



RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN ISLAM

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Abstract

Women Education provides them, most vital qualities of confidence, capacity to work and thereby leads to their empowerment. Muslim women who by virtue of social norms and had suffered backwardness due to lack of education though Islam as a religious bigotry in it. Several organizations individuals, through theoretical and practical applications have lifted the backwardness of Muslim women and as a result Muslim women have conquered to dark areas of ignorance and fear. Muslim women welfare performers in different walks of life over a period of time.



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Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study are as follows :

- *To study the Text of Holy Quran that encourages the education and well-being of women and the favorable comments regarding the education and status of women.
- *To trace the status of Muslim women in higher education.

Hypothesis :

The hypotheses have been formulated as follows :

Islam as a religious faith is not an impediment for the education of women

The higher education rate of muslim women has a gradual growth

Education and employment have given muslim women self reliance

Educator, has a direct bearing for empowerment of women

Area and Scope of the Study :

For the past years the subject of education of muslim women, employed muslim women, higher educational institutions for muslim women education, muslim women organisations, and their programmes to promote muslim women education have been studied.

Muslim women education has been neglected due to religious misconception and also economic barriers. Many muslim families all over the country have their reservations in educating their female children due to conservative attitude or practice. As a result most

muslim women confine themselves to household and lack economic independence and exposure in the society.

Methodology and Sources:

The methodology adopted in the presentation of this study is historical. The data collected for this study belong to two categories - secondary and primary. The researcher has consulted government records, government reports, government orders, reports of commissions, committees and census reports. The secondary sources consist of various books, journals, periodicals, newspaper clippings. The researcher also has visited a number of relevant websites and has collected materials, for the study.

Limitations of the Study:

The study is not exhaustive but is subject to availability of materials information obtained from the newspapers, magazines, journals and also the world wide web.

Right to Education in Islam::

Islam gave, the right to education, to women 1400 years ago. In the Qur'an education is urged as a duty for men and women. The Surah-i-lqra acknowledges this. It places women on a footing of equality with men in the pursuit of education and knowledge. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) declared that the pursuit of knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim male and female". As a result of his declaration, it is significant to note that during the hey day of Islam even the Muslim women made enduring contributions in the field of Education. Ibn Athir writes, "All masters of literature are unanimous in declaring Khansa as the best woman poetess in Arabic. No woman in history has ever written such poetry as Khansa". Hazrat Ayesha, Safia, Hamza and Fatima were known for their knowledge, intelligence, oratory and outstanding memory 50 It is very interesting and very important to note that the Prophet gave the right to education to the slave girls also. He said, that if a man has a slave girl and he gives her good education and proper training and then marries her then such a man will have a double reward. So he will be doubly rewarded first, for educating the girl and training her and secondly, for liberating her from slavey⁵¹. When Islam offers such high rewards for the training and education of slave girls, then how can it tolerate the denial of these rights to free girls? The Holy Prophet educated and edified his daughter, Hazrat Fatima, to the best of his ability to show that there should be no preference for boys to girls in

the matter of education. Thus, in Islam there is nothing to bar women from learning knowledge as far as their aptitude and possibilities may allow. Indeed, there is no difference between boys and girls to make progress in every field of life.

Higher education has been interpreted in various ways, as the education of the upper ranks of society, as preparation for the elite professions, as the study of higher subjects and as the final stage in the process of formal schooling. Higher education can be used in many different connotations. It can be used for any one of the following : Post-secondary, .Advanced, Excellent, Further, Continuing, etc. Whatever be its connotations and intel-,utationsT, ertiary education, which follows the 12 years of primary 2nd secondary school~ngis popularly referred to as "Higher Education".

Higher education is intended in the way in which it is structured, for only a minority of students, who have demonstrated their ability and interest in academic work and, who wish to get acquainted with a broad spectrum of knowledge with specialisation in a discipline. It is expected, that the education would also equip the graduate with life skills. The link between education and preparation for making a living is perceived as central by many, who consider higher education to be a ladder which helps one to move upwards in social status, through one's employability in a highly paid position."

Higher (or Post-secondary) education is the system, in which the inputs are the secondary students and the outputs are the graduates and post-graduates. The university structure is determined by the thinking, aims and ambition of its faculty, by the goals of its patrons, namely the Society and the Government by the needs of its consumers, viz., the students, by its own inertia or resistance to change and by the inner logic or need for consistency in its curricula and its programmes. The university system must be acceptable to the society as such."

In the history of mankind, education has always played a very important role leading to the development of attitudes, values and capabilities both of knowledge and skills. However, to enable the education system to play its role effectively in the process of national development, it is essential, besides, ensuring that all people get the benefit of education, it should also be arranged that the level of educational attainment among people would not be too disparate between sexes.:' Since independence, there has been a growing consciousness of the place of Women's education in promoting the development of the country. 'This has been proved from the fact, that prior to independence, education was the gateway for

employment and generally the urban population and the higher classes took to it in large numbers. In the post-Independence period, the progress of literacy has been comparatively faster. At all India level, it went up from 16.67 in 1951 to 29.45 in 1971.

The Articles 14, 15 and 16 under Part-III, the chapter on Fundamental Rights in the Constitution of India secure for all citizens Equality before law, Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth; and the Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment. Article 15 (4) states, Nothing in this article or in clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally Backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Article 16 (4) states, Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State

As far as women are concerned, the literacy rate has more than doubled itself during this period from 7.93 to 18.70 at all India level. The various steps taken by Free India in the field of education like compulsory and free education upto the age of 14, adult literacy drive and other measures are responsible for an improvement in the literacy level from what it was prior to Independence.

To safeguard the interests of the minorities Article 29(2) of the Constitution states that "No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them",

An Article 30(1) states "All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice" and an Article 30 (2) states : "The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution, on the ground, that it is under the management of minority, whether based on religion or language Education is of basic importance in the planned development of a nation. In a democratic setup, the role of education becomes crucial, since it can function effectively, only, if there is an intelligent participation of the masses in the affairs of the country.

Thus, education forms an important area of development, for which the responsibility devolves on the planning commission.

Several commissions and committees setup during post-independent India examined the higher education system in the country and recommended several innovations towards making it more effective and responsive to the needs of the society. The University Grants Commission introduced in 1984, a coaching scheme to prepare students belonging to educationally backward minorities for various competitive examinations. As part of implementation of the 15 Point Programme, by the end of financial year 1990-91, all the 41 minority concentration districts had been covered by community polytechnics or their extension centres. NCERT has been organising seminars and training programmes for Principal teachers of minority managed schools, in subject areas of English, Science, Mathematics, Vocationalisation of education and Educational evaluation.

To improve the Educational conditions of Muslim Women the following Steps may be taken into consideration :

Due publicity that Education alone can help to remove or mitigate ignorance; illiteracy and poverty among women should be given in order to change the view that women's higher education is a secondary consideration. The plus 2 stage of Higher Secondary Education including the Vocational courses be made meaningful and attractive, so that a large number of girls can opt for them. It is encouraging to observe that muslim girls are entering the vocational and professional fields of education with the mainstream. In the professional education most of the girls in general and muslim girls in particular prefer the teaching profession. This is essential, at least for muslim girls, because lack of muslim women teachers in the formal as well as non-formal centres in the muslim dominated locality or in schools managed by the Muslims caused the dropout of girls before they reach class V.

In Delhi, the institutions, which provide pre-service training for teachers of primary and secondary school are Central Institute of Education - a department of Delhi University, District Institutes for Elementary Teachers (DIETS) and Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) earlier known as Teachers' College of Jamia Millia Islamia. CIE provides training for secondary school teachers, DIETS give training to primary school teachers and IASE Jamia provide training to both Primary as well as Secondary school teachers through its Diploma in Basic Training (two years) and B.Ed. courses. Most of the muslim girls come to IASE, Jamia for their Teachers Training courses. The performance of Muslim girls at the examinations of DBT and B.Ed. of IASE for the last five years show that the performance of

Muslim girls in theory papers is very poor as compared to non-Muslim girls. Performance of Muslim girls is slightly better in 1996 as compared to their performance in previous years but still they are lagging behind non-Muslim girls. Every year the number of Muslim girls, who have failed is also more than that of non-Muslim girls. Six out of forty -five Muslim girls have failed at least one of the theory papers in 1996 whereas only one non-Muslim girl was not able to pass one of the papers.⁹⁷ (See also Appendix - VII) Similar is the case in Teaching Practice and Practical work. Here also performance of non-Muslim girls is better than that of Muslim girls. Performance of Muslim girls is slightly better in Diploma course. In this course Muslim girls outnumber non-Muslim girls⁸. (See also Appendix - VIII) In theory papers the results are not very encouraging but in practice teaching the percentage of Muslim girls getting 1st division is improving steadily since 1993. The data shows that the number of Muslim girls who either opt for or compete for B.Ed., course is less as compared to the number of Muslim girls entering into the Diploma course, as a result we have more Muslim female trained teachers for primary schools than for secondary schools.

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