression of his desire to educate and unite the Muslim community in India. The objects of this Conference were:

- a) To promote western education amongst the Muslims.
- b) To encourage the education of oriental subjects and theology.
- c) To improve and raise the standard of old Indian *maktabs*.

The Conference attracted orators like Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Dr. Nazir Ahmad, and poets like Hali and Shibli who used the annual gathering to promote modern education and intellectual progress. Theodore Beck and Theodore Morison (Professor of MAO. College) were very active workers of the Conference. During the life-time of Syed Ahmad, this Conference was a kind of Muslim Brain Trust in educational matters.²²

In 1888, after the two years of establishment of Conference, another body was established to organize its activities throughout the year. It was 'The Central Standing Committee'(CSC) . Theodore Beck was appointed the Joint Secretary of the Committee.²³ The functions of the Committee were laid down in its constitution such as to decide the venue of the annual meetings, choosing the president of the Conference , scrutinizing the resolutions, holding public meeting of Muslims to explain the objects of the Conference and the necessity for English education, activating the Conference through the division of its work, establishing local committees in order to extend its area of influence and considering reports sent by its members.²⁴ Syed Ahmad was the Secretary of the Conference and he had a lot of tasks to do. It was difficult to carry out the dual responsibilities of the College and the Conference; therefore to lessen his duties the office of Joint Secretary was created. Syed Mahmud was the first person appointed to this post to assist the Secretary.²⁵

Components of the Conference

To divide the work of Conference, the following sections were approved by the CSC

1. Education Census Section: The most remarkable step of the Conference was the establishment of Census Section in 1893. Theodore Beck was the main architect of this proposal. He gave the suggestion of the establishment of Education Census during the annual meeting of Conference in 1892. The major rationale behind the establishment of this section was to inquire and gather the information about those parents that were reluctant to send their children to educational institutes. Furthermore, he was also interested to know the reasons behind this action of parents that whether social, cultural, religious or economic barriers were involved in it. Mr. Beck was keen to know the factors which were responsible for keeping the people away from getting education. Further two aspects were also considered in

this regard that this lack of interest was because of parents or because of the youth who did not want to study scientific subjects.²⁶ He was of the opinion that hard work in the right direction would bring positive results that might lead to a better future.²⁷ The Education Census was successfully operational till 1899 when Theodore Beck died.²⁸

2. **Women Section:** Another important section related to the education of women was established in 1896. The section was established to discuss the prospects of Muslim women education, development of curriculum for them that should be a combination of traditional and modern education. The objective of this section was also to motivate people and especially the Muslim community to start educational institutes for girls only. Maulvi Mumtaz Ali was the first Secretary of this section.
3. **School Section:** The School Section was the last section that came into existence during the life time of Syed Ahmad in 1896. The section was established for the purpose to inquire the factors that increased the troubles faced in the Islamic Schools. The establishment of primary schools, their grants and a uniform syllabus were also the domains of this section. Mr. Morrison was appointed the chairman of this section.²⁹

How much interest Syed Ahmad had in the Conference had been narrated by Hali, that 'Syed Ahmad used to go to the place where the session was to be held several days ahead and help the local committees in making every kind of arrangement. The Conference Hall and accommodation for the delegates used to be arranged in accordance with his advice. He himself used to draft the agenda and programme, get the tickets printed, select the resolutions to be considered, prepare the annual accounts and annual reports to be submitted to the Conference, compile the proceedings, have them printed in the form of a booklet and then send them to the members after each session. He corresponded with the Managing Committee every year about

the venue of the Conference. In between the annual sessions he wrote articles about the Conference and had them published in the newspapers. In those years when the annual session was held at Aligarh, he himself used to discharge the functions of the local committee. He faithfully and diligently implemented all resolutions on which action was to be taken by the Secretary. He corresponded with the local governments, the education departments and the universities, and submitted to the Conference a resume of the correspondence with a report on its outcome. Despite all this, he frequently used to move resolutions like other members and make long speeches about them. Apart from these duties, there were many other things connected with the Conference which he had to do, as is apparent from the proceedings of the various sessions held. It is true that the local committees made diligent efforts to collect funds and generous arrangements for the accommodation and entertainment of the delegates. But as soon as a session was over everybody except Syed Ahmad used to forget all about the Conference until the next session.³⁰

Fund Raising Campaign

The major task to establish and continue institutions was the collection of funds. Mainly the income was derived from registration and membership fees, donation from members and from the states of Hyderabad (Deccan), Bhopal, Patiala and Rampur. And government officers also helped by grant in aid. Besides this, Syed Ahmad had to employ every possible device to raise funds. Although it was the duty of every member but practically this task had to be done by Syed Ahmad alone as revealed by him. He wrote; 'members of committee do not struggling for the collection of fund. Among fifty two members just one is struggling, I am alone and do when I have free time and by writing this my purpose is not to make members angry but to inspire them so that they do work hard and collect fund by going door to door'.³¹ His letters, articles, speeches and tours explain that fund raising was a constant campaign and approximately every class of society contributed in subscription. Syed Ahmad adopted many techniques to collect subscription. He sold the report prepared by the select

committee to be aware the educational plan for future generation and to collect money. Construction demanded a lot of money. He divided the building of College into portions and after estimating their cost, gave advertisement mentioning that who will pay the required money; his name will be engraved on the building.³² Funds were collected by specific names such as one rupee fund, building fund, mosque fund, scholarship fund, university fund and fund for encouragement of Arabic and Science education in Aligarh College. Furthermore many other means were created for funding such as lottery, ticket, exhibition, theatre etc. Volunteer corps were formed called Muhammadan National Volunteers. They were appointed in each district for raising funds from landholders and government employees. According to Hali Sir Syed took retirement from the government job to collect funds for the College. In 1884 Sir Syed Ahmad with his companions made countrywide tours for the publicity and subscription of the College. He went to Ludhina, Jalindhar, Amratsar, Gourdaspur, Lahore, Patila and Muzafarnagar. The detail of this tour was compiled by Syed Iqbal Ali who accompanied Syed Ahmad in this tour. During this travel Syed Ahmad made speeches, addresses to excite the sentiments of Muslims for modern education. And mostly money was collected for Syed Ahmad's entertainment. But he refused to take invitation and received money in cash to spend on College. During fund raising campaign in Punjab, his individual effort was acknowledged in these words;

‘In these days we know of no instance among our countrymen, of anyone attempting to establish an institution by the charitable contributions of the public, and this you only have succeeded in doing and for this great deed your name will run down in history and posterity will turn to you a reverential eye’.³³

Even he sacrificed his domestic happiness such as at Syed Mahmud's marriage Syed Ahmad gave no valima party.

Instead, he paid five hundred rupees into the College fund. Announcing this, 'I am neither a jagirdar (Landlord) nor a rais (rich man) . The maximum amount I could have spent on the valima is five hundred rupees. That amount I have paid into the College fund'. Syed Ahmad's favourite victims were his personal friends and relatives . Without consulting them; he would include their names in the subscription list and put down arbitrarily fixed sums against them. Demand notices came to them in due course. If they honoured, then well and good. If they declined to pay, Syed Ahmad would come down on them with all the weapons in his armoury, the strongest of them was the threat to cut off relations with them. Sometime he used the sentence 'Secretary will do begging' and sometime he said that fund will be collected by folded hand, touching some one's chin and by twisting the ear.

His dedication to the cause and unflinching determination met with the crowning success when he was able to accumulate so many funds that eight lakh rupees were spent on the construction of the College building in twenty years.

Systematic Approach

Syed Ahmad was the member of 'Royal Asiatic Society' since 1864 and could understand the system of the associations and had the experience of institutions since that time when he established first school in Muradabad and especially after the visit of England his views on education took definite shape and he translated them into practice. So in Syed Ahmad's pattern there was a reflection of colonial policies. Whenever he started any plan, first he used to form committees, their rules, regulation and aims were settled, their meetings were conducted and reports were published. During meetings, resolutions were passed then to take the end of these resolutions, different steps were taken especially he carried on extensive correspondence with individuals, officials and government offices. Correspondence with government offices was made in English and with others in Urdu. For correspondence, he used to prepare drafting, noting and filing

then managing of mail registers, maintaining of complete accounts, verification of different bills, annual budget and annual reports for all such works he became expert. He arranged staff consisting of accountant, clerk, petition writer, translator, stationary keeper and furthermore artificer, overseer and even a certified British engineer was the member of his staff. Side by side he issued journals to support his institutions. 'Aligarh Institute Gazette' was associated with 'Scientific Society' while 'Tahzeeb ul Ikhlaq' was initiated for the publicity of MAO. College. Boarding house was established in educational institution. In this way Western education prevailed among Muslims.

Syed Ahmad was systematic and methodical in his approach and knew how to implement the projects. Institutions remained primarily in Syed Ahmad's hands but to continue different types of work, different departments, sections, committees and sub-committees were formulated. To accomplish different tasks, he chose the people having intellectual abilities as the members of his kitchen cabinet including; Maulvi Samiullah Khan Co-founder of the college, Syed Mahmud, Altaf Hussain Hali, Moulvi Zakaullah Khan, Dr. Nazeer Ahmad, Shibli Numani, Maulvi Mahdi Ali, Maulvi Mushtaq Hussain known as Nawab Viqar ul Mulk, Zain ul Abdin, Rajajy Kishen Dass. Then it was the result of Syed Ahmad's persuasive nature and experience of government service that he involved the high ranking officials. 'Scientific Society' was inaugurated by Commissioner Merth, Mr. F. William and Society's by laws were framed with the help of Lieut. G.F.I. Graham.³⁴ B. Sapte was the first Chairman of Society³⁵ and its Patron was His Grace the Duke of Argyll and its secretaries were Lieut. G.F.I. Graham and Syed Ahmad. When he left for London he delegated his power of secretaryship to Rajajy Kishen Dass³⁶. His next institution MAO. College was inaugurated by Lord Lytton, the Viceroy and Governor General of India. In the past, British destroyed Muslim community but now they laid the foundation stone of Muslims institutions, it was just Syed Ahmad's influence.

Decision Making Ability

Of course Syed Ahmad got favour from British officers. They were indulged in the preparation of by laws and rules. By the division of work, he made a vigilant team, and he used to consult with colleagues on different issues and accepted their suggestions. 'The Muslim Educational Congress' was renamed word 'Congress' replaced with 'Conference' unanimously, even Syed Ahmad's resolution about the rejection of small schools was rejected, he faced criticism of colleagues but in policy matters about institutions he never shared decision power. For example when many names were suggested for 'Scientific Society', he ignored all opinions included Graham's who was his best friend and decided that its final name would be remain as 'Scientific Society'. Another issue was created about the selection of language in which European Knowledge had to be translated; here he took the stand in favour of Urdu, then most turning points came in College's management where he stood like a mountain in decision making process. In 1884, he abolished one wing of College i.e., 'Oriental Department' due to very few enrollments of students, here Syed Mahmud became angry but Syed Ahmad did not compromise. Next issue emerged when he nominated Syed Mahmud as Joint Secretary of the College so that after his death Syed Mahmud may hold the College. Aligarh College was mainly Syed Ahmad's own project but in the planning and management Syed Mahmud's contribution was not small one. Along with it he assigned the supervision of boarding-house to Theodore Beck, earlier its manager was a Muslim. Syed Ahmad's colleagues like Maulvi Mahdi Ali, Maulvi Mushtaq Hussain and especially Moulvi Muhammad Samiullah Khan forbade him for such suggestions but he did not withdraw. Syed Ahmad wrote an angry letter to Moulvi Mushtaq Hussain;

*'You wrote that it was improper
for me to decide the question of
my successor. This is not correct.
You are not associated with the
management of the College.
Considering the present*

conditions, I think it is very necessary that the question should be decided now. Therefore all of you must accept my opinion or, alternatively take over the management from my hands.’³⁷

In another letter he wrote,

‘Let me know that who including Maulvi Samiullah has ability to call professors for College from Europe in the time of need. Only Syed Mahmud can do this. If Syed Mahmud withdraws from College, the College will fail even in my life. After my life, if Samiullah and others would be able to arrange a single European Professor then you should come to my grave to curse it.’³⁸

Another decision which was much weighted than this was that, College Fund Committee was replaced by the Board of Trustees. Code of Trustees was prepared by Arthur Strachy³⁹, Syed Mahmud and Mr. Beck so that College may get patronage from government. Syed Ahmad’s associates remained annoyed due to his decisions about the College management even Moulvi Samiullah Khan left the College, but he implemented his decisions and he did do just for the progress of Muslim community. Syed Ahmad’s institutions attracted Europeans and this was his achievement which is denoted by his speech when he said that:

‘A European gentleman who intended to come to College from Europe, he inquired from John Strachy that on which conditions he should join MAO. College.

John Strachy replied, to sure that College is in Sir Syed's hand is the best condition to be contented'.⁴⁰

Conclusion

To conclude, Syed Ahmad had a strong passion and focused approach to organize institutions. He shared the workload at the best level but never shared power of decision and this quality upgraded him from an organizer to a stamped authority. He was a man of initiatives and of perseverance, every time he founded the way of betterment in his thoughts and in practical work. Among the three mentioned organizations, 'the Scientific Society' had a time limited scope and with the passage of time it faded away. Only Aligarh Institute Gazette was a powerful instrument which he used till his death to spread his views. The cognate organization, 'The Muslim Education Conference' became a lively forum for the discussion of social and educational questions and proved to be an important factor in promoting Muslim solidarity in the sub-continent. His main focus was MAO. College through which he saw the fulfillment of his mission in growing association of Muslims with the British people. His thoughts about College were going ahead and he was making plan even after his death for the next generation of Muslim community. That is why sometimes he became very strict in his point of view such as he had to abolish the College Fund Committee and had to give importance the European staff, between the lines, 'British Government'. But it is clear like crystal that if Syed Ahmad did not do so, then after him the MAO. College would convert into traditional institution and his forty years efforts would be reduced to ashes.

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- 12 Law, N. N. (1915). *Promotion of Learning in Muslim India*, Calcutta: Hijra International Publisher, Introduction.
- 13 In the beginning the Muhammadan Educational Conference was named as the Muhammadan Educational congress. But the word Congress confused the people with the Indian National Congress founded in 1885. Therefore after a few years the word Congress was replaced by Conference and the body came to be known as the Muhammadan Educational Conference.
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- 18 Lahori, Z. (ed.), (2004). *Khud Novisht Afkar-e-Sir Syed*, Lahore: Mushtaq Press Printer, p.191
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- 26 Zubair, G. (2015). *Role of Muhammadan Educational Conference in Educational and Cultural Upliftment of Indian Muslims*, ph.D Thesis (unpublished), Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, p.82
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- 28 Khan, A., R. (2001). *The All India Muslim Educational Conference; its Contribution to the Cultural Development of Indian Muslims 1886-1947*, p. 43
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- 31 Maqalat-e- Sir Syed, Vol. X, *Darul Uloom ke Mukhalfeen*, p.218
- 32 Hali, A., H. (2000). *Hayat-e-Javeed*, p.231
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- 34 G.F.I. Graham Assistant Superintendent Police of Ghazipore, he was Syed Ahmad's friend and first biographer.
- 35 First chairman of Society, B. Sapt was a Collector of Ghazipore.
- 36 Raja jy Kishan Dass C.S.I., Syed Ahmad's close friend and member of Society was a Deputy Collector of Aligarh District.
- 37 Syed Ahmad's letter to Mushtaq Hussain. (ed.). (1985). Panipati, M.I. *Makubat-e- Sir Syed*. (2nd ed. Vol.2). Lahore: Majlas-e-Tarriq-e-Adab , p.298

- 38 Syed Ahmad's letter to Mushtaq Hussain. Panipati, M.,I. (ed.), (1985). *Maktubat-e-Sir Syed*. (2nd ed. Vol.2). Lahore: Majlas-e-Tarriq-e-Adab, pp.309-310
- 39 Arthur Strachy served as a judge in India.
- 40 Syed Ahmad's speech. Panipati, M.,I. (ed.), (2009). *Khutbat-e-Sir Syed*, Lahore: Majlas-e-Tarraq-e-Adab, p.461