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Understanding the Educational Aspirations of Muslim Girls

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Abstract

The present study was investigated in Nizamuddin Muslim area of New Delhi, the objective of this study was to study and understand the factors that determine the Educational aspiration of Muslim Girls. In the present study, the combined methodology was used to realize the selected problem intensely and to draw the factual conclusions of the study. To study the educational aspirations, a questionnaire was applied while as for the Muslim society the observation method was adopted to understand the insights of the Muslim community in the study area.

Keywords:- Educational Aspiration, Muslim girls, Clouds of poverty, Muslim Girls, low socio-economic status and Home environment.

“Education is like a catalyst, which alters the pace of social, economic, and intellectual development in the society. However, in the current period, the catalyst is in the disaster due to the storm of globalization. The repercussion of this catalyst has been coated by the paint of materialism and careerism upshot of which the catalyst begets the materialistic minds rather than intellectuals in the society” (Asma & Farooq 2017).

Introduction

The dictionary meaning of the word Aspiration is “a hope or ambition of achieving something” therefore the educational aspiration means merely a wish of achieving the education to the desired level. Now a question arises why this educational aspiration ranges across the students, of different communities, and gender groups. Before moving, ahead, we answer the question one must understand the environment where these different groups are living in the surrounding environment influences every individual. The concept of aspiration is the reflection of the habitat, and this plant of hope grows under the control of surroundings. Copious theoretical and statistical models identify the problems between the types of factors affecting an adolescent’s educational attainment and career advancement, such as social-cognitive/learning theory (Farmer

1985; Bandura et al. 2001), social-cognitive-ecological theory (Guerra and Huesmann 2004; Huesmann 1998; Huesmann et al. 1987).

Morphology of Indian Muslim society and girl's educational aspiration

A human being is similar to a flower that flourishes only when the soil is fertile, the sun is moderate water is sufficient, and the care is regular.

However, in the Indian context, the educational aspiration of Muslim Girls is also delimited by the political outline of the country. During the survey, many parents are reluctant to send their daughters to schools or colleges because of fear. Apart from this, the Muslim community of the country is overloaded by the problems the problems are from inside as well from outside. On the other hand, we can say the Muslim Community are sandwiched in the flood of troubles created by the exogenic and endogenic factors of the country which have become the obstruction in fulfilling the educational aspirations among the Muslim Girls.

Let us talk about the exogenic and endogenic factors, which have become the impediment to achieving the educational aspirations of these girls.

The exogenic factors

The exogenic factors are the factors that are facing this community outside the home. As it is well, know that the successive governments did not show any gravity towards the welfare of this community. The UPA Government led by Dr. Manmohan Singh constituted a high-powered committee to study the socio-economic position of Muslims that committee, is famous by the name of Sachar committee. The committee report revealed the terrible condition of the Muslim community and stated that these Muslims are lagging behind in every sector. The committee also highlights the shortage of necessary infrastructure in these areas. Even the Kunds committee report (2013) also highlights the surprising outcomes of the Muslim girl's education.

Recently the list of 20 most backward districts listed by the Niti Aayog among these 20 poor districts 11 was Muslim majority districts. Beside this the escalation in the sense of insecurity among the community members as during the discussion with this community, there is a sense of insecurity planted by some political forces for their Political gains.

No doubt, there are some schemes for the advancement of this committee, which were framed after the report of the Sachar committee 2006. These half-hearted measures are not enough to uplift a mass. These measures are like a "Banana for hungry Elephant" or ants for the mouth of Bear.

The second thing some elements are spreading the wrong notion about the Islam so-called Islamic phobia which has adversely affected the young buds remarkably the Muslim girls who follow their religious character, like wearing hijab. During the survey, number of girls shared the anecdotes, which are directly linked with this as one of the respondents stated that

Meaning when I wear the hijab the people pass rude comments that feels me painful (Rubina).

Endogenic factors

These are the factors, the Muslim girls are facing inside their houses, and in the community, these factors include the weak socioeconomic conditions, cultural rigidness; these factors also play a critical role in shaping the educational aspiration among these Muslim girls. The low socioeconomic status plays a vital role in taking the streams in the college. During this study, we noticed a significant number of Muslim girls had changed their subjects because they were not able to handle such dues. Many Muslim girls have a dream to enter the university, but their elders are against their aspiration because they believe that it is against their honor of the family name and community culture to study in the co-educational institution. Even some girls stated that we are disbarred from accessing the social networking sites while as boys are using this without any hesitation. During the survey One of the research students of Jamia Millia Islamia Central University, New Delhi said that our society has complex disorders of different types, so it needs a various and effective antidote for remedy.

If we look to the community, it is the frozen community, which has constructed the strong walls in their minds against the progressive ideas. The designers of these walls are the local religious preachers who are very conventional and lack the sustainable vision almost they are textual they did not think outside the text. These preachers are ready to issue a fatwa without examining the subject. Our opinion is that the deep understanding of religious makes a person tolerant and broad-minded.

Coming on the main topic of the subject educational aspiration of Muslim girls in India as said above for the better understanding of educational ambitions of Muslim girls we have to study the profound insights about the habitat of the Muslim Families in the country. In India, the Muslim communities are living in the zoo environment with particular pockets with a curtailment of learning and other infrastructure. Moreover, during the survey, I found that the social environment of the Muslims is very different from the rest other Indian communities. The Muslim community in India is living in ghettos where there is a particular flow of ideas and

norms whenever the advanced notion of the rest country tries to penetrate into these ghettos the ghettos shows tremendous resistance. The rationale behind this is the complete dominance of the Preachers in the community and low education. Apart from this, they think that by this external culture their own culture will be diluted and destroyed. Here I want to cite the example of Nizamuddin Muslim pocket of Delhi an NGO (Aga Khan Foundation) is working for the upliftment of the Muslim youth. When I talk about this Ngo, with the local Muslims, they asserted that it is an NGO, which installs the false values among our generation and is working under the shadow of Jews. Therefore, they began to show resistance to this and spread this among the members of the community that not to send Girls or boys in the Schools that are controlled by this Particular NGO.

Our observations and educational aspiration of Muslim girls

Based on the observations we have classified the community into three parts as highlighted below:-

The nucleus

The core of the community is very conservative because it is densely managed by the patriarchy. These people are mostly illiterate and have minimal socioeconomic status with lack of awareness about the government programmes, and mostly these people are involved in illegal activities and expenditure all their earnings on these activities. Most of them are engaging in bagging activities. When we talk to the girls belonging to this group, in Nizamuddin area of New Delhi, we find they also have constructive ambitions, but they are under the landslide of deep poverty and are in the clinch in the web of child labor. These people are unable to meet their essential daily expenses.

Intermediate layer

When we move away from this nucleus towards the intermediate layer, we found a difference in the thinking and with slight consciousness about the importance of education. The people come into this category, as most of them are educated primary and middle level, and very few have reached the college. However, these people have a powerful influence of religious preachers and are doing blind imitation to these preachers without the understanding of issues. The children's of these people are learning Quran without understanding they are just memorizing this. The members of this intermediate layer are they doing the small business and are mostly linked to the traditional industry.

These Muslims believe in the principle of (us versus them), by this by this these people portrait themselves as a separate community, and their entire behavior rotates this sense of thoughts.

These people show a mixture of response towards the ideas of progress. The most characterized of the people these are in confusion whether we adopt modernization or should we remain on conservatism. However, due to the expansion of International and national media and other programmes concerning the importance of education they have changed brain regarding the girl's education.

The upper layer

The people in this category have exposed themselves to the ideas of modernization and have adopted some constructive ideas among them. These people did not show any resistance to the notions of social engineering development. They are highly educated class among the Muslim community and are wholly cognizant of the different programmes of the government and most of the times they took advantage of these programmes. Nevertheless, the problem is they did not support the other two groups for the same. Some of them used this community as a vote bank during elections.

Attitudes of Muslim Girls towards the educational aspiration

I have the wings to fly and the open skies too, But then why this compulsion not to fly. As if the iron of rusted conventions has been nailed to the soul, So the wings can flutter but not fly' (Meira Kumar 2016 former Speaker, Lok Sabha).

When I speak with the Muslim girls', first, it was tough for me to approach the Muslim girls directly then I contact to their parents, and in this way, it became a little bit easy for me to talk with them. During that talk, these girls I found have high educational aspirations along with this they have heap number of problems which results their hopes are sunken under the community problems and the cloud of poverty. The high aspirations among the Muslim girls are the result of the penetration of National, international media and social networking which highlights the value of education for the human beings. These girls have different constrictive ambitions, but the aspirations are dormant under the avalanche of masculine dominance and narrow traditional thinking prevailing in the community.

Study Area Description

The Nizamuddin Muslim area of New Delhi was selected for the present study. The area is one of the Muslim dominated areas of the New Delhi. It is very famous at National and International

level due to the presence of two important things one is Shrine of Sufi Saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Awlia there is the center (Markaz) of Tablighi Jamaat located in the area and the famous tomb of Humayun.

The specific area of the Nizamuddin where a researcher has drawn the sample was Boali Gate Nizamuddin located at the GPS location as (Lat. 28.5925N and Lug. 77.24153 E. This area is famous by the local name Nizamuddin Basti among the people of the respective area.

Sample

The total sample for the study was 49 Muslim higher secondary girls in the Nizamuddin Muslim Basti of New Delhi.

Data collection

I used the survey method, initially; it was very tough to collect the data. We contact their parents and then it became easy for us to contact their respondents. In addition to this, we told the respondents about the aims and purpose of the study.

Results of the study:-

- It was found that a significant number of girls belong the families with low economic status. These girls stated that we also want to sit in the class of Colleges and Universities, but the situation in our homes are not so constrictive.
- It is also revealed from the study that the sense of insecurity among the girl's parents is becoming the barrier to the educational aspirations of Muslim girls. Even this factor has highlighted by the non-Muslim girls one of the girls who name is (.Princy...) stated that I want to do the Ph.D. however; my parents are not supporting because of the insecurity.
- It is also reported, from the study that the parents are not rewarding the girls when they show better performance at the school. Besides, for the same cause, the same family appreciated the boys and often reward them with some gifts. The whole gender prejudice led to demotivation among the girl students and affected their educational aspirations.
- The study also reported that 90% of girls did not have separate space for the study in the houses.
- A significant number of these Muslim Girls said that their family members did not check their homework after they come from school.
- The care of siblings keeps them away from their educational aspiration in this regard many girls have left the education, and now they are assisting their mothers in the kitchen.

Conclusion

The study found that the Muslim girls have high educational aspirations, however; these educational aspirations adversely affected by both internal and external factors. Their challenges are started from their homes that result the will of doing something better among these girls becomes the target of male ascendancy, poverty, and another community ethos. In sometimes, the elders/relatives pressurized these parents and asking them to stop the girl from the educational institute as these people think this is against their family norms. When they come out from their homes, they face the shortage of infrastructure in their areas, which are essential for the primary education, and they also face the environment that is full of pollutants and the molecules of hate, gender prejudiced thinking, norms. Therefore, these Muslim girls have double challenges to fulfill their educational aspiration, however many girls try to fight with these impediments, but these problems are such deep-rooted which results their all aspirations remain in the four-chambered heart inside them. The pessimism spread by some people at an international and National level against the Islam is also somewhat curtailing the educational ambitions among the Muslim girls. To overcome these hurdles, which are faced by these girls, the Government should exercise the iron triangle approach in which the preachers, the buds, and their parents should be engaged to aware the community about the importance of education and other developmental measures among Muslim girls.

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Note:- The present work is observations of Muslim pocket of Nizamuddin area of New Delhi.