

Sociological study on the status of Muslims in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Higher education can improve the opportunities and overall quality of life in the twenty-first century. The Muslim community is one of the most backward communities in higher education, second only to BCs and STs. The ultimate goal of higher education is to produce effective manpower that can fulfill prosperous careers, financial security, and upgraded social status. Muslims in India have remained weak in politics, social life, economics, and culture. Backwardness in education must be eradicated in order to overcome all of these factors. Traditional practices, religious beliefs, purdah, polygamy system, lack of link between madrasas and modern education, negative attitude toward girl education, and other factors contributed to Muslim educational backwardness. Common people believed that unless Muslim educational backwardness was addressed, Muslims' conditions would remain solitary. The major goal of this paper is to determine the status of Muslims in higher education, identify the causes of their backwardness, and advocate for actions to enhance their situation.

1. Introduction:

The goal of higher Education should be to champion the airing of all honest viewpoints nothing less is acceptable. Providing high-quality higher education is one of the most essential things we can do for future generations. Higher education is only one crucial weapon for achieving socioeconomic, political, and cultural equality. Despite the fact that the Indian constitution provides for equality in higher education, the status of Muslims is the lowest of all religious

communities in India. Muslims are the second largest community in India after Hindus and the largest among Indian minorities, but they have the lowest status in higher education in our multi-religious country.

According to the 2011 India Religion Census, Hindus make up 79.80% of the population, while Muslims make up 14.23%. Among the minorities, Muslims are the largest group in terms of population, with the lowest levels of literacy, graduation, and higher education.

As per 2011 census report:

| Religion | Percent | Total Population |
|------------|---------|------------------|
| Hindus | 79.80 % | 96.62 crores |
| Muslims | 14.23 % | 7.22 crores |
| Christian | 2.30 % | 2.78 crores |
| Sikh | 1.72 % | 2.08 crores |
| Buddhist | 0.70 % | 84.43 lakhs |
| Jains | 0.37 % | 44.52 lakhs |
| Others | 0.66 % | 79.38 lakhs |
| Not stated | 0.24 % | 28.67 lakhs |

As per 2011 census report:

| Religion | Literature in Percent | Graduation & above |
|-----------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Hindus | 63.6 % | 5.9 |
| Muslims | 57.3 % | 2.75 |
| Christian | 74.3 % | 8.84 |
| Buddhist | 71.8 % | 6.17 |
| Jains | 86.4 % | 25.65 |
| Sikhs | 67.5 % | 6.39 |

According to India's constitution, Muslims have the least access to higher education, while Jains have the most. The National Commission for Minorities in India has designated Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Parsis as religious minorities, accounting for 18.8% of the country's overall population.

Muslims are one of India's many minorities, and they play a vital role in the country's society. It is a well-known fact

that the educational status of Indian Muslims is quite low (Pervez&Hasan, 2015).The main reasons for the low level of educational attainment among Muslim women were early marriages, seclusion, and a lack of meaningful role for educated women in the community. Menon (1981), Narula (2014) identify early marriage, gender disparity, and a negative attitude of parents toward women's education as major causes of the Muslim minority's educational backwardness. Indian

Muslims lag far behind in achieving literacy status due to economic conditions, a lack of school availability, more dropouts, a lower likelihood of surviving educationally, a lack of resources in school availability, a low level of interest in education, and a lack of honest leadership in the community. It has also been reported that Muslim students drop out at a higher rate from schools and other educational institutions. Female literacy among Muslims is also significantly low, which is one of the major causes of illiteracy and ignorance in the Muslim community (Hossain, 2012).

Madrasas are frequently the only educational option available to Muslim children, particularly in areas where schools do not exist. Children frequently attend Madrasas not because they want to, but because other schools are unavailable or inaccessible, and there is a lack of education in their mother tongue.

The Sachar Committee finds that the 60 years of institutional neglect and bias that have left Muslims in the country lagging far behind other social and religious communities in the education committee indicate that the Islamic education rate (59%) is significantly below national average (65%). The dropout rate among Muslims is the highest in the Primary, Middle, and Higher Secondary levels with only one in 25 undergraduate students and one in 50 graduates of major colleges being Muslim. Muslims are represented at the bottom of the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) and Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT's) institutions. The unemployment rate for Muslim students is very high at all social and religious levels.

2. Muslim Education – Policies and Programs in India:

Several safeguards have been enshrined in the constitution to protect minorities in the country. Some of these rights are shared by all citizens, including Muslim minorities, and are incorporated in the constitution's following articles. Discrimination on the basis of religion, ethnicity, caste, sex, or place of birth is prohibited under Article 15.

- Article 15 makes it illegal to discriminate on the basis of religion, race, caste, gender, or place of birth.
- Article 16 guarantees equal opportunity in public work and establishes specified "classes" for employment, appointment, and promotion in state-run services.
- Article 26 guarantees the right to govern religious organisations and religious issues, subject to public order, morality, and health.
- Article 27 guarantees freedom from paying taxes for the promotion of any particular religion,
- Article 28 promises freedom to attend religious worship in religious institutions or religious worship in certain educational institutions.
- Under Article 29 Minorities have the right to preserve their language, script, and culture
- Article 30 grants minorities the right to establish and manage educational institutions.
- Article 347 permits the use of minority languages for official purposes.
- Article 350 states that the state shall to allow the use of minority languages for grievance redressal.

- Article 350 A requires the state to provide linguistic minority groups with opportunities for instruction in their mother tongue at the primary level of education.
- Article 350 B provides for the president to appoint a special officer for linguistic minorities.
- Programs initiated to improve the education of young people are the Prime Minister's 15-point program of youth development (1983), a comprehensive local program for young people backward in education, the Modernization of Madrasa, the Maulanaazad basic education program (1989), the provision of free textbooks. and standing and eligible bursaries for the weak class of the premier committees on the socio-economic status of the Muslim community in 1983. A national junior education monitoring committee was re-established in 2006. A national minority monitoring committee was developed for junior service.

3. Reasons for the Backwardness of Muslims:

According to the 2011 census data among Muslims, educational development trends, particularly at the higher level, are insufficient. Even though a number of constitutional measures, welfare programs, and policies for Muslim minorities have been enacted in democratic India, progress among Muslims has not been sufficient. Despite various reports showing improvement in Muslim students' educational status, the rate of progress is very low when compared to other communities. As students progress from primary to secondary, secondary to higher education, their representation has been dwindling due to the highest percent of dropouts at the primary level.

Various research studies have been explained the various reasons for educational backwardness of the Muslims in the following.

- High dropout rates and low levels of educational attainment among Muslim girls are due to a variety of factors, including poverty, withdrawal of girls from school to engage in household chores, opposition to co-education, the belief that the right place for women is at home, and the perception that it is difficult to find a spouse for a highly educated girl (mandal-1997). These factors are still present today.
- Private schools are more expensive for parents, and spending on non-fee things in schools, as well as the availability of infrastructure and other amenities (Economics of Muslim-managed secondary schools in Delhi) have all contributed to the current state of backwardness.
- Because of a lack of entrepreneurial leadership in education, The Muslim community has not developed, and Muslim educational institutions have been unable to use government-provided educational resources (Anwar, 2006).
- The majority of non-ashraf Muslims in the government are converts from lower caste Hindus, pre-Islamic cultures, successive Islamic interpretations, economic and political factors that contribute to discrimination against Muslim women (Hussain - 1990)
- According to the Sachar Committee, Muslim colonies are routinely denied access to infrastructure and public services such as power, piped water, and

sewerage. (GOI – 2006) The Muslim community lives in low-income, unclean, and deplorable living circumstances.

- In both pre- and post-independence India, there was a lack of committed and authentic Muslim leadership. The majority of Muslim leaders lack practical vision and never lead their communities toward a better future. Muslim leaders today are either puppets of the ruling party or lack understanding of the issues.

4. Steps to Improve Higher Educational status among Muslims:

Development of higher education should be improved gradually with the development of Muslim educational institutions such as Aligarh university, DaralUlyoomDuyuband, Tamiya Islamic, Manlanajauhar Ali university, Osmania university etc.

- Educate Muslims on the value of higher education in terms of obtaining numerous employment prospects, self-employment plans, and the resulting economic well-being. (2010, basant and sharif)
- The government should place a greater emphasis on improving Muslims' socioeconomic conditions.
- For the impoverished and disadvantaged Muslims, government incentives and scholarships are also required. Muslims should be given priority in higher education and prestigious institutes like IITs and IIMs. As a result, access to higher education in general, as well as the necessity to provide it to all at a reasonable cost, is essential.
- There is need to develop more girls school to minimize the problem of accessibility of schools. Parents should develop positive attitude towards girls higher education (MHRD – 2013)

- Madrasah education should be modernised in order to increase the educational standing of traditional Muslims, and vocational, science, and computer education should be integrated with religious instruction in Madrasahs.
- It is also necessary to connect Madrasahs to higher education. To alleviate the problem of school accessibility, more girls' schools should be built. Parents should encourage their daughters to pursue higher education (MHRD, 2013).
- The government should establish a powerful organisation to improve the state of all centres of primary, secondary, and higher learning in India, as well as undertake numerous educational programmes aimed at recognising minority education.
- Various educational plans put out for implementation of recognition of minority education, coaching courses for competitive examinations, and so on should be developed by the government in order to improve the condition of all centres of primary, secondary, and higher learning in India.
- To reform the backbone of the Muslim community, a true social and political leader is required (GOI – 2006).

5. Conclusion:

It is said that, after many years of execution, recommendations of programs and policies to enhance higher education in India remain insufficient; Muslim higher education progress is lagging behind SCs and STs. As a result, the government should adopt innovative efforts to increase the quality of the people of India by providing and expanding higher education opportunities.

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