

THE TRANSITION OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MOBILITY AMONG MUSLIM WOMEN IN INDIA

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Abstract: According to the secondary data, this paper examines the correlation between educational attainment and social mobility among Muslim women in India. Drawing on a wide range of scholarly and empirical sources, the paper aims to understand the dynamics that govern the educational landscape and the mobility prospects of Muslim women. It investigates the various challenges and opportunities that Muslim women encounter in their educational journeys and assesses the impact of education on their socioeconomic status and overall social mobility. The findings reveal significant disparities and barriers that Muslim women face in accessing quality education and subsequently advancing their social and economic status. The paper concludes with recommendations for policy interventions and societal changes that could foster a more inclusive and equitable educational environment for Muslim women in India..

Keywords: Social Mobility, Education, Muslim women.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in understanding the educational status and social mobility of Muslim women in India, with several studies exploring the challenges and opportunities they encounter in their pursuit of education and career advancement. This review paper aims to synthesize and analyze existing research on education and social mobility among Muslim women in India, shedding light on the complexities and nuances of their educational experiences and the implications for their socioeconomic mobility. The progression of social mobility has been researched by the researchers of India and outside. Education is a necessary resource for serving the Muslim women out of their economic gloom because economic dependence is the key factor contributing to the low position of Muslim women. Education is the key factor of human development. Education acts as a mechanism for social mobility. Education attempts to expand ability and capability in individuals to increase higher status, positions and promote dynamic social mobility. Education and social mobility both are closely related. Education supports the development and eliminates the backwardness of the community. The more valuable and productive is the education, the more is the social mobility. Education tries to develop ability and capacity in individuals to gain higher status, positions or respect and sponsors active social mobility. Education is directly related to occupational as well as social mobility and the successive development in economic position.

2. LITERATURE RIEVIEW

Sreekala Edannur ¹, in his Intergenerational Social Mobility among Muslim Minority in Kerala State of India: Formal and Religious Education, compares, social mobility of Muslims in Kerala across two generations with regard to education, occupation and gender. He also tried to find out the relationship of religious education with formal education among younger generation. Author carried out the Case Study on Indian Government's Policy on Social Mobility. One notable result of his study is the relationship between religious education and formal education. It can be observed here that these two types of education are associated and a look at the raw data shows that those who accessed religious education also accessed formal education and they are directly related. Data from 231 randomly selected Muslim respondents; 128 males and 103 females, aged 25-40 from twelve election wards of 6 Panchayats in Malappuram district of Kerala state is used for the study. Respondents aged 25 to 40 were

selected from the Socio Economic and Caste Census 2011. The result of the study shows high upward intergenerational educational mobility and strong occupational reproduction among Muslim community in Kerala. Family background influences the chances of education and occupation of younger generation. Religious education is not found hindering the formal education of the younger generation of Muslims in Kerala. The result of this study shows that there is very high intergenerational educational mobility among Muslim community in Kerala. One notable result of this study is the relationship between religious education and formal education. Another factor that may be worthy to study will be the reasons of low labor participation among Muslim women.

Khan Wafi Ahmed ², described his study on Social Mobility among Muslims of Aligarh City. The study is to confine the intergenerational mobility among Muslims in Aligarh city and concludes that over the generation people of Aligarh city have assigned higher importance to education because of well-developed education institution in the city and as a consequence people have opted for more remunerative and respected occupations with higher income. In his study, he combines intergenerational income, educational to study the social mobility among Muslims in Aligarh city. He used purposive snowball sampling method for the collection of the data from three generations of the same household to capture the intergenerational mobility among Muslims in Aligarh.

Social Mobility Commission, London, held in September 2017, the members Jacqueline Stevenson et. al. ³ carried our study on “The Social Mobility Challenges Faced by Young Muslims”. The Commission research suggests that young Muslims already encounter significant barriers in the education system itself. Commission said that, Young Muslims from low socio-economic backgrounds, where parents are new arrivals, and/or where parents do not have high levels of education or wealth, consider background and circumstances as having a fundamental and negative impact on possibilities for social mobility.

Rajvanshi Balak Ram, ⁴ carried out his research on “Muslim Women’s Education and Social Mobility in the Perspectives of Globalization”. In his study he said that, Education tries to develop ability and capacity in individuals to gain higher status, positions or respect and sponsors active social mobility. Globalization made it easier to move people around the world and people get in touch with organizations who promise a better life faster. Education is directly related to occupational mobility and the subsequent improvement in economic position. His research is based on three objectives: Educational status of Muslim women in India, Impact of globalization on education, and the role of globalization and education in social mobility of Muslim women. His research states that, Education is the key to all-round human development. Education performs as an instrument for social mobility. Religion acts as an important cultural aspect, which reinforces the old-style perception of women as secondary to males. Education and social mobility are closely interrelated. Education is capable to encourage the development and eliminate the backwardness of the nation. Globalization clarifies the situation whereby persons of the world live in a borderless world without any geographical limitations and the world will be transformed into a solo global village. Explosion of knowledge and information in the age of information technology has somehow helped the globalization of education.

Moumita Hazra ⁵, conducted a study on “An Overview of Educational Status of Muslim Women in India”. From the study we have got acquainted that, Education helps to increase self confidence within Muslim women. It helps to raise the status of Muslim women in the patriarchal society. Education raises social mobility of the Muslim women in the society. In her study, she described historical perspective of Muslim women education in India both before and after independence. According to the research, education is the basic and fundamental requirement of a person to survive in the world. Education not only empowers the women but empower the whole society. According to her study, the Indian Muslims women are far behind

in achieving the literacy status because of their poor economic conditions and religious superstition.

Nures Salam ⁶, in his research title *Education of Muslim Women in India: A Brief Discussion From Past to Present*, highlights the progress of education of Muslim women in India since independence along with the possible solution to empower them through education. It concludes that, education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, which a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation.

According to the authors, various factors are contributing to the high rate of illiteracy among Muslim women in India. These factors encompass economic, social, cultural, and educational challenges. These challenges include poverty, lack of access to quality education, early marriage, gender inequality, inadequate infrastructure, and traditional educational systems like Madrasas and Maktabas. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach involving government policies, community initiatives, educational reforms, and awareness campaigns. Efforts to improve economic conditions, enhance the quality of education, promote gender equality, discourage early marriage, and integrate traditional educational systems with modern ones could all play a role in tackling illiteracy among Muslim women in India. Thus, it concludes that, education is the great engine for social mobility among Muslim women.

Khushboo Zeb ⁷ in her research paper titled *Education Of Muslim Women in India: An Overview*, tried to discuss some of the major factors which are responsible for hindering social mobility among Muslim women are as such: 1) Educational status of Muslim women in India 2) The literacy rate among the religious communities. 3) The causes responsible for the educational backwardness of Muslim women in India. According to the research; women in general and Muslim girls, in particular, are still lagging behind in achieving the literacy status. There might be various reasons for female education such as poverty, custom, and cultural practices, gender-based discrimination and the traditional notion of families. Therefore, the government should provide special facilities for Muslim women to receive an education so that they could contribute to the development of the country.

Birjies Qadar ⁸, research scholar, Department of Sociology, C.C.S University Meerut, in his study on “*Educational and Occupational Mobility Among Muslim Women among Saharanpur*”, concluded that, to overcome the Muslim women’s educational and economical backwardness, education plays most important role. Backwardness and typical image of Muslim women is slowly improving.

Firdaus Bano Research Scholar Kolhan University, Chaibasa, Jamshedpur, India ⁹, conducted a study on “*Educational Status of Muslim Women in India*”. She briefly explained the importance of women education. According to her study; it seems to know that, educationally Muslim comprise one of the most backward communities in the country. Muslim girls and women lag behind their male counterparts and women of all other communities. Among the Muslims, 17.6% is the dropout rate, higher than the national average of 13.2%. As many as 25% of Muslim children in the age group of 6 to 14 years have either never attended school or have dropped out. Muslims have the highest dropout rate in the country. Only one out of the 25 under-graduate students and one out of the 50 postgraduate students is a Muslim in the premier colleges. Author suggested that; India is in dire need of policy innovations to include the lower castes, tribal and Muslim people in to the development mainstream. Social inclusion has been attempted through a policy of reservation, which has failed to uplift the minorities. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the main programme to achieve Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner. This paper calls for assessments of social development in various states to see why the disparity has narrowed in some states but not in others. Socioeconomic backwardness an indicators thereof should be organized properly and considered before framing educational policy or providing subsidy, rather than basing it on

religion. This would enhance the overall development effort currently gaining momentum in the country.

Tasneem Shazli and Sana Asma ¹⁰, in their research paper titled “Educational Vision of Muslims in India: Problems and Concerns”, described vision of Muslims towards education as well as educational status of Muslim in India. Further they extended their study on Muslim women education in India. They suggested some remedies for the educational upliftment of Muslim Women: 1) Increase in awareness among Muslims about the importance of education, various employment opportunities, self employment schemes as well as resultant economic well being through it. 2) The Government should give more emphasis towards the concept of small family size for the improvement of socio-economic condition of Muslims. 3) Governmental incentives and scholarships are also necessary for the poor and deprived Muslims. Muslims should be provided reservation in higher education and elite institutions such as the IITs and IIMs. Thus access to higher education in general and the need for offering it to all at affordable cost is required. 4) There is need to develop more girls’ school to minimize the problem of accessibility of schools. Parents should develop positive attitude towards girl’s higher education. In this paper various problems of Muslim’s education has been described.

Alex Nunn, Steve Johnson, Surya Monro, Tim Bickerstaffe and Sarah Kelsey ¹¹ carried out research on factors which influencing Social Mobility. Authors described the concept of social mobility very well. It is observed that, more focus was on the factors which influencing the social mobility. In reality, they work in overlapping ways and in different combinations for different individuals. According to the authors, some of the factors like social capital, cultural capital and education influencing the social mobility.

Dwivedi Bindu ¹², research paper titled, Research in Women Issues: Problems & Perspectives studies are closely related to the women’s education, health, economic participation, political empowerment. The research studies in the different areas of women Included in this article are Social Status of Women, Economic Status of Women and Political Status of Women. The status of women has been studied by scholars of various disciplines like geography, economics, sociology, anthropology and political science. Invariably, all the studies recommend empowerment of women as a channel to enhance status of women.

Babasaheb T. Kazi ¹³, in his research on Muslim Women: Challenges and Opportunities, described that, the Muslim women had rights and privileges in Islam not only superior to the society at the time of its advent but even in comparison to modern religious society. But their rights were misinterpreted by selfish patriachs in male dominated societies for their own interests. But a transition is taking place in the status of Muslim women due to her own individual and group efforts. There is a big hurdle posed in this transition due to the insecurities of larger Muslim communities of which these women are a part. The up-coming of Muslims women’s issues is taken advantage by the political enemies of Muslims thus strengthening the same hurdle. Though, the situation of the Muslim women including her mind-set is changing slowly and silently, there is dire need of any gender-based mobilisation of all the types of Muslim women in India.

Ibrahim B. Syed ¹⁴, in his research, Education of Muslim Women, explained causes for the downfall in education of Muslim women. He has taken an example of Muslim women residing in Kerala. According to him, Education Empowerment leads to Economic Empowerment for Muslim Women.

Seema Kazi ¹⁵, working as an independent researcher on Muslim women in India and human rights education in Muslim societies. Her report locates the political, socio-economic and legal position of Muslim women within a historical framework beginning with the evolution of Islam in India and its subsequent interaction with Indian society. It emphasizes the complex diversity of women in Muslim communities and the range of factors influencing their status. The author Seema Kazi traced the developments in discourses of Muslim women from the late nineteenth

century, and described Muslim women's transition from being British subjects to Indian citizens. Muslim women's contributions, successes and failures within the women's movement are outlined, as well as the formidable challenges they face as members of India's largest religious minority community five decades after independence. The environment in which they have to confront these challenges is an unenviable one for reasons which are essentially twofold.

Lakshmi Devi ¹⁶, described in her research "Social-Economic Development of Muslim women, that, education is one of the significant social indicators having bearing on the achievement and the growth of an individual as well as community. This is perceived to be highly suitable for providing employment and, thereby, improving the quality of life. The educational status of Muslim women in India is worse than that of Muslim men and women of other communities. They have the lowest work participation rate and most of them engage in the self-employment activities. The article suggests that state governments need to make special provisions, over and above the normal, for drawing and retaining Muslim girls in school till class 8th as a fundamental right, and for improving their participation in secondary and higher technical education and professional education, so that they can contribute effectively in the socio-economic development of the nation. In this article she also explained the reasons for the Educational Backwardness of Muslim Women in India. According to her study, there is a need to adopt a broader social, economic, political and programmatic perspective along with the prevailing heterogeneity in terms of region, class and gender.

Chandu Prasad ¹⁷, carried out a study of Dalit Muslim in India for their social inclusion and region. According to him, there is not a single inclusive policy for these vulnerable groups to claim themselves as the full member of the political community. The biggest problem with the Muslim community is that, they are more conservative and fully trust whatever Islam and molvis says. Chandu Prasad expressed that, Dalit Muslims has to think beyond their religion then only one can think of solution and something called the unity with other Dalit communities in India is possible. Dalit Muslims should also start independent movements as like other religious groups or communities. If they do not start independent socio-economic and political movement.

Osella and Osella ¹⁸ studied Islamism and social reforms in Kerala. They tinted the endorsement of education by the reformist groups (Mujahids) initially for understanding the religion itself. According the Reformers majority of the Muslims do Shirk (deviation from monotheism) because of their ignorance in religion. In order to understand the religion better, the community realized the significance of rational thought and promoted education. From these reformers the traditionalists (Sunnis) are also giving importance to formal education for confronting the past. The authors mention the initial of schools that taught Islamic subjects along with 'modern' subjects. Researcher traced some processes of production of categories of 'reformism' and 'traditionalism'. Reformists are split between several tendencies and debates continue about what are reform's core aspects, reformists unite around a general concern with shirk, now sometimes leading them into confrontation with Sunnis.

Sushma Jaireth et.al. ¹⁹ conducted a field study about the madrasah system in Kerala and found that, excluding a few 'traditional' type, madrasahs in Kerala overtake by a huge and growing network of reformed madrasahs which incorporate 'modern' subjects and teaching methods of unreliable degrees. There is a rising importance for English and computer education along with Islamic education. Timing of madrasah is not intrusive their school timing. It is earlier to the opening of school or after the regular school classes. It is highlighted that, in comparison with madrasahs in Trivandrum district, madrasahs in Malappuram are facilitating students to continue their school education to higher degrees in recognized universities. According to the observation of author, There is no Madrasa Board in Kerala at government level. Physical infrastructure of Islamic learning centers of both districts though varying according to the financial set-up of the institution attempts to meet the needs of their students.

Imtiaz Ahmad ²⁰, in his research paper titled “Muslim Educational Backwardness: An Inferential Analysis”, did argument that, the educational backwardness of Muslims in modern India based upon sure questionable assumptions. These are, one, that Muslims are an collective community; and two, that the appeal of education is universal to all social strata. If certainly Muslims are educationally backward, it is because of some distinctive religious traditionalism which dispirits pursuit of nonspiritual education, or because of critical 'minority complex'. This article questions these assumptions and claims that educational opportunities are likely to be demoralized in any community by those sections that are oriented to employment in the professions and services. The educational backwardness of Indian Muslims should therefore be attributed not to any 'religious fanaticism' or 'minority complex' but to the small size of the social strata whose members can be expected to seek educational opportunities.

3. EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF MUSLIM AND DEVELOPMENT

The educational status of Muslim women in India is shaped by various factors, including socioeconomic background, cultural norms, and access to educational resources. According to a study conducted, the literacy rate among Muslim women in India is lower than the national average, with significant variations based on factors such as age, marital status, and urban-rural divide. The study also highlights the disparities in educational attainment between Muslim and non-Muslim women in the region, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to improve educational outcomes among Muslim women.

4. IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON SOCIAL MOBILITY

Despite the challenges, education has been identified as a key driver of social mobility for Muslim women in India. Studies have shown that higher levels of education are associated with improved socioeconomic outcomes, including higher employment rates, better wages, and increased decision-making autonomy. For instance, one study found that Muslim women with tertiary education in India are more likely to be employed in formal sector jobs and have greater economic independence compared to their less educated counterparts. Similarly, research by another study found a positive correlation between educational attainment and social integration among Muslim women in the region.

5. CHALLENGES FACED BY MUSLIM WOMEN IN ACCESSING EDUCATION

Several studies have identified various challenges that Muslim women in India face in accessing education. These include socioeconomic constraints, lack of awareness about educational opportunities, cultural and religious norms that discourage women's education, and gender-based discrimination. For example, one study found that many Muslim families in India prioritize the education of male children over female children, leading to disparities in educational attainment between genders. Similarly, research by other study highlights the role of poverty and economic vulnerability in limiting the educational opportunities of Muslim women in the region as well as lack of nearby educational institutions near residential area.

6. CONCLUSION

The findings of this research paper highlight the complex interplay between education and social mobility among Muslim women in India. While education is recognized as a crucial pathway to economic and social empowerment, the challenges faced by Muslim women in accessing quality education persist. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that involves targeted interventions by policymakers, educational institutions, and

civil society organizations. Promoting inclusive and equitable education is essential to ensure that Muslim women in India can realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to their communities and society at large.

As per the data collected, the majority of authors agrees that, the Muslim community is one of Maharashtra state's minority and marginalized communities. The condition of the Muslim community especially, condition of Muslim women has slightly changed. Studies in most of the cases are concentrated on the country wide region. The Muslim community had diminutive job mobility, despite the fact that education is a significant factor of social mobility in modern times, specially Muslim women is a marginalized among minority community. If we are thinking on development of Muslim community, then focus should be on Muslim women development.

According to the studies reviewed, education factor have had a substantial impact on the social mobility of the Muslim community. The present study made an effort to examine the social life and welfare i.e. social mobility among Muslim women. When reviewing the literature on social mobility, we kept a few key elements in mind, such as the burden, the change of societal norms in Muslim community, social changes, and the importance of education in promoting "social mobility among Muslim women".

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