

Problems Faced by Muslim Girls While Choosing Any Professional Course

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Abstract— There are a huge number of problems and issues faced by Muslim girls in every face and aspect of life but when it comes to education and specifically professional education, it becomes more problematic and tough. Because most of the families still prefer a safe and comparatively easy as well as less burdened job for their girls. Girls constitute almost half of the population of the world. Education for girls is the best way to improve the health nutrition and economic status of a household that constitute a micro unit of nation economy. Gender disparities in education and all other social and demographic indicators reflect the unequal position of girl and women in highly sexist gender discriminatory social order. While historically there has always been a gap between the boys and girls in India, the case of Muslim girls has been yawning. The Study aimed at giving a brief overview of education status of Muslim girls and to explore the future directions and strategies for integrating and galvanizing women of all walks of life for playing their role in building and sustaining the 21st Century. And more importantly building an equitable social order and a society that will give its girls not only formal equality but a life of dignity.

Indexed Terms— Professional course, Gender disparities, Discriminatory Social Order, Galvanizing and Equitable Social Order.

I. INTRODUCTION

The National Commission of Minorities in India had identified Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsees which constitutes 18.8% of the total population of the country. Among these various minorities, Muslims occupy an important position in India. Women and girls have been victims of ruthless power struggles for centuries in all societies and cultures around the world. Sadly, but truly, many societies including some Muslim societies continue to exercise this patriarchy in different forms such as the denial to education, unequal salaries compared to men in workplaces, forced marriages and many others.

The low socio-economic status of Muslims is now well known; like the Scheduled Castes, they are disproportionately represented among the poor and have the lowest per capita income indicators. This is a scribed not only to the lack of access to asset ownership, but also to poor educational attainment and occupational patterns, which show clustering in low-paid activities, as well as the concentration of the Muslim population in the economically backward regions of the country.

This economic differentiation constitutes probably the primary source of differentiation in status between Muslims and others in the aggregate, since the household's level of assets ownership, occupation and income possibilities critically determine the basic conditions of life of the Muslim girls.

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- A brief review of the present status of Muslim girls in education

Girl's education refers to every form of education that aims at improving the knowledge, and skill of girl. It includes formal education at schools and colleges, vocational and technical education, professional education, health education, etc. Girl education encompasses both literary and non-literary education. Educated women are capable of bringing socio-economic changes. The constitutions of almost all the democratic countries, including India, guarantees equal rights to both men and women. "Education for all" is one of the main tasks being

carried out by the government of India but still we have the lowest female literacy rate in Asia.

India is working but pace is slow as we haven't achieved what we should have achieved as long before. Parents especially in lower strata of society economically send their male child to school but not girl child due to poverty and orthodox thinking. This is one problem where parents do not send their girls to schools. Secondly, it is also common to see that the parents of urban areas often send their male children to better and quality schools. According to Napoleon, "Nation's progress is impossible without trained and educated mothers. If the women of my country are not educated, about half of the people will be ignorant." Education liberates women from ignorance, increases self-esteem and helps them take control over their lives and guide the progress of their families. Women are the backbone of a society. They are equally important as men are. The role of women cannot be denied in any society or culture.

According to Islam, "A mother's lap is the first school for child." There is no priority for men over women in relation to the right to education. Both are equally encouraged to acquire education. Indeed, all the Quranic verses which relate to education and which advocate the acquisition of knowledge were directed to both men and women alike but unfortunately educationally Muslims comprises one of the backward communities in the country. Muslim girls and women lag behind their male counterparts and women of all other communities. Among Muslims, 17.6 percent is the dropout rate, higher than the national average of 13.2 percent. Many as 25 percent of Muslim children in the age group of 6 to 14 years have either never attended school or have dropped out. Only one out of the 25 under-graduate students and one out of 50 postgraduate students is in the premier colleges of the country. The share of Muslims in all courses is low, particularly at the postgraduate level and marginal in the science stream.

Meaning of Regular Courses:

Regular courses are the simple graduation courses. These courses are very popular and demanded courses of all times. Regular courses are available for students of every field, including Humanities, Commerce, and Science. These are the simple BA, B.Com and B.Sc

courses which can be pursued generally by anyone. Students often opt to choose for these courses because they are considerably cheap. Moreover, students also choose to pursue these courses because they find them convenient. Students find these courses convenient because they do not require long hours of study. They are usually considered to be easy courses which can be passed by any average students. That's why students who want to pursue a course just for the mere sake of getting a graduation degree opt for these courses. But the scope of these courses are limited and they do not offer any wide future prospects. The value of these courses is considered to be very low without any master's degree. So, the students who pursue these courses are required to go for masters in order to raise their market worth.

Meaning of Professional Courses:

Professional courses are special courses, offered at many colleges and universities, that put emphasis on professional development. Unlike academic courses, these courses usually do not require prerequisites, sometimes do not offer credits and are specifically oriented toward professionals wanting to enhance skills useful for their specific work environment. For example, West Liberty University offers professional courses in computer use, portfolio development, grant writing and administration. These courses are usually categorized under "Continuing Education" Studies" at universities. You are awarded a professional certificate upon completion of a professional course.

Basically, professional courses are very important to improve and search a new you. As far as girl education is concern we are evolving day by day but still there is a huge gap to be fulfilled. We as a society improving ourselves and now we are in an era where our girls are taking higher education as well as getting into many professional courses. But like all other girls Muslim girls are still doing hard to get even a fair chance to prove themselves. Muslim girls are facing many problems to enroll themselves in even mainstream higher education and professional courses are still like a dream come true to them.

Need of Professional Courses:

Industry needs qualified candidate

Academic qualifications do not hold much value in the eyes of recruiters. That is because these qualifications

do not impact a candidate's suitability for a particular job. Most big companies require candidates to possess specific professional qualifications. These companies won't even interview candidates with general academic degrees. For instance, to become a teacher, you need to have a professional teaching degree like B.Ed., NTT, ETE, et al and to become an HR manager, you will be preferred if you have an MBA in Human Resources degree.

- Profession helps you grow and sharpen your skills
Academic courses are theoretical, and they do not put any attention on skill development. Without essential skills, candidates are not fit to step into the practical world. On the other hand, most professional courses require students to undergo practical training. These trainings tend to sharpen a student's technical as well as soft skills. Once done with the course along with hands-on training, candidates are all set to face the workplace challenges.

- Professional courses are comparatively updated then the regular courses
Academic courses follow the same curriculum for years. They are only remotely attached to the dynamics of the outside world. On the other hand, professional courses are updated on a regular basis. The syllabus is modified to eliminate the topics that no longer hold practical relevance and new topics are added according to the latest trends.

- It gives you a clearer path and goal
Once you have opted for a professional course, you can visualize a clearer career goal. Your career journey is a lot more organized and smoother. While in case of academic courses, you have no clear direction until you go for an additional specialized course or acquire some practical experience. For instance, if you are going for BA English Honors' after graduation, you will have endless options, which can be good yet overwhelming and confusing. However, if you have opted for BEI Ed, you will be sure that you can find a job in the field of teaching.

- Muslim girls in professional courses:
Muslim Enrollment ratio was far less than any other community in higher education sector in India is exposed by the official records of government itself.

As per the data of All India survey on Higher Education, Muslim student ratio was only 4.9 – 5.0 % in 2017-18 in proportion to their population of 14%. This meager number points to their lack of representation. Community representation among teachers is also nothing short of bad representation. There are only 4.9% teachers from the community in the higher education and if we talk about girls enrolled in professional courses, the situation is very disappointing.

The Educational backwardness of the Muslim girls in India has been established and highlighted by a number of officials reports. The various schemes launched by government to ameliorate the economic and educational condition of Muslims have remained mostly on papers, the benefits of various government schemes, aimed at improving the socio-economic condition of the weaker sections of society, have not accrued to Muslims in any significant measure. Many schemes did not succeed, but that should not deter us from continuing the endeavor.

The very low level of schooling is one of the most depressing findings of the survey. In fact, nearly 60 per cent of the total Muslim respondents never attended school. There is a negative correlation between education and employment among Muslims and the minuscule proportion of Muslims in formal employment or wealth-creating occupations. The proportion of Muslim women who are illiterate is substantially higher for rural north India than for the entire country — more than 85 per cent reported themselves to be illiterate. Fewer than 17 per cent of Muslim women ever enrolled completed eight years of schooling and fewer than 10 per cent completed higher secondary education, which is below the national average.

One of the most striking insights into the situation of Muslim women comes from their dismal work participation rate — estimated at 11.4 per cent for urban Muslim women and 20 per cent for rural Muslim women. This low figure is especially striking in the light of the obvious deprivation of most of these women. Significantly, only a minuscule 0.14 per cent of Muslim women respondents cited pardah as the reason for not working.

So what is it that makes Muslim women so badly placed at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid (lower even than OBCs) and so disenfranchised in every sense of the word? A sprinkling of high-profile Muslim women judges, academics, ministers, sportspersons does not offer a complete picture. In the hamlets of rural India and the slums of urban India, young girls are still encouraged to stay within the home (first their own, then that of their husbands'). A complex web of circumstances makes the schooling of Muslim girls a daunting task. There is, of course, a fair degree of conservatism, a general mistrust of Western-style education, even a tendency to regard education for girls as being not entirely necessary, sometimes even viewed as an impediment in getting a girl married. But this is not the complete picture.

The link between poverty and illiteracy among Muslim women cannot be over-emphasized. Regardless of whether illiteracy is a consequence of poverty or vice versa, regardless of the debates between the 'modernists' and the 'traditionalist', regardless of the merits of an English-medium western-style education and an Urdu-medium traditional education, what Muslim women want today is some form of knowledge that empowers them to better their lot.

Individual initiatives — few and far between and laudable for their courage, no doubt — will not take the Muslim girls very far. While much is being achieved in pockets, in an isolated, random, almost ad hoc manner, a lot still remains to be done. What is needed, and needed urgently, is a more proactive role on the part of the state. More cash incentives, attendance incentives, special stipends to meritorious girl students, special bus services, more morning shift schools, more emphasis on basic literacy and numeracy, adult-education classes, public reading rooms, gender-sensitive learning materials — these need to be factored into any schemes involving education among Muslims. Given the increasing incidents of communal violence where women are the easiest victims, parents are often wary of sending girls to "unsafe" neighborhoods.

Finally, let's remember that literacy alone is not the key. It will not magically open the doors of opportunity. The quality of education is just as

important. It has been seen that after the first few years of the primary education afforded to the Muslim girl child, one of two things usually happens. Either the girl is plucked out of formal education by the time she reaches puberty and for all practical purposes lapses into virtual illiteracy, or, if she continues in school and does climb up the education ladder, with every rung, the quality of education available to her is so inferior that it equips her for very little. The quality of education in some Urdu-medium schools as also the caliber of teachers in such schools is so inadequate that the girls who do come out from such institutions — many privately run, others with dubious affiliations from quasi-religious bodies — cannot cope in a competitive environment.

Problems Faced by Muslim girls while choosing any professional course:

Lack of guidance and counseling:

Many of the Muslim girls faced problems while choosing any professional course because they did not get proper guidance and counseling from school as well as from the family, as many of the family members don't have any idea about the courses.

Gender Discrimination in India

Girls in India face discrimination both inside their homes and outside in their communities. Inequality in India means unequal opportunities for girls. India is the only country in the world where the mortality of girls under- 5 years exceeds that of boys. Girls are encouraged and also engaged more in household work and drop out of school at an early age. Most of the time their movements are restricted to get an education and engage in social exchanges.

Poverty

Poverty and gender-based preference are two of the main challenges which impact girl child education. Girls are forced to stay at home or engage in daily wage labor to contribute to the income of the house. According to a UN report, every year more than 1.5 million girls in India are married before they turn 18. They are not allowed to go to school after marriage. Eventually, these young girls become mothers at an early age which has adverse effects on the health of both mother and child.

Distance from Home

Even though 80 percent of schools in India are in the country's villages, most of them are non-functional. There is a severe lack of teachers, proper teaching-learning facilities, and infrastructure. Children in rural areas often have to walk a long distance to reach school in a different village or city. Due to fear of harassment and violence against girls, most parents prefer to not send their girls to school.

Lack of Toilets in Schools

In developing countries like India, a lack of separate toilets for girls and boys is one of the top barriers to education. Adolescent girls frequently miss school due to hygiene-related problems and eventually drop out. Schools do not provide sanitary napkins due to extreme taboo which often lead to girls of menstruating age dropping out of school.

Muslim girls have to face a lot of more problems like they have to go through gender discrimination, Lack of guidance and counseling at school level, Many social boundaries, Lack of education in the family, Lack of clear vision about job and career, Dowry-related harassment, Gender pay gap and much more.

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