



A STUDY ON INEQUALITY TOWARDS MUSLIM GIRLS HIGHER EDUCATION IN KERALA

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“If you educate a man you educate an individual and if you educate a woman you educate a whole family”

ABSTRACT:

- Pandit Jawaharlal Lal Nehru

Education and Muslim Women

“Man is born free, however, he is everywhere in chains”, once said by French Political Philosopher Rousseau. The cause of this servitude in nature in man is made by us based on many factors framed by ourselves. We may become slaves under stronger power, slave to social convention, and slave to religious doctrines and slave to superstitious beliefs and so on and so forth. Under these manifold circumstances, Muslims women in a greater percentage have been under low status for a long period because of social structures and socio economic problems.

Education is the right of every individual regardless of religion, caste and region. Female education plays an important role in all-round improvement and progress in the society. If women are educated whole family and society is educated. Without women education, a nation cannot progress. The present study highlighted the various factors that are responsible for low educational status of Muslim girls and also provide some recommendations and suggestions.

Keywords: Female education, Attitude of family towards Muslim Female education.

INTRODUCTION:

From the Time Immemorial, in India Muslim community kept women under purdah system of Islamic Religion. Due to the wrong concept of the strict principles of purdah system female education came very late in the State. Many luminous girls were not getting educated. The idea of Socio-Economic enlistment of woman was quite nil in Muslim Community in India. Women are regarded by the Muslim Community as valuable treasures of caring and nurturing children. The most loyalty nature of the Muslim women is their subordination to the main members especially to their husbands. Moreover, as most of women are illiterate the Muslim community is rather backward in spite of their settlement in plain areas of the

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state where there is a good communication system and prevailing of good centers of learning, business etc. In addition to illiteracy, early marriage and divorce have affected the social status of Muslim Women. Early marriage and bearing of many children are common practices of Muslim Women in rural areas of India. Lack of education Muslim Women were excluded from the opportunities of employment. It also caused conflicts in the society. Degree of conflicts and criticism from the orthodox Muslims is higher in the rural areas. Thus Muslim women in India before some decades faced many conflicts for getting education. But nowadays they are really supported by their fathers and brothers as they know the value of the women education in building the family and society. Under the Purdah Systems cent percent of the Muslim girls could not get their higher education after passing Matriculation Examination as they could not get any nearby College which will cause great loss for the social development of the Muslim Community.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Husain and Naz (2021) said that, educational status of Muslims are very low, even a lot of efforts are made to improve their conditions of education, as far as Islam is considered it provides equal rights to both genders to acquire education.

Ahmad (2021) stated that a nation without women education cannot develop. For the social and economic development of women, education is considered as the single most important tool.

Khan (2022) found that Islam does not forbid girls from getting education, instead it insist for education. In Islam it is the duty of both men and women to acquire knowledge. However, flawed top-level policies, culture, political interest and media role affect the interpretation of Islamic teachings.

Salue (2021) pointed out that, Muslim girls fail to attain education due to their lower socio economics conditions because of limited resources, support id always directed towards sons education which compromises daughters chances of obtaining higher education.

OBJECTIVES:

- To study the low level of higher education in Muslim Girls in Kerala.
- To discuss the minority educational institutions in building up the weaker section of the society
- To analyze the socio economic status, education and enrolment ratio in Kerala.
- To suggest the policy measures to improve the status of the Muslim women

HYPOTHESIS:

Ho: There is no significant difference between the family attitudes provided with respect to the higher education pursued by the Muslim girl's students.

H₁: There is a significant difference between the family attitudes provided with respect to the higher education pursued by the Muslim girl's students.

METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on primary data and secondary data collected from the year 2022 to 2023. Primary Data was collected with the help of an internet based survey questionnaire. The secondary data was collected by various published sources like books, journals, magazines, reports, publications, etc.

SAMPLE SIZE: The study had a limited sample size of 50 due to time constrains and data was collected through questionnaire in form of Google form to various departments of Kerala University.

MAJORS FACTORS INFLUENCING EDUCATION OF MUSLIM GIRLS:

Low Level of Education: Effect on Muslim Community:

Education is an area of grave concern for the Muslim Community. The popular perception that religious conservatism among Muslims is a major factor for not accessing education is incorrect. The recognition of their educational backwardness is quite acute among a large section of Indian Muslims and they wish to rectify it urgently.

Poverty — the Main Cause of Low levels of Education:

High dropout rates among Muslim students are worrisome. As with many Indians, the main reason for educational backwardness of Muslims is abject poverty due to which children are forced to drop out after the first few classes. This is particularly true for Muslim girls. Little children are expected to provide for their families by working in karkhanas (small workshops), as domestic help or by looking after their siblings while their mothers go to work. It was not felt that the incidence of child labour was much higher among Muslims as compared to other SRCs. Poor and illiterate parents cannot afford tuition for their children; nor can they provide the necessary support system at home which has become so essential a part of today's educational system. The opportunity costs involved in sending children to school is also too high, making it difficult for parents to do so.

Low Perceived Returns from Education:

Moreover, a community-specific factor for low educational achievement is that Muslims do not see education as necessarily translating into formal employment. The low representation of Muslims in public or private sector employment and the perception of discrimination in securing salaried jobs make them attach less.

Urdu — A Marker of Identity or a Tool of Education:

While Urdu was never exclusively a Muslim language, it is said to have suffered because of its identification with the Muslim community. The communal divide that has emerged over the issue of Hindi and Urdu has been the major factor contributing to the decline of Urdu since Partition. Overnight the knowledge of Urdu has become more a liability than an asset. This was brought into sharper focus by a constitutional provision (article 351) which prescribed that Hindi should draw increasingly upon Sanskrit for its vocabulary. This Sanskritization of Hindi and the perversion of the three language formula in many Hindi speaking states (providing for only Hindi, Sanskrit and English) has practically put an end to Urdu instruction in most government schools, thereby affecting the education of a whole generation of Muslims.

Table 1.1: Population in the relevant age groups participating in Higher Education

SHARE OF POPULATION PARTICIPATING IN HIGHER EDUCATION 2020-22				
CASTE	2019	2020	2021	2022
MUSLIM OBC	4.04	5.42	6.15	8.02
MUSLIM GENERAL	4.25	4.97	6.26	8.49
OTHER MINORITIES	11.78	16.12	13.64	18.04

Source: National Sample Survey (2022-23)

The above table 1.1 shows that there is a very low level of higher education in the Muslim community. In the table the Muslim community has been divided into two i.e. Muslim OBC and Muslim General. The enrolment

rate is very low in this community: only 4% in 2019, only 5% in 2020. Thus it's high time for the government to take up certain steps for the Muslim community.

Minority Educational Institutions:

The resistance to recognize minority educational institutions has been a matter of serious concern with the Community in several states. This is also a clear violation of Article 30 of the Indian Constitution. In India there are nearly 40 universities and institutes only for the Muslim society.

Table 1.2: List of Islamic Universities and Institutes in India

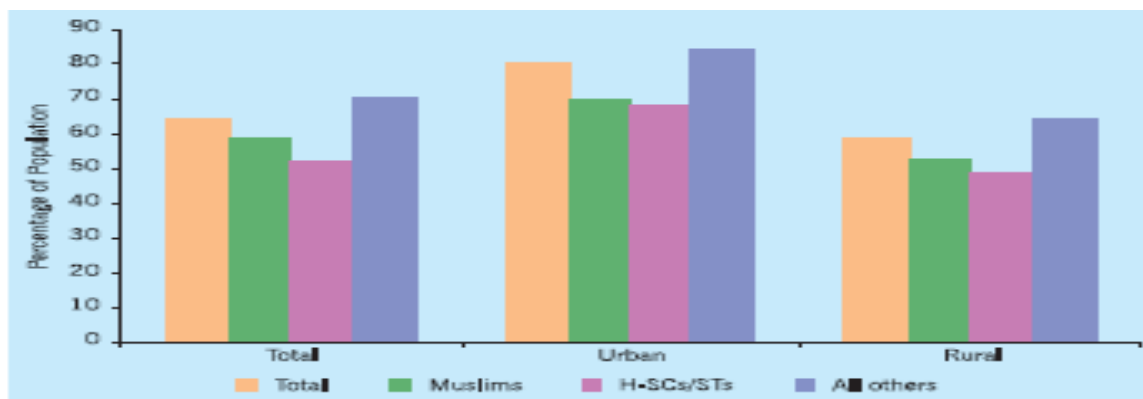
Universities & Institutes	Place
Aliah University	Kolkata
Aligarh Muslim University	Aligarh
Anjuman-I-Islam	Mumbai
Era's Lucknow Medical College	Lucknow
Jamal Mohamed College,	Tiruchirappalli
Dar-us Salam Education Trust	Hyderabad
Jamia Millia Islamia	Delhi
Nibrasul Islam Islamic & Arts College	Trivandrum
The Maulana Azad Education Society	Aurangabad
Crescent Engineering College	Chennai
Osmania University,	Hyderabad
Mohammed Institute of Engineering and Technology,	Tiruchirappalli

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development Report 2021-22

Levels of Literacy:

The low literacy level of Muslims and SCs/STs is very low compared to other populations. In the mid 2000's literacy levels of both these groups were low, and far lower than that of 'All Others'. In many States however, the position of SCs/STs was worse than that of the Muslims. The literacy rate among Muslims in 2021 was 59.1 %. This is far below the national average (65.1 %). If the SCs/STs, with an even lower literacy level of 52.2% and Muslims, are excluded, the remaining category of 'All Others' show a high literacy level of 70.8 %. In urban areas, the gap between the literacy levels of Muslims (70.1%) and the national average is 11 percentage points and in relation to the 'All Others' category it is 15 percentage points.

Figure 1.1: Literacy level of Rural and Urban Population



Source: NSSO report 2020-22

The above figure 1.1 shows that although the levels of literacy are lower in rural areas (52.7% for Muslims), the gap between the compared categories is also narrower. It is important to note, however, that the SCs/STs are still the least literate group in both urban and rural India. Although the literacy levels of 64% and 68% among male SCs/STs and Muslims respectively are not low, they are far below the level for ‘All Others’ which is 81%. In contrast, Muslim women with a literacy level of 50% have been able to keep up with women of other communities and are much ahead of the SC/ST women in rural India.

Table 1.3: Literates as a proportion of Population by Age Groups 2020-22

Age Groups	Hindus			Muslims	Other Minorities
	General	OBC	SCs/STs		
6-13 yrs	90.2	80.8	74.7	74.6	88.5
14-15 yrs	95.7	87.5	80.0	79.5	91.9
16-17 yrs	95.0	85.2	78.6	75.5	91.3
18-22 yrs	91.4	76.9	65.0	70.5	85.8
23 yrs & above	74.0	50.6	86.5	46.1	67.0
Total	80.5	63.4	52.7	59.9	75.2

Source: Estimate from NSSO Round data 2020-2022

The above table 1.3 shows age specific literacy rates from NSS Round data (2020-22). The literacy rates for the SC/ST population have risen more sharply than for Muslims; while persons of the older age groups in the Muslim community had much higher Literacy level; these are higher for SC/ST in the Younger age groups.

Table: 1.4 Literacy rates of Muslim and National Level of Male and Female

Year	Muslim Literacy			National Literacy		
	Male	Female	Average	Male	Female	Average
2011	67.6%	50.1%	59.1%	75.3%	53.7%	64.8%
2021	74.9%	50.3%	67.6%	82.1%	65.46%	74.04%

Source: Census Report 2011 and 2021

The above table shows that the literacy rate of male and females of Muslim community is very low. But compared to 2011 the literacy rate in 2021 has been increased.

STATISTICAL TOOLS Based on Secondary Data: (ANALYSIS OF TIME SERIES)

By using methods of least square (non- linear trend) in the above table 1.4, we can predict level of participation for higher education in the year 2025:

Year	Y	X	X ²	X ³	X ⁴	XY	X ² Y
2016	34.1	-3	9	-27	81	-102.3	306.9
2017	38.9	-2	4	-8	16	-77.8	155.6
2018	40.4	-1	1	-1	1	-40.4	40.4
2019	48.2	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	50.1	+1	1	+1	1	+50.1	50.1
2021	59.1	+2	4	+8	16	+118.2	236.4
2022	67.6	+3	9	+27	81	+202.8	608.4
N=7	ΣY=338.4	ΣX=0	ΣX ² =28	ΣX ³ =0	ΣX ⁴ =196	ΣXY=150.6	ΣX ² Y=1397.8

We have to fit the equation

$$Y=a+bX+cX^2$$

Since the value of $\Sigma X=0$ and $\Sigma X^2=0$, the equations are reduced to

$$\Sigma Y=Na+ c \Sigma X^2$$

$$\Sigma X Y =b \Sigma X^2$$

$$\Sigma X^2Y=a \Sigma X^2 +c \Sigma X^4$$

Substituting the values

$$338.4 = 7 a + c 28 \quad (i)$$

$$150.6 = b 28 \quad (ii)$$

$$1397.8 = 28 a + 196 c \quad (iii)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{From equations (ii) } b &= 150.6/28 \\ &= 5.378 \end{aligned}$$

Multiplying equation (i) by 4

$$2368.8 = 28 a + 112 c$$

$$1397.8 = 28 a + 196 c$$

$$\begin{array}{r} (-) \qquad \qquad (-) \qquad (-) \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$-971 = -84$$

$$c = 11.55$$

Fitting the value of c in equation (i)

$$338.4 = 7 a + (11.55) 28$$

$$7a = 338.4 - 323.4$$

$$a = 2.14$$

The required equations would be

$$Y = 2.14 + 5.378 X + 11.55 X^2$$

For 2025, X will be +3.

Putting X= 3 in the above equation

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{2025} &= 2.14 + 5.378 (3) + 11.55 (3)^2 \\ &= 2.14 + 16.134 + 58.2 \\ &= 76.4 \end{aligned}$$

Thus, from the above time series equations it has been estimated that the higher education participation in 2025 will be 76.4. There will be drastic changes of educational level if it is going to continue then it will be a sky-scraping again in the coming years for the Muslim Girls in Higher Education.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

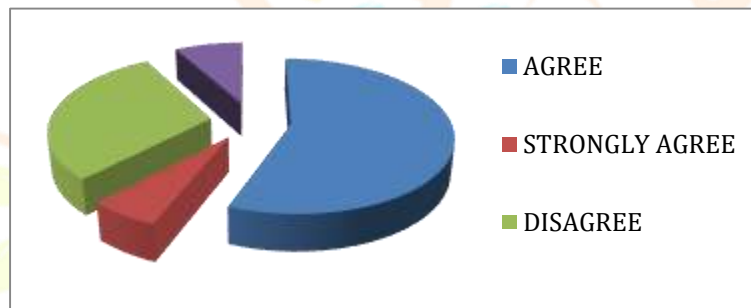
Personal interview was adopted as a good contact method to bring immediate and more reliable data to the survey. In total 50 students were interviewed From different localities of Trivandrum District pursuing higher education in Kerala University and Studying outside Kerala. This data analysis is able to achieve the research objectives. The data collected in this survey are interesting and can be very useful to practitioners and educators.

TABLE 2.1 ORTHODOX ATTITUDES FAMILY MEMBERS AS A BARRIER IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

FAMILY ATTITUDE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
AGREE	28	56
STRONGLY AGREE	3	6
DISAGREE	15	30
STRONGLY DISAGREE	4	8
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: Primary data

CHART 2.1 ORTHODOX ATTITUDES FAMILY MEMBERS AS A BARRIER IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION



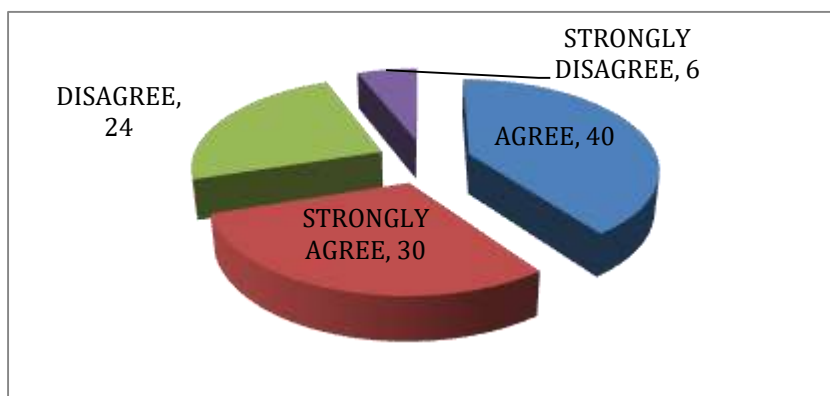
The above table 2.1 and chart 2.1 shows that 56% of the respondents are feeling that orthodox attitude towards the family members as a barrier in pursuing their higher education as they think what the community and locality people will think and investing a money is a waste so it is better to married the girl to the salaried employed guys in their young age even though they are pursuing their education this makes a discouragement to the high goals and aims for the girls and 30% of the respondents are not of this view.

TABLE 2.2 LACK OF PROPER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN THEIR LOCALITY AND AREA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

LACK OF PROPER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
AGREE	20	40
STRONGLY AGREE	15	30
DISAGREE	12	24
STRONGLY DISAGREE	3	6
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: Primary data

CHART 2.2 LACK OF PROPER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN THEIR LOCALITY AND AREA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



The above chart 2.2 and table 2.2 reveals that there is a lack of educational facilities in their locality and area this leads to a very great hindrance to go for higher education 40% agree that there is a lack of educational facility this makes a high increase of dropouts rates for Muslim girls in the Muslim Community and 24 % are disagree about this fact.

HYPOTHESIS:

Ho: There is no significant difference between the family attitudes provided with respect to the higher education pursued by the Muslim girl’s students.

Hi: There is a significant difference between the family attitudes provided with respect to the higher education pursued by the Muslim girls students.

Observed frequencies:

Attitudes/ Higher education	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Total
Yes	30	5	35
No	8	7	15
TOTAL	38	12	50

Applying Chi-Square test

26.6	8.4	35
11.4	3.6	15
38	12	50

O	E	(O-E)^2	(O-E)^2/E
30	26.6	11.56	0.434
8	11.4	11.56	1.014
5	8.4	11.56	1.376
7	3.6	11.56	1.376
			4.24

$v = (2-1) (2-1)$

$=1$

$v = 1, \chi^2_{0.05} = 3.84$

Results:

Calculated value (4.24) is greater than the Table value (3.84)

Inference

Since the calculated value is greater than the Table value we reject the null hypothesis. Thus there is a significant relationship between the family attitudes provided with respect to the higher education pursued by the Muslim girl’s students.

Concluding Observations and Policy Options

- ❖ As compared to other religions, Muslims have a higher perception of unfairness and this sense of discrimination is especially high in the employment and education spaces
- ❖ Participation of Muslims is relatively low in the education space but has improved in recent years. However, the situation is particularly poor in urban areas.
- ❖ The participation of Muslims in higher education is particularly poor but once they cross the threshold of school education and once other factors that affect participation in higher education, the deficits for Muslims decline significantly. Therefore, a focus on eligibility is quite critical for Muslims as for other marginalized groups and consequently the links between secondary and tertiary education are quite important for Muslims especially because the drop-out rates are quite high after middle school
- ❖ While limited access (supply of schools) and discrimination is not ruled out, household endowments along with location play a critical role in determining participation of Muslims in the education space. There is some evidence to suggest that the Community does not fully appreciate the rewards of education even as returns to education are high

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