

## RELIGIOUS POVERTY IN INDIA

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**Abstract :**From a sociological point of view, the nation of India is large and complex enough that it might be considered a world of its own. Four hundred languages are spoken in India, 16 of which are officially recognized by the government of India, besides the two major religions that originates in there- Hinduism and Buddhism-several other faiths/ sub faiths animate in this society. Demographically the nation is huge, with over a billion residents, which gives abundance opportunity for the religious activities to flourish of all religions. There exists a Mandir, Masjid, Gurugwaras, Monastries, Jaini Temples, Dargah, etc etc where the people of this country worship, meditate and get the internal strength to overcome with day to day hurdles for well being and smooth functioning. Hindus are in majority almost in all the states except few. All other religions which are practiced in India falls in minority religion and followers of the same are known as minorities in India. In India there is a religious based minority's class. Various Provisions have been incorporated in the Indian Constitution for the uplifting these minorities in India. Though the benefits are not as much as are available to SCs/ STs, yet they are being recognized for community development/ Social development as well as economic development. An effort has been made to highlight the religious faiths along with religious population and the level of poverty among the minorities in India.

**Key Worlds: Religions, Poverty, HP- Himachal Pradesh, NRM- New Religious Member, BC- Before Christ, AD- After Death of Christ, BPL- Below Poverty Line , TM- Tendulakar Methodologies NSSO- National Sample Survey Organization. NCM- National Commission for Minorities**

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## Religion

The Oxford Dictionary defines 'religion' as the belief in a superhuman controlling power, especially in a personal God or Gods entitled to obedience and worship." On similar lines, Tomlin Law Dictionary defines it as the habit of reverence towards 'Divine Nature' whereby we are enabled and inclined to serve and worship him" Neil A. Mc Donald (1965) <sup>1</sup> points out effectively the universality of religion. He observes: Religion deals with the absolute in life. But the very act of conceiving an absolute draws with it a perception of the nature of the absolute , and some this absolute cannot be known through the sense or through reason, individuals are bound to have different ideas about it, based to sense extent on their experience. This is why men disagree about the nature of God and what God requires of man." (a) Religion means "a system of beliefs or doctrines which is regarded by those who profess that religion as conducive to their spiritual well being"(b) A religion is not merely an opinion, doctrine of belief. It has its outward expression in acts as well (c) Religion need not be theistic(d) 'Religious denomination' means a religious sect or body having a common faith and organization and designated by distinctive name.

## Religions World Wide

It is not only India which is embodied with majority of religions, but almost all countries are rich with number of religions, where as the freedom of preaching the religions is exclusively granted only in India. The Scenario of worldwide religion as viewed from [www.indexmindi.com](http://www.indexmindi.com) world demography profile 2010 estimates<sup>2</sup> religion Buddhism followed by followers in millions by 488 (7.1%), Christianity by 2168 (31.4%), Hinduism by 1032(15.0%), Islam 1599 (23.2%), Judaism/ Zoroastrianism / Jains by 15 (0.22%), Sikh by 20 (0.35), others (Sect/ NRM) by 37 (6.35), and No religion by 1131 (16.2) in the world. Further the primary location of followers worldwide are i.e., Buddhism in Southeast Asia/ Magnolia/Tibet, Christianity in Europe/ North America/ South America, Hinduism in India/ Indian Communities Overseas, Islam in Middle East/ Central Asia/ North America/ Indonesia, Judaism/ Jews/Parsi/Zoroastrianism in Israel/ United States/ France/Russia , Jainism in Iraq/ Iran and Philistine and Sikh in India/Indian Communities abroad. It is further revealed that the founders (approximate birth date) of religions are i.e., Buddhism by Gautama Sidhartha (563 B.C), Christianity by Jesus Christ (6 B.C), Hinduism no Specific Hinduism founder (1500 B.C) Islam

by Mohammad (570 A.D), Judaism/ Judaism/ Zoroastrianism Jews/Parsi/ by Abraham (2000 B.C) , Jains by Khud Khud Achyarya (108 BC) the last 24<sup>th</sup> Tirthankara was Mahavira of India in 6<sup>th</sup> BC and Sikh by Guru Nanak Dev Ji ( 15<sup>th</sup> AD ). Important texts (and holy sites) in different religions are i.e., in Buddhism -Trip taka (Areas of Nepal) , in Christianity- Bible ( Jerusalem, Rome), in Hinduism -Sruti and Smrti texts (seven-secret-cities-,including Varanasi), in Islam- Qur'an, or Koran (Mecca Medina, Jerusalem) ,in Judaism/ Judaism/ Zoroastrianism Jews/Parsi/ Torah, Talmud (Jerusalem) , In Jainism Agam, Purva ( various Jain temples) and in Sikh Guru Granth Sahib, Amritsar India.

Further number of Countries with majority of religion and their percentage worldwide as depicted in ([www.google](http://www.google). Religion wise growth in population: future of world religion, April 2015)<sup>3</sup> reveals that Buddhism is in majority in 8 countries containing 3 % of world states, Christianity is having majority in 162 countries (69.23%), Hinduism is in majority only in 3 countries (1.28%), Islam is in majority in 50 countries (21.36,%) Judaism/ Judaism/ Zoroastrianism Jews/Parsi/jains are in majority in 4 countries (1.70) No specific religion is adhered in majority of peoples of 7 countries (2.99) out of total 234 countries of the world.

Hence in worldwide tremendous diversity exists in religious beliefs and practice, overall about 83.6 % of the world population adhere some religion, thus a large proportion about 16.4 % is non religious. This level of adherence changes over time to time and varies country by country and age group. In US non religious are 13% where as in 1900 they were 1.3 %. (Richard T Schaefer (2011)<sup>4</sup>. Similarly, Christianity leads in heading 162 countries which shows that almost 69% countries have the major Christians religion, followed by Islam 21.36%. Hinduism is headed only by 3 countries consisting only 1.28 % of the total countries head in the world. This shows that, Hinduism is a very small segment of faith in the world population but in Indian perspective the majority of states 28 out of 35 have majority of Hindus.

The table further reveals that Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism Sikhism, Jainism and Hindus are followed by people all over the world. Some of these faiths, like, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism with last Thirthankara Mahavira are originated in India

## Religions in India

Ours is a multi religious, multi-lingual and multi cultural society, Secularism is the bedrock of our national hood. Uniquely among world civilization ours has combined antiquity and continuity with the heterogeneity. Our diversity is not a weakness but the basic sources of our strength as a nation. We have build our national hood on the value of tolerance and self confident synthesis of openness to the best in all cultures without losing our distinctive identity of co-existence among different ways of life and the cross fertilization of ideas.

The Supreme Court of India descried the religion in Constitution since 1950 and says: Religion is certainly a matter of faith with individuals or communities and it is not necessarily theistic. There are well known religions in India like Buddhism and Jainism, which do not believe in God or any Intelligent First Cause. A religion undoubtedly has its basics in "a system of beliefs or doctrines which are regarded by those who profess well-being," but it would not be correct to say that religion is nothing else but a doctrine or belief. A religion may not only lay down a code of ethical rules for its followers to accept it, it might also prescribe rituals and observances, ceremonies, and modes of worship which are regarded as integral parts of religion and these forms and observances might extend to matters of food and dress" ( Richard T Schaefer (2011)<sup>5</sup>.

The Position of Religion in India is explained below in table 1:

**Table 1**

**Religion in India Census 2011**

Religion	Percentage	Estimated	Total	Male	Female	State Majority
All Religion	100.00 %	121 Crores	1,210,854,977	623,270,258	587,584,719	35
Hindu	79.80 %	96.62 Crores	966,257,353	498,306,968	467,950,385	28
Muslim	14.23 %	17.22 Crores	172,245,158	88,273,945	83,971,213	2
Christian	2.30 %	2.78 Crores	27,819,588	13,751,031	14,068,557	

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Sikh	1.72 %	2.08 Crores	20,833,116	10,948,431	9,884,685	1
Buddhist	0.70 %	84.43 Lakhs	8,442,972	4,296,010	4,146,962	-
Jainism	0.37 %	44.52 Lakhs	4,451,753	2,278,097	2,173,656	-
Other Religion	0.66 %	79.38 Lakhs	7,937,734	3,952,064	3,985,670	-
Religion not States	0.24 %	28.67 Lakhs	2,867,303	1,463,712	1,403,59	-

**Source: Census of India 2011, official website govt. of India.**

The term; minority has been defined in the constitution of India or in any other enactment or in the Government of India Resolutions under which minority commission was established. Minority may of linguistic and religious. It is difficult to decide the minority on the basis of languages because large numbers of languages are spoken in India. So, determination of minority is based on the religion or faith having lesser number/inhabitants. The problem of the minority is not even available in India but, it is omnipresent, every corner of life. The discrimination is enforcing on Caste, colour, race, religion region etc or any one of them in all over the world. In India Minority Commission was established in 1992 and it is treating Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists Zoroastrians/ Parsis and Jainism as religious minorities at the national level in India, because their numerical strengths as compared with rest of Indian citizens is smaller and as such they are entitled to any protection that may be designed to for religious minorities. the status of minorities at state level are different. The Picture of the Population by religions at the national level is different from that at the state levels. At the National level Hindus are the dominate majority but at the state they are not in few states and union territories. Muslims are in majority in Jammu & Kashmir & Laksdeep, where as Christians are in majority in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Sikhs are majority in Punjab. The religious minority constitute about 19.32 % of the population of India comprising Muslims 14.23%, Sikhs 1.72 %, Buddhist 0.70% Christians 2.30%, Zoroastrians 0.007 % included in other religion and Jains 0.37%. Minorities have been defined by the Minority commission in India on the bases of religion.

India being a welfare state all its citizens enjoys equal economic, cultural and educational opportunities to grow and progress. Realizing non-dominant status and as a mark of acceptance of the distinct identities of different religious groups, some special provisions such as articles 25, 29, 30 and 350 have been made in the Constitution of India to safeguard their educational and other interests ( Ranjan Kumar 2008)<sup>6</sup>.

India pursues the philosophy of Surve Dharma Sumbhava and therefore, everybody has the fundamental right to freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitution. Article 25 to 28 of the Constitution deals with the right to freedom of religion and comprehensively, almost all the matters concerning religion are covered by these four Articles. Article 50 mentions religion in the context of the right of religious minorities to establish educational institutions of their choice. Hinduism and Islam, the two most important religions in India, Islam arrived in India in (1000 AD) with the first of many Muslim invasions. It flowered there during the Moguls Empire (1526-1857). The Religion, Zoroastrianism, (David G. Mandelbaun, 2014)<sup>7</sup>, was introduced to India from Persia in about the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. The Parsis were the refugee Zoroastrians from Iran. The Population of Persians in India was .006 % in 2001, but they are the most developed community in India (Rustagi 2008)<sup>8</sup>. Christianity came to India (Wankhede Harris S. 2009)<sup>9</sup> in the first century AD. It is believed that Jesus, at the age of 13 years came to India. Together with Jains and Buddhism, Christians and other religion make up 4 % of India's Population ( Embree 2003)<sup>10</sup>

Swami Vivekanand (2010)<sup>11</sup> in the first world Parliament of religions convened on September 11, 1893 made a short speech, the theme of which was "Unity in Diversity", he said that rivers had different sources but they all ultimately reached the same sea, similarly religions had different teachers, but they all take you to same god. According to N. A, Subramanian (1962)<sup>12</sup> India has observed the principle of equality of all religions and of their followers. Even when hereditary rulers belonged to a dynasty professing a particular religion. All religions are to freely profess and practice their own respective faiths.

### **Rural and Urban Split of Religious Population in India**

Religious persons are splits throughout India in Rural and urban areas. Though, the characteristics of distribution are different in different religion, which is explained in Table 2.

**Table: 2 Religion wise Rural and Urban Population in India Census 2011**

Religion	In Crows				Sex Ratio
	Male	Female	Total	%	
Hindu (Urban)	14.68	13.45	28.13	74.82	<b>920</b>
Hindu (Rural)	35.14	33.27	68.41	82.05	946
Hindu (Total)	49.83	46.80	96.63	79.80	<b>939</b>
Muslim(Urban)	3.54	3.33	6.87	18.23	940
Muslim(Rural)	5.29	5.06	10.35	12.41	958
Muslim(Total)	8.83	8.39	17.22	14.23	951
Christian(Urban)	0.55	0.57	1.12	2.96	1045
Christian(Rural)	0.88	0.79	1.67	2.00	951
Christian(Total)	1.37	1.41	2.78	2.30	1023
Sikh(Urban)	0.31	0.2702	0.5902	1.57	900
Sikh(Rural)	0.78	0.71	1.49	1.79	904
Sikh(Total)	1.09	0.99	2.08	1.72	903
Buddhist (Urban)	0.1839	0.1789	0.3628	0.6	973
Buddhist (Rural)	0.25	0.24	0.49	0.58	959
Buddhist (Total)	0.43	0.41	0.84	0.70	965
Jains(Urban)	0.1811	0.1736	0.3547	0.94	955
Jains(Rural)	.047	0.044	0.09	0.11	935
Jains(Total)	0.23	0.21	0.44	0.37	955
Others (Urban)	.0363	0.0376	0.0739	0.20	1008
Others (Rural)	0.358	0.362	0.72	0.86	1008
Others (Total)	0.39	0.41	0.80	0.66	1010
Non- Religion(Urban)	0.0619	0.0605	0.1224	0.32	976
Non- Religion(Rural)	.087	0.083	0.17	0.20	946
Non- Religion(Total)	0.15	0.14	0.29	0.25	958
Total (Urban)	19.54	18.16	37.7	100	929
Total (Rural)	42.78	40.60	83.38	100	948

Overall Total	62.32	58.76	121.08	100	943
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**Source: Population of India Census 2011 Govt. of India Official website**

It has been observed while analyzing table 2 that sex ratio of urban India is 929, and the urban sex ratio of Hindus (920) and Sikh (900) are less than the average urban sex ratio, where as the urban sex ratio of Christians and others sects are more than 1000. Sex ratio of rural India is 948, stating that the sex ratio of Hindus (946), jains (935), Sikh (904) and Non religious (946) are below the average rural sex ration in India The overall sex ratio in India is 943 and the sex ratio of Hindus (939), Sikh ( 903) are below the national sex ratio.

It is further analyzed that larger population of Hindus are inhabited of rural India where as Majority of Muslims are residing in Urban India. This shows that the Muslims are urban centered. The overall population distribution of the religions indicates Hindus at 79.80%, Muslims at 14.23 %, Jains at (0.37 %) and non religious persons are at the bottom 0.24%. This shows that the Hindus are at majority and all other followers of the religions are in minority and falls in the minority except the persons of non- religions.

It is further observed that Non- religious characteristics of the persons have been found at International level 16.4 %, national level (0.24%) of India and even in the state of HP (0.03%). This shows that due to communal fights among the religions some people don't want to indulge them with the ideology of any religion and live with their own code of conduct.

Richard T. Schaefer (2011)<sup>13</sup> observed that all religions have certain elements in common. Yet those elements are expressed in the distinctive manner of each faith. These patterns of religions behaviours like other patterns of social behaviour are of great interest to sociologist – especially inter actionists –because they underscore the relationship between religion and society. Sect, Cult and New Religious Movement (NRM) represent either a new religion or a major innovation of an existing faith. The religion has become subservient to selfishness and profit motive. Mostly people these days build temples mosque and churches to gain their selfish ends. The religious trusts and endowments are fruitful sources of tax evasion. Many religion institutions are run with a political motive. Religious beggars are carrying the orthodox traditions of spiritual seeking and



enlightenment of the innocent house-holders. They are yogis, sanyansi, sadhu, Dervesh, Fakir. Vairagi, Udasi etc (Dr. Kumar 2011)<sup>14</sup>.

### Poverty

Poverty in India is big issues for government to measures exact numbers of poor people and per capita expenditure various methods had been adopted by government of India. India official poverty estimates are based on the thick rounds of the consumption expenditure survey carried out roughly after every five years by the NSSO. The thickest round for which data are available is 2004-05. The official measure of Indian government, before 2005, was based on food security and it was defined from per capita expenditure for a person to consume enough calories and be able to pay for associated essentials to survive. Since 2005, Indian government adopted the Tendulkar Methodology (TM) which moved away from calorie anchor to a basket of goods and used rural, urban and regional minimum expenditure per capita necessary to survive. The Planning Commission has been estimating the number of people below the poverty line (BPL) at both the state and national level based on consumer expenditure information collected as part of the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) since the Sixth Five Year Plan (World Bank Report 2011)<sup>15</sup>

Planning commission established many committees so far i.e., Alagh Committee (1977), Lakdawala Committee (1989), Tendulkar Committee (2005), Saxena committee, Hashim Committee & C. Rangrajan Committee (2012) for the determination of poverty line in India. Out of these Tendulkar committees was considered by the Planning commission for estimation of poverty in India. However the Report submitted by the C. Rangarajan also viewed by the Planning Commission for implementation but proved unactioned. A committee chaired by Suresh Tendulkar, the India's finest economists, former chairman prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council and National Statistical Commission computed poverty lines 2004 -05 on the lines equivalent in purchasing power parity (PPP) in terms to, one U.S. dollar per person per day, which was internationally accepted poverty line (IAPL) at that time. PPP refers to a method used to work out the money that would be needed to purchase the same goods and services in two places across countries, this is used to calculate an implicit foreign exchange rate, the ppp rate has the same purchasing power parity in different countries (Mihir Shah 2013)<sup>16</sup>.

India's new below poverty line estimate based on the Tendulkar Committee Report (Sachin Kumar Jain 2016)<sup>17</sup> has been hailed as being much more realistic than earlier/other estimates. Tendulkar Committee has shown its true colours, which is "acceptable" to no one other than the government of India. Poverty estimates suggested by the Tendulkar Committee have been accepted by the Planning Commission. These estimates count 41.8% rural and 25.7% urban families as below the poverty line (BPL), rejecting earlier and other estimates. Tendulkar, an economist, had devised the formula to assess poverty line in 2005, which the Planning Commission had used to estimate poverty in 2009-10 and 2011-12.

Tendulkar Estimates (2009 reports) reveals the urban poverty line per day per person Rs 33, urban poverty line per month, per person Rs.1000/-, rural poverty line per day per person Rs.27, rural per month per person poverty line Rs.816. The calorie consumption predicted 2400 for rural and 2100 for urban. Poverty line is based on the expenditure on food, health, education and clothing. The estimates reveal that 27 crores Indians are below poverty line.

The Estimates of Ex- Governor of Reserve Bank of India C. Rangrajan Estimates (2014 reports) reveals the urban poverty line per day per person Rs 47, urban poverty line per month, per person Rs.1407, rural poverty line per day per person Rs.32, rural per month per person poverty line Rs.972. The calorie consumption predicted 2155 for rural and 2090 for urban. Poverty line is based on the expenditure on food and nonfood items such as education, healthcare, clothing, transport, rent & items which meet nutritional requirements. The estimates reveal that 37 crores Indians are below poverty line. Since 1950, various governments have experimented with a large number of poverty alleviation programmes. Studies (James D. Wolfensohn, 2000)<sup>18</sup> reveal that the mandatory and dedicated subsidized programmes have not been fully successful in meeting their social and economic objectives. The common features of these programmes were: target orientation, based on grant/subsidy and credit (Rdommes Swami Nathan, 2007)<sup>19</sup> 'linkage through banks, These programmes, often not sustainable, have perpetuated the dependent status. Micro-finance (Dwarakanath, 2003)<sup>20</sup> is recognized as a key strategy for addressing issues of poverty alleviation, women's empowerment and access to credit has been considered a major poverty alleviation strategy in India. It is not just a financing system, as per Gurumoorthy, TR, (2000)<sup>21</sup>

but a tool for social change especially for women and other dominated castes and religions. Since micro-credit is aimed at the poorest, micro-finance lending technology needs to mimic the informal lenders rather than the formal sector lenders.

Awardhesh Kumar Singh, and Singh A.P. (2012)<sup>22</sup> expressed Poverty is one of the serious problems in rural areas. The fifth five year plan adopted a strategy of poverty alleviation, which stressed upon employment generation in the rural and urban areas. By putting credit, saving, insurance and other base, financial services within their reach, micro –finance can provide thousands of poor people with opportunities to overcome poverty and unemployment. One cannot but concede to the fact that micro- finance is the single most ant- poverty approach that could provide the problem of wrong targeting and, at the same time, stand the test of market.

**Rural & Urban Poverty by Religious Groups in India**

Poverty ratios for religious groups: Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Buddhism and Other Religion (Sect/ NRM) have been shown in table 3 below. Due to small sample size, the estimates for poverty of Zoroastrians as a separate group cannot be reliably estimated and included in the category of other region. Further the estimates for poverty in Buddhism and other religions for the year 2011-12 are based on time series tool:

**Table: 3**

Poverty by Religious Groups in India						
	Share in the Population	Percent population below the Tendulkar line				Percentage point reduction in poverty
Religion	2011-12	1993- 94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94 to 2011-12
Christianity (Rural)	2.0	44.9	28.7	23.8	22.2	22.7
Christianity (Urban)	2.96	22.9	14.1	12.9	5.5	13.4

Christianity (Total)	2.30	38.5	24.5	20.5	16.4	22.1
Hinduism (Rural)	82.5	50.5	42.1	33.5	25.6	24.5
Hinduism (Urban)	74.82	29.7	23.1	18.7	12.1	17.6
Hinduism (Total)	79.8	45.6	37.5	29.7	21.9	16.3
Islam(Rural)	12.41	53.6	44.5	36.2	26.9	26.7
Islam(Urban)	18.23	46.6	41.8	33.9	22.7	23.9
Islam(Total)	14.23	51.2	43.6	35.4	25.4	25.8
Jainism(Rural)	0.11	24.3	10.6	0.0	0.7	23.7
Jainism(Urban)	0.94	6.0	2.7	1.7	3.9	2.1
Jainism(Total)	0.37	10.5	4.6	1.5	3.3	7.2
Sikhism(Rural)	1.79	19.8	21.7	11.9	6.2	13.6
Sikhism(Urban)	1.57	18.6	9.5	14.5	5.0	13.6
Sikhism(Total)	1.72	19.6	18.9	12.5	5.9	13.7
Buddhism(Rural)	.49	73.2	65.8	44.1	43.8	29.4
Buddhism (Urban)	.36	47.2	40.4	31.2	31.0	16.2
Buddhism (Total)	.84	64.9	56.0	39.0	38.4	26.5
O R* (Rural)	.72	57.3	57.8	35.3	34.2	23.1
O R* (Urban)	.07	31.5	18.8	13.6	12.2	19.3
O R* (Total)	.80	51.2	52.5	29.9	29.0	22.2
Total(Rural)	37.7	50.3	41.8	33.3	25.4	24.9
Total(Urban)	83.8	31.9	25.7	20.9	13.7	18.2
Overall Total**	121.08	45.7	37.7	29.9	22.0	23.7

Source: World bank sustainable development network Urban and risk management Department 2013 in policy research working paper 6714 by Panagriya & Megha Mukin. compilation/ calculations of the authors of this paper.

- (OR- Other Religion, \*\* overall total including the Non religious persons)

Table shows that in rural India the poverty has been reduced in all the religions from 1993 to 2011. The highest poverty decline has been observed in Islam with 26.7 followed by Hinduism 24.5%. In urban India the poverty fall out ration is also higher to all other religions in Islam with

23.9% followed by Hinduism by 17.6%. Overall poverty has been declined at faster rates among Muslims 25.8% followed by Christians with 22.1%.

Finally, the differences in poverty rates between Hindus and Muslims have been negligible in the rural areas. Therefore, the common impression that poverty reduction rates are significantly higher among Muslims than Hindus is largely based on observations from the urban areas. Even here the good news is that the percentage point poverty reduction during the high-growth phase for Muslims at 23.9 percentage points is almost 1.5 times more than that for Hindus

The Correlation analysis between the population growth from 1991 to 2011 and the poverty percentage change from 1993 to 2011 has worked out as + 0.44. The population percentage has been declined in this period by (-0.31) points, where as the poverty has been reduced by (-23.7) from 45.7. This shows that there is low level positive correlation as the reduction in population is also followed by the reduction of poverty in these periods. Only the population of Muslims has grown where as their poverty ratio declined in the study period. Despite of this the poverty ration among the followers of Islam is highest in India. This needs a special consideration of the government(s) for the eradication and education development in this religion.

**Trade off between the population change and poverty change**

Religion	change in population			change in poverty		
	1991	2011	% Change	1993-94	2011-12	% Point Change
Buddhism	0.77	0.70	-.07	64.9	38.4	-26.5
Christianity	2.32	2.30	-.02	38.5	16.4	-22.1
Hinduism	81.53	79.80	-1.73	47.5	21.9	-25.6
Islam	12.61	14.23	+1.62	51.2	25.4	-25.8
Jainism	0.48	0.37	-.11	10.5	3.3	-7.2
Sikh	1.94	1.72	-.22	19.6	5.9	-13.7
Others Religion	0.39	0.90	+.51	51.2	29.0	-22.2

The relationship between the percentage point change in the religious population since 1991 to 2011 and percentage point change in the religious poverty from 1993-94 to 2011-12 is measured through the co-efficient of correlation( $r$ ). The table 4 shows the correlation coefficient below:

Source: compilation/calculations of the authors of this paper.

The correlation coefficient between the percentage point change in the population of the religions i.e., Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Sikh and other religions(Sect/ Nrm) and percentage point change in the poverty of the above/same religions during the aforesaid periods (1991-2011 & 1993-94-2011-12) is worked out as (+0.045). This shows that there is a positive correlation between these two variables, but the degree of change is very low. This is viewed that there is reduction in the population percentage from 1991 to 2011 and reduction in poverty ratio from 1993-1994 to 2011-12 almost in all religion except Islam (Muslims) and other religions (sect/ Nrm) but the percentage change in the poverty reduction is higher as compared to percentage change in population reduction. The low degree correlation coefficient is also due to inverse change in the population and poverty of Muslims in India

Hence it is concluded that almost all religions are practiced in India as in the rest of the world. Hinduism is largest practiced followed by Islam (Muslim). The population of all other religions is very marginal. Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Sikh and Zoroastrianism falls in the list of minority and the governments in India are committed for their socio-economic development. The marginal portion of Indian population does not follow the code of any religion in India. The population percentage of almost all the religions is declined in 2011 census as compared to previous census except Islam. Similarly the poverty of all the religions declined but the declining ration is more in Islam than all other religions. The co-relationship between the population change and poverty change is low degree positive. This shows that the reduction in population reduced the poverty among the religions in India to some or large extent.

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