



Educational Attainment of Muslim Girls: Socio Emotional Constraints and Opportunity

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Abstract

Knowledge and skills are the most powerful weapons to compete all kinds of incompetency in our societal life, which always gathered from learning and experiences. Education is the ideal process of learning to acquire knowledge, so if we desire to assimilate ourselves with our versatile social context, we must have to go through the process of acquiring knowledge. Aims of every independent nation is to facilitate proper and equal educational opportunity to their citizens to upbringing and formulate ideal society. Indian government have taken so many initiatives to make its citizens competent in all aspects, yet a large percentage of citizens in the form of girls child, especially among the muslim community are deprived from the formal education. In this paper author has tried to focus on the socio-emotional constraints for girl's education. In addition, why different initiatives of state and central government could not bring any significant changes in girl's education especially among Muslim girls. It also found out some cultural constraints of low educational attainment among the girls from Muslim community. Author also tried to raise some points from his observation, which seemed to him very much peculiar in the context of globalization.

Keywords:-psycho social constraints, women subjection, suppressive mind-set, Educational opportunity, socio emotional constraints.

Reality of Educational attainment of Muslim Girl's:

RTE Act-2009, Art 21(A) Consequences that the state shall provide free and compulsory education for all the children between age group of 6-14, as it is a Fundamental Rights from 86th Amendment of the constitution. Despite of this a large number of children of this age group are out of school. Muslim community are the most disadvantages section of the society because of so-called literates did not have the ability to apply their reading & writing skills. "The literacy rate among Muslims in 2001 was 59.1%. This is far below the national average (65.1 %)".¹ Muslim girls are

relatively deprived especially in rural area, probability of completing middle school significantly increased among all communities, but the differences still exist among the Muslims and the rest. In time to time union and state government has taken lot of initiative; residential girl's secondary schools like Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) were set up in 2004 to provide high quality education for the socio-economically weaker section of the society. In January 2015, Prime Minister launched 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan' with the joint venture of ministry of women and child development, ministry of health and family welfare and ministry of HRD, to save and educate the girl child. In recent time the west Bengal government has taken various initiatives like "kanyashree prakalpa" to promoting secondary education among the girls child and protect them from early marriage by targeting adolescent girls child of 13 to 18 by giving unique conditional cash transfer facilities to remaining unmarried and continuing education until she comes to official marriage age. "Sabooj Sathi" prakalpa to encourage and retain the students for higher education. West Bengal government has set up number of girl's colleges, and university like 'Kanyashree University' to the moto of empowering the girls child, "Aikyashree prakalpa" has been introduced with fully funded from states budget to provide financial support to the minority community meritorious students to carry on higher study. But the Educational attainment of Muslims were not too satisfactory,

Major challenges of Muslim girl's education:

One of the major challenges of Muslim Girls education is psychosocial constraints, as most of the parents of the Muslim community are concern about their daughter's future within the in-laws house rather than to being self-dependant. There is a common belief that the education is not too important for the Girls, they enrolled in formal educational institution though the large number of dropout is been occurring due to early marriage. A large number of guardians want to send their girls child to the girl's school or colleges rather than co-educational institutions, though they are not willing to send their daughter to the higher educational institution because of absence of girl's hostel & female teachers, which is another causes of Muslim girls' dropout at the early stages. Therefore, the "a significant disparity between the status of Muslim and that of other socio-religious community (except SCs/STs) can be noted, it is well known that the educational condition of Muslims is a matter of great concern. Educational attainment improved over the years slowly, actually gap between advantages section has widened significantly, in several cases traditionally disadvantage section (SC/ST) overtaking the muslims, as

muslim's have not been able to reap the benefit of the policy of the government and slipped gradually".² The term education can be explore as "Education is the manifestation of perfection that already in the man".³ "Education is more than the ability to read and write. It is a process of acquiring knowledge, skills and values in a variety of different areas that enables individual to contribute to the social, Economic and Political well-being of their families and communities in meaningful ways. Without educating its citizens, no society can develop and prosper".⁴ Muslims are the most vulnerable section of the society compared to other socio-religious groups. There are so many causes of this backwardness; misconception about religious righteousness is one of them. A certain number of Muslim parents demand that they strictly follow the order of Almighty Allah, which they got through the Noble "Quran" (message of god) and the "Hadith" (advice of Prophet Muhammed) in their daily and social life. If you look at the holy "Quran", the first word came from Allah in the holy "Quran" "Ikrah" (Read/Recite/proclaimed)

Disparity between righteousness and practice

"Ikrah bisme rabbika allagi khalak, Khalakal insana min alak". (Recite in the name of your lord who created man, from a clinging substance.) [Verse-96, chapter-1-2.]

Another hadith "Allah Almighty makes the path to paradise easier for them who walk on it for getting knowledge"- Sahi Muslim -2699.

"Talabul ilm faridatun ala kulli muslimin wa muslimatin"-[Ibne Madha] (Seeking knowledge is compulsory for every Muslim men and women) this hadith clearly mentioned that acquiring knowledge is not limited to the men only, holy Quran put uttermost priority on the relevance of acquiring knowledge, as the term "Ilm" (Knowledge) comes more than 800 times as a references. Another hadith came from Prophet (pbuh) which says that "What I have forbidden for you, avoid; what I have ordered you [to do], do as much of it as you can. [Reported in Bukhari and Muslim]. Though some time it contradict to the practice of the most common muslim's, Acquiring knowledge is compulsory for every believer, but most of the Muslim parents are worried about the girl's child to make her ideal household maker to being an ideal bride. By taking into the consideration of sahih Muslim hadith (3635) which is narrated as "A women may be married for four reason; for her property, her status, her beauty and her religion, so try to get one who is religious, may your hand be besmeared with dust". So made her righteous is more important rather than promoting her to acquire knowledge to being self-sufficiency .They are more worried about their daughter's marriage than that of education.

Incognizance about early child marriage and relevance of education:

Another serious obstacle of Muslim girl's education is early child marriages, as the specific age of marriage is not clearly mentioned in the Quran, it only says that "O young people! Whoever among you can marry, should marry, and whoever is not able to marry should fasting" [Sahih al-Bukhari 5066]. So most of the Muslim parents conceptualize about their daughters that once menstruation begins, she is considered suitable for marriage and should get married, some time they force her to marry, whatever the age 14 or 16 does not matter to them. Girls should acquire mastery in the "House hold making", and to be a "Religious" is the first priority before she reach to menstruation. So naturally they are deprived of formal education while acquiring knowledge in the particular trade ("House hold making, and to be a "Religious"). A study on menstruation of Indian adolescent girls in Urban area of Mysore shows that "The mean menarche age 13+/-1.1 years with wide variation, i.e., 10-17 years".⁵ Therefore this data indicate that a large number of girls students are deprived of their fundamental rights (Rights to Education) because of the lack of awareness of the parents. Actually, they victimized by trapping into this dilemma. However, the parents claimed to properly following the instructions of Almighty. Nevertheless, the Quran and hadith clearly mentioned for promoting the girls education in ideal manner, and acquiring knowledge is compulsory for every believers of Islam. However, most of the Muslim parents are not concern about this instruction of almighty, which is obligatory to every believer of Islam. Rather, they are concerned about whether their daughter will cover their face with the hijab or not. Most of the parents are not aware about early child marriage and relevance of education is not always true, some time they are bound to do so because of economic uncertainty. Even after passing anti Dowry act in the year 1961, taking dowry has become an ingrained part of the Muslim society instead of giving (Mahar). It has embedded in the veins of the modern society that, girls will not get married without money. NCRB reports indicate that, "6753 cases were registered under Dowry death (section 304 B of IPC) in 2021, where 6795 were victimized which is 1.0 crime rate per one lakh population".⁶ Many parents think that spending on girl's education is one kind of bad investment. Because they will have to spend lot of money in the upcoming days while marrying their daughter. They also concerned about that, the more educated the girls, A lot of money has to be spend to find a suitable groom, so the best way is to marry her off to get rid of from the burden of the girl's child.

Insecurity and male domination at domestic and outside:

Another reason of discouragement of girl's education in Muslim society is the safety and security of the daughter. If we look back to data from National Crime Report Bureau, it will be very clear to us. "According to the NCRB reports in 2015 shows that 51% of human trafficking in the country involved child, & 85.5% of that case registered under 366A of IPC".⁷ Wife is considered as the wonderful instrument for entertainment in a male dominated society rather than better half. This conception gradually promoting psychosocially dominant & suppressive mindset among the male dominated society, which is another source of domestic and sexual violence and woman subjection. Another report of NCRB (2021) shows that, "A total of 4, 28,278 cases of crime against women were registered during 2021, showing an increase of 15.3% over 2020 (3, 71,503 cases)".⁸ "Majority of cases under crime against women under IPC were registered during 'Cruelty by husband or Relatives' (31.8%) followed by 'Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty' (20.8%), 'kidnapping & abduction of women' (17.6%) and 'Rape' (7.4%). The crime rate registered per lakh women population is 64.5 in 2021 in compare with 56.5 in 2020".⁹ So many Muslim parents are losing their interest to send their daughter to the formal educational institution to protect them from this kind of cruelty. As the modesty and chastity of their daughters is the most valuable property to be glorifying to in-laws house and to the creator.

Misconception of society about madrasa education system:

There are so many govt model madrasa and Islamic boarding school non-government schools and missions, which are heart and solely trying to assimilate the Muslim community with the mainstream of the advanced society, by facilitating good quality modern education with Islamic knowledge and tradition. Somehow intentionally or politically those institutions is been accused to not focusing science & technology, which will gradually push them towards the Islamic fundamentalism. As it eventually trying to focus on religious knowledge and culture, in many cases the students of these institutions are rustically molest and satirised by tagging them "Madrasah Brand" this kind of social degradation will force them to lose enthusiasm to take those advantages. However, the parents are comfortable to sending their girls to that institution because of the opportunity to formal and religious Education together, but they are losing their enthusiasm due to this propaganda. Many parents thought that religious knowledge is more important to their daughters to build a good character and to be an ideal bride. The eternal belief of every muslims is that the chastity of character, religious belief, faith and practice is

compulsory for everyone to go to ‘Jannah’, as the ultimate goal of their life is to go to heaven so formal education is less important than religious faith and belief. That is why they do not always want to compromise with their belief at the expense of formal education.

Misuses of Personal law and Governments scheme:

This is the reason why Muslims are gradually lagging behind in all aspects of social context, especially for not being able to take advantage of various government schemes, which are offered by the union and state governments from time to time. West Bengal government introduced “Kanyashree prakalpa” for promoting secondary education, also to protect them from early child marriage especially for the girl child between age group of thirteen to eighteen, by giving unique conditional cash transfer facilities to remaining unmarried until 18 years. However, they are taking advantages of Muslim personal law regarding marriage. (Nikha) According to Muslim Marriage Registration Act 1981 which is known as the Jammu and Kashmir Marriage registration act, 1981. Registration of marriage contracted is mandatory for every Muslim within the thirty days after end of the ceremony, but registration of marriage is not mandatory in Islamic point of view, it is ‘Mustahabb’ (preferred but not essential) not ‘Makruh’ (legally not forbidden but discouraged). By taking into the consideration of the Muslims personal law, a large number of parents marry off their daughters according to the Islamic ‘Nikha’ without registration before 18 years. On the other hand, they enrolled in school or college only to take the advantages of such Cash Transfer Scheme.

Conclusion:

Therefore, the acquiring knowledge and skills remains elusive to them. They need to inculcate modern rational values to change this patriarchal mentality. There will be no certain changes in our society until we came out from those conceptions that girls are the burden of the society. Male counterparts are not burden of our society, they also have the ability to do something for the society but they need scope and dignity too.

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