



**CONTEXT AND CONSEQUENCES OF MUSLIM
WOMEN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION**

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By

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December 2022

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ABSTRACT

Background

In India, accessibility to education is unevenly distributed across religion, region and gender lines (Chanana, 2011). There is comprehensive discussion of various structural barrier that affect girls' access to education. In case of Muslim women, accessibility to education is not satisfactory. As a Muslim women advance in their trajectory, representation falls. When it comes to their representation in higher education, it abruptly falls in comparison to representation in matriculation and intermediate (Hasan & Menon, 2004). For Muslim women, gender-based challenges to higher education are multiplied by their minority status. Muslim women's accessibility to higher education and their educational attainments in higher education are lower than those of Hindu caste women (Basant, 2007). Even education policy 2020 also pointed out that situation of notified minorities in education and higher education is not satisfactory. It suggested special attention to address the problem. So, a need was felt to undertake research to understand the phenomenon of pursuance of higher education among Muslim women. Phenomenon was found to have close association with what context they come from, challenges faced, support availed and consequences developed. Since Muslim women lives are located at the intersection of gender, family and community, this study investigated the phenomenon at three fundamental levels i.e., Muslim woman herself (Individual), her family and community level.

Objectives

This study intended to understand and describe the phenomenon of pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. The study attempted to know what context they come from particularly for demographic purpose, what are the challenges they faced, what are the supports they availed and what are different consequences they developed/perceived at Individual, family and community

levels. Further this study looked for social work intervention at micro, mezzo, and macro level with the help of known challenges, supports and consequences.

Method

The study adopted qualitative descriptive approach to understand and describe the phenomenon of pursuance of higher education. In order to understand the phenomenon, perspectives and experiences of fourteen interviewees (14 IDIs) were enquired in detail with the help of semi-structured interview guide. All in-depth interviews were conducted with Muslim women from Darbhanga who were pursuing higher education in Maulana Azad National Urdu University. Their detail reflection on context, challenges, support and consequences enabled study to look into research problem minutely.

Findings

The narrative of the Muslim women revealed context, challenges, support and consequences in relation to phenomenon of pursuance of higher education. Challenges at Individual level were early disinterest, lonely movement over distance, lack of early guidance, ignorance of academic interest etc. Challenges at family level were discriminatory attitude of parents, family preference for particular course, dominance of elder brother, marriage before completion of marriage etc. Challenge at community level were in relation to age of marriage, lonely movement over distance etc. Muslim women supported herself by developing skill of persuasion, being adamant, winning trust for their motivation for higher education. Family supported Muslim women by negotiating with age of marriage, mobility, mobility over distance, ignoring social pressure, creating education environment in the family, moral support etc. In case of married Muslim woman, they get support from husband and husband's family by not being resistant to her education. Community extends its support by providing moral boost. Teacher, co-traveller and colleague helped for locating selection of course, educational institution and guidance in other matters as well. Consequences developed on Muslim women are change in personal, enhanced self-esteem, elevation in status, learning from own

experience, ability to bargain with future husband. Consequence developed due to pursuance of higher education by Muslim women are guidance for sibling, catalyst of change, change of heart of close relative etc. Muslim women become role model, guide and source of inspiration for community.

Conclusion

On the basis of findings and correspondence among challenge, support and consequence it was found that pursuance of higher education by Muslim women is mainly determined by concept of women and place of higher education. Nature of concept (mindset), attitude, manifestation of attitude into action (challenges & supports) and transfer of action (consequences) mainly determine the fate of education trajectory of Muslim women. Patriarchal/progressive mindset was found to be main factor in shaping concept of women and place of higher education in that concept. Those mindsets constitute the discriminatory/progressive attitude that manifest into challenging or supportive actions. And those action transferred and developed consequences on Muslim women, family and community. Study further suggested what could be possible object of intervention to improve pursuance of higher education at micro (Muslim women), mezzo (family and community) and macro (policy) levels from social work practice perspective.

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CHAPTER-1 INTRODUCTION

This study begins with researcher interest in the field of education and knowing the reason behind the appalling condition of Muslim women/girl in reference to education. Merely having interest was not enough to undertake academic research. So, Preliminary/initial literature review was done to identify the problem in the field of education in relation to Muslim women. Problem identified at the level of higher education in relation. There was consistent issue of low participation and lower growth rate in the participation of Muslim women in the field of higher education. There was also issue of what consequences Muslim women perceive or develop as a result of pursuing higher education. In the course of data collection, it was felt essential to include the element of support besides challenge which affects pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. The two issues, consequences and support which is not thoroughly researched somehow seem linked with pursuance of higher education by Muslim women.

So, study intended to know the reason behind low participation and the lower growth rate in the participation of Muslim women in higher education bringing Challenge, support and consequences into consideration including context.

Background of the Study

Education commission and its focus

Radhakrishna commission (1948-49) also known as University Education Commission, was established to investigate into the necessities of higher education in India in order to inculcate democratic values, peace and harmony. It recommended for the restructuring of university education in the light of wants of the country and tradition. And develop great personalities who could give their contribution in politics, administration, industry and commerce. The commission was premeditated with objective to address the issues faced by the colleges and universities.

Similarly, National Education Commission (1964) also known as Kothari Commission was set up by the Government of India to examine all aspects of education sector in India to evolve general outline of education and to advise guidelines and policies for the progress of education in India. Its objective was to frame general principles and guidelines or the development of education from primary level to the higher level.

The National Policy on Education (1986) was introduced by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The policy called for special stress in the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunities, especially for Indian women, ST and SC communities. The policy introduced Indira Gandhi National Open University in order to expand prospect to access to higher education. The NPE (1986) called for a “Child-centred approach” in primary education and launched “operation blackboard” to improve primary schools nationwide.

Knowledge Commission also known as the “National Knowledge Commission”. The main recommendation of the commission was formation of universities, achieve excellence, creation of regulatory body. The committee suggested the establishment of 50 new national Universities and a nationalization of higher education. The publicly owned Universities would give admission to eligible students of India.

The objective of New Education Policy 2020 (NEP) announced by Ministry of Human Resource Development is to bring in changes in the 34-year-old dying policy in school and higher education system in the country. This policy put weight on creativity, innovation and personality development. The vocational training would start for class 6 and it would provide exposure to students from early age. And student will be able to choose their favourite subject from class 8-12.

Empowerment of Muslim Women

Without a extensive range of empowerment initiatives, Muslim women will be unable to tackle their helplessness and work towards empowerment (Hasan & Menon, 2004). Unless masses of Muslim women are mobile and able to

independently access the state machinery, they will not be able to seek redress for the development deficit facing them (Sahu, Jeffery, & Nakkeeran, 2016).

A Leadership Development Scheme for minority women developed by women's activists and proposed in the 11th five-year plan could not be implemented due to design flaws. It was rolled out afterward in the 12th five-year plan period, however, with an awfully small budgetary dispersal. This allocation needs to be considerably enhanced and strengthened so that Muslim minority women can be helped, trained and empowered to observe their citizenship to the fullest extent, both for their own rights and the rights of their community.

Muslim women must have access to institutional and policy level decision-making. There is a need for representation of Muslim women in all institutions *intended to promote their welfare* namely, the National and State level Women's Commissions, National and State Minority Commissions and Minority Financial Corporations, among others.

Programs for the empowerment of women like Mahila Samakhya must be given directives to work in Muslim areas with Muslim women, with specified targets. All government micro-credit and SHG programs should stipulate a special focus on Muslim women and earmark funds accordingly. In addition to making education accessible to Muslim girls, there is a need to make a wide-range of technical and higher education opportunities including training centers, available to them, with a direct link to employment. For Muslim female home-based workers, there is a need for policies that facilitate access to low interest credit, to markets, and training for manufacturing high value products. Loans for women in home-based industries must have single-window facilitation without awkward paper work, which works as a restrictive to Muslim women, many of whom lack basic literacy skills.

Rationale of the study

The problem of lower participation of Muslim women in higher education largely impacts the Muslim community and eventually impact the society being one of its parts. So, problem undertaken for research has practical relevance in

the sense it will help in contributing change in Muslim community. Study can be applied to solve concrete problem faced by Muslim women in matters of acquisition of higher education so that real life process (social functioning) of Muslim women, families and community can be improved in the present and future as well. This study has further more relevancy by virtue of research being done under the auspices of social work. The findings and subsequent discussion helped in understanding the problem and developed a model that is expected to help in improving intervention plan and strategy in the field of education in general and higher education in particular.

The problem could be investigated at different levels but researcher chose to enquire the issue at fundamental level i.e., individual, family and community level. The problem could be seen from different perspective like individual, family and community perspective. But study chose to investigate the undertaken problem from Muslim women perspective. This particular preference has been made on the ground that Muslim women are persons who live in the family and located in community and reaches to educational institution. So, Muslim women perspectives comparatively give clearer picture about the problem at fundamental level. Perspective of family and community has not been kept under consideration in view of length of time it demands. Finally, the problem was conceptualized as Muslim women come from particular context, face distinctive set of challenges and get support as well that is why they have been able to reach at the level of higher education. And eventually they have been able to develop/perceive consequences.

Organization of the Thesis

The present thesis is organised in eight chapters including introduction and discussion, suggestion and conclusion. The first chapter briefly introduces the research problem, rationale behind the study, objectives of the study.

The second chapter presents review of literature concerning context, consequences, challenges and support. It includes major studies done in the past

across the countries which helped in formulation of objectives of the study. The review was done thematically. Major review was done towards the end of the study. The themes so evolved were higher education in India, Muslim women and higher education, Muslim women, marginalization and issue of accessibility, Gender disparity, Muslim and higher education, globalization and higher education and Higher education and necessity of affirmative action.

The third chapter covers the philosophical assumptions about the study and methodological choices made. The chapter reflects on the study design, study site, research participants, sampling procedure, sample size, data collection process, data handling and the limitation of the study. It also reflects on maintaining rigour, ethical consideration and challenges during the course of this study.

The fourth chapter is based on the information and narrative that is related to context which is in accordance to purpose of the study. The chapter collects information about the educational history of family, type of family, rural/urban position and narratives about educational environment inside and outside the family. The purpose was to understand how they are related to pursuance of higher education by Muslim women.

The fifth chapter describes about challenges faced by Muslim women that have emerged from family and community level from their perspectives. A detail account of challenges has been captured that challenges the pursuance of higher education by Muslim women.

Sixth Chapter presents the support Muslim women availed. At individual level, it includes in what ways Muslim women supported themselves. In addition to this, what were the support they availed that had emerged from family and community. These supports include persuasion, resilient behaviour, negotiation with age of marriage, educational environment and proper guidance in the family and MANUU as grooming platform.

Seventh chapter talks about the consequences that have developed as a result of reaching to the level of higher education. Consequences developed has been

seen at three level. Consequences include evolving meaning of education, utilization of opportunity utmost, gradual development of self-dependency, guidance for siblings and becoming guide and source of inspiration.

Last chapter is discussion, suggestion and conclusion. This chapter includes the account of correspondence between findings with previous research. Moreover, a conceptual understanding about the phenomenon of pursuance of higher education by Muslim women has been made on the basis of interaction among challenges, support and consequences. Major focus area where social worker can intervene has been located with the help of respondents' narratives and insight developed during the course of study.

CHAPTER-2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Review of Literature is an integral part to academic research. Research cannot be undertaken without it. Review of literature develops the insight in relation to topic concerned and guides the researchers to formulate the objectives of the research(Snyder, 2019). Review of Literature makes sure to what types of questions has already been sufficiently answered, and further assists in identifying the conceptual impairments faced in the present field of research. This paves the way to overcome those obstacles and more importantly makes sure research questions which are already answered are not repeated (Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Thus, review of literature acquainted the researcher of the previous studies and highlight agreement, disagreement and major debates in the concerned area of the study.

The present literature review is arranged in a thematic order for this research studies, each article read several times then given open code according to focus of the study in order to find out the themes. For this, many research articles have been accessed from different journals. Apart from the research journal articles, books were also included for the review. Since the studies on higher education of Muslims are very limited, particularly the studies on Muslim women therefore researcher also has taken the help of other important sources like television debates that are concerned to the issues of women in general and Muslim women in particular. In this review, peer reviewed published work was also consulted and further analytically viewed for locating the themes in the concerned area. Researcher has filtered the relevant information from the articles through inductive coding method where analysis of the article done by researcher through the interpretation of raw data to develop themes in reviews, rather than using pre-conceived themes (Snyder, 2019). Researcher also tried to make remark in terms of the relevance, quality, completeness and gap in the research article.

Higher Education in India

Education is viewed as an instrument of social change, individual mobility and social equality for all social groups through social justice and integration and mainstreaming. So, education is compulsory to eliminate the cumulative disadvantage of certain section of society. Higher education is to liberate the individual from the clutches of poverty and ignorance and further pave the path of socio-economic prosperity to individual, family and ultimately to the nation. As far as Muslim women in India is concerned, there is insufficient specifically negligible literature and data on the Muslim women in relation to higher education (Abidi, 2015; Chanana, 1993; Hasan & Menon, 2004). According to All India Survey on Higher Education (2014) the total number of students enrolled in higher education is 34211637. The representation of male is 54 percent (18.5 million) and female representation is 46 percent (15.7million). scheduled caste student enrolment is 13.5 percent of the total enrolment while Scheduled Tribes students share is 4.8 percent. Out of the total students, 33 percent belong to OBC group with 54 percent of male students. Among minority category, 4.5 percent students belong to Muslim minority and 1.9 percent comes from other community. *Muslim Minority has more male students than females whereas other minority has more females than males* (emphasis is original).

According to (AISHE 2019) Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for 18-23 age group in higher education in India is 27.1 percent with GER for female is 27.3 percent which is higher than 26.9 percent for male student. Similarly, GER is 23.4 percent for schedule caste, 18 percent for schedule tribes as compared to nation's GER 27.1 percent. The share of female students is lowest in Institution of national importance followed by deemed universities, government and state private open universities. Eleven universities are exclusively for women, 3 in Rajasthan, and 2 in Tamil Nadu and 1 each in Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra and West Bengal. 58 percent of colleges are located in rural areas of which 10.7 percent colleges exclusively for women (Department of Women's Studies, 2002). Chanana (1993) observed that the development

strategy in independent India in the 1950s depended heavily on planning. The first two Plans mentioned the complications of women's education and that required to be linked with higher professional education and occupations. These remained sufficiently validated by the Report of the Committee on the Status of Women, 1974. He further noted that Indian women as a category are very heterogeneous in nature and the dimension of caste, class provide cumulative disadvantage as result women bear multiple burden of inequality. Consequently, the participation of women in higher education in India is still low as earlier with marginal improvement. The report of the committee on the education of women (1956-88) made extensive recommendation which led to the more focused thrust in subsequent plan but the disparities in the education of men and women continued. During the period from 1950-51 to 1989, there was remarkable increase in the enrolment and there was also increase in the enrolment at different levels. Women were concentrated in a few faculties and men were relatively even. The Report of the committee on women's education (1959) mentioned region as the major problem in women's education. It was noted that the four southern states had better profile in terms of female literacy and education than northern Hindi-Speaking states (as cited in (Chanana, 1993, 2007).

Muslim Women and Higher Education

Women in general and Muslim women in particular have been historically the victim of marginalisation owing to multiple reason like poverty, patriarchy, political indifference, cultural pressure and many more. Despite of these barriers some women have been able to acquire the higher position in the society. Rural Muslim women are more marginalized than the urban Muslim women (Hasan & Menon, 2004). Further this division is more visible in North Indian Muslim than Muslim women of south and central India. Moreover, when the marginalisation is viewed from the rural urban vantage point disparity increase. Engineer (1994) observed that there is a very small portion of Muslims women who work and earn, however the trend is changing. Educated Muslim women from upper and middle class are part of workforce. He noted that in a Muslim traditional society

husband wants to confine her to domestic's affairs only and discard the idea of working outside. Moreover, many of the problems of Muslim women are due to economic illiteracy. It is highly misleading notion that Islam does not allow the women education. According to Quran education is equally important for men and women. However, traditional societies have tried to keep the women uneducated or gave them elementary religious education so that they can perform religious duties only. This is a sociological issue rather than religious or ideological problem. Our attitude is shaped as much by social factors as by ideological or religious factors. Commenting on the socio-economic and educational status of Muslim and Muslim women, Basant (2007) who was also the member of the Sachar Committee Report observed that literacy rate among the Muslims is lower than most of the other socio-religious categories (SRCs) except SCs and STs. But, in recent years the growth in the literacy rate of SCs and STs has been higher than Muslim. With this meagre literacy growth rate Muslim is not going to converge with the literacy rates of other groups. Author further noted that dropout rates are the highest among Muslims and upsurges considerably after middle school. Moreover, primary education, higher secondary attainment levels and graduate attainment rates (GARS) are also lowest among the Muslims. These indicators in tandem contributes to large deficits in higher education for Muslim. Non-availability of Urdu medium school remained one of the major impediments for education of Muslims at the primary level. The NPE (National Policy on Education) states that female literacy and the enrolment of girls are lowest among educationally backward minorities. An all-India survey conducted by Hamdard Education Society suggests that as the level of education rises the dropout's rate also rises. The survey of Muslim managed schools for girls at all India level in 1982, found that drop-out rate reaches up to 75 percent. The common reason cited behind the drop-out were girls reaching puberty and plan for marriage. The study also observed Muslims have generally been backward in education and their women are more however, all Muslim women are not deprived of education, small portion of Muslim women have acquired the higher education and they are well-off. Though, this trend is not uniform and depend upon the socio-economic

factors and regional location. It was noted that absence of school, poverty and lack of economic resources in the family, single teacher school, lack of financial help and incentives at an early age, discriminatory treatment and attitude of teachers, indifference of parents, irrelevance of education for immediate productive function are the major reasons for low participation of women in education. In case of Muslim women, the reason for educational backwardness is reluctance to send their girls to co-educated schools, socio-economic condition of head of the family, girls not considered as bread earner or future earner, *pardah*, absence of Urdu medium school and lack of Muslim female teachers. Department of Women's Studies (2002) conducted a study titled '*Education of Muslim girls: A study of the Area Intensive Programme*', which was implemented in minority concentrated districts throughout the India. '*The Area Intensive Programme*' of financial assistance was aimed to uplift the educational status of the Muslims. Study revealed that scheme was partially successful to the slated objectives in most of the states. The study also revealed that 26 percent of educated Muslim women had uneducated spouses. This truncated male schooling level would generate additional pressures to impose ceilings on girl's education. This, in turn, may distress women's work involvement in direct and indirect ways. It is recognised that the involvement in work force of Muslim women is extremely low, but the study specifies that this may be fewer due to the force of religion as such, than to the male-controlled edifices and patterns, low mobility and lack of opportunity that define their lives. It is pertinent to note that, the work involvement percentage of women across groups lean towards to be low in certain areas, particularly in the north and the east. Some of this is due to forthright control over women's agency by male members of the household. Author discovered that across-the-board women in India lean towards to have comparatively less autonomy of decision-making within the household. Obviously, patriarchal control remains one significant constraint upon the outside work of women, among Muslims as well as certain other social classes. Most of the outdoor work that the representative Muslim woman has access to falls in the lowest paid and most subjugated categories of labour. Such activities self-employed in low productivity activities

in the informal sector, as casual labourers and domestic servants imply poor working conditions and low wages. Therefore, it may be possible that Muslim women are kept out of the paid labour force not only by faith or Veil (*pardah*) sort of inspirations, but maybe more suggestively by low education, low mobility and the incapability to delegate domestic responsibilities (Ghosh, 2004; Hasan & Menon, 2004).

Similarly, John & Shinde (2012) in their study related to Muslim women's education in India reveal that the state of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and to some extent Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, have quite better stories owing to overall higher literacy rates and higher persistence on the part of Non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Author cites example of 'Anwarul-Uloom', established in 1996 Women's Arabic College in Calicut which provides a blend of modern and traditional Islamic education. Moreover, People's Movement, an NGO specializing in education has done commendable work among the *Meos* in Haryana who have around ninety percent illiteracy. The study further illustrated several reasons for conventional issues faced by the Muslim women like religious affiliation, patriarchy, poor economic conditions and above inappropriate educational provisions from the government part. (Hasan & Menon, 2004) studied five cities in India to examine the condition of Muslim women's education. The study shows important regional similarity as well as difference on the of Muslim girls' education. In Kolkata, where Muslims accounts for 22 percent of the population, Muslims lag behind other communities in terms of education. It was found that most of them are illiterate, and the figure in the rural area is far more dismal owing to widespread poverty. In Delhi there is growing enthusiasm for modern education among Muslim families but there is government indifference towards establishing Urdu medium education at different level of education. Because of this, as the level of education rises, dropout rate also rises. In Hyderabad, where Muslim population constitute 40 percent of whole population, 84 percent of women are illiterate but there has been transformative change that families getting their girls enrolled in English-medium schools and colleges. Moreover, girl's education has witnessed a considerable improvement owing to economic

prosperity and the reservation for girls and Muslims in professional colleges and government jobs. And similar kind of conclusion has been drawn in relation to education of Muslims in Aligarh and Calicut where Muslim-managed girls' school have been set up to impart modern and religious education which make them culturally more relevant. Author mentions that there is little literature available on the education of Muslim girls which indicates certain indifference on the part of community leaders. Authors, also noted that there is dismal situation of Muslim women education in rural areas and northern India in comparison to urban area and Southern and Central India. The hurdles faced by the Muslim girls are indifference of the state to the conditions of Muslim women, widespread poverty, and dislike towards co-education after certain level, shortage of girls' school and women teachers, and the early marriage.

Similarly, (Iqbal, 2012) conducted a study to know the educational trajectory of Indian Muslim by comparative analysis of the several universities of north and south India. It was found that in north, besides AMU and JMI (minority institutions) where the majority of the students are Muslims, the representation of Muslim is very abysmally even lower than the enrolment of SCs and STs. In the two minority institutions enrolment in professional courses is very high in comparison to rest of non-minority institutions. Moreover, in minority institution 50 percent of the scholarship is availed by Muslim students whereas in other two non-minority institution, it is only one percent. In the South Indian Central University, the percentage of enrolment of Muslim is high due to reservation of the Muslim in the educational institution. On UG level, Muslim constitute around 9 to 10 percent of the total students. In Post-Graduate course it is raised to 11 percent while in MPhil. enrolment rate is nine percent and about seven percent of Muslim students avail scholarship. The author noted that in the north Indian universities, as we ascent the ladder of higher education, the percentage of Muslim students decline which is not the case with south Indian Universities. Moreover, participation of Muslim students at different level of education is evenly distributed (7 to 9 percent). Study finally concluded that higher education in India is slowest and lowest among Muslim despite various

recommendation. So there is a need of tireless effort both from government as well the community for social inclusion of the Muslims.

Sanyal (2011) in her study illustrated the misrepresentation of Muslim women in India. She argues that ‘Identity building is a crucial subject pertaining to Muslim women, which may be referred by the communal, economic, political and gender space. Muslims are the most marginalised when equated with other socio- religious group on different indicators. Being “marginalised” within a secluded community impacts identity formation of ‘Muslim Women’ which leads to numerous conciliations to sell space within a larger context. She further cites the Sachar Committee report which conveys that ‘Muslims face quite high levels of poverty’. By and large, their state is only somewhat well than that of SCs/STs and other backward sections of the country. Paper reveals that Muslims in countryside report more illustrations and instances of social and political discrimination as well as irrelevance and abandonment by state authorities. Even in urban areas, likewise, a majority of Muslim Women live in miserable circumstances with insufficient job prospects and political voice. Additional pointer of the poor socio-economic conditions of Muslim women and Muslims is the absenteeism of fiscal aid for their schooling. There is wide-ranging lack of consciousness with respect to schemes. Consequently, the study also reaffirms that the matter of Muslim deficiency is related to the general economic policies and structures followed by the state. Though, it can be highlighted that Muslims are slightly better placed compared to some of the backward and weaker sections. The study reveals that there are three main components which effect the low socio-economic profile of Muslims viz., educational accomplishment, work-related profile and the dynamics of ghettoization. In a special programme on RSTV¹ concerning to the educational backwardness of Muslims including Muslim women, where views of experts were recorded. Host started the debate with view that situation of education in India is not very satisfactory still much needed to be done but to utter dismay situation of

¹The Big Picture - Higher Education Reforms in India

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50zJnfAreFc&ab_channel=SansadTV

Muslims is extremely pathetic. Appearing on the same debate prominent educationist Prof Zoya Hasan opined that in India other minority groups like Christian are better performing while Muslims are lagging behind particularly women of the community. This is because of government apathy towards them, backwardness of community aggravated by indifference of the community itself. Wazahat Habibullah senior administrator from the Muslim community is of the view that partition of British India too added to the miseries of the Muslim in India. From north India educated and who were capable of leading the community opted for newly created Pakistan, and those who were left were resource-less. Hence, Muslims further fell down on different socio-economic indicators. Moreover, due to socio-religious tradition Muslim's share in higher education is just four percent and of women even worse. He further opined that many Muslim families do not prefer co-education appropriate for girl child which is one of the reasons for their backwardness in education. Similarly prejudicial treatment of state government in scholarship scheme also worked as an impediment in the education of the Muslims. Programme concluded with the opinion of Zoya Hasan that community must come forward as the case is in Kerala where Muslim organisation performed well for the educational betterment, only government initiatives cannot be useful in the era of privatisation of education. Hamidia College was started in the year 1932, before independence to impart education among Muslim women and still is of the immense importance for the Muslim residents of historic city Allahabad. Veteran TV journalist Ravish Kumar² (2014) visited Hamidia Girls' Degree College in Allahabad to know perception of Muslim girls on wide range of topics. It was found that owing to social norms women in general and Muslim women in particular face different issues. Moreover, parent's behaviour and attitude towards female are different than male members of the family. It was

² Influence of Muslim women on their families' political alignments https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGIWxwdEkDM&ab_channel=NDTV

inferred from the views of the participants that women do not take political decision separately instead religious and community identity influence the decision making which harms the fundamental motive of education. Women are ambitious and are eager to be financially independent but they have to negotiate with the societal norms. Thus, education has created desire among the Muslim women but still many things needs to change at societal level to ensure the fullest participation in nation building (Kumar, 2014). Similarly, to understand the progress of education among Muslim girls Ravish Kumar³ visited, ‘*Usman Ghani Computer Centre*’ Bihar, which imparts computer education to girls. This institution is established in a building that was bestowed by Dr Usman Ghani as a contribution towards empowering Muslim women. Since its inception, hundreds of girls have attained degrees and have been placed in several organisations. It is regulated by ‘*Imaarat-E-Shariya*’, which is a religious body to look into personal laws of Muslims of Bihar, Jharkhand and in Orissa. This organisation was established around 100 years ago and it has run several educational institutions for male students with special focus on religious teaching of Islam and also contemporary subjects. But to utter disappointment it was only in 2003 that institute initiated to impart education to girl’s student which again is belatedly good initiative, which has also discussed during show. This sort of institution needs to nurtured to impart proper relevant education to the Muslim women (Kumar, 2015). McClendon, Hackett, Stonawski, & PotanCokova (2018) in their study provides a great detail of status of Muslim women’s education scenario across the globe which is not very convincing. Muslim women in general lag far behind to their counterpart from Jews, Hindus and others. This paper was penned down in the background of high-profile attacks on girls’ education by groups like ‘Boko Haram’⁴ and the ‘Taliban’, with

³ Ye Jo Mera Bihar Hai: Empowerment of Muslim girls
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnsmUpxd9vw&ab_channel=NDTV

⁴ <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/09/world/boko-haram-fast-facts/index.html>

the firing on 14-year-old Malala Yousafzai⁵ in north-western Pakistan in 2012, have renewed the debate over religion's role in gender discrimination and whether Islam, in precise, hinders female educational accomplishment in the Muslim world. Authors further provides that that females in the Middle East and in further Muslim-concentrated States incline to have lesser years of education, lesser rates of labour force involvement, a reduced amount of image in politics, and broader gender slits. These indicators were equated with women in other nation states. Muslim women's schooling levels are of specific attention because of the significance of schooling for women's self-sufficiency, economic prospects, as well as for the crucial role that mothers play in the education, socialization, and well-being of their children. It was found that there is deep-rooted link between education and fertility, religious variances in women's education levels might also have consequences for future growth of religious populations. Moreover, girls' schooling has been a target of attacks in Muslim world by extremist groups as Western education and gender equality are consider as an antithesis to Islamic values. Acknowledging the extremely underprivileged state of Muslim minority in India particularly of women, the government of India initiated several schemes which is elaborated in the upcoming book of National council of educational research and training (NCERT), which is pertinent to briefly discuss here. As per scheme, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) opened in areas with a considerable Muslim population. Additionally, a special literacy derive has to be steered in districts with a substantial Muslim inhabitant. The aim of these initiatives is to increase the general literacy rate and predominantly the literacy rate of 'Muslim women'. Women Hostels and Polytechnics will also be provided in the Minority Concentration Districts (NCERT, 2017). Another important scheme is '*Nai Roshni* Scheme' (New light scheme) is a leadership development scheme for women associated to minority communities, to empower and inculcate self-confidence among them by providing knowledge, tools and performances for need-based exchanges with the Government system. This scheme is run with

⁵ <https://www.malala.org/malalas-story>

the help of NGOs, civil societies, and government institutions all over the country (NCERT, 2017). Still, its implementation and its impact needs to be observed however, it appears to be a decent initiative for the educational upliftment of Muslim women. In a Television debate on Rajya Sabha TV, a programme named 'The Big Picture' an academic debate was conducted to discuss the government initiative to provide higher autonomy to the higher education institutions. Panellists agreed that it is necessary to make higher education more autonomous to carry out their academic excellence. One panellist and Upper House (Rajya Sabha member of Indian Parliament) opined that there is a lack of higher education institutions in India and students do not find sufficient institutions to enrol in it. This is a prominent hurdle in imparting higher education in India, which adversely impacts the marginalised sections of Indian society. Moreover, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is not very satisfactory, this calls for urgent physical expansion of higher education, while ensuring quality is also aligned within. Among the panellists one advocated for the use of information communication technology (ICT) for out-reaching to distant places. The role of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in providing the accessibility of higher education was also appreciated. One panellist opined that present day economic development is driven by advancement and innovation of science and technology hence, there is a need for higher education which can ensure cutting edge researchers in scientific research and in that decision of granting autonomy is a welcome decision. However, another panellist contradicted that innovation is not limited to scientific innovation, it is also extended in the field of Linguistics, Arts and aesthetics and in other fields too, which need to be carried out in higher education institutions. Another important discussion is that autonomy is a reflective idea, which checks the political and bureaucratic interference but again the poor condition of universities is due to internal factors, syllabi are out-dated and many more issues (Pereira, 2017). Hence, the higher education system must ponder on itself and try to be accommodative to the Indian society provided its immense diversity.

The Ex Vice-President of India Hamid Ansari⁶ (2018) in a television programme concerning to educational backwardness of Muslim in India opine that “among the identified issues faced by the Muslim community, education has been the most vital one and is deserted by all the segments of the community. We have recognized the issues a number of times. Hamid Ansari further emphasised that Education, according to him, "has been neglected by all segments of the community and it has only confined to a small section of the community". He quoted that "Delhi has a great number of Sikhs and most of them were refugees. They have not only rehabilitated themselves but have also set up their educational institutions. If a small community can do that, why can't a much bigger community,” The lecture, devoted to Indian reformist-writer and social activist, was organised by the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism. In the same gathering, A.G. Noorani⁷, Constitutional Expert, counselled the Muslims to include themselves in national issues. He further emphasised that "denying the discrimination is to denying the truth" Both luminaries were apprehensive of the educational backwardness of Muslims in India, educational backwardness is source to several other social backwardness (The Quint, 2018).

Muslim Women, Marginalization and Issues of Accessibility

Menon (1979) in her study on the Muslim women of Kerala tried to find out significant factors which hampers the educational development of Muslim women. It was found that Muslim women continue to be one of the most marginalised sections concerning their education. This is due to the “presence of certain social structural and institutional factors in Islam”. It was found that religious education which is consider obligatory in the community leads to late entry in schools which force Muslim woman to cease her studies. Moreover, early marriage which is extensively in vogue among Muslims, is another constraint in continuing the education. When a woman reaches the stage of

⁶ <https://www.thequint.com/news/hot-news/education-neglected-by-all-muslim-segments-hamid-ansari>

⁷ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/profile/author/A.G.-NOORANI/>

puberty she not authorised to move freely and feels secluded. Due to this seclusion women lack outside world mobility which also pounded their chances of attending schools. It was found that lack of socially defined occupation role undermines the importance of education as an instrument for achieving occupational skills. The author concluded that “lack of education deprives women of the capacity to engage in modern roles outside home and this contributes to their being confined at home”. (Sahu et al., 2016) conducted a study on Muslim women and their problem in accessing quality higher education in urban Bengaluru. It was found that both Muslim and Hindu women place emphasis on higher education as safety venture for unseen event like divorce and widowhood. It was further observed that majority of the participants both Hindu and Muslim stressed on self-identity. Women participant from low socio-economic background stressed on the importance of higher education for financial independence, better paying job while women from higher strata looks higher education for gaining self-worth. Moreover, financial constraint plays significant role in shaping women’s educational trajectories. Majority of participant admitted good financial condition of family is needed for a woman to get the approval of higher education. It also determines the quality of education, as the woman from affluent family can have number choice than their counterpart who have more choices in terms of quality of education, subject choices, and high paid colleges. Lack of safety and security concern for women in public space also limits their physical mobility which ultimately obstruct the women trajectory of higher education. Author noted that for young Muslim women, the location of college in non-Muslim residential areas also raises the added fears therefore women from economically well-off Muslim families travel lesser than their counterpart and poorer Muslim women attend college near to their home in pursuit of higher education. It was also found that when financial resources are limited, families tend to support higher education for sons rather than daughters because they are considered as a future breadwinner. In Indian male dominated society people usually expect women to be less qualified than their husbands and this curtails young Muslim women’s higher education aspirations. In both cases, either relatives or neighbours has advised

participant's family to discontinue her higher education, as it would make her outspoken or they feared about negative influence of the city on her. In case of Muslim women wider family members, neighbours and community play decisive role in the educational trajectory. Also, sometime these people in tandem works as a barrier for pursuit of higher education of Muslim women. Study also noted that the general notion of religion of being obstruction for the Muslim women in pursuit of education is wrong and found it be very complex. Saxena (2014) studied the Muslim women of India and Pakistan who attain higher education and forced to leave the study owing to various reason other than religious affiliations. It was found that traditional religion defines the women lives in many ways and issues like early marriage, transportation, access to basic education, all Girls College, societal pressure and religious concerns are prevalent in both countries. Religion has been found to be one of the chief components of failure of enrolment of Muslim women in the higher education. However, some women have defied it and went ahead for higher education and attained higher status in society. There has been encouraging outcome of government policies for empowering the girl child in the high literacy state of Kerala. In Pakistan, situation of women has very slow improvement in some places and none at all at others. It was suggested that there is need to control over Taliban Phenomenon and overall societal approach towards women's education for higher attainment of women. Women from both countries who attained higher education admit that family support is mandatory to realize their dream and suggest strong support system can change the scenario of women. In both countries, the scenario can change and it can only happen if policy makers take concrete step in educational reform. There is need to get rid of rigid ideas, gender biased curriculum, religious beliefs, rote learning and power dynamics. Sahu et al., (2016) in their study found that financial constraint plays very important role in determining women's educational trajectories, duration and quality of educational experience. Financial condition of the family plays a significant role to have the approval to go through the higher education and also determines the quality of education and even limit subject choice. It was found women from affluent family can go for high paid college of their choice while

other could not even go for Government College due to acute financial condition. Indian society is characterized by division of caste, class, religion, region and sex. Muslims are predominant minority group with high degree of urbanisation spread all over the country. In India, apart from Muslims and Neo-Buddhist other socio-religious group like Sikh, Christian and Parsi have relatively fair representation in higher education and they cannot be considered as educationally backward group.

Abidi & Kazmi (2019) in a study analyzed educational backwardness of Muslim girls in higher education. The article tried to uncover the socio-cultural and educational factors that works as barriers in their educational participation. The authors located several factors like financial constraints, lack of safety and security for women in public space, gender bias, gossip and social control on them by the family and the community as the major reason for marginalization of Muslim women in higher education. It was found that Muslim financial barrier is the most important factor that hamper their chances of entering in higher education and in case of scarcity resources familial support is usually directed towards the education of son who is considered as a future bread winner of the family. Moreover, communal factors, such as identity politics, Muslims spatial segregation and family and community dynamics, are also play important in the educational marginalization of the Muslim women. Authors concluded that financial constraints – not the religious conservatism is the most critical factor that work as impairment in the educational attainment of Muslim women. Similarly, emphasizing the case of Hyderabad Syed Mehdi Hasan mentioned in his paper ‘Muslim Women and Higher Education: A case study of Hyderabad’, found that education and socio-economic status are closely related but education is also conditioned by the prevalent value system in the society. Saudi Arabia is country where there is no problem of per capita income however there is low literacy in general and women in particular. But scenario is changing nowadays and people developing positive attitude. Study also reveals that if a family having educated father, it is highly probable that female member goes through process of education. In the majority of the cases where father is poor, rickshaw pullers, mechanics, vendors there is not much

motivation for female literacy. It was also found that economically backward Muslim who reside in urban areas are also unconcerned to women education. Similarly, Muslim population comprises artisans do not see benefit in sending their ward to school. Studies also tried to understand the perception of Muslim women regarding higher education, however in Indian context these studies are rare particularly that focuses on how Muslim women make sense of overall higher education and changes they perceive in themselves.

Ministry of Women and Child Development (2007) found that, women belonging to the identical faith might have diverse settings which are influenced by their earning capacity, employment, rural-urban setup, educational level, and so on. While in minority clusters, some females survive Below the Poverty line whereas others enjoy a higher standard of living. Moreover, caste separations also impact the status of women, hence, women share certain common features of social and monetary discrimination. The study observed that women's traditionally defined roles and the socializing agent does not present any alternative attitudinal behaviour representations which also limits their self-development. Commenting on Muslim minority perception the study found that the apprehension that the secular state schools do not impart any religious education, will pollute the minds of Muslim kids is amplified by the Muslim clerics who indorse only traditional Islamic education for Muslim children for the purity of thought and behaviour. It is also a fact that majority of educators and officers of government schools being principally Hindu, certain signs and rites are practical like hanging picture/statues of Sarasvati perceived as blasphemous in Islam by Muslim clerics. These perception in tandem works as constraint in the educational aspiration of the Muslim.

Ben Natan, Ashkenazi, & Masarwe (2016) in their study identified the elements that influences the intent of Muslim Arab women in Israel to attend prenatal classes using the Theory of Planned Behaviour. It was found that women belief and attitude play a crucial role in attending the parental classes other than perceived social pressure applied by the significant other. The study also shows that spouse play a very crucial role in decision making of the women to attend

the prenatal classes. Other factors that remained significant was age and years of education. Moreover, study also reveals that geographical distance (accessible location for classes), language barrier (medium of instruction) remained significant impairment for the women in attending the prenatal classes. The study concluded that there is a need of 'transcultural sensitivity' from the practitioners for the inclusion of Arab Muslims in such activities.

Oplatka & Lapidot (2012) tried to find out enabling factors that helped Arab graduate women to apply for the higher degree and succeed. It was found positive perception of higher education among the Arab society have much influence upon their decision to continue for higher study. Moreover, it was noted by the authors that family support particularly the academic atmosphere at home, play a decisive role in the academic growth of the women. Other determinants that remained significant were perception about their teachers as a role model at high school, the individual's personal drive for learning, the husband's support and academic atmosphere at local community. Authors concluded that positive attitudes towards higher education together with the several positive elements are needed to internalize academic goal of women in Arab society.

Gender Disparity, Muslim and Higher Education

Commenting on the marginalisation of Muslim women (Rastogi, 2007) observed that Muslim women broadly belong to marginalised section of society and further marginalised due to the gender. Author argues that reforming forces are often moderated by historic hindrance and religious discrimination. In history, occupational and educational mobility in India has been limited. Prejudiced by an occupationally grounded caste system, people have been normally anticipated to remain in the same social and economic position as their parentages and descendants. Though this is shifting for some underprivileged groups, particularly Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) who benefited from affirmative programmes in public employment and education, but Muslims are mostly do not find the money for this backing in spite of the difficulties they face. The disadvantage Muslims have experienced in the past

and continue to experience is in part a product of religious discrimination. Muslims face significant discrimination in both service and education. Author provides that Muslim men and particularly women have lower levels of wage employment and education because of past and current disadvantage and discrimination. Additionally, this hindrance may have deepened in recent decades due to increased communal tensions.

Shah & Khurshid (2017) tried to examine how women used their distinct educated identity to construct what it means to be empowered Muslim women by focusing the lived experiences of educated Muslim women from two diverse background. Illustrating two case studies of Rashida and Noreen from India and Pakistan authors observed that for Rashida, being a Muslim in a Hindu dominated society meant inhabiting an inferior caste-like status. Education provided her access to opportunities in terms of job, resources, mobility to public spaces and higher status in her family and roles which provides her certain privileges and reinstated her personality from other women in her community. However, empowerment for her means is specific norms of Muslim family and community rather than the larger Indian society. Similarly, Noreen, an educated Muslim woman in a Punjabi village of Pakistan, confronted the 'othering' of her family through mobilizing Islam. She referred to her distinct status an educated and empowered woman by mentioning 'her access to economic resources, male-dominated spaces, public mobility, and higher status in the family'. Thus, the notion and practices of empowerment for Noreen meant violating some of the social norms that were aligned with Islam. This comparative ethnographic lens provides critical insights into context-specific and tentative notions of not only education and empowerment but also Islam.

Chanana (2012) in an article on inclusion of women in higher education argue that Indian women are similar to women from other place, are diverse and the social system of stratification is echoed in differential access to women from different socio-economic groups. It was found that higher education was mostly publicly funded till the early 1990. However, post economic reforms privatisation of education is ever increasing. Moreover, it also remained

subsidised to an excessive degree even then, the gender gap was high which was shoddier for the females from underprivileged groups. The state governments allowed the setting up of new private unaided “and for-profit institutions called self-financing’ colleges or universities which offered the market driven subjects. Author concluded that though, the state policy and public discussion on education put a premium on the necessity to encourage education among girls ironically it is shaped by the social contours surrounding the societal notion of the feminine role.

Fehmi (2011) in her study found that due to religious cultural barriers of Muslim society women are at the receiving end in the multicultural India. She reveals that Muslim womenfolk usually left out of the good experience due to the burden of patriarchal concept of gender separation in all walks of life. There is an enormous loss in such institutes where they do not get to encounter even with girls from other social order. This works as a huge handicap in contemporary times. Additionally, it is not just a loss for these Muslim girls but then again also for the non-Muslim larger community that has been bereft of this mutual exposure. Besides, such an unsuitable and deficit-ridden teaching does not fulfil the basic purpose of whirling a person into a socially useful human resource. Further, as these pupils reach graduation level all the subjects, they have studied through Urdu standard of language are taught in English in universities, generating an undefeatable cleavage in comprehending what is being taught in class or the textbooks that come only in English for each subject. “Their education up till higher secondary level becomes outmoded all of a sudden and they realise that they are not equipped with the basic terminologies and lack the language proficiency to express and engage in class as well as unable to pursue whatever they wish to study further”.

In an important study Rajan (2011) contends for education for women as a right not as a virtue to the family and society as this is much propagated for educating girl child. Author argues that ‘in spite of nuanced understanding of equality, most public plans are grounded on slender expectations because education is not consider as right of the girl child rather a responsibility or

burden on the family. Additionally, knowledge and education that reproduces such traditional discourses discriminate and not recognise women's rights as human rights.

Jayaveera (1997) found differential impact of gender norms and expectations on educational prospect and its processes. It was also found that in most countries higher education is an opportunity to get remunerative employment, non-schooling is not considered as an obstacle, as people are usually engaged in unskilled economic activities. While in few countries, education is seen as an opportunity for upward mobility, in other countries there is a discrimination among boys and girls as boys are perceived as future breadwinners. Moreover, gender role assumptions and stereotypes in educational curriculum and school environment stimulate negative self-image in girls that could hamper their personal development was observed from the data that traditional male-controlled values, kinship and legal structures regulate women's access to resources and further 'limit women's social space and gender equality in the total spectrum of family issues'. Author concluded that access to education has enhanced the quality of life of a woman in a very limited sense and it has not been able to counter socio-economic constraints that spread poverty and social class differentiation.

Jacobs (1996) reviews a number of literatures on gender and higher education. The author made an important observation that gender inequality is more visible in some facets of the higher education system than others. Highlighting the case of United States, she noted that women are comparatively well in the area of access but less sound in terms of college experience and appear underprivileged with respect to outcome of the schooling. Therefore, access, process, and outcomes which are significant elements of the higher education must be analysed separately. Critiquing the comparative historical research, the author tried to explain the problem of access by revealing the case of Muslim women. She noted that in traditional Muslim societies the demand for the separate school for boys and girl may reduce access for the girls. The education of girl is also hampered by distance to schools which creates panic among the parents

regarding 'safety, propriety and loss of daughter's time for household chores. However these things are more visible in third world countries.

Thasniya (2014) tried to examine the status of girls' higher education in the era of globalization with respect to access, quality and enrolment rates in various disciplines. It was found that less importance given to women's education as the marriage of the girl is more prioritised than employment. The author revealed that the foremost cause for low levels of registration of women in professional courses is the high fee. Moreover, in a male dominated social order it is outside the resources of women to manage these financial constraints. As a result, women choose traditional education rather than professional or technical education which also has little prospect for job.

In a study of Kerala Edannur, PK, & Myers (2014) noted that gender is significantly influencing in the chances for higher education. Author further revealed that very limited female respondents received education above graduation as compared to males. This may be owing to the obstacles of early marriage as mentioned by earlier researches. The gulf money which referred as 'income effect' too may be the reason for the low level of labour participation. Therefore, number of women in the profession as well labour market outside the household is meagre.

Katiyar (2016) studied the gender disparity in education in India revealed that gender inequality enlarged continuously from 1901 to 1961 and for the first-time gender disparity decreased by 1.08 per cent in 1971. In 1981, and it again amplified by 2.67 percent from then it has been constantly decreasing. Study found that the state of Rajasthan has the extreme gender disparity in both rural and urban areas. In the meantime, the state of Meghalaya has the least gender disparity in rural areas and Mizoram has the lowest disparity in urban areas. The author concluded that there is an opposite relationship between literacy and gender disparity; it discloses that there is more gender disparity in rural areas than in urban areas. Author also provides that there is no state in India which has a better rate of female literacy than that of males. So, there is a demanding

need to emphasis on female literacy in all areas, mainly rural areas to address the issue of gender disparity.

In a study of Kerala on the social inclusion of Muslim Cherayi & Jose, (2016) revealed that Muslim women as a marginalized group usually left out in their familial and social life. They have low personal autonomy, little impact on household decision making and political empowerment. Thus, there is needed to examine Muslim women's empowerment in different domains of life and encourage women's access of through formal and informal institutions of justice and insure their inclusion in familial and social life. For this author hypothesized a model (figure-1) to elucidate how women's empowerment accelerates social inclusion. This model assumes that different aspects of women's empowerment such as social, economic, psychological and political, expressively persuade the process of social inclusion of women. The model proposes that the women with high individual authority considerably influenced family decision-making and other important aspects of everyday life. In the contrary, those who enjoy less participation in household decision-making reported less scores on other indicators of empowerment. "As per the model women who have significant influence in household decisions in the domains of health care, household purchases and daily necessities, and enjoyed access to resources, and own significant power to use in household resources, improved their level of empowerment". It ultimately helps in promoting just and inclusive society and further stimulate the higher education of women.

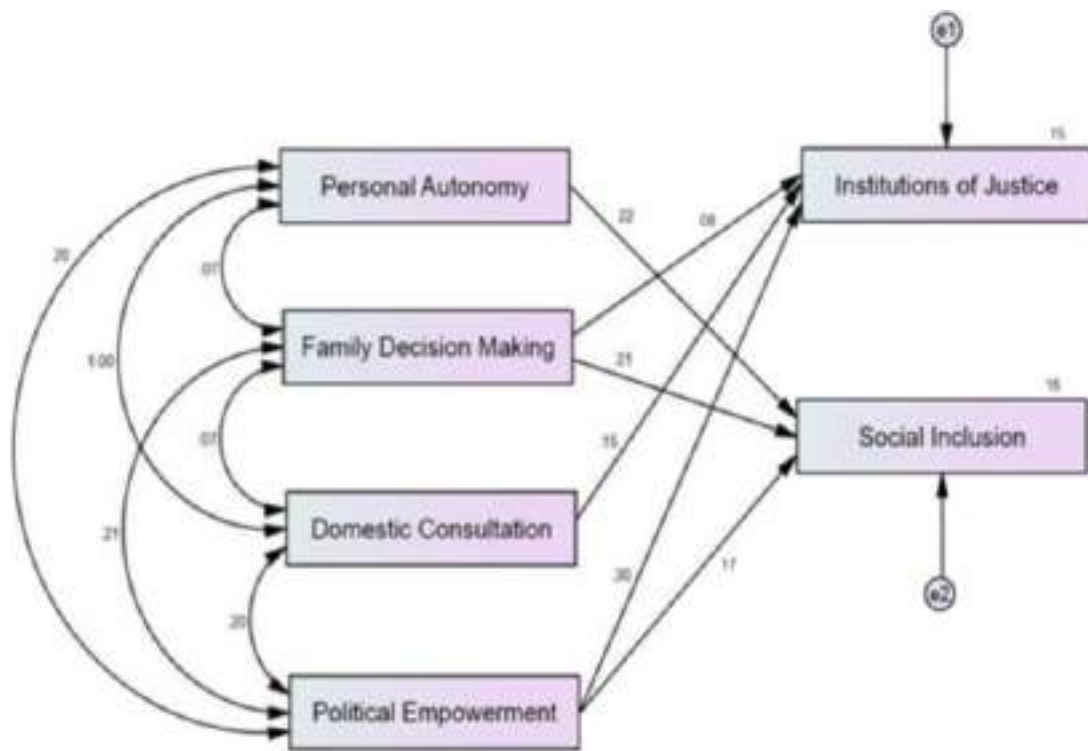


Figure 1 Path diagram of social inclusion model after structural equation modelling. Source: (Cherayi & Jose, 2016)

Al-deen (2019) in her study on the Muslim female students of Australia tried to understand how these women interpret and utilised the notion of agency in pursuit of their higher education. It was found that familial support particularly the support and encouragement of the parents played a crucial role in shaping the professional career of the women. However, in some instances the choice of courses and institutions was decided in a negotiation between the young women and their families. It was noted by the author that despite of the challenges some women encountered in negotiating with their families, they unequivocally credited their success in educational trajectories to the different forms of parental support. It was also found that women ‘desire for future financial independence and upward social mobility inspired Muslim women for higher education degrees. Moreover, opportunity to study and achieve academic success was also motivating factor for the young women. The article also highlighted that Muslim woman, “racialized and gendered Islamophobia discourses of Muslim women and Islam threaten to negatively impact the young

women's potential, particularly in a competitive job market". However, the young Muslim women abilities to confront these obstacles in the form of negotiation with traditional values, determination for upward social mobility, challenging inequality and discrimination are great example of Muslim women's exercising their agency.

Globalization and Higher Education

Chanana (2007) studied the impact globalisation on women education in India and tried to understand how subject preferences has changed owing to the need of the market economy. Author found that globalization has changed the world into a global market and the there is a direct relation among the industry and higher education. There has been a consistent change in the boundaries between arts and science subjects and globalisation has brought a transformation in the skills required to get jobs. The stratification flanked by arts and science and courses associated to biosciences like molecular natural science, microbiology, biochemistry, biophysics are favourite over biology, physics and chemistry. Moreover, new disciplines such as management, media and mass communication, fashion technology have also taken their room in the direction of the higher end of the spectrum. The private institutions are very quick to respond that has led to the devaluation of subjects in the humanities and social sciences. Author further argues that the new disciplines which are accessible in the public and private sector higher education, appear to meet the ambitions of only a sectional of young women and their parents in cities to be jobwise qualified, to have a career, to earn to be independent. In their case, gender and class overlap in overcoming the outmoded barricades to women's education". It can be inferred from the article that still women are lagging behind in higher education of professional courses owing to patriarchal values and social traditions, when this argument is extended to Muslim women's they too are under heavy pressure from religious and societal norms. Hence, more probably they too are misrepresented in vocational higher educations. Similarly, Agarwal (2007) in h a study found that since 1980s, there was an unexpected demand for quality higher education pertinent to the needs of business and industry. This

has led substantial stress on governmental resources owing to financial restraints, as the government found it tough to set up new campuses and colleges. This resulted into withdrawal of the government from taking additional responsibility for higher education. As a result, public universities and colleges have started self-financing courses, distance education programmes and private institutions have flourished over the years. Private higher education establishments that were the main site for growth in enrolment in the post-1980 era offered courses in subjects partaking a market-demand, for instance engineering and technology, medicine, teacher education at the undergraduate level, computer applications and management at the postgraduate level. It was found that more than eighty per cent of all enrolments in professional courses are in the private sector.

Highlighting the case privatisation on the education (Bhoi, 2013) studied the impact of privatisation of Indian market on higher education and illustrated how it affected marginalised community, which can be inferred to Muslims in general and Muslim women in particular owing to their well-researched economic condition. Author reveals that most countries adopted the principles of market-driven economy in their educational system. India also was entombed into the framework envisioned in the policies of World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1994 and General agreement on tariffs and trade (GATT)⁸ in 1996 and was hard-pressed to adopt privatization of its education system. In this changeover, it has increasingly become unbearable for the marginal and poor people to access institutions of higher education. As a result, higher education is to be a luxury good and a domination of the rich. More privileged sections of the populace are gifted to access the educational prospects generated by market forces. Under the ‘privatisation, the refinancing higher education institutes or the self-financing courses in public academies are also threat signals for Indian higher education where currency plays a power play in the higher education market by neglecting merits and equity’. Provided the financial constraint of

⁸ <https://www.thebalance.com/gatt-purpose-history-pros-cons-3305578>

Muslim in India this adds to the woes of Muslim women who aspire for higher education.

Verma, (2014) studied opportunities and challenges to women facing in higher education found that post-liberalisation and globalisation unlocked up the doors of higher education for women across all sections of society yet in practice even today cultural domination flourishes in the educational organizations reproducing gender/class and caste dominance and disseminating new patterns of disparity. Author argues that education is still stuck within the traditional parameters of social structure. It remains a task for higher education to teach appreciation for difference of socio-cultural background rather than fashioning division on new parameters. The study also revealed that knowledge in higher education institutions is working to reproduce male dominated structure, which promotes the gender exclusion. The complexity of discrimination of women, in various circumstances counters the ideas stated in Indian education, especially those regarding policies of equal opportunity for all in terms of access and reasonable representation in the promotion of ideals of gender equality.

Kumar (2014) studied the impact of economic reforms on higher education found that privatisation is creating cleavages in Indian society. Author argues that 'public capitals have been used to fund the enlargement of the private segment in India. Not only this privatisation has shaped a rich class of college proprietors belonging to the higher and middle castes, it has also heightened disparity of access to higher education'. A large number of graduates of private colleges either end up enrolling in additional courses to improve their qualifications or taking jobs at meagre salaries. Poor students particularly the marginalised groups' students are stuck in the web of private colleges. Consequently, the result is replica of caste and class, and pure instrumentalization of knowledge and qualifications. Author concludes that this look like the universal trend of public goods being moved to private players while the state may be seen scheming with the market.

Higher Education and Necessity of Affirmative Action

Ghosh, (2004) counters to those who argue for meritocracy in higher education and argues for reservation for making assured representation of marginalized communities in India. She however accepts that this not an impeccable solution but the economic disparity which crates hindrance to all and marginalised in particular requires a separate and specific set of measures which must operate for rectifying social discrimination. She illustrated that one important way to deal with it in higher education, is a system of blind admission in all institutions combined with very extensive provision of scholarships in public institution as well as to privately maintained institutions to prevent students from lack of resources (Ghosh, 2006). Nevertheless, the article didn't explicitly talk about Muslim marginalized groups but this scholarship scheme will have paramount to Muslim women attaining higher education as the financial constraints remained a most significance issue till now. Commenting on the benefits of special provisions on the higher education of marginalised sections of the society Wankhede (2008) tries to investigate into what happens to the beneficiaries of special provisions while they are pursuing higher education found that structured inequalities cannot be alleviated only through curative actions given the detrimental conditions of the group. Traditional factors limit the effect of modern factors such as skills, knowledge, competition and performance. The author noted that higher education in India fails to prepare students to entirely overcome the bounds and irons of the caste system that lead to numerous handicaps in communal life and also in higher education. Still, there is no feasible substitute to higher education to this important section of the Indian population, the scheduled castes (SCs) as a means to attain societal mobility in a bolted society like India. So, it is relevant also to appreciate and draw experiences of such caring instruments like the Post Matric Scholarship (PMC) arrangement at the higher education level provided to such segments of the society. The author conclude that PMS scheme is not very beneficial for higher education (Wankhede; 2008). Though this study is regarding the schemes for higher education to the non-Muslim marginalized section of

society, this sort of consistent implementation of scheme will also be of immense benefits for the Muslim women who in many a case leaves higher education in the absence of financial support. As provided in discussion section of this thesis.

Rao & Chatrapathi (2005) tried to access the implementation of governmental policies, programmes and facilities in higher education for disadvantaged section of the society. The data was collected from 29 universities. It was found that majorities of universities followed the reservation policy however ten percent of the university remained silent on this question. Most of the universities were found to follow the roster system. It was found that universities have provision for marginalised sections concerning to decrease in the entry requirements apart from monetary provisions to channelized their access in higher education. However, most of the institutions didn't have any specific policy for women and physically challenged person. The main shortcoming of this study was that, of the total sample universities 66 percent were belonged to states/Union Territories. Secondly, it didn't provide any specific reference to Muslim women concerning the above-mentioned things.

Sahni & Kalyan (2012) found that post-independence situation is improved for women, yet they lag behind substantially to their counterpart male. Study noted that lack of all-inclusiveness for girls in engineering can be outlined at the level of application and admission numbers. There is a wide gulf in the quantum of 'seats' available, extending into 'seats available under reservations for girls. It could be supported that in the absence of gender reservations, the admission of girls would be more constrained in the established centres too. In recognized centres (Pune, Mumbai), there is better utilization of ladies' provisions ensuing in more engendered sharing in professional courses. It was noted that a larger number of girls can enter engineering by availing the girl's reservation quotas. While girls' participation is higher in Pune across both 'open and reserved categories', it is still soaring about the 30 percent mark the officially reserved threshold for girls' reservations. Authors concludes that it is the reservation of

seats which ensure quite good representation of women in Maharashtra, else their situation could not better.

Tilak (2015) in an important study on higher education under title “*who participates in higher education in India? Rethinking the role of affirmative action*”, found that there is shortage of quality higher education institutions in India therefore author emphasized to ensure reservation policy for adequate representation of different social groups. It was noted that though reservation policy is implemented, still the participation rates are lower than average for SCs, STs, OBCs and Muslims in all measures of full sample. One important aspect that was noticed in this research is that, Muslims and other minorities depend predominantly on private institutions in higher education. It further provides that ‘in response to the growing demand for higher education, there has been an increase in the ‘amount of higher education institutions but to utter dismay quality of these institutions leaves much to be desired’. Though this paper does not deal with the Muslim women’s in higher education but still it can be inferred that if reservation policy for schedule caste and to STs and OBCs do not meet the needs and aspirations then how Muslims women who are devoid of any affirmative action asks for major help to catch up the race in higher education (Basant & Sen, 2010). Sachar Committee also advocated for the scholarship scheme for Muslim women who constitute the most disadvantaged groups among all the socio-religious categories can meet the demands of private institutes and pursue their higher education.

Summary

After the review of literature, it is realized that disparity and marginalisation is shrinking but not up to satisfactory level. There are different barriers that a woman in general and Muslim women in particular faces during their way to higher education. Barriers includes poverty, lack of infrastructure, poor quality of education, distance of educational institution from home, marriage, cultural pressure, opposition to the co-education, public place safety etc. Further it can be said that overall education is not impressive. As a researcher we are witnessing an extreme privatisation of education in India, which is extensively

argued by many authors above. There is chain of good education system, which is fairly expensive given the extreme destitute sections of the Indian society. Therefore, private institutions are distant dream for them and especially for Muslims. Moreover, if one cannot get good secondary school then it is quite difficult to get admission in public funded universities which are instrumental in providing education at reasonable cost. Owing to poor schooling, Muslim minority are invisible in higher education and Muslim women in particular.

We are living in knowledge economy age where to succeed in any field of life, education is imperative. In past few years governments, civil societies and other religious organisations have initiated programmes to impart education to marginalised sections which is commendable however colossal effort is needed for Muslim women who are not only backward in terms education, employability but also faces multiple form of discrimination in their everyday life. There are many studies regarding representation of the women in higher education but still fairly limited study is carried out on Muslim women about their higher education in India. As we know there is no provision reservation for Muslim women in higher education like other backward communities (SCs and STs). This calls for more studies on Muslim women concerning their underrepresentation in higher education. Provided this, an attempt is made through this dissertation to understand the contexts from which Muslim women are coming for the persuasion of higher education and during the course what are the impediments they face and how they overcome in these challenges through the support system and what is positive change they perceive in themselves, their family and in larger community while attaining their much-deserved higher education.

CHAPTER-3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter deals with philosophical approach of research such as what is the nature of reality (ontology), what is nature of knowledge expected from study (epistemology) and accordingly by what appropriate means that knowledge has been known methodology (Crotty, 2020; Moon & Blackman, 2014). Research Philosophies (ontology and epistemology) has its assumptions about reality/being/existence of phenomenon and knowledge expected from phenomenon in the form of research findings to fulfil research objective. Once the philosophical stance of study was decided in the light of research objective, it guided the researcher how that knowledge can be acquired through specific methodology. Philosophical stance of study resonated in research approach, design, method, data analysis etc.

Research Objectives

1. To understand and describe the phenomenon of pursuance of Higher Education among Muslim women from Darbhanga.
2. To understand and describe the reason of low participation of Muslim women in Higher education from their perspective.
3. To understand and describe challenging and supportive factors for pursuance of Higher education by Muslim women.
4. To know, whether conceptual understanding can be developed for social worker in the field of education that may help to improve higher education among Muslim women?

Research Questions

1. What are different challenges Muslim women face at individual, family and community level while following the educational trajectory to higher education?

2. What are the supporting factors at individual, family and community level that facilitate and ease Muslim women journey to higher education?
3. What are the consequences that developed/perceived at individual, family and community level as a result of they have reached to the level of higher education?
4. In what ways Muslim women educational life is influenced by themselves, family and community?
5. What is the nature of role of marriage in determining pursuance of higher education by Muslim women?
6. What kind of pressure a parent has to face when it comes to providing higher education to their daughter?

Research Philosophy

Source, nature and development of knowledge are concern of research philosophy. In simple terms, research philosophy deals with the belief and assumption about the reality of phenomenon (Crossan, 2003). The phenomenon undertaken in this research is to know about context, consequences, challenges and support to Muslim women who are pursuing higher education. Towards the completion of research, answer to the research question has yield as knowledge. Depending on the nature of study, how reality can be known about undertaken phenomenon will be the concern of research philosophy. It would further determine the course of research methodology.

Ontology

Ontology and epistemology are two mutually interwoven aspect of research philosophy. Ontology in this study can be defined as “the science or study of being” and it deals with nature of reality (Bryman, 2015; Crotty, 2020). Relativism is the ontological position of this research and view the undertaken phenomenon is the outcome of interplay and interaction of social actors concerned with its existence. Relativism has the ontological position which assumes that meaning of social phenomenon is dependent on social actors and

it is continuous process (Paleček & Risjord, 2013). It helped the study in determining the research design. In this research, the reality about context, consequences, challenges and support has to be enquired in relation to Muslim women who are pursuing higher education. Respondents' experiences about their context they come from, challenges they faced and support they found and consequences they developed are outcome of the interaction of social actors such as Muslim women themselves, family (parents, siblings, grandparents) and the larger community (neighbours, people in society and educational institution). And these experiences have been constructed as the interaction between them take place. The meaning to their experiences has been changing with time and space and the narratives below are the testimony to their experience and change that has taken place.

Context

Context play an important role in which Muslim women reality is formed through varied experience. Educational history of family, educational environment outside family, rural/urban, nuclear/joint family, educational environment outside family has been considered contexts in which experience of Muslim women gradually shapes. This study arguably assume that Muslim women have lived their lives with parents and siblings who have certain educational qualification. They have upbringing in the certain kind of academic environment within and outside the family. Further, they lived in rural or urban centres, therefore social milieu also gives meaning to their experiences. Thus, the contexts have influenced some way or other way. The reality concerning their challenges, support and consequences also got constructed with other social actors in the family and community.

Challenges

Challenges faced by Muslim women have emerged from the interaction with their family, community also during their trajectory to higher education. These challenges had also potential to influence negatively.

Support

Muslim women received not only the challenges but also support that enabled them to reach higher level of education. Like challenges, the experiences of support they received also come from the same social actors like family and community. It was apparent from the narratives that parents, siblings, elders in the family, teachers are social actors have extended their support in different way to Muslim women in reaching to higher level of education.

Consequences

Consequences are those changes developed in Muslim women as a result of reaching and pursuing higher education. These consequences have developed as result of support and challenges they faced keeping their aspiration alive. Again, different social actors (Muslim women herself, family, and community) facilitated to find change in themselves. Interesting to mention here, change developed in Muslim women also brought changes in family and community as well. This research finds realism not suitable as ontological position citing the specific reason that objectivism assumes about the nature of reality (reality is static, objective and independent of the people involved and can be understood through suitable instruments) that is social phenomenon is independent of social actors. Therefore, in this study, it is assumed that meaning to the reality of social phenomenon is constructed through the interaction and interplay of different social entities and actors. This Study believes that respondents have different and distinctive experience which dynamic in nature and got constructed rather than its eternal presence. Ontological choice further facilitated this study to choose choice of epistemology, research approach and data collection method. This choice will be discussed and illustrated as the things evolve afterwards in this vary chapter.

Epistemology

Epistemology is branch of philosophy dealing with sources of knowledge. Epistemology set criteria in any study to determine that what will be considered as acceptable knowledge and what constitute knowledge (Crotty, 2020; Joshi, 2015; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Different research

philosophy have respective theories of knowledge or acceptable knowledge and consequently they have their own ways of finding knowledge (Berringer, 2019). Research objective and research question of this study suggest interpretivist (constructionism) as epistemological position which assumes acceptable knowledge can be created through meaning making of the respondent experience and its details registered in narratives from interviews. Ultimately knowledge that is answers to research question has to be produced through engagement of researcher and respondents through interviews revolving around research objective (Denzin & Lincoln, 2006). Thus, this research argues the interpretivism is right epistemological position. One of the objectives of this research is to locate the plausible factors responsible for low enrolment of Muslim women in the higher education. Apart from that what consequences they developed as result of entering into higher education. This particular question has a potential to answer the reason behind the drop out of Muslim women in higher education. This answer will also serve the purpose, that what are expected consequences on Muslim women. Therefore, in order to achieve research objective, an effort has been made to know the context, challenges, support and consequences of Muslim women who are pursuing higher education. Study intended to answer these questions from Muslim women perspective. Each respondent has distinctive set of experiences in their families and communities in relation to their context, consequences, support and challenges they faced during their higher education trajectory. Thus, study tries to find the meaning of those experiences to answer the research objective.

Methodology

Methodology is the strategy, plan of action, process or design, lying behind choice and use of particular method and linking the choice and use of method to the desired outcome (Crotty, 2020; Denzin & Lincoln, 2006; Rubin & Babbie, 2016).

Study Design

This study has used qualitative descriptive research design. It was used and considered appropriate to understand and describe the various experiences concerning challenges, support and consequences. The research design of study touches almost all facets of research, from minute details of data collection to the selection of the techniques of data analysis (Ragin, 1994). In another words research design is plan, strategy or blue print about how the research questions have been answered.

Research Locale

Darbhangha is the research locale in my study. Darbhanga is one of the 38 districts situated in the Mithlanchal region of Bihar. Almost fifty percent (49.4 percent) of the women are literate in the age group of (15-49). There are only 22.7 percent of women with 10 or more year of schooling in the age group 15-49. In Darbhanga, 45.1 percent women in age group 20-24 years married before age of 18 years in 2019 as opposed to 44.3 percent in 2015 (IIPS & ICF, 2019).

Profile of the Respondent

3.1 Respondents' Profile

Name	Age	Course Pursuing	Marital Status	No. of Sibling (F+M)	Father Occupation	Mother Occupation
IDI-01	24	Diploma*	Married	2+2=4	Shopkeeper	Housewife
IDI-02	21	B.Tech	Unmarried	1+1=2	Farmer	Housewife
IDI-03	26	M.Ed.	Married	3+2=5	Doctor	Housewife
IDI-04	21	B.Tech	Unmarried	0+1=1	Engineer	Housewife
IDI-05	26	M.Ed.	Unmarried*	0+1=1	Professor	Teacher
IDI-06	28	Ph.D.	Unmarried	2+4=6	Farmer	Govt. Job
IDI-07	22	B.Tech	Unmarried	1+0=1	Teacher	Housewife
IDI-08	22	B.Tech	Unmarried	1+3=4	Businessman	Housewife
IDI-09	25	M.Sc.	Married	1+2=3	Pharmacist	Housewife
IDI-10	23	MSW	Unmarried	2+2=4	Businessman	Housewife

IDI-11	23	MCA	Unmarried	0+2=2	Private Job	Housewife
IDI-12	26	M.A.	Married	0+3=3	Teacher	Housewife
IDI-13	27	Ph.D.	Unmarried	2+2=4	Businessman	Housewife
IDI-14	25	M. Tech.	Unmarried	1+2=3	Businessman	Housewife

Profile of the Respondents include age, course pursuing, marital status, number of siblings, occupation of the parents. Name of respondent has been deliberately concealed for maintaining confidentiality. IDI-X corresponds to the name of respondents. Youngest respondent has age of 21 who was doing B. Tech while oldest respondent has age of 28 who was doing PhD at the time of interview. There are two respondents, each with age 21, 22, 23. There are maximum three respondent with same age of 26. There is one respondent each with age 24, 27, 28. Respondents were pursuing very diverse course in higher education. One exception needs to be mentioned that IDI-1 was pursuing Diploma in engineering. The reason of her inclusion in the study was that she was pursuing Diploma after the completion of graduation. That is why age of respondent and course she pursuing seems very unusual. Respondent with highest degree of course pursuing is PhD and lowest is Diploma. B. Tec is the course preferred by maximum four respondents. Diploma, M.Sc., MCA, MSW, MA and MTech are the course pursued by one respondent each. There are four married respondents and rest are unmarried. Four respondents who are married have age of 23, 24, 25 and 26. Three of them pursuing master degree and one doing Diploma. There are two unmarried respondent each with 21, 22, 23 years age. There were four unmarried respondent each with age 25, 26, 27 and 28 years. This information is important to mention here as the respondents have already passed the age at which girls are married or when people start to suggest marriage for daughter. What narratives they have share also get substantiated by the above-mentioned information. Parents have negotiated with social pressure created for marriage of girls. At least the parents of respondents with age 25,26,27,28 years had put very deliberate and conscious effort for their daughter higher education. Maximum and minimum number of siblings is 6 and 1 respectively. There are three respondents with one sibling. There is maximum

four respondents with 3 siblings each. There are two farmers, job holder, businessmen, engineer, teacher, Professors and Pharmacist are among parents to respondents. There are only two parents who are doing job and rest are housewives. The parents who are doing job have been guiding their daughter from very early age according to narrative shared by them. Other detail is mentioned in detail chapter which has similar purpose.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The present study has aimed to understand and describe the pursuance of higher education among the Muslim women from Darbhanga. All Muslim women from Darbhanga who were pursuing higher education from Maulana Azad National Urdu University were potential participants to the study. Sample was selected through purposive sampling. Availability of Muslim women pursuing higher education from Maulana Azad National Urdu University and their willingness to participate in study formed sampling. They were approached in very informal way and informal style. Approach through formal route may hamper their willingness to share their experience in detail. As far as qualitative study is concerned, there is no way to have a defined number of sample size (Patton, 2002). Therefore, data saturation method is chosen as a criteria for sample size as opposed to representativeness and adequacy in quantitative study (Patton, 2002; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Study started with tentative sample size of 20 in-depth interview. After doing 14 in-depth interviews, interview was stopped because it has reached saturation level as no new themes were emerging from the interviews.

Accessing and Approaching to Respondents

Accessing and approaching respondents gave potential data which helped to understand the phenomenon of higher education. Their concern shows significant reflections. According to purpose of study, Muslim women who were pursuing higher education from Maulana Azad National Urdu University were prospective respondents. They were residing in the girls' hostels. So, researcher had to approach them indirectly. Under such circumstances, three of female fellow research scholars from Department of Social Work were

approached. They happily agreed to cooperate with researcher and help them throughout the interviews. Three of them approached prospective respondent collectively and sometimes individually for the interviews.

Firstly, suitable and prospective respondent were approached and effort was made to establish rapport with them by friendly conversation for one or two days. Prospective respondents were then introduced with purpose of meeting asking them that they were required to participate in an interview. Some of them got ready easily while some got ready after drawing inspiration and courage from who had already participated in interviews. When it turned that they will be interviewed by male student prospective respondent told female research scholar that they were ready to be interviewed by them but not by male scholar. They had concern that what sort of questions would be asked. They were reluctant to interact with male researcher and share their issues or challenges. When female research scholars assured that they would be present at the time of interview, they got ready. Four of them instantly got ready because their family had no issue or restriction on talking with male member. Most of them of them denied to give interview with male person. Major reason behind their denial was that they were not allowed by family to interact with male person in the campus. They feared that if family would know about it, their education might be in trouble and their further education might be compromised. When they got aware with significance of study, they got ready anyhow. It took two days to convince them. They got ready on the condition that if they were not willing to answer any question, they would not be insisted to answer that question. They feared that they had to disclose their personal life. And nine of them said that they would not give interview other than university visiting room. They felt safe in university vising room. They said that it should not be known to anyone particularly boys of the university. Boys might inform my family that could put me in trouble. Two girls totally denied to give interview. One of them told reason that she is not taking part in interview because one of my brothers lived in campus. If he knew it, he would inform my father about that I had an interaction with male person. Girls who got ready, they wanted another girl present during interview. They had to say that girls who talk for one or two

hours with boys, they are not seen with good intension. Girls' name is tagged with boys in bad ways. It is fine talking with boys in the presence of parents. Some girls asked about interview time, some girls gave their own convenient time. They proposed afternoon time because maximum students did not walk around in campus. Respondent felt safe and gave interview. Female fellow research scholar had advantage being senior, that they got permission easily from warden and provost to arrange and facilitate interviews in visiting room. After the completion of interview, they had the concern that 'did they speak well'. Some of them reacted saying it was very difficult to speak in front of male person. Some of them also said, it would be better if a female person had taken their interviews.

Respondent behaviour during interview

As far as their behavior during interviews are concerned, they participated and cooperated very well during interviews. What researcher was told by female fellow research scholar about respondents concerns and the way respondents participated seem contradictory. It might be because they were not used to talk with male person and the assumption they had in their mind. Family restrictions might be another reason therefore such concerns prevailed.

Only passive respondent in terms degree of cooperation

There was only one passive respondent who was just waiting the interview to get over. After the interview, researcher had reflection that she was very indifferent to her education. She was pursuing post-graduation on her husband insistence. Her indifference attitude gave insight about how she emerged from her quality of educational trajectory

Twin respondents

Researcher got an opportunity to interview with twin sisters at the same time. That interview was very insightful. Twin sisters came from same background (context), they had to face same challenges and enjoys same support and developed almost same consequences. But they were different in terms of

academic interest perhaps due individual difference. It gave an idea that individual difference also leaves distinctive mark on the aspiration of the female students.

Very active respondent

This need to be mentioned that (IDI-11) voluntarily came forward for interview only by knowing that someone interviewing girls related to education. It is noteworthy she was very motivated, ambitious, informed towards education. I find her very frank and expressive. She come from the family in which father, mother and one elder brother were against the women education and one of brothers helped her and motivated for all the way to currently pursuing Masters of Computer Science. She herself is courageous girl and a lady with strong will. She is happened to be from researcher neighbouring village.

Cooperative respondent

Apart from cooperation by respondents at the time of interview, one respondent (IDI-14) on request managed and arranged 3-4 respondents for interview when researcher and female fellow research scholar were unable to find new suitable respondent.

Data Handling

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews (IDIs). Interviews were recorded mostly in Hindustani (Hindi & Urdu) language and sometime English language (1 or 2 sentence) spoken by respondents. The recorded interviews were transcribed later on. The process of transcription was fascinating and rigorous at the same time. Fascinating in the sense that narratives were talking to researcher and giving clue about itself. It was rigorous because transcription demanded researcher to move slow, comprehend and reflect. Researcher had to serve good amount of time for this process. While transcribing the interview recording, reflection at the time of interview and reflection at the time of transcription were written together which played instrumental role at the time of coding, analysis, interpretation (meaning making). Transcription was done with caution to prevent data loss. Interviews

were transcribed first in Urdu and then in English. Once the Urdu transcriptions were ready, they were visited and revisited to prevent data loss and add to the reflections. Urdu transcription was transcribed into English with keeping potential narratives in Hindustani language. Finally transcribed interviews were read, reread at different interval of time and simultaneously working on field note, observations made at the time of interviews and reflections emerged from the interviews. Reading and studying transcription was done at different time and at different interval of time. Narrative stopped speaking to researcher. Meanwhile researcher had to take break and work on himself in relation to meaningful deconstruction of self. This enabled to approach interviews' narrative with fresh mind with better understanding. Outcome was very fruitful, researcher felt as if narrative got more vocabulary to talk about itself. After sufficient understanding and reflection, researcher moved to the next stage. Organization of data according to already established frame and coding. Coding emerges as theme and subtheme in the later stage. Study had already four aspect (context, consequences, challenges and support) and which had visualized on three levels (individual, family, community level). Researcher had to organize the narrative within already developed frame. After drawing finding from thematically organized narratives, it developed into conceptual understanding of the problem.

Making Sense of Narrative

Keep reading the narrative unless you unearth the sense beneath it. And try to understand the narrative in the context of whole interview. Narrative sometimes seems inconsistent within the context of whole interview because of respondent wants to conceal some facts for showing respect to elder. Below mentioned are the narratives from respondent (IDI-1) and (IDI-12) which tell the approach adopted and its importance.

1. My father wanted his daughter to be self-dependent.

(Mere abbu chahte hain ki meri ladkiyann is layak ho ki wo apne pao pe khadi hosake)

2. I have not desire of anything, whatsoever parents say, I would love to do job but could notI can if they give permission.
3. Neither my parents nor my in-laws house would allow me for job.

(Na mere sasural wale na ghar wale mujhe job krne denge)

4. My in-laws are very cooperative.

Narrative 2 and 3 are considered as the premises and narrative 1 is conclusion. Conclusion is the false statement because had her father wanted her to be self-dependent, he would have allowed her for job what she wishes. Moreover, he got her daughter married to the place where women doing job is not allowed. Indeed, self-dependency cannot be inculcated by going against her wish of doing job. Narrative 3 and 4 shows that, being cooperative does not mean not allowing her to follow her wish. This respondent has been very vocal with her view but in some places in order to respect or defend her elders gave some inconsistent narrative.

One of the respondents (IDI-12) shared some contradictory statement, one statement cancels the other. Below are the narratives that is not consistent with whole content of the interview.

1. Indeed, change has come. When I first came here, that did not suit me. I was not comfortable with even study and residing here. Gradually I am liking everything. I knew the importance of education after getting here

(Han bilkul tabdili aai hai, jab pehli baar yahan aai to bilkul bhi dil nhi lg raha tha. Padhai likhai se lekar rhne shne tk. Ab har cheez me dhire dhire dil lag rha hai,yahan aane k baad mai padhai ka ahmiyat jaani.)

2. I just want to get back to my home after completion of my post-graduation. My husband wants me to do Ph.D. from here. But I will not do because I am not interested doing it.

(Mai to bas MA khatm krke yahan se jana chahti hun, mere shohar bole yahan se PhD krne k liye, main hi krungi kyunki mere yahan dil nhi lg rha hai.)

If both the narratives are closely looked into, it refers to the disinterest of the respondent in the study. One time she is saying, I knew the importance of education, in the couple of minutes she says despite my husband wish I do not want to do Ph.D. She was found disinterested toward the study. She also mentioned during her interview that she is pursuing post-graduation because of her husband wish and insistence. Study took every possible measure to tackle with these inconsistencies among the narratives in the broader context of each interview. One of the advantages of semi-structured interview was that respondent might not deliberately inhibit, conceal the information so that consistency in their information could be traced by assessing the response in the context of whole content of interview. Researcher never interrupted the respondents while they were speaking. This provided respondent comforting environment. This strategy allowed respondents to feel comfortable at sharing their views without any interruption. They went on sharing minute little detail. Quite frankly, leaving couple of instances they never went very irrelevant. As study demand, on the basis of purpose of meaning making of narratives, narratives have been categorized into following two types for analysis purpose

- Self-Evident Narratives and
- Dependent Narratives

Self-Evident Narratives are those narratives which carry the complete meaning, it does not depend upon other narratives for its meaning.

Dependent Narratives are those narratives which complete its meaning in the presence of other narratives.

Many times, it seems to happen that the things were going chaotic. Revising and recalling research objective and research question and accordingly arranging and rearranging things in meaningful way to hold study together and to keep moving ahead. The questions (in-depth interview guide) put before respondent instead of asking so many questions. Purpose of reaching out to them discloses what questions are to be answered. Our talk begun like this, look, you have a long journey reaching to this stage, you must have faced so many challenges on the way, and those challenges you had faced at different time and still you might

be facing some challenges, share those challenges in detail. You must have found support as well besides challenges, what supported you, share with me in detail. Since you have followed a long trajectory, you must have perceived some changes in you (consequences) and share those changes that developed while following your educational trajectory. Before starting with introduction, interviewer seek oral permission from each respondent for conducting interview and use of audio recorder in order to transcribe the whole interview. Interviewer started with a personal question like let me know about your parents, siblings, grandparents and of course about yourself. Semi-structured interview guide framework derived from research objectives guided the researcher to navigate the interview and purposeful interaction with study respondent. Since respondent were well educated, they understood study quest very well. Interviewer had only to navigate them at three different level. Sometime researcher was required to put question for better clarity and deep understanding of their response. There were a few instances, where respondent could not understand my question, researcher had to rephrase the question to make comprehensible to respondent.

Staying with Narratives to Allow Data to Speak

Staying with narratives to allow data to speak has been most challenging, meaningful and introspective phase for research. As it is known ‘let the data speak’ is one of the pre-requisites for qualitative research. In order to allow data to speak and finding pattern in them, staying long with narratives is indispensable which requires a lot of patience and effort. Until the data begin to speak within proposed research objective and questions, it was quite irritating. Once data starts to speak, they speak too loud and too much. It became challenge to manage them in meaningful and purposeful order. A number of times, it was felt that data speak beyond the boundary research has been set. Perhaps data have independent and variable dimension of meanings but those meanings are instrumental which serve the purpose of answering research question and finding pattern in them. While finding meaning and pattern, data compelled to introspect whether they are being interpreted in the right way, the way it should be done, the way data have meaning in the respondent life. Nature of the content of narratives, meaning of the narrative, sense that provided meaning to the narrative and experience that provided sense to narrative is the route of formation of the narratives. Those routes need to be revisited by researcher indirectly to find meanings in them.

Route of formation of narratives by respondents.



Route of meaning making of narratives by researcher.



The above-mentioned approach has been deployed to serve the purpose of meaning making. This approach enabled researcher dig deep to find himself in respondents' position for the purpose of meaning making.

Nomenclature of Theme and Subtheme

Theme and subtheme should be named in such a way that they represent the basis of theme and subtheme formation. Beside it, theme and subtheme represent meaning and sense of group of narratives under them. In other words, meaning and sense of group of narratives reduced to the single or small group of words forming theme or subtheme. In this study, 'wish to fly' is subtheme under broader theme of 'consequences', under this subtheme whole group of narratives talks about the high aspiration of respondent, they seem to have confident and they want to take flight to their high future aspiration. Respondent doing M.Ed. aspire to do Ph.D. and become professor in university, such narrative does not deserve less than 'wish to fly'. Throughout the theme, subtheme and nomenclature, this approach has been kept in mind.

Maintaining Rigour

Rigour helped researcher to establish confidence in the finding of study. A study is considered credible when it presents an interpretation of a narrative in such a way that respondent sharing that narrative immediately recognize it. The strategies used to establish credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability are reflexivity, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement (sufficient length of time spent with respondents) and using the respondents' words in the final report. The strategy for maintaining rigour are discussed as follows

Prolonged Time Spent with Respondents

Prolonged engagement has limited meaning than usual in this study. Muslim women from Darbhanga who were pursuing higher education in Maulana Azad National Urdu University were respondent. And they were interviewed for limited time at allotted place. Viewing, observing their context was not possible.

Yes, we had interview for sufficient length of time. Some respondents were followed up as well.

Thick Description

Thick description refers to minute little detail of field visit, interaction with respondents, impressions, behaviour of respondent during interview. All little detail of respondent about their gestures (facial expression, eye contact, tone, smile and laughter) and posture during interview were recorded in field notes beside ongoing observation. This was very helpful in recalling the event, meaning of narratives. Some smile gives meaning that contradict the narrative given by respondents. These detail accounts were written in reflexive diaries and discussed with fellow research scholar later on.

Peer Debriefing

Since this study is academic research. Peers had different topics. So, researcher and peers had exchange of thought about one another ongoing work. So, mutual and collective peer debriefing helped researcher to have understanding about truthfulness in transcript, methodology, findings, conceptual understanding about problem and tiny little details. This approach validates the study and make it credible.

Self-reflexivity

Self-reflexivity is a conscious effort by researcher to minimize his subjectivity by revisiting his own belief and values during research. Minimizing subjectivity (biasness) does not mean withdrawal of role of researcher in study but researcher had to critically understand his values and belief so that it could not uncritically affect the study's various aspects. Epistemological stance clearly mentions in study, researcher is co-creator of undertaken reality and it is value laden unlike quantitative research. However, researcher is required to reflect on his own values and beliefs consciously. For this purpose, researcher kept sharing and discussing his own beliefs, values and perspective with fellow research scholar so that they can be kept in check. Researcher maintained reflexive notes at all stages of research process. Focusing problem at hand, co-

creating meaning enabled researcher to deal with reflexivity and minimizing subjectivity. Researcher had to keep reminding himself all the time that he had to keep his belief, values, biases on check, rather curtailing his involvement in co-creating meaning of narrative.

Ethical Consideration and Challenges

Respondents deserve all respect, regard and best treatment realizing their instrumentality in the study. Respondents when indirectly approached they were then already informed about what was the purpose of study what they were expected to deliver. At what site or location and time they were willing to give interview was respected. However, each respondent was informed with purpose of study, what possible question they were expected to answer at time of interview. After getting informed consent, they were asked to allow me to record the session ensuring them that their identity and conversation will be kept confidential and only used for academic research purpose. Researcher had to face challenge in approaching respondents, they were first approached through female fellow research scholar as all prospective respondents who were residing in hostel. Once respondent was willing to participate in study, female fellow research scholar had to take permission from hostel authority to arrange interview with respondents. Accordingly, researcher had to approach them. Researcher had to follow time and place instruction. Interview could be done between afternoon and evening in the place allotted for visitors. Some respondents were generous in giving interview outside hostel but within university campus according to time allotted by them. Researcher sometime had to wait for respondents due to their engagement in exam.

Limitation of the Study

The present study was conducted with Muslim women from Darbhanga who were pursuing higher education from MANUU therefore the study has certain limitation. Firstly, the nature and scope of this is restricted to Darbhanga representing only Muslim women. Since this study adopted qualitative approach through small sample offered in in-depth understanding about context, challenges, support and consequences among Muslim women, the findings of

the study cannot be generalised for Muslim women in other parts of the country. Second limitation of the study is that data collected from Muslim women was based on their recall about their experiences in relation to challenge, support and consequences. So, the collected information might have recall bias. Despite these potential limitations, the study provides deep understanding about experience of challenge, support and consequence of Muslim women from Darbhanga District. Further the study opens a research horizon to compare the experiences with another religious group.

Operational Definition

Context: The context in this study implies what has been background of respondents. The context includes educational history of family (over three generation), educational environment inside and outside family in relation to Muslim women education, rural/urban positioning and types of family (Joint/nuclear).

Challenges: The challenges are those barriers or factors that challenged respondents during their higher educational journey at individual, family and community level from their point of views.

Support: All those factors that facilitated and helped respondents during their educational journey at individual, family, community levels from respondents' perspectives.

Consequences: Consequences means the fruition as result of respondents reaching to the level of higher education on themselves, family and community according to their point of view.

Higher Education: Higher education in this study can be defined as course at graduation level and above

Concept of Muslim women: Concept of Muslim women for respondent, family and community means conception of herself, daughter, and Muslim women respectively in their worldviews.

Place of Higher Education in the Concept of Muslim Women: Place of higher education in the concept of Muslim women means what is the significance and need of higher education in the concept of Muslim women.

Conclusion

This chapter is foundation of research study conducted on Muslim women pursuing higher education. Philosophical perspective of undertaken research problem provides input for the research methodology for the further course of enquiry. Ontology and epistemology deal with study of undertaken social phenomenon and its reality and how those reality can be known respectively. The nature of phenomenon dictates how the reality of undertaken aspect of social phenomenon can be known. Further ontology and epistemology provide the basis and facilitate research methodology. Methodology draws the direction from ontology and epistemology. It further goes on knowing about what research intended to know about. This chapter included research methodology, research design, data analysis etc.

CHAPTER-4 CONTEXTUALIZING RESPONDENT PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction

This chapter includes the information about the Muslim women that includes educational history of family, educational environment in the family, rural/urban background, educational environment outside family which will help in understanding the phenomenon of pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. The chapter present demographic detail to light that helped in understanding the phenomenon.

Educational History of Family

Table 4.1 Intergenerational Profile of Respondents

Respondents' Name	3 rd Generation			2 nd Generation		1 st Generation	
	Respondent + , (Husband)	Female Sibling	Male Sibling	Mother	Father	Grand mother	Grand Father
IDI-01	B.A., Diploma (Inter)	Inter, 7 th	12 th , 10 th	Madarsa	7 th	Madarsa	Illiterate
IDI-02	BTech	6 th	10 th	Madarsa	10 th	Madarsa	Illiterate
IDI-03	B.A, M.A, B.Ed., M.Ed. +. (BA, Job)	B.A., B.Sc., 12 th	BTech., Medical Aspirant	Graduate	Doctor	Inter	Doctor
1DI-04	BTech	-----	BTech	10 th	BTech	Madarsa	12 th
IDI-05	M.Ed.	-----	9 th	Teacher	Prof.	12 th	Teacher

IDI-06	Ph.D.	12 TH B.A.	LIC(JOB), 12 th , 10 th , JOB	Madarsa	12 th	Madarsa	6 th
IDI-07	BTech	Graduation	-----	12 th	Teacher	Not known	12 th
IDI-08	BTech	12 TH (married)	12 th , Merchant Navy, Software Engineer,	Madarsa	12 th	Madarsa	Don't know
IDI-09	M. Sc (Job Engineer)	B.Sc.,	12 th (Medical Aspirant), 10 th	ICDS (Job)	Pharmacist	12 th , Housewife	M.Sc.
IDI-10	MSW	MSW, 12 th	B.Com. Inter	8 th Housewife	Graduation	Madarsa	10 th
IDI-11	MCA	-----	BTech, BTech	Madarsa	8 th or 9 th	Madarsa	4 th
IDI-12	M.A., (Ph.D.)	-----	B.A, 10 TH , 10 TH	Madarsa	Teacher	Don't know	Don't know
IDI-13	Ph.D. (Urdu)	Ph.D. (Biotech), BTech	B. Com (CA aspirant), BTech, 7 th	Graduate (Housewife)	12 th	10 th (maybe)	10 th (maybe)
IDI-14	MTech	(Ph.D.) (Science)	MBBS Aspirant, Hafza	10 th Housewife	B.Sc.	Housewife,	Accountant

Educational history of family shows the educational qualification of family across three generation including husband qualification if respondents are married. Here study presents analytical interpretation of the detail given above

in the table. Educational qualification of third (respondent) generation is continued or stopped. So, meaning can be derived but that will not be very concrete. Educational qualification of second generation and third generation have come to end. So, some concrete meaning can be derived from comparing first generation with second generation.

Across generation:

If educational attainment of first generation (grandmother & grandfather) and second generation (mother and father) is compared, it can be said that educational attainment has improved. Means, mother educational attainment is better than grandmother. In the same way, father education attainment is better than grandfather. If education attainment of respondents is compared with mother and grandmother, it follows the same pattern, it has improved. It means female educational attainment is under the process of gradual betterment across the generations.

Within generation

If educational attainment of grandfather and grandmother within first generation is compared. Educational attainment of grandfather has always been better than grandmother in all cases without exception. If educational attainment of mother and father within second generation is compared, father qualification has always been better than mother with exception in case of respondent IDI-13 in which mother is graduate and father has passed intermediate. If educational attainment of male sibling and female sibling is compared within third generation, the gap between educational attainment has decreased and better than second and first generation. A fair conclusion can be drawn that the gap in educational attainment in male sibling and female sibling, mother and father and grandmother and grandfather has shrunk across generation. Then, it could be said that this gap would shrunk further.

Respondents (IDI-1, IDI-2 & IDI-3) with second- and first-generation having sound educational qualification have been able to provide early guidance and environment in comparison to rest of the respondents according to narratives

shared by them. Even with these respondents, the issue of distance and selection of course have been remained an issue.

Married Respondents and Husband’s Educational Qualification

The married respondents IDI-1(Diploma), IDI-3 (M.Ed.), IDI-9 (MSc), & IDI-12 (M.A.) have got husband with educational qualifications Inter, B.A., B Tech and PhD respectively. There is only one respondent (IDI-1) who got non-graduate husband. In this case, neither respondent family nor her husband was supportive to higher education. She negotiated anyhow and managed to pursue diploma after completion of graduation. Her family did not have very fair educational background. The respondent IDI-3, IDI-9, IDI-12 have very sound educational background, even female members are doing job. The gap between respondents’ qualification and husband’s qualification has shrunk. In case of respondent IDI-9 and IDI-12, surprisingly respondents’ qualification is better than their husband. Study would like to mention respondent IDI-5 who was engaged with software engineer working in China at the time of interview and she bargained with her future husband about her condition. It can be concluded that educated women are being preferred as well. Educated Muslim men have choice for educated Muslim women. Thus, educated men and women together changing the trend set in community.

Type of Family

Table 4.2 Classification of Respondent on the Basis of the Family Type

Joint family (2)	Nuclear family (12)
IDI-3, IDI-9	IDI-1, IDI-2, IDI-4, IDI-5, IDI-6, IDI-7, IDI-8, IDI-10, IDI-11, IDI-12, IDI-13, IDI-14

There were two respondents living in joint family and twelve respondents in nuclear family. By going through the narratives, it seems that the pursuance of higher education by Muslim women has something to do with family

background. One thing can be said that respondents living in joint family have very sound educational background across three generation than rest of the respondents. Families of IDI-3 and IDI-4 got guidance from the family at very early age which helped them to draw inspiration from their family. Educated family of nuclear nature extended guidance as well. It seems that family being educated matters more rather than to family being either joint or nuclear in matters of pursuance of higher education by Muslim women.

Rural/ Urban Location

4.3 Classification of respondent on the basis of their locality of residence

Rural (8)	Urban (6)
IDI-1, IDI-2, IDI-3, IDI-6, IDI-8, IDI-10, IDI-11, IDI-13	IDI-4, IDI-5, IDI-7, IDI-9, IDI-12, IDI-14

Out fourteen respondents, there were eight respondents' families residing in rural areas and six respondents' families residing in the urban area. Within eight respondents' families, two families (respondent IDI-4 and IDI-5) migrated from rural area to urban area. Brother of IDI-4 got job in Hyderabad. So, family settled in Suncity of Hyderabad. Family of IDI-5 migrated to town in Darbhanga because her father was transferred there. IDI-12 become urban by virtue of being married in urban area. IDI-12 did not want to pursue education but she pursued post-graduation on her husband insistence. The point is to make that with migration educational opportunities increase. On the basis of narratives, it has been found that the quality of educational institution, teacher, English medium school and tuition facility are better in Urban area (Darbhanga) in comparison to rural area. But urban area is also unable to meet competitive standard as per shared by respondents. Muslim women seem to bound to move from rural area to Urban area and city in search of higher education. And Distance is great concern in matters of Muslim women mobility as revealed by narratives.

Educational environment in the Family

There are mix reaction about the perception of educational environment inside the family. There is lack and presence of educational environment in relation to Muslim women. Where there has been lack of educational environment in the family happens to be less educated in comparison to the family where there is good environment in the family.

Lack of Educational Environment in the Family

Owing to lack of educational environment inside the family, parents decided to send daughter to the place where she could get higher education. The environment provided by MANUU is not the same as home. Respondent thinks that she can devote much time in study which was not possible for her being at home.

My father encourages everybody for education. Not having good environment around he decided to send us to MANUU. [IDI-10]

I am the first girl from the family who completed graduation and **stepped out of the family for education**. There is good environment in **MANUU which I had not at my home**. Here I can **invest good amount of time** in study. [IDI-1]

Realizing the environment, despite having opportunity to take admission in Bangalore and Darbhanga my father got me admission in Hyderabad. [IDI-2]

Although there is no difference in the education of boys and girls, but there is difference in the treatment of boy and girls at the level of execution. There is environment inside the family that boy can move for education but girls are hardly allowed for same. There is differential treatment when it comes to distance and mobility etc.

There is no difference between boys and girl's education. But there is not as such environment that girls are allowed to pursue education residing away from home at some distant place. Same is not the case with boys. I am here but my all-female sibling getting education from home. [IDI-6]

In my family, there was not difference between boys and girls as far as education is concerned. But did not allow any girl going away from home. They thought girls had to pursue education

within certain limit, staying at home. Now I am here. So, there is shift. [IDI-14]

There was a respondent who expressed lack of environment in the family by sharing the importance of educated elder member of family in matters of guidance.

There is a need of environment in the family that allows the girls to move distant place for education. If elder members of the family are educated, they guide and lead us to move forward and ahead. [IDI-2]

One of the respondents shared that household's daily chores and regular relative visit become hurdle in making environment of home educationally supportive. Even the respondent found herself unable to utilize her energy up to the level of satisfaction.

I just wanted to get away from home for whatever I wanted to prepare for. So that I have enough time and I could utilize it. There is not as such environment at home. I was unable to focus on frequent visit of relatives. Anytime work could surface for me anytime. I could not study up to my satisfactory level. [IDI-11]

Household chores, differential treatment despite positive attitude towards education, lack of guidance due to uneducated family member are leading cause of lack of educational environment inside the family.

Presence of Educational Environment in the Family

There are family where there is very educational friendly environment. Elder member of the family is available to guide the respondent in matters of education. Their mere presence seems to be source of inspiration and motivation.

I have educated family. Eight people from my family are government employee. Some are overseas for job. Almost all in my family who have completed their education be it male members or female members are either post graduate or graduate. My uncles are educated so they used to teach us. [IDI-9]

The family in which there has been presence of educational environment in the family, the female member of family already pursuing education. Movement

and lonely movement of Muslim women are not issue for them. Moreover, elder educated female members of the family provides guide all the time.

I come from the background. girls have been getting education away from home. There is cousin sister who have long been in Aligarh and completed her education. So, distance and away from home is not big issue in our family. Neither at paternal side nor at maternal side. But in our society, parents bother to send their daughter to distant place for education. [IDI-7]

Where there is presence of educational environment in the family, they have not only positive attitude but also perform their attitude into action.

There has always been the importance of education in my family. Be it boys or girls, they are provided with the education. [IDI-3]

Ammi brought novel from school and my father brought magazine like Umang. There are so many books at my home. Even today two newspaper comes, Hindustan and Times of India. [IDI-5]

All are getting education, my sisters as well as my brothers.
[IDI-13]

The role of educated parents and family members play instrumental role in determination of educational environment in the family. They are silent role model and they are source of guidance available for 24 hours. The family which lacks less educated parents or member in the family, Muslim women of such family get educated environment in MANUU.

Educational Environment Outside Family

Educational environment outside the family is not very encouraging in terms of women getting higher education. According to respondent, the situation is worse in village area. There is also sign of improvement but very gradual.

Disabling Environment

Girls drop out from school or college after completion of 10th or 12th class. Situation is such worse in village that even boys drop out after 12th standard. Girls are generally married in the age range of 14-18. If they are not married, they stay at home. Else they do any course as formality. Girls' higher education

is not taken as priority. One of the respondents share important view that family who are economically sound does not allow daughter for higher education.

I am not only first from my family but also from my village who is very far away from native place for Education. Girls drop out from school and very few attend classes after 10th standard. Most girls are married off as they acquire the age of 15-16 years.
[IDI-1]

If I see in other family, among my classmates and friends that there is not primary focus on education. Pursuing education by girls seem as formality. (*han, bus kuch krlo*). This is in Muslim family. In Hindu family's girl's education is their priority.

[IDI-9]

In village there is not educational environment and education of girls to the level of higher education is very rare. There is much more problem in village. So, my parents decided us to pursue higher education from away from home. [IDI-10]

Education is provided to boys and girls equally but same is not the case in my village. School up to 12th standard came into being very recently so things are changing now. Many girls pursued education but dropped out later. Even there are boys who dropped out after 12th standard. There is such environment in village that girls are married off soon. A very few could reach to the level of graduation and most of them could not. [IDI-3]

In my village, a very few girls are highly educated. Mostly they have passed 8th or 10th. A few have done their intermediate. One I know who have done graduation in Business Administration. Girls are married off around the age of 18. [IDI-4]

Most of friend of mine have been married off. And who are not married yet, even then they are not pursuing education. They are at their home. College friends are married. A very few have reached to the level of post-graduation, and whoever could do, did it from home. Nobody other than me have gone outside distant place to pursue higher education. [IDI-5]

Although families in neighbourhood are rich, but they do not allow their daughter for higher education. Either they are married or study from home. Some families dare to allow their daughter to frequent move for education. [IDI-11]

The majority of girls in neighbourhood have not got the fate like me as far as opportunity to education is concerned. Alhamdulillah Parents are educated there. There are so many Muslim girls who are pursuing their education away from home
[IDI-7]

The discouraging environment outside family shows the general environment outside the family which does support girls' higher education very much. Discouraging environment comprises of dropout, marriage at young age and education as formality. These factors are in no way provide educationally productive platform for families or Muslim women in the vicinity.

Enabling Environment

There is also positive sign. But there is not rapid growth in girls' participation in education particularly in higher education. Chandanpatti, a place in Darbhanga, where people are conscious about education, girls are not provided with opportunity to pursue higher education. The same respondent shared that presence of MANUU model school and College of teacher education have played very significant role in general environment of the Chandanpatti and the locality in vicinity. Another respondent said that there are some families for whom girls' higher education is in their priority list.

Girls are acquiring education gradually still number of girls acquiring education is low. Girls are not allowed to go outside. They are not allowed to wear another kind of dress. Girls do not enjoy all kind of freedom. But the situation is changing. [IDI-2]

In my Chandanpatti village, whole Mohalla is conscious about education. Boys and girls are given equal opportunity. A many people do the job. But continuation of Higher Education after 12th by girls is not general phenomenon. A few friends continued study and some dropped out and staying at home. Some are married off. [IDI-8]

The people are not very educated at the place where I live. But there are some families who have focus on education. They want education for girls like boy. And find it is happening. [IDI-14]

Improvement in the environment is optimistic sign of change in external environment. Environment is not stagnant rather it is going under slow change which is supposed to be one of the characteristics of society.

Conclusion

Household chores, differential treatment despite positive attitude towards education, lack of guidance due to uneducated family member are leading cause of lack of educational environment inside the family. The role of educated parents and family members play instrumental role in determination of academic environment in the family. Discouraging environment comprises of dropout, marriage at young age and education as formality. These factors are in no way provide educationally productive platform for families or Muslim women in the vicinity. Environment is not stagnant rather it is going under slow change which is supposed to be one of the characteristics of society.

CHAPTER-5 CHALLENGES AS OBSTACLE IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction

This chapter deals and presents the challenges confronted by Muslim women at individual, family and community level from their perspective which was emerged from interaction of the researcher with respondent through in-depth interviews. These challenges are those barriers/factors which have in some way impacted the education trajectory of Muslim women.

Individual Level Challenges

Early Disinterest and Lack of Educational Career Guidance

It was found from the raw data that early disinterest is one of the first challenge faced by Muslim women which appears to be due to the indifference of parents, attitude towards education. Giving up education for 3 years by one of the participants shows the sign of lack of motivation on the part of parents that further transferred to their daughter. This early dis-interest instigated age-class gap which had potential to get to the age of marriage before completion of education which happened in this case. Respondent did diploma after graduation.

I gave up my education for 3 years despite my mother said to go to school. Seeing my younger sibling going to school, I wished to continue my study. I said my concern to my mother, she scolded me and said ask your father. My father got my admission in six, principle said no to taking admission in class seven what my father wanted. [IDI-1]

Another woman faced same kind of apathy from very early stage and that continued even when she was pursuing higher education from Maulana Azad National Urdu University. Despite getting support from husband which is not very common, she was not enough ambitious and aspired to have future plan.

She was just dying to be with her husband at home without utilizing the support of her husband for doing research.

I just want to complete my post-graduation and get back to home.
My husband told me to do research but I would not do so... I
have no future plan. [IDI-3]

It was found that the seeds of disinterest gradually developed over the course of time by their parents' action. Marriage was of such utmost importance that she was engaged in her childhood with her future husband. Dream of their parent got realized and she got married during intermediate without any resistance.

After eleventh class, parents got me married. I did not say to delay it, rather I was happy [IDI-3].

(On probing by researcher that you were married in 11th class, did you tell your parent that they should delay marriage so that you could complete your intermediate?)

Disinterest has its own trajectory of development, she was taught *dini taleem* by *Maulana* (teacher for religious education) at home. She got early education from schools and afterwards she used to appear in examination only.

It never happened that I thought about what course or stream I should pursue. I had no intention to continue education. After graduation, I did nothing for two years. On my husband insistence I am pursuing post-graduation. [IDI-3]

Early disinterest led to the multiple issues like discontinuation of education and lack of motivation. Reason behind it seems to be not giving importance to girls' education. Early disinterest associated with the respondent had the parents who had educational qualification not even up to high school and having the rural background. There is no education environment inside the family as reported by the respondents. Locating interest, and guidance are the alien things in this situation.

Muslim women lack proper counselling and guidance from parents and elders which led to the loss of educational year, lack of development of interest in particular stream.

I studied in Govt School up to fifth class. Thereafter I was admitted in convent school in lower class, four years back.

[IDI-10]

I had completed my education (Graduation) in *Darbhanga* and after getting admission into Diploma engineering, people reacted me saying why you are going five years back. [IDI-1]

Lack of early educational and career guidance also occur due to the brother dominance over selection of course for sister. Attitude of parents and brothers towards girls' education determine what type of course she would be allowed to pursue. And the interest of Muslim women is overlooked.

During the time of 10th and 12th, I got guidance from five different person and mouth. They wanted to impose their decision rather than knowing what I really wish to do. They never care what I am interested in. [IDI-6]

There is lack of communication between parents and Muslim women for their future course of action. Instead of knowing and allowing to develop interest, they are informed and forced what they have to do according to the wishes of their family. It also proves to be obstacle in the path of development of decision making among them. This shows the lack of agency among the women.

There was not as such interest in any course during my graduation. We only got to know that after graduation we have to pursue our further education away from home in Hyderabad. [IDI-10]

After completion of my degree in Arabic language, I stayed at home for one year. I was unable to think and decide what to do next. [IDI-13]

What course and what subject Muslim woman would pursue is decided by her gender rather than her interest. It is so perhaps because the assumption that science should be pursued who score good marks in it. And social science and humanities will be pursued who cannot score good marks in science.

Social science was in my mind, but when I performed very well in 10th class, my mother and elder sister told me when you have good result, instead of opting social science, pursue education in science. I had interest in social sciences and I wanted to do which my mind likes but perhaps that was not my destiny. [IDI-14]

Lack of academic and career guidance and locating interest seem to be result of inability of family to do so and family attitude toward daughter's education. Educated family seems to give comparatively better guidance.

Distance

Distance and lonely movement of Muslim women are the two facets of the same coin. Despite three generation in higher education and almost equal importance to girl and boy education in the family. Distance become hurdle in the movement of girl in the rural areas. Thanks to her uncle who had home in town from where she could continue her education.

Middle and High school was away from my village, going there was not possible for me. [IDI-3]

Distance engulfed heart of mother with such intense fear that education might get defeated with the hand of fear.

Due to longer distance, my mother gets very concerned. She even told me to stop education owing to distance after my Diploma. [IDI-14]

Indifferent father along with the unsupportive brother was not in favour of girls going distant place for education. The reason of getting sister in nearby school village only because her parents and brothers were not in favour of girl's education. Brother studied from Aligarh Muslim University and father returned from gulf country had their own reason for this kind of attitude. Father did not want because she thought girl would become outspoken and straightforward. And brother had the reason that girls get habituated with bad habits when they go out. Both reflect gender discrimination which knelt down before the adamant nature and motivation for education of respondent.

My brother despite my disinterest wanted me to take admission in nearby college in Rampura citing nearness. [IDI-11]

The resistance did not stop there. Due to unavailability of coaching in the village, when respondent wished to join a coaching institute and go Darbhanga, she had to face resistance from family. Again, distance mattered. Sometime distance is used as means to cover and conceal the apathetic attitude towards daughter education.

My family had problem with me doing coaching in final year of graduation in Darbhanga by one of CM Science teacher [IDI-11]

Distance is such powerful force in the matters of girl's education, it can lead to wastage of time and not getting admission at better educational institution. In the following case, family has discriminatory attitude towards girls' education.

After the completion of Intermediate, I wanted to do my graduation from good place or good University. But no one in my family agreed to this point citing distance and environment concern. Eventually, after wasting my two months I got admission in graduation in the same college. [IDI-11]

Distance and family concern seems directly proportional. Greater the distance, greater the fear. Fear or concern is multiplied 'when first from family or area' come into equation.

My father and maternal uncle started to consider whether they should send me to this far Hyderabad. They feared that no girl moved to such distant place from my area. [IDI-9]

In the following narrative, distance is cover to conceal discriminatory attitude towards girls' education which is very evident from the narratives. Other concerns are nothing but lame excuse.

When everybody knew about that I am going to take admission in Hyderabad. There was ruckus (*hungama*) in my family that girl will not go outside for education. They have the concern who will look after, will do whatever she wishes, nobody will be there to say something to her. This was being said by my second eldest brother. My youngest brother was in my support. [IDI-6]

Distance is painful even after negotiation with it. In the following narrative, respondent is allowed by parents happily to pursue higher education. Emotional attachment led to have this kind of concern. When this narrative was analysed in the context of interviews, it can be arguably said that concern was not due to discriminatory attitude towards daughter education. Rather it was concern daughter going thousands kilometre away from home.

Journey is very troublesome because Hyderabad is very far away from Darbhanga. I do not prefer 3-day long journey of train. Whenever I have to go home, my father come or he books my plane ticket. Some body see off and receive at airport. [IDI-5]

Distance is genuine concern as well as the pretext to hide discriminatory attitude towards daughter education. Concern or fear multiplies with increase in distance

and also when the girl is being first from family or locality going away for education.

Lonely Movement

Lonely movement over distance is not preferable by the parents due to safety concern. From the interviews, it was also known that girls move in groups in order to dodge any indecent event. Thus, security remained a major concern even for the girls' students who are away from home for the higher education.

Excerpts from the interview

The biggest issue with girls is the lonely movement. We cannot travel alone perhaps that is why parents prefer pursuing education staying at home. [IDI-13]

Many respondents cited fear of misbehaviour and casualty during traveling. Apprehension of the occurrence of any untoward incident is the reason behind avoidance of lonely movement by the girl students. Serious Health conditions of guardian in the family may compel Muslim women to compromise with the course she was willing to pursue.

My father's kidney failed four years ago and my mother donated kidney. I wanted to go in medical field but my father illness came in the way. [IDI-2]

Health condition also led to lonely movement by daughters in pursuit of her aspiration for higher education. It seems that Muslim women are dependent on father and elder brother for their mobility outside the house. Negotiation with lonely movement is very essential when parents or elder brother are not there to accompany her.

There was an issue in coming to Hyderabad for the first time, my brothers are in abroad and my father was ill, and my mom cannot travel. So, I had to travel alone. [IDI-1]

Dependency syndrome arise out of lack of family companionship in the matter of lonely movement or travelling. This dependency can be curtailed by enabling Muslim women traveling alone when needed.

Challenge of Breaking the Ice

Once the negotiation is made with distance and lonely movement, challenge of breaking ice is one of the most crucial psychological hurdles confronted by the young Muslim women dreaming for higher education, particularly the Muslim women who come from rural area faced such kind of psychological obstacles. In order to overcome these psychological barriers, parents have to neutralize the social pressure first, thereafter daughters have to show the courage to go against what is normal and natural in their socio-cultural contest. Some reflections from the interviews:

I am the first girl not only from my family but also from my village who moved for education to Hyderabad (MANUU). [IDI-1] & [IDI-2]

I am first from my family who moved to farther place for education. [IDI-6]

Psychological barrier can be understood through the analogy that, any student who has never seen any person speak in public is asked to speak for the first time in his life. Not only parents but also daughter have to compete from within and outside. From within means, allowing themselves doing something for the first time that has not happened earlier.

Sacrificing Aspiration for Little Brother

This sort of challenges arises out of the situation when mother has employment and have little child who has to be taken care of. Sister of that child has to make sacrifice to look after growing child.

After doing my Intermediate, I was aspired to do preparation for medical exams but at that time we had an issue in our family. I had to take care of my younger brother who was 12 years younger than me owing to my mother did job. We were not allowed to go outside the home. For this reason, I thought I should also sacrifice. [IDI-5]

Employment of mother led to the sacrifice of higher aspiration of daughter. The motivation for higher aspiration is compromised with using defence mechanism of giving sacrifice for the family. Unpaid leave can rescue this situation but

sacrifice by daughter seem reasonable to parents. Thus, education of the girl in families even today is considered secondary which shows the possible gender discriminatory attitude of family towards girl education.

Ignoring Academic Interest of Muslim Women

Instead of discovering interest of Muslim women, they are imposed to follow particular course because family, parents and brother have customized course for daughter and sister respectively. The suitability of course depends upon the concept of daughter or sister in their understanding. Engineering is not for girls, education or teaching is suitable. This shows gendered division of the courses among the family members which have only conceptualised 'soft jobs' like nurse, teacher and other clerical jobs for women.

I wanted to go after my strong desire of doing engineering but my father wanted me to go in teaching line (B.Ed.), I had no interest earlier. I kept doing what my father said. [IDI-1]

My brother wanted me to opt for commerce, and do preparation for banking and have job in this field which is good for girls. [IDI-11]

Respondent in second narrative got inspiration from her brother becoming engineering, but engineer brother does not want his sister to do engineering. This is very evident that what he likes for himself being boy is not suitable for his sister being girl. Courses has also been classified across gender. Parents, one of two brothers and mother are against her high educational aspiration. She faced resistance from almost all family but any how she moved ahead and faced resistance for her choice of course she was interested in.

Challenges in Academics

Absence of Quality Institution of Learning

The following single narrative is enough to speak about dearth of educational institution in Bihar. As respondent points out there is lack of institution which lack facility and other respondent mentioned compromised quality of education.

If such an educational institution with such facility had been in Bihar, we would not have to face such issues and challenges

like coming far away from home, facing hardship in traveling.
[IDI-13]

Physical mobility over long distance is one of the challenges for Muslim women. They further added, educational backwardness in Bihar is primarily attributed to quality of education and very few number of quality institution of learning.

Frequent Shift in Medium of Instruction

It was apparent from the narratives of the Muslim women that switching to the medium of instruction lead to the underperformance by the Muslim women. Frequent change in medium of instruction caused the reduced comprehension capacity which become reason of underperformance. Narratives from the field are:

We face great challenge due to medium of instruction. First Hindi medium in government school, thereafter, English medium in convent school and finally Urdu medium in university. [IDI-10]

When I went to GS Public School (English Medium) to Sharda Convent (Hindi Medium). Teacher got my admission in 5th class for being good in Mathematics and English. I suffered a lot due to Hindi medium, as a result I got second position in the class for the second time. I insisted my mother to get my admission in English medium school. I do not understand in Hindi. I was not interested in Hindi medium, but I had to study, as result I underperformed. In Inter (English medium) I acquired good marks, 70%. When I took PCM stream, it got difficult because I studied four years in Hindi medium and thereafter continued in English medium, means I was neither good at Hindi nor good at English. [IDI-11]

In government school, students are taught basically in Hindi language. And there are few English medium schools in rural areas. If there are English medium school, they provide education up to 5-6 standard. Thereafter students have to switch to other school. So Muslim women have to take admission in Hindi medium school unwillingly. Hindi Medium School is also imposed on Muslim women because of discriminatory attitude of family towards their daughter. It is very evident from following narrative that mother has different

concept of daughter because of which she was unwilling to allow her daughter to take admission in English medium school in Darbhanga town. The issue of distance and lonely movement were determining factor whether she will go for English medium school or not. Son can study at distant place but daughter cannot study at distant place.

I insisted my mother to get my admission in English medium school in Darbhanga citing reason of not understanding in Hindi Medium. But my mother said ‘you are my only daughter, where will you go, girls from village have also studied here’. When I ask about brother, she said **your brother is different from you** (*bhaiyya log ki baat alag hai*). [IDI-1]

Less effective quality education led to change in aspiration when Muslim women enters in competitive and in university education. The respondent of following narrative completed his graduation from Bihar in *Darbhangha*. Where Arabic language was taught in mother tongue. She ended with no command over Arabic language. She was unable to comprehend and speak Arabic. She was compelled to opt for Urdu. Switching over to another medium of instruction lead to despair, low academic attainment.

At my place, Arabic is taught in Urdu. And here, I felt as if I am in Saudi Arabia. Teachers were rigid that you have to ask even a question in Arabic. Means I was mentally disturbed so I opted Urdu. (*Hamare yahan, Arabic urdu me padhaya jata hai. Aur yahan, mujhe lag raha tha mai Saudi Arabia me hun. Teacher rigid the ki sawal bhi puchna hai to Arabic me puchna hai. Matlab mai dimagi taur pe pareshan hogai to Urdu me badal liya.*). [IDI-13]

Regular Education in ‘Distance Mode’

The challenge of lack of regular classes seems to be very prevalent in govt. and semi-government colleges. This sort of indifference by government towards education led to formation of weak academic foundation. Issue of irregular classes were also reported at govt. middle and high school level. Excerpts from the interviews;

In Class 8th, 9th and 10th classes would not take place very often. [IDI-11]

Irregular, enrolled in regular course but only gave examination. [IDI-1]

I did my Intermediate from semi-government college (Islamia College). Classes would not take very often. We were dependent on tuition. That is why we were focused on coaching only. And there was not good quality of teaching. There are good facilities in colleges but quality of education and regular classes are compromised. In reality there is no college where full regular class take place. There are reputed college like C M Science College, Marwari College, college with name, even there does not take the classes regularly. Suspension of classes in my college was very often. [IDI-7]

Coaching is taking place of college and school for acquisition of quality education of competitive standard. Respondent took admission deliberately in Govt and semi-Govt College with intention that she would not have to take classes. The objective behind such decision was to focus on preparation for competition in coaching institute.

I got admission in semi-Govt College with less facility so that I can freely focus on coaching. College was not worthy to depend on. We had to go at the time of admission, practical, registration and examination only. [IDI-7]

There were regular classes at the beginning stage of admission in MRM college. But later on, it was not so. [IDI-11]

I do not go to college during graduation because classes would not take place. I was only dependent on coaching. I would go to college only if I had to fill form or to know something [IDI-11]

Negligence on the part of education system not regulating and monitoring the govt. schools and colleges led to absence of learning environment at mass level.

Lack of Hostel Facility of Certain Kind

Distance and lonely movement have been major issue for families of Muslim women. Those families who have been able to negotiate with distance and lonely movement, they have the challenge of finding 'safe places' for daughter. What is safe for them can be understood in the context of answer given against the question why they preferred Maulana Azad National Urdu University.

Islamic (Muslim) environment, hostel facility for girls and safe compound were desirable by Parents.

My brother tried to find the way out but, there was hostel facility for boys but not for girls in Darbhanga. [IDI-11]

A certain kind of desirable atmosphere for sisters or daughter shorten the flight of Muslim women. Instead of looking for certain kind of atmosphere, if they had provided with mobility, they might grab better educational opportunities.

Familial Level Challenges

Discriminatory Attitude of Parents and Grandparents

Attitude of parents play an important role in determination of educational trajectory of Muslim women. Attitude means, their perspective towards education to male and female child and understanding about the outcome and importance of higher education. Parents seems to have assumption that if they allow their daughter for higher education. They may disobey religious obligation and abandon practicing veil. Daughter would not wear dress of their wish. Parents also fear that their daughter would become outspoken and disobedient. It was very difficult to look into reason behind it. It seems partially religious, patriarchal and cultural. There seems to be chaotic combination of factors in the formation of such kind of attitude. Whatever have been the factors, but it formed gender discriminatory attitude. Dress was also kept under consideration while making selection of school for respondent.

My father was against the education of daughter, he used to say 'why to educate girls, it is enough (education up to lower class) citing example of his sister that they are happy. What is need of educating them to higher level? More study, more advance (modernised, outspoken). They will argue with us, and become disrespectful. Take her own decision. Abandon covering face (veil). Girls get better, if they have habit of covering their face (veil). [IDI-11]

My grandfather did not like me going to English medium school. He said why girl needed to go distant place. Clothes were also different. He got me admitted in Sogra Girls School which was near my home. [IDI-1]

Such kind of attitude and consideration of parents are shared by elder male member of the family. If any male member come forward to rescue the situation of his sister, he has to confront his father and other member of the family.

When one of my brothers started helping me for study, my father said ‘your brother is doing “right”, he will be held responsible if something goes wrong. Wrong means something done wrong by me, or some incident happens, or someone says something wrong, or bring dishonour (*badnami*) to us. [IDI-11]

Discriminatory attitude of mother has been derived from patriarch that girl child is not supposed to go to distant place alone. This was practice of creating daughter of her own kind. Mother is not very educated. She knows reciting Quraan and *Khat-kitabat* (basic reading writing). She had different conception about girl and son. Mother seems to be superimposing her own position on daughter.

But my mother said ‘you are my only daughter, where will you go, girls from village have also studied here’. On asking about brother, she said your brother is different from you (*bhaiyya log ki baat alag hai*). [IDI-11]

It was found that there is transfer of gender discriminatory attitude from one generation to other and father put his legs in his father shoes and become advocate of not educating daughter at distant place.

After 10th, I was selected for Diploma in Engineering in MANUU. I was selected for Hyderabad centre. My parents and my grandfather were not ready to send me here. My father way of thinking is like my grandfather. He clearly denied me coming here. Means your elder sister did not go, so you will not also go. [IDI-14]

If parents any how get ready to educate their daughter. They have to next negotiate with distance and lonely movement of their daughter.

When I was in high school, even then my mother feared most because school was in other village and there was mango plantation on larger area which I had to pass through so she did not allow me to go alone. Ammi feared thinking if something happened to her...It is the matter of girl.... keeping all those things in mind. [IDI-1]

Taking admission in Maulana Azad National University, Hyderabad was not first option. Being girl, parents wanted me to study from home. They did not want me to send alone. [IDI-1]

Environment outside the home was great concern for parents. According to respondent, they feared about daughter going against their expectation. These are anticipatory concern about their daughter.

There are guardians who think in accordance with atmosphere and circumstance, daughter will live away from home, live alone, live in hostel. Here is such atmosphere even a good girl can also deviate from father expectation (Family or Parent) seeing other girls, therefore my father feared and my father said nobody would go after me. [IDI-1]

Degree of resistance by family and family members reflect their perspective that woman or daughter should not live alone at distant place. This kind of perspective reflect being careful and at the same time having gender discriminatory attitude. This also seems to be an act of controlling the behaviour.

When everybody knew about, I am going to take admission in Hyderabad. There was ruckus (*Hungama*) in my family that girl will not go outside for education. They have the concern who will look after, will do whatever she wishes, nobody will be there to say something to her. This was being said by my second eldest brother. My youngest brother was in my support [IDI-6].

Going outside, you are younger, careless about when to eat and when to sleep. How will reside away from home (*wahi baher jana, chhoti ho, na sone ka thikana na khane pine ka, kaise baher rhegi*). [IDI-11]

Parent's discriminatory attitude and understanding about their daughter keep resonating in whole educational trajectory. Mother in individual capacity acted as an advocate of patriarch, functioned as making daughter up to the expectation of patriarch and society. The mother and father of [IDI-13] were not educated themselves and they seem to be conforming with society where daughters were married early without giving importance to their education. Narratives from the in-depth interviews are interesting to note

My family had problem with me doing coaching in final year of graduation in Darbhanga by one of CM Science teacher. [IDI-11]

My mother was only interested in providing education up to matriculation or intermediate. I got married when I was in eleventh class. [IDI-13]

Thus, discriminatory attitude of parents and grandparents put challenges at different stages of education of Muslim women. Their attitude of the family members tries to shape the behaviour of Muslim women.

Attitude and Dominance of Elder Brother

Elder brother seems to make his attitude by observing the behaviour of girls residing outside house living in metropolitan society. Brother have limited view about behaviour of girls. His attitude is based on his personal observation. He has selective observation to satisfy discriminatory attitude towards his sister. Thus, discriminatory attitude seems a tool of exercising his power through determining and defining the behaviour of sister of his own wish.

My brother told me girls in Delhi get deviated, smoke cigarette, do this and that. Means environment in Delhi is not good. They are outspoken (*Bindas*). If it would be AMU, I might get your admission (*Bhaiyya bolte the, delhi me ladki log khraab hojati hai, cigarette piti hain, ye krti hai wo krti hai. matlab delhi ka mahaul achcha nhi hai. whan bindas rhte hain, adar AMU hota to dilw bhi deta.*). [IDI-11]

Dominance of brother was so intense that even mother started to talk in the language of her son. Even at the stage of post-graduation, brother did not think of her sister choosing course of her own choice. Neglecting decision making capacity in sister extended to the post-graduation level. Which reflects denial of respondent taking decision in matters of course selection. Taking decision in formative stage is an act of guiding and giving direction to sister. When this approach is extends at the level of graduation, it means she has not provided the opportunity to take her own decision or dominance of brother did not allow her to take her own decision.

My mother wanted my sister to pursue higher education but there was fear of my brother so she speaks in the language of my brother. [IDI-6]

When I enrolled myself in MSW, my eldest brother scolded me very badly and said you have grown mature... you are taking decision by your own hmm...and further added that you should at least ask before taking admission. When he knew about this course through his colleague that there is good scope of this course. He calmed down. [IDI-6]

Brother influence extended further. Suitability of course will be determined by brother. Which is supposed to be chosen by who has to pursue it. This seems to be chronic case of denial of decision-making agency by brother. The attitude of head of the family reflects in their sons. Like father, brother holds the charge. Fortunately, one elder brother rescued her from this situation.

My brother wanted me in commerce and banking field. Then persuaded to opt for Arts stream. Even tried to convince to get admission in college in nearby village Rampura. But I had decided to take admission in Intermediate in Science. [IDI-11].

Like father, mother and grandfather, brother also interferes on the issues like lonely mobility, over distance, selection of course etc. But there is someone from family come forward to deal with such situation.

Family Values and Corporate Culture Conflict

Courses are decided as per the understanding of parents about what is allowed in religion and what circumstance in the outside world are. What the reason guardian cited was verified later on. It was found that guardian had established assumptions about corporate environment that wearing veil is not permissible there. Employees don't have freedom to choose their dress code.

My father and Maternal father did not allow me to pursue masters in computer science which led me to job of my interest in corporate field saying it is not possible to maintain the practice of having veil on the face. All are educated but without compromising practice of wearing burqa they don't allow anything. [IDI-5]

When researcher try to know environment in corporate world from person who was employed in a multinational company. It was known that there was not as such restriction that management did not allow to wear veil. Employee are allowed to choose their attire.

Family Preference for Particular Course

Parents and grand-parents have certain understanding about suitability of courses for Muslim women should pursue. What will be suitable for Muslim women will be decided by what kind of environment daughter will be living in? For this purpose, her interest is overlooked. Again, gender become the criteria for selection of course for daughter.

I did graduation and masters in Physics staying at home in Darbhanga. After completion of graduation, I got interested in computer science so I did multiple diploma courses in computer. I wanted to go in corporate field and wished to pursue MCA, I was adamant for it but my father and maternal grandfather resisted me saying corporate field is not for girls. [IDI-5]

My father wanted me to do LLB. Everybody wanted me to study particular stream of their wish. So, I could not do what I wanted to do. My father persuaded me with folded hand to do LLB referring research as useless. [IDI-6]

I had interest in social science and I wanted to be a lawyer. But my family was not ready for it. They gave reason that profession of lawyer is not for girls, and telling a lie is normal practice which is not allowed in our religion. [IDI-13]

The course of LLB is offered to a respondent by guardian requesting not to do research. The same course is neglected by guardian by citing reason lawyer speaks lie which is not acceptable in Islam. In both the situation one aspect that is common is parents of both were against their daughter decision. This shows that women have to pursue the course even against their will. As a result, their performance deteriorates sometimes. Moreover, it was issue of distance and lonely movement of daughter that the courses are selected on the basis of whether daughter will be able to pursue it by residing at home.

Marriage is All Important

Marriage and education are two important events in the life of Muslim women. Which event will be achieved first depends on what is important for parents? Marriage is so important that, preparation begins from early childhood. Mother has decided to what level daughter should be educated. In first case, respondent

did not agree and negotiated with parents. In second case, respondent proved to be indifferent to education.

My mother said graduation is enough, Study is not important (On probing further respondent told, her mother allowed her to study on the condition that within one year she will have to marry) [IDI-1].

I was married in eleventh class. Our marriage was decided in our childhood. [IDI-13]

Marriage wins over education. Perhaps marriage is supposed to be more important than education. Or, guardians are unable to make balance between importance of education and marriage of their daughter.

Financial Burden and Number of Siblings

Financial burden also plays important role in determining who will get education either boy or girls. Resource deficit and a greater number of children become barrier to equal opportunities to every sibling particularly girl child.

We are eight (brother and sister), Due to financial condition of my father, he focuses primarily on the education of eldest brother. Rest brother and sister could not study more. [IDI-6]

Financial constraint takes away the opportunity to study in private English medium school. Private schools demand handsome tuition fee which is not affordable by every guardian.

Due to shutting down of my father business. My admission in convent school was cancelled and got admitted in government. [IDI-10]

Financial burden acts like gambling, who will be eldest among sibling will get opportunity to study however the chances of getting education of boys still greater than the girls. This may be because of the position of the boy in the family as a breadwinner or ray of hope for the family. Thus, it also took away chance of getting education where Muslim women wish.

Influence of Close Relatives

Being girl, girl going outside home and girl going distant place far away to Hyderabad are concerns of closed relatives. Their concern is primarily due to girl is in the picture. If this had been boy, they had not the same concern.

Maternal uncle, uncle and maternal grandparent raised such issue before family which brought family into pressure. Only highly motivated parent determined for the higher education of their daughter can survive. Else such close relatives and their concern strengthen the gender discriminatory attitude.

My maternal uncle said it was not good to send daughter at distant place for education. [IDI-1]

My maternal uncle and maternal grandfather also indirectly questioned and said, why these girls are going so distant place. It would be better for them get admission here. [IDI-10]

My maternal grandparent did not want me to go outside. At the time of admission, my maternal grandparent was the first who raised the question why sending to distant place. He was not in favour of girls going elsewhere for education. [IDI-2]

My maternal uncle and maternal grandfather also indirectly questioned and said, why these girls are going so distant place. It would be better for them to get admission here. [IDI-10]

My uncle was raising question, why to send daughter so distant place for education. He was little sad on my coming to Hyderabad. [IDI-13]

Such oblique comments have great potential to strengthen discriminatory attitude of parents toward their daughter education. Relatives seems to be put pressure on the family and trying to influence parents' decision.

Community Level Challenges

Social Pressure

Community and society put pressure by providing multiple reason. Marriage, age of marriage, sending daughter at distant place are the argument through which people from community tried to justify marriage is more important than education of daughter. As she reaches to age of eighteen, people have another reason for not suggesting higher education. Age of eighteen is norm for community and society.

Wherever my father went in the village, people used to say taking my father's name, why you are sending your daughter distant place for the education. It is normal in village that as the girl acquire the age of eighteen, people start looking bridegroom for marriage. Women also, from my village tried to convince me

not to go far from village for education saying who knows how is the place. [IDI-1]

People in my hamlet tried to convince my father that your daughter has reached to the age of marriage so better not to send distant place for education instead you should look for bride groom for marriage. [IDI-5]

My father had to also listen why you are sending your daughter thousands kilometre from home. [IDI-10]

The village where Muslim girls do not normally study up to higher education. Such pressure can leave such mark that parents do not allow daughter for higher education.

In my village, I am not different kind of person. Same thing is happening with everyone. My classmates were also good student but they had to unwillingly choose Urdu, Arts. Anyhow I got opportunity to study science. [IDI-11]

Community and society find different reason to exercise the discriminatory attitude towards girls. Taking care of ill father, younger brother and helping mother in troubled situation used as argument by people of the community. Although ill father was ready to give education to his daughter in such situation.

I studied up to eight standards in CBSE school and henceforth people started to say giving up my education and look after my chronically ill father. There was pressure on me to give up my study. And after people started to say help your mother and take care of your father. [IDI-2]

Women from community become advocate of gender discriminatory attitude. They share their own experience and put emphasis on marriage at the right age. What they are suggesting is testimony of what is general status of Muslim women in that community/society. Even they are able to frighten respondent saying 'get married, else will be left as bachelor'. For them, finding bridegroom and marriage at 'right' age is more important than getting education. Thus, these women (underdogs) speaking the language of top dogs (patriarch of the house).

Whenever I go in the vacation, women in neighbourhood used to say that all are getting married and you are unmarried after useless education. If not married soon, you will not find good bridegroom. If get education more (higher education) you will not find suitable bride. [IDI-5]

Thus, narratives around the 'age' of the women used as a tool underscored the marriage over higher education.

Pressure Exerted on Parents for Being Indifferent to Daughter Education

Traditional Pressure

Traditional pressure are those pressures that transmit from one generation to another generation. Parent might be thinking that my parents did not provide education to my sisters besides *khat-kitabat* (reading and writing) *deeni-taleem* (religious education in Madarsa) so, why I should. That keeps floating in the psyche of the parents and that further perhaps become guiding principle in shaping the concept of daughter and place of higher education in that concept.

Direct and Indirect Pressure

Indirect Social Pressure

Indirect social pressures are those pressures which are put on the family particularly on parents. Such pressure has great suggestibility power. Such pressure emerges from immediate surrounding and relatives. This is passive kind of pressure which operates even without saying, it communicates and suggest. This kind of pressure is responded only because family is associated and being one of the parts of surrounding and society. *Nobody or majority in my neighbourhood and in relatives are not educating their daughter than why I should.*

Direct Social Pressure

Immediate surrounding and relatives also actively put pressure just by saying and engaging the family or male parent in conversation. *People from community and relatives discourage what is need to educate to higher level. After all we have to get them married off.*

Above mentioned pressures shape the concept of daughter and place of higher education in that concept.

Being Less Educated Pressure

In case of, parents are not educated enough. Realizing the fact higher education comes at the top of educational trajectory. Up to that time, Daughter reaching to the age of adulthood. Allegiance and commitment to the institution of marriage. Bringing above mentioned facts into consideration, less educated parents might be engulfed in the great conflict and pressure. They might not be able to give importance to higher education for daughter because they have not been through that path. They might find themselves blank in such situation and decide to marry her off considering it as ultimate responsibility toward daughters as constructed by society.

Symbol of Dignity Pressure

Dignity pressure arises from the popular notion in the psyche of parents, family, community, society and particularly men that daughter (women) is symbol of dignity. That dignity should be protected. That sense of over protectiveness and possessiveness brings parents into pressure to hinder in providing a critical freedom in which the acquisition of higher education could take place. Parents may have presumed doubt that if I send my daughter to college, she may interact with boy, might have affair with boys and can do anything. Which can bring insult and dishonour to family. (*Meri izzat mitti me mil jaegi, mai kisi ko muh dikhane k layak nahi rah jaunga*) & (*Hum aisi waisi ladki nahi hain jo aisa waisa kam krlenge*). If something like that happens, it would be very difficult to find suitable bridegroom. Because marriage is supposed to be ultimate responsibility on the shoulder of parents.

Bridegroom's Criteria for Bride Pressure

Bridegroom demand pressure seems to be arising from the general criteria set by bridegroom and his family for marriage of girl. Age, educational qualification, suitability in the family in terms of role and responsibility are those criteria. While parents taking decision in matter of higher education to their daughter, parents must be taking those general criteria into consideration. It seems that possibility of Muslim women getting higher education also depends upon the general criteria set by bridegroom and his family for marriage.

So, parents might be thinking to what extent they have to allow their daughter for education so that she can be married off without trouble. If age criterion of marriage set is just girl approaching the adulthood (18 years) around the 18 years. Such range of age preference by the bridegroom for marriage may lead to the discontinuation of study means deprived of Higher Education.

Although, during my interview I had mixed response,

1. Married and allowed by the husband to pursue higher education.
2. About to complete M.Ed. and expected to marry soon. Engaged, no bridegroom demand pressure.
3. Complete your Diploma final and settle at home. No more studies.

It seems that bridegrooms are negotiating with age and looking for educated bride. There was one out of four bridegroom who was not cooperative. That is why, perhaps it led to slight rise in the participation of Muslim women in Higher Education. But it does not seem to be general pattern.

Dilemma with Married Women

Marriage is not hurdling rather the attitude and value of bridegroom and his family towards Muslim women continuing education or doing job determine whether she will follow her educational and career aspiration.

Girls have to socialize themselves in two family contexts. Before marriage she has to socialize herself with culture and values of parent's family and when she got used to with it, one day she is married off and has to learn, follow the family tradition and values of bridegroom family. From the above statement. following can be said in the light of narratives found from four married Muslim women.

1. Married Muslim women have two values cum traditional life in comparison to men.
2. If the educated Muslim women is married in the family where they are indifferent to value of education, continuation of education is unlikely, same in the case of doing job.

3. Fortunate are the women who get similar values and culture both sides. In this situation continuation of study and doing job, possibility turns into greater probability.
4. In one case, parents who was resisting their daughter's higher education, they married off daughter in the family where husband was also found to be resistant to Muslim women higher education. There were further two cases, parents were found to be very supportive for their daughter education and those Muslim women got husbands who were supportive to their wives' education. There was a case
5. Muslim women having parents supporting their higher education get the bridegroom who supports her wife in acquisition of higher education and her further aspiration.

Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher tried to locate the challenges faced by Respondents at individual level which are mostly related to movement, movement over distance, lonely movement over the distance. These challenges seem to be emerged from discriminatory attitude of family towards women education and importance of education for women. There are some other challenges related to quality education, irregular classes and lack of hostel facilities. At family level, Challenges include discriminatory attitude of parents, elder brother. Which further lead to dominance of elder brother in matters of movement and selection of course. Challenge at community level is social pressure in matters of again movement, movement over distance, lonely movement over distance. Marriage seems to be primary concern in matters of Muslim women.

CHAPTER-6 SUPPORT ON THE WAY TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction

Supports are those factors which have somehow and someway helped the Muslim women in pursuing Higher education. These factors are so important that lack of it means discontinuation in the educational trajectory of Muslim women. Supportive factors have been studied at individual, family and community level. Supports have not been much explored at community level. Since respondents have shown great significance of educational institution (MANUU) in their academic life that account has been also covered under the heading community.

Individual Level Support

Persuading Parents for Education

Motivation for higher education led respondent to persuade her parents who were not in support of their daughter doing diploma after completion of graduation. Doing diploma after graduation was not an issue. It was conflict between willingness of pursuing education and parents' willingness to marry her. That was problematic for them and in such situation, respondent persuaded her parents. She devised mid-way to rescue herself from this situation. She respected wish of parents and also fulfil her aspiration by putting condition. Excerpts from interviews are

I promised my mother let me take admission, after first semester or first year I would marry with whoever you want provided he (Bride) allows me to complete the course (with winning smile). I got admission first and married afterwards so that I had not to stop my education. [IDI-1]

When I was selected for admission in MANUU. People knew MANUU for Distance Education. My family was in my support of going to Hyderabad. My father had to face the people saying why you are sending your daughter to distant place. As a result,

my father and uncle started to think whether to send. Every day new question was surfacing. [IDI-9]

Respondent had so intense motivation that she negotiated not only with parents but also community standing behind her parents and misinforming her father. Interest, motivation, knowledge of respondent helped her to clear the confusion and find her way. Under such condition where her aspiration was at stake, she came out with persuading the parents. This shows that as the Muslim women elevates on the educational trajectory they develop and use their agency to confront and negotiate not only with the family but the larger environment.

Exhibiting Resilient Behaviour

Narratives of respondents showing that motivation for higher education with optimism and forward-looking approach developed the quality of being resilient among the women. The quality of being resilient enable respondents not to bow-down before financial constraint, gender discriminatory attitude, switching over medium of instruction and switching to different courses. No matter what was trouble in educational trajectory, they enabled themselves to move ahead. Some reflection from the Narratives are as follows.

I was from Hindi Medium and here was Urdu Medium instruction. Environment and language were quite different. It was difficult to stay here. Coming here and going to home was difficult task. I got skin disease in first year. [IDI-14]

It is only resilient behaviour which can enable to so survive any student. This long story of respondent is the testimony how she could survive in her journey to higher education. Hurdle after hurdle, but she never bows-down. It was her aspiration and motivation to realize her potential which led her to higher education. Excerpts from interviews are

I passed 12th by self-study with 57 percent marks. There after I wanted to do MBBS, I was offered admission in private college but could not pursue due to financial constraint. I just wanted to do simple B.Sc. But I did Diploma in Pharmacy on family wish. Thereafter I joined a job in Hospital as staff nurse alongside B.Sc. Due to job I could not well perform in B.Sc. hence got poor marks. My father wanted me to do LLB. Everybody wanted me to study particular stream of their wish. So, I could not do what I wanted to do. During my B.Sc., I joined job where I was offered

better salary. So, I took admission in MSW. When I enrolled myself in MSW, my eldest brother scolded me very badly. I started doing my MSW through distance education meanwhile I was offered job 250 km away from home. I was adamant and interested in doing job but nobody was ready for it. Anyhow with support of my younger brother I made it possible. I qualified NET besides doing job. MANUU, Hyderabad. I fortunately get selected. When everybody knew about, I am going to take admission in Hyderabad. There was ruckus (*Hungama*) in my family that girl will not go outside for education. I anyhow made possible with my rigidity and support of younger brother.

[IDI-6]

Struggling and being resilient nature were precious, unique and exceptional qualities that developed in Muslim women due to uncompromising inspiration for their educational aspirations.

Being Adamant

Being adamant with her demand compelled indifferent and resistant parents to think twice before taking last decision. Giving resistance to the parent attitude is not normal action by any Muslim women. The denial of daughter aspiration led to formation of adamant nature. This rigid attitude helped the daughter in getting permission for tuition. Excerpts from interviews is

I was rigid about I will get tuition in final year of my graduation from one of professor of CM Science college. I become adamant about why I will not. [IDI-11]

Adamant attitude develops when daughter was denied to her wish to excel in the field of education. When Muslim women was resisted against her wish of going for tuition 15km away from home, by becoming adamant she made the situation favourable for herself.

Winning Trust and Confidence of Mother

Mother is perhaps more concerned with the safety and security of her daughter. Fear of uncertainty in the heart of mother can only diminish when her daughter assure that she is alright. Mother has different kind of concern for her daughter like whether daughter is able to take care of herself. How daughter will manage herself. Such concern makes mother conscious about her daughter.

When things got easy and settled. The fear in them is no longer. They have trust in me now that she will do right decision and will do right. Now my mother is assured that I am doing all right. She does not worry anymore. [IDI-14]

By winning the trust and confidence of mother, Muslim women prepare fertile mind on which seed of knowledge can be shown and grown for herself. This shows that Muslim women are aware of the domain of concern of their parents and accordingly trying to win the trust of their parents.

Familial Level Support

Negotiation with Distance and Lonely Movement

The family who has been very supportive are able to negotiate with issue of lonely movement over the distance. Perhaps they had understanding about it was not possible to find quality education and desirable atmosphere together keeping their daughter at home.

Distance has not been reason of any problem in my family. I travel alone sometime in case no friends are there to give company. [IDI-8]

My father takes it easy on the issue of distance and lonely mobility (*Akele aana jana hai to hmare abbu bolte hain theek hai koi baat nhi*). [IDI-10]

This shows that some of the fathers are conscious and have realized that for the betterment of daughters, they are needed to be given critical freedom of lonely movement over the distance. It seems that supportive father tends to give exposure of external world to the daughter.

Negotiation with Age of Marriage

Family has to negotiate with marriage as opposed to marrying daughter in early years of adulthood. Family has to support and have perspective that marriage should not be obstacle in the path of education. Family also extended support to daughters and respected the wish of daughter.

Neither my parents nor I am in hurry for my marriage. My parents have supported me and want me to study to the level I wish. [IDI-8]

Neither my family nor I am in hurry for marriage. [IDI-10]

This suggests a forward-looking approach of parents not sacrificing the wish of daughter. It was found that educated parents tends to give importance to completion of higher education before marriage.

Parents Ignoring Social Pressure

In both of the following cases, educated parents ignored the social pressure of marrying off the daughter. Parents residing in urban areas also have to face such kind of social pressure from the community members around the marriage of young daughter. Family negotiated with such pressure rather than get persuaded by the narratives around marriage. Excerpts from the interviews are interesting to note here.

My father never ignored my education. Women used to ask my father about my marriage. [IDI-5]

My Parents are very supportive in every sense. But I did not get same kind of support from close relatives. [IDI-7]

Family is the agent through which society penetrates into younger generation and spread its tradition and values regarding their notion of education.

Showing Trust in Daughters

As respondent mentioned, Parents provided freedom because they think daughter is worthy to be trusted. In order to pursue higher education, only motivation of the Muslim women is not important but the trust and motivation of the parents towards their daughter is also play a significant role in the education attainment of the Muslim women. Parents showing trust in their daughter makes the journey smooth. Parents trust provide the critical freedom which further created opportunity for their daughter.

My family have trust on me and they have provided me with freedom. [IDI-8]

Only tears were not enough, my mother was in my support of coming here. Although papa was ready but whoever he was consulting for suggestion was giving negative feedback. Mother played vital role. [IDI-9]

Father Calming Down ‘Others’

Father has to play crucial role in matters of daughter education. But sometime it happened that other members of family are reluctant. A supportive father has to deal with hesitancy and apprehensions of the family members and turn into approval and agreement and some time has to deal with close relative as well.

I have drawn a great deal of motivation from my father. My mother, my elder brother did not want me to get admission. Mother was not talking to me and my brothers were angry at me. My father supported me and said ‘son’ go and pursue education. I am in Hyderabad because of him. He convinced rest of the family that Hyderabad (MANUU) is good place. [IDI-1]

Despite my maternal father opposition, my father resisted saying no matters she is girl (*ladki hui to kya hua*) she should study. [IDI-2]

Besides taking care of family member, Father has to neutralize or resist the pressure or suggestion made by people of the community. Sometimes members of the community have gender discriminatory attitude. They have best possible means that can jeopardise the education of the daughter like marriage of girl, reminding age of marriage, girl going distant place, girl going alone. Father has to neglect, resist, and neutralize these patriarchal hegemonic narratives so that his daughter could pursue her aspiration and dream.

On insistence on my parents for my marriage, they replied that if she wishes to do M.Eds., she must do. [IDI-5]

My parents never cared about what people say about my marriage, age, more education. They never bothered these words. They always wanted and supported to have education level of my wish. And they replied such comment when there will be God will, she will be married and I am not in hurry. [IDI-5]

My father had to assure elders of the family that she would wear veil with education. She has reached to the level of the maturity that she can look after herself. They have full faith in me that I would not do anything wrong. [IDI-5]

Elders of the family have the concern about the religious and cultural practice of wearing veils. Father plays the role of mediator between elder and daughter

to get approval by elders. Father has to unfold his wing to counter the narratives of elder members, brothers, close relatives and people from community.

Motivation by Showing Future Prospect

Although mother is not very educated, she inspired her daughter by setting higher goal for her daughter. Mother and daughter relationship is very intimate relationship. Despite of mother not having modern education as shared by one of the respondents, she dreamed of daughter becoming what she is not.

My mother never listened to anyone and she always wanted me either doctor or engineer. [IDI-2]

Supportive mother is not only setting higher goal but also save her daughter and herself from discriminatory attitude of people around them.

Academic Environment and Proper Guidance in the Family

Muslim women living in joint family are in the field of either job or in the field of education. Even female member (mother) is government employee. Such atmosphere has potential to unconsciously shape the behaviour and inclination towards higher aspiration. Educational environment in family also helped in formation of interest of respondent. Respondent develop interest by looking seeing her maternal uncle taking interest in science and got guidance as well.

My mother guided me since my childhood. She had eye on whether I was studying and how I was using my time. [IDI-9]

Senior member like my uncle keeps suggesting what I have to do. I have been watching that my uncles study science. Perhaps due to the environment of science in the family, I am pursuing education in the field of Mathematics. [IDI-9]

For me, my maternal uncle has been source of encouragement and guidance for what and where I am today. [IDI-9]

I have grown my interest in Mathematics because of my uncles. They taught me at home. I got this mind-set with regular counselling. [IDI-9]

Thus, educational environment at home creates an education friendly environment. Elder can guide and keep eye on her for education. And simultaneously helps in locating interest.

Providing Better Environment away from Home

Father, brother, elder brother tries to create a better environment by extending different sort of support. Father himself took decision to allow her daughter to pursue study away from home. This is deliberate effort of father to give friendly environment because there is neither educational environment in the family nor in the community. Father tried to provide better exposure to have good outcome from his daughter.

I qualified for Darbhanga, Bangalore and Hyderabad. My father wanted me to study away from home and he thought that was the best for me. [IDI-2]

If there are elder and educated members in the family, then Muslim women may start receiving guidance and motivation from early period. Drawing motivation unconsciously by watching and may be by observing. It is good fortune for Muslim women from educated family getting guidance because they invest more vigour on brilliance. As a result, Muslim women don't have to face challenges in course selection, subject choice and other important things concerning carrier and guidance other than challenges in academics.

The elder members of the family are educated, they guide and lead us to move forward and ahead. [IDI-3]

I have joint family, and all members of the family support for the education. It was support of the family because of which I had to face less challenges. No body interferes because they are educated. [IDI-3]

When we were about to complete our graduation, my father decided and took decision of getting admission in MANUU, Hyderabad. [IDI-10]

The elders, especially brother also extend his help to rescue the situation in case of death of guardian in family. Muslim woman was heavily dependent on guardian for financial support apart from other support. If the elder brother is in earning position, then there is higher probability that she will not face much challenge. Respondent also got exposure of Hyderabad city and university.

After death of my father, everything got managed due to my elder brother and he is doing job here in Hyderabad and he

resides in Suncity with my mom. And I reside in the MANUU hostel. [IDI-4]

Permission to Spread Feathers by Doing Job

When education of Muslim women is not very high and father giving permission to his daughter for job brings curiosity in them. Such parents have come a long way ahead in understanding the importance of higher education in the life of their daughter. They have good understanding that job is not only for boys but girls can also get financially benefitted by doing job. This is an inverted view to the gender discrimination.

My father has no problem with us doing job. One of my sisters already doing job in Delhi. [IDI-10]

My father is very good. He always encouraged me saying ‘Do not get disturbed due to my illness, you should study and bring glory for us (*naam roshan karo*). [IDI-7]

My father suffered but he never let me suffer. I had not courage and I derived encouragement from my father. [IDI-2]

Parents created such an opportunity to their daughter so that they could utilize, realize and actualize their potential.

Husband and his Family’s Support

Husband has been very supportive for some wife. But it is not the same case for married respondent. After marriage, Muslim women pursuing higher education is very common. Two husband who supported and encouraged his wife come from very educated family. Male as well as female members of the family are educated. In case of second respondent, even the female member (mothers-in-law) is doing job. Husband’s support encouraged wife for doing masters and research.

I was pursuing my B.Ed. when I was married. My husband supported me a lot when I was doing post-graduation in Darbhanga. Credit goes to my husband that I am here. He is now persuading me to do research. [IDI-3]

If I am doing post-graduation, it is only because of my husband support. My husband wanted me to study, so I got admission in

graduation after marriage. My husband told me that you have to study. So, I came here for post-graduation. [IDI-12]

He also supported me very much. He says 'study at the time of study and talk at the time of talk'. [IDI-9]

I had not to negotiate with my husband's family for pursuing M.Sc. I have full support of my husband. [IDI-9]

Marriage is transition phase for husband as well as wife. But nature of transition of wife is different from the husband. Women leave her home and shift into another family where she has to adjust with different set of people around her and those people may have different kind of family tradition and value. In such situation, support from husband is very important for continuation of education. And such kind of supportive environment provided in the above two cases. It was evident from the data that husband family also extended its support by allowing, motivating continuation of the study. Husband family where female members are educated and doing job are able to provide such environment where thinking about whether to continue education or doing job is not an issue. Such family environment provide support to thrive for aspiration.

My husband's family is also educated. That is why my mother-in-law motivated me for higher studies. She says 'use your time'. [IDI-3]

My husband family supported me after my marriage. There is educational environment in my husband family. They too are educated and even female members are pursuing either education or doing job. My mother-in-law and sisters-in-law are doing jobs. So, there is not as such issue of continuation of study after my marriage. [IDI-9]

Three respondents out of four married women got such kind of supportive attitude and environment. These married women had same kind of educated parent both sides. Thus, educated families are more responsive towards the education of women and in providing congenial environment to their dreams. It was also noted that working in-laws have no problem with Muslim women trying to get a job in multinational companies.

Sibling's Support

Elder brother supported his sister by earning money so that she could pursue higher education. Brother's income was only the source of income for the family. So, brother's financial support was very essential. Elder brother support was limited to money. Because he was not in support of his sister going long away from home for education.

My eldest brother started doing job since he was 18. His support led me to this stage. (But he was not in support of his sister going distant place to follow his aspiration). [IDI-6]

In the crucial time, fourth brother of same respondent was rigid in matter of allowing his sister going distant place for education. Respondent was indebted to her brother support. Elder brother supported by taking position for his sister against the will of other member of the family.

My fourth brother was in my support. He stood like wall before family, 'why not to send'. I am here doing Ph.D. of my wish because of him. [IDI-6]

Brother supported not only by taking stand for his sister but also by caring, guiding and leading from front, which made possible the journey to research. The 'support' was described by the respondent as follows

My younger brother supported me a lot. He took me to that place, got room for my living and arranged food. I qualified NET besides doing job. My younger brother insisted me to fill the form for Ph.D. in MANUU, Hyderabad. I fortunately get selected. [IDI-6]

In case of another respondent, father, mother and one of two elder brothers were not in favour of my higher education. One of two elder brothers come forward in favour of respondent's higher education. He provided support by convincing parents and brother. He also provided moral support and guidance in the field of academics and career.

One of my brothers supported me very much. He morally supported me initially and tried to convince my parents and brother for me doing engineering. Whatever I am today is because of my brother. He encourages me even today to do my best and prepare for competitive examination. He filled me with motivation. [IDI-11]

In the same case, elder brother had to assure the other resistant member (parents and one elder brother) of family. He assured family by taking responsibility if something happens otherwise.

My brother was questioned for providing support and liberty to me. My brother replied I will take care of it and I have full faith in my sister. [IDI-11]

I was offered admission in IT and computer science, she suggested to take admission in computer science considering me as a girl. For me my sister is my ideal. I followed her path. [IDI-14]

Thus, elder sister also acted as guide and ideal for Muslim women. Presence of someone especially elder sister who was ideal to follow the path was incredible support for Muslim women to have. The same elder sister helped in selection of course for her sister. There were cases in which Muslim women did not get such kind of support rather a particular course was imposed on them. Respondent was interested in social science, sister guided her to science and finally got admission in diploma in engineering. Sister was already doing masters in computer science. So elder sister supported her younger sister by persuading her to take admission in computer science so that she could help because she had travelled through that path and had good knowledge about her field.

The elder sister got me into science field as she was herself in the same field. She wanted me to follow her footprints. I got admission in diploma (computer science). [IDI-14]

My sister is first in my family and relatives who is doing job. [IDI-10]

If I fall somewhere, she helps me to rise. If I do something wrong she scolds at me, and scold at me in such a way that she makes me realize where is my fault. She also suggests the way out and which is often right. [IDI-13]

Siblings (brothers and sisters) provide their support in variety of ways. Financial support, standing for sister interest, acting as role model, guidance etc. Thus, the experiences of the other person of the family members are very crucial for higher education of Muslim women particularly in choosing the subject that could have positive impact in future life. Moreover, the role of the elder sister is also very vital for being first in the family and relative who was doing job.

This gave a sign of relief from psychological barrier in such a way that she would not have to struggle for getting approval from family.

Support of Close Relatives

Close relatives supported in variety of ways and in different situation also helped women sometimes. A Muslim woman residing in village having highly educated parents and educated grandparents who were not resistant to female member getting higher education but found it difficult to allow movement of female member over long distance in rural area. After 6th standard, Muslim women had to go long distance and family could not afford it. In such situation uncle residing in town provided shelter to stay and continue study further. In another situation, due to not having good college around the area, aunt made space in home to stay and complete the graduation.

I acquired education from Darbhanga, my uncle is there and we have home. After 6th standard, I studied in Darbhanga and did my B.A., M.A., B.Ed., and now pursuing M.Ed. from MAANU. [IDI-3]

I did my graduation residing at the house of maternal aunt (*khala*). [IDI-10]

The cousin who had exposure to college and university life and had knowledge about different educational venues guided the respondent's parent to get her admission in MANUU.

My cousin brother guided my father for doing MSW from MANUU, Hyderabad. [IDI-10]

Close relatives provided their support by allowing respondents to stay at their home and pursue their academic aspiration. Such kind of support was availed by respondent living in rural area. Parents were not resistant to higher education to their daughter but apprehension was regarding to the long distance, woman has to cover. Thus, such kind of support are required especially for women belonging to remote areas.

Community Level Support

MANUU as Grooming Platform

Maulana Azad National Urdu University has supported in different way and played a crucial role in educating the marginalised clutches of the society particularly its role is immense in educating Muslim women. In this section researcher would like to deliberate and describe the ways in which MANUU has emerged as centre of fulfilling the educational dream of Muslim women.

Cultural Association

Respondent felt associated with the cultural milieu of the university. When the researcher asked the meaning of Muslim University, she meant that she felt comfortable with the kind of environment with which she could associate herself with.

Hyderabad University (MANUU) is (Muslim culture) Muslim university. University is good for girls. So, parents got us enrolled in MANUU Hyderabad. [IDI-10]

There are certain kind of educational environment in which they feel comfortable. That environment is equipped with other aspect which they mean by Muslim environment are given below.

Academic Space

Being away from home in Maulana Azad National Urdu University provided them with ample time for study which Muslim women were usually not getting home because they had to carry out household chores. Hostel facility in MANUU Campus saved time by having no need to move here and there for tuition.

Here (MANUU), I am free from everything. I have plenty of time for study. At home I had to help with my mother, furthermore I had to go for tuition a little far away, school was away at distant place. I went there by bicycle; it took me around an hour. [IDI-1]

Respondent having exposure to another college also put emphasis on the importance of hostel facility provided by comparing her previous exposure.

When in I got admission in B.Tech. in one of the private colleges of JNTU, then I come to realize the importance of MANUU hostel, even I was missing food of here. [IDI-14]

Thus, MANUU proved to be grooming ground for them. What MANUU provide is suitable and desirable for them.

Safe and Secured Compound and Trust

A respondent who was already pursuing education in MANUU, Darbhanga preferred MANUU, Hyderabad over Darbhanga centre. This could happen because of father and respondent had perception of safe hostel compound in Hyderabad centre.

This is opportunity for me that I am studying in Maulana Azad National Urdu University. There is also a branch of MANUU in Darbhanga, but I preferred to pursue M.Ed. from Hyderabad. This is also better because here is safe hostel compound and my father also suggested for the same. [IDI-3]

Muslim women find it problematic to pursue education without safe hostel. A respondent who pursued Bachelor degree in Engineering had to lead difficult life. She found relief in the Hostel facility provided by MANUU.

My family thinks that there is safety here. I had to live in PGs, there was no hostel facility. In MANUU, there is no issue of safety and security. [IDI-7]

One of the respondent's husbands who was very supportive persuaded her to do post-graduation only on the ground that he felt MANUU provided academic environment and safe hostel.

My husband knew about MANUU himself. He persuaded to do post-graduation citing good environment and hostel facility. [IDI-12]

Since MANUU provide academic environment, safe and secured hostel facility, parents have trust in the University.

Parents have trust in MANUU campus. I pursued school education in MANUU Model School in Chandan Patti, Darbhanga. I also did Polytechnic from MANUU Darbhanga. And now pursuing Bachelor in Technology in MANUU, Hyderabad. [IDI-8]

Respondents, parents, husband in case of married women unequivocally believed that MANUU provided Muslim women with safety and security. Hence, they trusted in MANUU. That was why they have sent their children to Hyderabad for the study. Thus, once the question of safety and security is addressed in the sight of parents the meaning of distance becomes meaningless.

Last Hope in Competitive Time

Respondent shared the importance of MANUU at the time of competition. They mentioned two universities in which they could not get admission. Those universities are also known and famous for accommodating mainly Muslim students. They mentioned tough criteria and competition for getting admission. In such circumstances, MANUU provide them with opportunity to study in one of the Central University where were able to get admission. Excerpts from the interviews are interesting to note here.

I had preference to get admission in Aligarh Muslim University or Jamia Millia Islamia but I was in the waiting list and could not clear for admission. Thereafter I fortunately got admission in Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad. [IDI-4]

Now a days there is competition everywhere. So, in the Central University. Everybody wants to get admission in Central University. I had also strong desire to get admission in Aligarh Muslim University. But there is tough competition. In AMU and Jamia, admission is offered on the basis of JEE ranking. Maulana Azad National Urdu University is very good university. These are the institution whose primary focus is study. Finding myself here is opportunity for me. Distance is meaningless if here is good and quality education. [IDI-7]

One of the respondents shared that MANUU proved to be crucial for those who have studied through Urdu medium. She shared that they were able to get admission because lesser competition in comparison to another university. Two women described their feeling as:

MANUU accommodate those who are from **Urdu medium**. And it is easy to take admission here due to less cut throat competition. [IDI-9]

Some people from neighbourhood appreciates us saying 'keep it up'. [IDI-10]

MANUU proved to be significant for those who are unable to get admission in another university due to tough competition. University provides platform to Urdu Medium students. Respondent who encountered with people who had negative perspective for girls getting higher education. But there were also some people who morally supported and wished for better in the future. People in the surrounding in the direct or indirect contact supported in different way and some time in a very unusual way.

Locating Educational Institution

Random supports were those supports which were extended to respondents which do not take place in normal situation. Supportive people emerged to support Muslim women in matters of their education. They helped in some way or another. One of the parents who was willing to provide higher education but not well informed about the educational institution. A person emerged from somewhere while they were traveling. Educated fellow traveller provided some information which gave guidance to parents and direction to respondent. This kind of support came unexpectedly way. A respondent shared her thoughts as:

There was no chance of me coming here, my father met a professor during train journey, and he suggested my father about getting my admission in Maulana Azad National Urdu University. I appeared in the test I qualified. And I am here. [IDI-2]

Teacher and Colleague Guiding Selection of Course

Situation in which parents not allowing respondent to go 15 km away to college or coaching from home, a teacher who was providing tuition in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics unknowingly helped respondent to select PCM stream. Respondent availed coaching service. Same teacher played important role in taking well informed selection of course at post-graduation level. A respondent who had severe resistance in the family except one supportive elder brother got clue about doing MSW by knowing that her colleague had done same course. Very unusual and accidental way of indirect support. Which seems to be like but it happens in the social relationship that one person gets influenced by another person in varieties of ways. Teacher came out to support respondent

by persuading parents by settling the fear, confusion and worries emerged from the concern that daughter going Hyderabad for education. Teachers in the community had some kind of influence on parents. That was why, Parents got convinced successfully. Excerpts from the interviews are

When I knew that there is Sanjay sir in my village who can teach me Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and then I decided to opt PCM stream. Sanjay sir helped me to opt for MCA. [IDI-11]

Where I was doing job, some colleague had done MSW. So, I took admission in MSW. [IDI-6]

My teacher also told my father that Hyderabad is good place. No need to worry, let her go. [IDI-1]

Courage for Education at Distance

One sister from village who was not relative to respondent gave courage to respondent and made her journey easy. Village sister did not say word of encouragement. But presence of such person only around respondent brought change in the perception of distance.

I am first from my family so it was a little difficult. But one of the sisters from village pursued B.B.A. from Delhi. So, she made my journey easy. [IDI-4]

The people around respondent with their different story and achievement had potential to change the perception of Muslim women regarding women getting education thousands kilometre away from home.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that Muslim women supported themselves by persuading their parents, resilient behaviour and by winning trust and confidence of mother. Family supported by making negotiation with lonely movement of Muslim women over distance and age of marriage. Family also supported by showing trust, providing academic guidance and allowed daughter to develop with her aspiration. MANUU proved to be grooming platform where they felt associated with. They found academic space, safe and secured compound where it was relatively easy for most of them to get admission.

CHAPTER7- CONSEQUENCES OBSERVED AND PERCIEVED

Introduction

Consequences are those changes that have developed at individual, family and community level as a result if Muslim women reaching to the level of higher education. This chapter deals with the outcome/change that have emerged out of challenges faced, support availed and following the educational trajectory to the level of higher education from Muslim women perspective.

Individual Level Changes

The meaning of education is different from respondent to respondent. They had multiple meaning associated to education. No two respondents had identical meaning of education. Sometime they had similar and sometime different meaning of education. Meaning of education ranged from escaping hardship to making different phase of life meaningful.

Change in Persona and Mindset

Respondent looked at education as a means to bring change in persona and mindset. One woman also pointed out importance of having university platform. Becoming ‘universal’ meant broadness in thinking. That further led to change in behaviour. Other respondent had outlook that education bring positivity in thinking and ability to take decision to lead life better.

I got my personality changed. When you come in university, you become universal. If I had not come her, I would not have the thinking that I have now. I have thinking and my behaviour changed a lot. [IDI-9]

The importance of good education is that one can easily differentiate between well-educated and not educated girl only by seeing them. Well educated girl looks at everything positively. She will make right decision. She leads a better life. One not educated will be different. She will always lack good decision-making. [IDI-13]

A respondent, from a traditionally educated family where each member of family is educated and female members (mother, sister-in-law) are doing job, perceived education in broader way. She thinks purpose of education is not only doing job but enjoying every aspect of life equally. She further shared, married, family, academic and professional life are different dimensions of life which should be lived and enjoyed equally. She called for change in the thinking that job is only purpose of education. Thus, meaning of education for her is well-being of life and linking education with job is narrow interpretation of education.

There is need to bring change in the thinking that after marriage you must do job. The primary outcome of education is knowledge. Secondary is job. I want to enjoy every phase of my life. [IDI-9]

One of the respondents shared her view on education that having education means also doing well to other by informing other what is right and wrong. Thus, according to her the purpose of education to inculcate good values in self and as well as others.

They can do well to others. They can aware others what is good and right for them. (When asked whether it happened in your case, respondent said yes). I found my perspective changed. [IDI-14]

It is evident from the data that every respondent found their perspective transformed after having education and reaching to the level of higher education.

Self-esteem

All the narratives by respondents seem to suggest that they had scariness in moving alone, talking with other and being hesitant earlier. Now they feel free from those psychological constraints. It is power of knowledge for them to get themselves freed from fears.

Earlier I was very hesitant in talking with others and I also lack confidence of doing something...now I can understand a range of things. Education is very important. If somebody is not educated, she cannot move alone with someone. If she has not

knowledge, she will always be scared. Many girls in the village cannot talk boldly with anyone. [IDI-10]

I feel self-dependent, and feel free everywhere. Do not feel hesitation. [IDI-7].

This narrative has potential to further substantiate what meaning has been made earlier. Self-dependency does not mean here financial independence rather it signifies that she felt captive, hesitant earlier. She felt free and confident after getting education. Education allowed them to have self-esteem that further enabled them to free themselves from fear and hesitation. Consequently, they were able to move and talk. Education freed them from captivity.

Sense of Righteousness

Respondents had the perspective that education enable person to differentiate between right and wrong, and good and bad. Such respondents seem to focus on ethical function of education. Which somehow shows the seeds of critical thinking

I have great influence of education on me. I now know what is good and bad for me. [IDI-6].

In present time, educated girls are aware of what is right and what is wrong. [IDI-14]

For respondents, education developing ethical dimension in them. It can be said they that critical and ethical thinking have developed as a result if acquiring education.

Education as Instrument of Self-Dependency, Empowerment and Liberation

Most of them looked at meaning of education as a means of empowerment. One respondent perceived education as means to exercise the rights of the individual. Other had comprehensive meaning of education, like change in the mind-set, self-dependency in marriage relationship. One respondent put emphasis on character and personality rather than job.

I can raise voice for my right. How to stop if someone doing wrong with me. [IDI-6]

For me education is means of change in behaviour and character. There should be empowerment. The sole purpose of education is not to have a good job but there should be change in thinking and personality. Girls in particular should be self-dependent after marriage. Education is an agent of empowerment. [IDI-5]

Respondent had very unusual and very futuristic outlook about meaning of education but still put emphasis on self-dependency. She had the viewpoint that instead of tolerating each other in intolerable circumstances, it is better to part your way. She meant; education is an instrument of liberation in unbearable marriage relationship. One of the respondents shared her view education as enabling her to do job for self-dependency.

In extreme unfavourable marriage condition, you can move on instead of tolerating each other as it used to happen earlier. The main purpose of education is self-dependency. [IDI-8]

Education is important to all. It is important because my father had a dream for me becoming an engineer. I just want to depend on myself by doing job. [IDI-4]

Thus, women give different meanings to education however, for the majority of women education is means for personality development and self-dependency which ultimately provide them empowerment and liberation.

Elevation in the Status

Respondents looked at education as means of elevating their status in the family and community. They perceived that parent get recognition from community for permitting daughter for higher education. According to one woman, education bring reputation to her and family. Another respondent said, she would be regarded by husband by being highly educated. One of the respondents replied, they would be married in educated family. This narrative implied that in order to get married in educated family, women needed to be educated as well.

There has been great impact of education on me. First of all, you are known that daughter of that person is pursuing education from MANUU. [IDI-9]

Education makes you respectable in the eye of husband. [IDI-8]

And second advantage is that I will be married in good and educated family because I myself have acquired higher education. [IDI-9]

Education has been seen as means of elevating social status. They meant, they will have social recognition and regard in the eye of husband. They will be married in educated family.

General Life Living Skill

Respondents had the view that education enhance life living skill. Responses include appropriate social interaction, dealing with different things and upbringing of child.

How I have to respond to different people. [IDI-6 AFSANA]

I can understand a range of things. [IDI-10]

And the time we are living in, we need to be educated to handle the things. So, education is very essential. [IDI-7]

Education is important to maintain good environment. It is also important to have your child good upbringing. [IDI-8]

Education seems to be enabling factor. According to the narratives, what they were earlier unable or less able, they become more able to perform this social activity. Respondent thinks, there is difference between upbringing of child by less educated and educated mother.

As a Safety Net

Some respondents perceived meaning of education as safety net in case of death of husband or divorce. One of the respondents said, she will be supporting the family in case of death of husband. She meant that she could provide financial support in such condition. Another respondent had the same perspective with little variation that if she will be educated, she will not have to depend on other. She meant to be self-dependent in such situation. Meaning of education being seen as safety nets in case of divorce or death of husband in order to have ability to provide financial support and to be able to self-dependent. Narratives from the women are as follows:

My father witnessed the death of his sister's husband and her suffering due to poverty. This gave us the lesson, if something that sort of thing happens then I will be able to support my family by doing job [IDI-1]

If women have good education, she can support herself in the case of divorce which is growing in numbers. She will not be dependent on anyone. [IDI-8]

Dealing with Hardship in Life

One of the married respondents who had less educated parents and pursuing higher by negotiating parents see the meaning of education as escaping from hardship. She perceived education as making life easy. She learned meaning of education by observing hardship faced by other uneducated women in her community. Thus, education is being seen as escape from hardship that emerged from being uneducated.

I used to see poor girls carrying bundle of crop on their head, I thought if they had education, they would not have to go through this sort of hardship. Then I decided that I will pursue education and do job and I will not have to go through this suffering. So, I decided to pursue education. [IDI-1]

Utilization of Opportunity Utmost

Except one respondent, every respondent intended to utilize the opportunity of studying in university utmost. They were trying hard, according to them getting this opportunity for someone was like happening of unthinkable. They see future in it. Muslim women lacked opportunity earlier. After having opportunity to study, they think to give their best.

I study and work hard to the best level. [IDI-1]

I do not know whether I am ahead, at any cost I am not going to slip this opportunity. I would never miss this opportunity. I was pessimist earlier but now I have plenty of reason of being optimistic about my future. [IDI-2]

I did my graduation in Arabic. Due to not very competent in Arabic, I got admission in M.A. Urdu. I did preparation for Ph.D. in my fourth semester. And now I am doing Ph.D. [IDI-13]

Apart from optimum utilization of opportunity, most of them have dreamt of making big out of it. They intended and planned to pursue next academic course

in their respective discipline. One of the respondents showed interest in doing job on guardian consent.

I have future aspiration to become an engineer and wanted to see my father happy. [IDI-2 MARYAM] I have dream to become professor and that is why I am on the journey to realize my dream. [IDI-3]

If I could not get good job after doing engineering then I would pursue masters in engineering. Job opportunities are less in the market now a days. Good job requires quality and higher education. [IDI-4]

I am doing M.Ed. and Insha'Allah will do Ph.D. [IDI-5]

I will pursue research. [IDI-7]

My guardian wants me to do MTech, but I want to do job. I have not taken final decision yet. [IDI-8]

Different respondent had different aspiration in their respective field. These respondents were not only willing to try hard but also setting high goals to achieve.

Gradual Development of Self-Reliance

Movement of daughter is not warmly welcomed. But when Muslim women were given opportunity, they moved freely and responsibly. Self-dependency grew over time. First travelled with brother thereafter with sister and finally alone. Respondent shown courage to move by her own. She helped herself. Lonely movement over distance is not normal among Muslim women.

I cannot for the first time my brother came with us. Onwards my elder sister and I travelled together. And now when my sister is not here, I travel alone. I do not fear traveling. [IDI-10]

I always travel with my brother. He has to study as well. [IDI-8]

Self-dependency of Muslim women saves the time of other member of family. By depending on herself and family allowing to do so is gradual development of decision-making agency.

Independent Survival Training for self-dependency

Respondent deliberately chose to Hyderabad centre instead of Darbhanga centre of MANUU. She could choose Darbhanga, her hometown, but she wanted to do

experiment with herself. She wanted to do experiment whether she could survive without family, it was an act of knowing about yourself. It was also an act of identify herself. Muslim women living away from home took this opportunity to look for self-identity, self-dependency and art of living in the society. Another respondent looked at exposure to different place and society as source of learning how to live in the society where she belonged to.

I was also selected in Darbhanga, MANUU. But I had desire to pursue my education away from home. Intention was to know about herself, to know whether I can survive without my family. Develop my own identity so I came to MANUU, Hyderabad. [IDI-5]

Residing outside make us learn how to live in the society. [IDI-7]

Respondents seem to be providing opportunity to themselves for empowerment out the exposure they have been given.

Learning from Own Experience

In the following narrative, respondent reflecting upon her own experience. Taking whole content of interview into the consideration, she mentioned what she lacked and what should be things like. She put emphasis on importance of early guidance and respecting the interest of daughter rather other imposing their wish and desire on her. Respondent learned how a women aspired for education should be treated by family and parent.

I think girls should be provided with guidance right from very beginning(10th). This may benefit them. Apart from guidance to girls, parents should be counselled so that they should realize decision should not be imposed but help their daughter to pursue education of her interest. [IDI-6]

Respondent seems to be suggesting that how Muslim should be treated, guided for productive change. In a remote sense, she seems to be locating focused area for intervention.

Able to Bargain with Future Husband

It was acquisition of higher education by the respondent which probably made her able to negotiate with future husband for what she needed and wished. Every educated man is not comfortable with such condition. That is why respondent had to reject earlier proposal. Another educated person came forward and he

accepted respondent condition. Thus, higher education put in the position of getting her condition accepted.

My prospective husband is doing job in China and he is ok with two conditions of my marriage. Practice of Veil and continuation of higher Education to level of research. Earlier I had rejected one offer. [IDI-5]

Familial Level Consequences/ Changes

Eye Opener for Siblings

First woman from family opens the door of opportunity for sibling. Siblings got so excited that they intended to persuade their husband to allow them continue study in the case if father did not agree.

My sister quarrel with me and said they will also come to Hyderabad (MANUU) after the completion of graduation. Here are so many options. They say if father will not allow them then they will study after marriage. [IDI-1]

One respondent after taking the exposure of external academic and career world. She realized the importance of English language in taking admission in reputed college and getting good job. She communicated the same to guide her sisters. This narrative outlines the importance of having knowledge and fluency in English.

I motivate my younger sister to have focus on study and improve your English. I used to say her, no English, No admission in good college, No good job. [IDI-10]

Catalyst for Change

Learning from the respondent, cousin sisters persuaded their parents for higher education. They asked for same kind of opportunity referring to respondent. Means to say, people are watching and they wish to imitate. Same respondent shared the view, girls in their family wish to follow us. This indicated girls at home lack the practical figure around themselves who they could follow. Respondents with higher education are able to change the mind-set of girls of younger generation in their family and close relatives. Same things happened in case of community which study mentioned later in community section. The narratives are interesting to note here.

My cousin sister realized when my sisters can do engineering and Ph.D., then why we cannot. Now they ask their parents for higher education. They are asking for the same opportunity that we got. [IDI-14]

Girls would want to follow our footprints. They will curious to know about thing and they would try to do the things. [IDI-14]

Sense of Happiness for Family

Respondents shared that family/parents felt very happy and proud of us. Parents proud of us that we are doing what we wanted. They were happy because of their daughter pursuing higher education. One of parents was also happy with daughter doing job in coming future. The feeling of proud is sense of achievement and recognition of effort made respondents. Proud perhaps may be because their daughter could do what majority of Muslim women are not able to do.

All are happy what I am doing. [IDI-3]

Everyone supports me and they feel proud of me. [IDI-4]

My parents are happy that we did what we wanted. They are proud of us. [IDI-14]

Family feels proud on us. And they are happy that their daughters have attained higher education and they would do job. [IDI-10]

Being Heard and Participation in Decision Making

Muslim women voices are not only heard in the family but they are being engaged by parents in decision making. One of the respondents shared that if she speaks something then family member hears and support. They are being engage in decision making in matters of concern related to education of siblings. Parents also seek consent before taking decision in matter of life of their daughter.

In my family, if I say something, another person favours and support me. [IDI-6]

Parents take suggestion in matters of brother and sister education. [IDI-5]

Now, family ask for suggestion in matters of education and take my consent before taking decision in my regard. [IDI-7]

Being educated have elevated the value of Muslim women in the eyes of parents and other members of the family. In third narrative, it clearly shows that same was not the case earlier. Engagement of Muslim women in decision making is the sign of their gradual empowerment.

Change of Heart of Close Relatives

This was very unusual but very appreciable change in the attitude of uncle toward Muslim women getting higher education away from home. One uncle who was not in favour of niece getting higher education away from home, he has not only changed his attitude but he was ready to send her daughter away from home for getting education.

The uncle who was against me coming here, after completion of my post-graduation. He allowed his daughter to pursue education from here. [IDI-13]

It seems that close relative who have negative attitude are waiting for such an example to happen to get encourage and change their attitude and action together. Respondent shared her views about cousin who thought her to be fortunate and wished to pursue education. But cousin anticipated that she would not be allowed.

I have a cousin who said that you are fortunate you went to Hyderabad for education, you are living your life. On asking you also come there, she replied I wish but my guardian would not allow me. [IDI-1]

Educated Muslim women are able to change the perception of another girl. But that is not enough, because decision is taken by parents particularly father. So, perception and attitude of father needed to be changed in order to bring girl in the education stream. Cousin went into storming phase; it is also a positive sign.

Community Level Consequences

Becoming Guide and Source of Inspiration

Respondents became guide by settling the query of girls around them. They provided information regarding entrance examination. Sometime parents too come to them to know where and how to get admission. One of the respondent counselled parents about getting daughter education completed before marriage.

I feel some change would have taken place. Some girls enquire me through telephonic communication about how to pass entrance examination. [IDI-2]

People come to have an idea where to get their daughter admitted. We also support them and try to convince them that get your daughter education completed before marriage. [IDI-10]

One of the respondents became reason for a girl getting admission in MANUU besides cousin. This is one step forward than guidance. Not only respondent but her father was also consulted for guidance. Father who had sent his daughter for education was consulted by other parents for counselling in matters of admission and place of admission. Same respondent also extended her academic assistance to the girls who could not continue her education by utilizing vacations. One of the respondents become source of inspiration for a neighbour who used to criticize her for education. The neighbour wanted daughter to be like respondent. This was complete change of the heart that also happened in case of close relative.

I have a cousin sister who came because of me. I have one of my juniors who completed his graduation in science. Some of girls did graduation in Arts. They all knew about MANUU through me. [IDI-9]

Some parents come to my father asking about where to get my daughter admitted. When I am at home, they have curiosity to know what to do. [IDI-3]

There are girls in the neighbourhood who could not study further because of financial constraint and lack of educational awareness. Whenever I go to my place in vacation, I give tuition free of cost to them. [IDI-5]

The neighbour who used to say about me to my parents why are you sending me far away for education, now they say their daughter 'you have to become like *IDI-5*'. [IDI-5]

Becoming Reference to Persuade Parents

One of the friends of respondent got inspired by her. She used respondent as reference. She successfully persuaded resistant family and father at different occasion. Marriage came in the way after completion of graduation. Father persuaded by referring respondent. She got permission and completed post-

graduation. For training from Jamia, resistance came again. Respondent referred again and got permission. This shows that over a period of time due to the exposure to the external world Muslim women develop a sense of agency and negotiate with their environment.

I have experienced a positive change very recently. I have a friend of mine, higher education to girls is not considered respectable in that family. Graduation is enough. She also hails from village but graduated from Darbhanga residing at the maternal uncle house. At the completion of graduation, she was being persuaded for marriage. She told her parents referring me when she can do higher education, why I can't. She got permission and completed her M.Sc. (Biotech). When came the time of training she referred me again when she can pursue higher education from Hyderabad why I can't, why I am being pressurized to do my training from or around Darbhanga District. Family allowed her. she is doing training in Jamia Milli Islamia now. [IDI-5]

Conclusion

Muslim women viewed education as change in persona and mindset, enhanced self-esteem, education as instrument of self-dependency and elevation in status. Muslim women proved to be eye opener and guide for siblings, pride for parents, change in mindset in family. Muslim women become source of guidance, inspiration and motivation at community level. The narratives of the women amply reflect that over a period of time due to the exposure to the external world Muslim women develop a sense of agency and negotiate with their environment.

CHAPTER-8 DISCUSSION, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The present study enquired about context, challenge, support and consequences of Muslim women pursuing higher education. Study started with the purpose of knowing about the reason behind abysmal representation of Muslim women in higher education. Muslim women pursuing higher education from Maulana Azad National Urdu University constitute population of the study. A total fourteen in-depth interviews were conducted during the study. Further method of data saturation has been used to construct the themes for the study and further to determine the sample size. Perspectives shared by Muslim women helped in finding answer to research questions. During this process, numerous themes emerged as findings which has been discussed in earlier chapters. Here the purpose of the researcher is to make sense of those findings and try to corroborate or contradicts with the earlier findings.

Discussion

It was found that early disinterest seems to be caused by the indifference of parents/family towards their daughter's education. Parents has priority to marry their daughter as soon as possible. This also shows particular kind of attitude towards daughter and higher education. Priority of parents determine the nature and length of educational trajectory of Muslim women. Early disinterest may have caused deprivation from school environment, exposure, interaction with students and teacher which most probably lead to have less interest, motivation and aspiration for education in life. Thus, positive attitude of the parents/family members play a crucial role in determining the education of Muslim women particularly their trajectory to higher education. This finding is similar to study conducted in India and Israel that emphasised Muslim women needs a supportive family that ascribes a great deal of significance to higher education

(Abidi & Kazmi, 2019; Al-deen, 2019; Oplatka & Lapidot, 2012). Irrespective of parents having higher educational qualification and positive attitude towards gender, even in such situation distance becomes barrier due to fear and insecurity instilled in the mind. Fear associated with distance is also used to control the behaviour of daughter. Due to the issue of distance, opportunity to study in better educational institution and getting coaching guidance are compromised in some cases. Which leads to weakening the quality of education and educational trajectory. Lonely movement becomes challenge in case of long distance. Distance and lonely movement are when associated, it adds to the story. The problem of distance and secluded movement was also highlighted by the various studies (Ben Natan et al., 2016; Chanana, 1993; GoI, 2007; Hasan & Menon, 2004; Sahu et al., 2016). It seems that it is not only the fear but manifestation of discriminatory attitude of parents towards daughter education which compelled the parents to perceive distance and lonely movement in the form of obstacle. Therefore, breaking the ice is the first challenge for the Muslim women which they had not witnessed in the family. This is significant transitional phase in the psychology of the Muslim women and their parent as well.

Lack of family support due to unfavourable health condition of father compels daughter to compromise with first choice of preference for academic course. When the patriarch in the family is too ill to company his daughter and other family members are not available for the same, parents and daughter have to negotiate with journey over distance alone. Lonely movement over distance get coupled with other challenges very often. The importance of supportive financial condition for education of girl also emphasised by the many studies. The most significant reason for the educational backwardness of Muslims are socio-economic factors especially the occupation of head of the family since majority of the population involved in skilled and semi-skilled jobs (Abidi, 2015; Abidi & Kazmi, 2019; Chanana, 1993)

Muslim woman is subjected to sacrifice her aspiration for a professional course in medical science, so that her mother could continue her teaching profession.

Aspiration of educated and employed mother is found to be in conflict with daughter aspiration. Lack of early academic and career guidance lead to the loss of academic year. Instead of guidance, they are bombard with heavy advises. Academic and career guidance are not motivated by knowing interest and potential of Muslim women rather it is motivated by her being women. Sometime they are imposed with certain course and it comes as surprise. This sort of action seems to be originating from particular concept and attitude towards women. Even academic course seems to be distributed along the gender. Teaching profession is mostly preferred choice of course and career by parents. In low-income countries families tend to have diverse conceptions of educational needs of girls and boys, while boys are considered as future breadwinner and head of the patriarch education of girls is considered as a waste of resource (Jayaweera, 1997). Thus, such attitude perpetuates gender discrimination in the family. It is found that there is lack of adequate number of educational quality institutions. In such circumstances, Muslim women are compelled to travel to other states like Telangana. Such kind of issue is not only confronted by female student but male students as well. Change in medium of instruction may have caused into depreciation in comprehension ability and consequently influenced academic performance. It has potential to influence educational trajectory at later and higher stage. Greatest disadvantage of change in medium of instruction manifests when Muslim women enters into competitive world and university life. Lesser availability of English medium school in rural areas is one of the reasons. Traveling alone to distant place is another issue that also drag Muslim women in Hindi medium school which most of them are unwilling to continue with. Sometime Muslim women has to reluctantly study in medium of instruction due to discriminatory attitude of parents. Muslim women are deprived of regular classed at school and college (govt. and semi-Govt) which degrade their overall academics. Intermediate level education is supposed to lay the foundation stone of academic and career which also seems to be in compromising position. Sometimes, college with irregular classes are preferred so that time could be dedicated to coaching classes for their survival in competitive world. Government school and college

seems to be unsuccessful in imparting quality education of competitive standard. Once distance is negotiated, hostel facility of certain kind is desirable. Parents want an environment which is exclusively for girls with another consideration. An environment where majority of Muslims reside, separate hostel accommodation, safe and secure campus are considerations. Though, parents have negotiated with co-education. If such criteria are not met, Muslim women willing to live in town for college or coaching are compelled to pursue education from home. Distant from school is often more important for girls than boys, especially in countries with single sex schools and a cultural emphasis on propriety (Jacobs, 1996). Muslim women are expected to follow defined set of behaviour which has arisen out of conception of Muslim women. Parents with discriminatory attitude try to resist other members of family who favour education aspiration of daughter. This attitude of parents or grandparents is shared by other members in the family like mother or siblings. Discriminatory attitude seems to be travelling across generation, from grandfather to father and to son. This may sustain to other generation if not checked and intervened. Parents and siblings with discriminatory attitude have the pre-conceived notion that behaviour of Muslim women would become outspoken, forthright, advance, disrespectful, would take her own decision and uncover the face. Discriminatory attitude seems to be tool of controlling the behaviour of Muslim women. Seclusion of Muslim women compels them from going outside home even when it essential deprives them of education which require breaking the seclusion rule and coming out of home to attained educational institutions (Menon, 1979).

Moreover, discriminatory attitude manifests itself in preference of school near to home, Hindi medium over English medium school, not allowing to go distant place for education, selection of course of study and career. It seems evident that parents are stuck in past and ignorant to need to reorganize and negotiate with demand of present keeping their socio-religious values intact. Discriminatory attitude voyages across generation, from elder generation to younger generation, from father to son. Sibling imposes restrictions on sister in order to control behaviour assuming her sister would be infected and adapt with

unacceptable behaviour. Discriminatory attitude of sibling particularly brother leads to dominance over sister in matters of decision what course she should pursue and to what level of education she would pursue. Domination of brother reflects on mother as well and she talks in the language of son. As mentioned earlier, discriminatory attitude express itself at different stage of life. The predefined behaviour and role determine the kind of treatment with Muslim women. Family values and corporate culture conflict and family preference for particular course are primarily motivated by student being women and Muslim. Again, it seems there is inability to negotiate with external world with opportunities for Muslim women. Parents takes decision in matters of marriage of daughter. Parent's encounters with two options, at what stage daughter has to be married and after what level of acquisition of education daughter should be married. Choices has to be made on the basis of what is more important. In spite of negotiating with marriage, marriage is preferred over higher education. Sometime marriage is so important in the eyes of parents that daughter was engaged in childhood. This shows place of marriage is more important than place of higher education in the concept of Muslim women as daughter. Practice of early marriage among Muslim community is significant factor in preventing the women from continuing her education after marriage (Menon, 1979).

Higher education is the stage where generally age of student exceeds 18 years bringing these factors into consideration, parents are left with two options either negotiate with the age of marriage or negotiation with bridegroom taking promise of allowing daughter to complete higher education. In some cases, parents are able to negotiate with age of marriage, and negotiation with bridegroom ends with three possibility he would not allow, he would allow happily and cooperate, and he would allow on the condition that completion of higher education would end of educational trajectory. Out of three possibility, first condition was not found. Second possibility was found which get the place in support. Third condition was found. Financial burden and a greater number of children squeeze the opportunity for younger sibling getting education. As a

result, the eldest is chosen for study to manage resources and bring wealth to the family. This is one of the aspects of story. There is another aspect of the same story. The Muslim women who shared this story, she was resisted many times. This is a manifestation of gender discriminatory attitude. When the financial resources are scarce, families tend to support higher education of sons rather than daughters because they are the future breadwinners (Abidi, 2015; Abidi & Kazmi, 2019).

It was will of respondent that enabled her to do research. Close relatives put pressure indirectly with their stereotyped views. They try to influence the decision of parents through suggestion in matters of what is appropriate step to be taken in matters of mobility, marriage, age of marriage, level of education to Muslim women. Relatives' views reflect their discriminatory approach, conception of daughter and importance of education in their conception of daughter. Community and society express its gender discriminatory attitude by influencing the decision of family (parents) in matters of women getting higher education by suggesting and posing argument like women should not be taught to the age when they reach 'right age' (age of adulthood, 18); they should be married as soon as possible suggesting lest 'older women' would not find bridegroom; they should not be away from home alone. Abidi & Kazmi (2019) in their study noted that gender bias, gossip and social control are some social causes which play significant role towards Muslim girl's educational marginalisation in higher level.

Adamant behaviour develops out of resistance posed in the way of aspiration of Muslim women and that further insists for change. Change implies creating space for herself and her aspiration. Wining the confidence of mother gives daughter a sense of psychological contentment. Psychological contentment forms calmness of mind which does not allow the mind to get engaged elsewhere other than their purpose. This finding is similar to a study conducted in Australia which found that Muslim women sought negotiation to resolve and convince their parents through their forward-looking approach where the women see their own interests and acknowledge the interests of their parents to

reach a mutually beneficial compromising stage (Al-deen, 2019). Which is helpful for optimum utilization of energy for what Muslim women who are away from home. Emotional attachment, uncertainty due to daughter being away from home make mother concerned. Daughter settles mother concern by making her assured by intimating about herself being alright. Muslim women seem to be conscious about how to deal with such inevitable situation and facilitate themselves to their purpose. The struggle faced in the process of chasing aspiration, Muslim women developed with certain set of creative skills to respond and confront the challenges on way of realizing their aspiration. Persuasion, resilience, art of winning trust and confidence of family and by being adamant, respondents had supported themselves. These creative skills are also developed consequences as result of having motivation for education. It was only because they had motivation and had very important place of education in their life. In another words, it can be said that motivation leads to development of creative skill like persuasion, resilience, rigidity (stubbornness) in order to accomplish which, they think is important for them. This finding corroborates with a study that was conducted in Australia that strong self, coupled with an endless ambition to progress in life, help women to overcome the barriers in their higher studies (Abidi, 2015; Al-deen, 2019). Family supports daughter by negotiation with movement of Muslim women over distance even when they have to move alone. Parents have to ignore the social pressure created in the name of marriage, distance, lonely movement, age of marriage. Parents show trust and provided critical freedom. Parents provide freedom because they think daughter is worthy to be trusted and education is worthy to be acquired. Two things are very important. Freedom (distance and lonely movement) seems to be given to those daughters who are worthy to be trusted by parents. Parents have to get rid of anticipatory mistrust emerged from preoccupied notion and assumption. Second thing, it implies that it is anticipatory mistrust because of which some parents do not allow their daughter with freedom of movement. To what extent daughter will be provided with freedom depend upon the credibility of daughter in the eye of parents. Father needs to cool down resistant family members and close relatives. Moreover,

educated family motivates the daughter by aligning their wish with daughter aspiration. Mother sets the higher goal for her daughter. Parents support by providing educational environment and proper guidance from childhood. Some parents realizing the fact that they are unable to give desirable environment at home, they deliberately send daughter to have such environment in which she could excel. Parents also expresses their support by approving and allowing for the job. In case of married Muslim women pursuing higher education, husband and husbands' parents both extend their support and they do not wish to discontinue or stop the education. They even supported and welcomed the plan of continuing education and doing job. Educated husband particularly educated mother-in-law doing the job seem to put zero resistance to academic and career prospect of married Muslim women. This finding substantiates with a study that was conducted in Australia which found that Muslim women needs a supportive family that attaches significance to higher education apart from a supportive husband for a string drive to study (Al-deen, 2019). People from community also support in a very unique, unusual and seemingly unexpected way. Co-passenger helps in finding MANUU, tuition facility in village created interest for PCM stream, same tutor guided in selection of course at post-graduation level (MCA), teacher helped in convincing and persuading parents.

Educational institution like Maulana Azad National Urdu University plays very important role in Muslim women's life. MANUU supports Muslim women and their parents or husband by providing a suitable cultural environment of their likings with which they can associate with. The perception of safe and secured compound with hostel facility created trust for parents and husband particularly in case of married Muslim woman. University and hostel life provide academic space in comparison to home where Muslim women had to devote time in discharge of responsibility of home. For some respondents, MANUU is last hope due to tough competition. For Urdu medium students, it opens the gate of opportunity to study in Central University at MANUU. Reaching to the level of higher education has comprehensive influence on the Muslim women. There is change in persona and mind-set. Broadness in thinking leads to change in behaviour. It brings positivity in thinking and ability to take decision. Education

meant for enjoying every dimension of life rather overemphasis on job. There seems to be elevation in formation of self-esteem. That led to have confidence in moving, moving alone, outspoken and not being hesitant and negotiating with life circumstances. There is development of sense of righteousness, ability to differentiate between right and wrong, and good and bad. Education is viewed to be as an instrument of self-dependency, empowerment and liberation. Safeguarding rights by opposing incidence of wrong, education is seen as means of self-dependence after marriage, parting ways in extreme unfavourable marriage condition and acquiring job for financial independence. Education is also seen as elevation in the status. Muslim woman and her family get recognition in the community. Muslim women are supposed to become respectable in the eye of husband. Muslim women would find educated family for marriage. Education is supposed to enable them to have life living skill like ability to handle the range of things including upbringing of child. Education has also been seen as safety net in matters of widowhood or divorce by becoming financially independent. Education has also been perceived as escaping from hardship emerging from being uneducated. The view of Muslim women of education as safety net from hardship, unfavourable marriage, acquiring independent is also highlighted by many studies (Abidi & Kazmi 2019; Sahu, Jaffery & Nakkeram 2016). Muslim women want to try hard with opportunity availed and set high goal to achieve in future. There seems to be gradual development of self-dependency in matters of traveling distance. Education is also meant for independent survival training by looking for self-identity and knowing whether she could survive independently. Passing through the trajectory of education, Muslim women learn from her past experience about the importance of early guidance and following her interest. Education gives capacity to bargain with future husband with their conditions which includes completion of course and doing research. There is also impact of pursuance of higher education on the family. Respondent proved to be eye opener for female siblings. Excitement and interest developed in them. Muslim woman guided sibling about importance of education in getting good academic course, college and job. Muslim women seem to play the role of catalyst for change in the

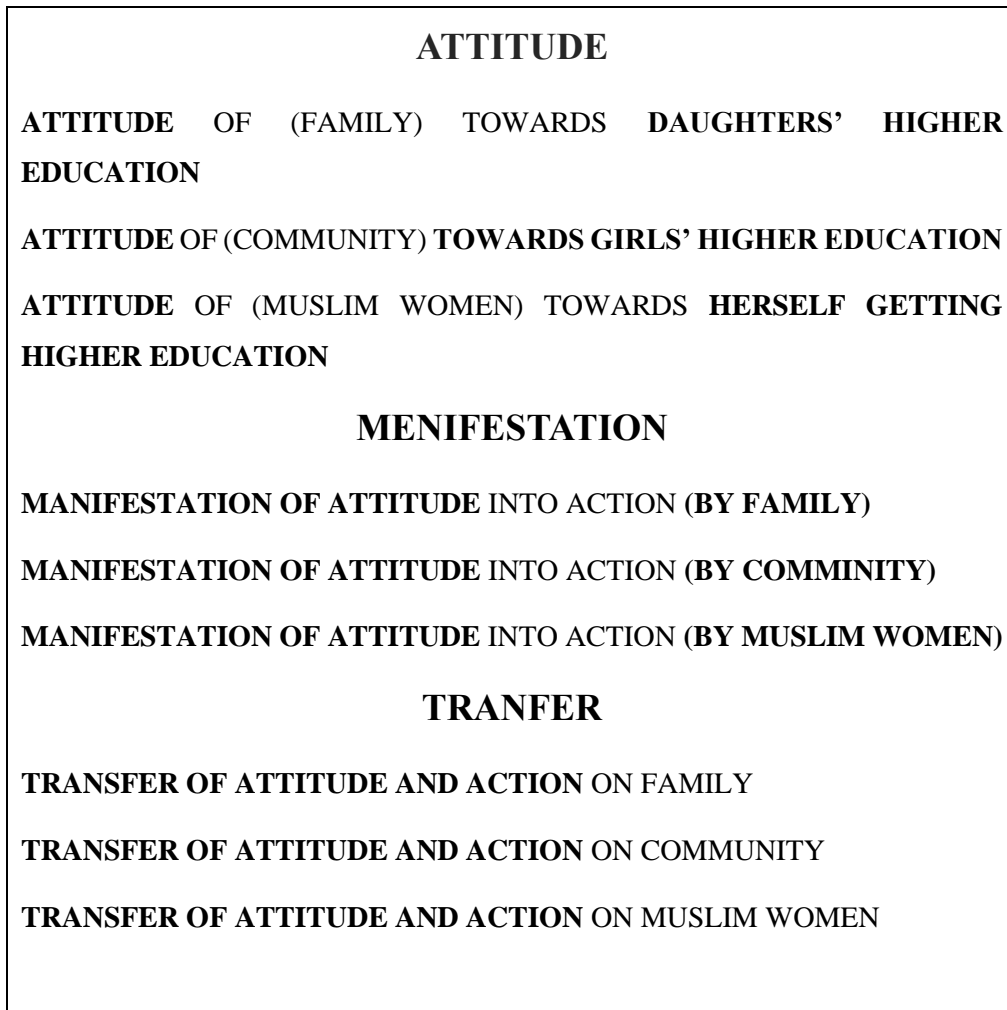
family. Educated Muslim women seems to be potential role model in the family and close relative. They seem to have functioned as role model in community as well. Pursuance of Higher education by Muslim women has brought pride and happiness in the family. Parents were also happy and comfortable with daughter doing job but not in all cases. Muslim women voice is not only heard but they are being engaged in decision making process in the family. Muslim woman changes heart of close relatives. Uncle, who was against his niece education away from home, sent her daughter with niece for education. Same phenomenon took place at the level of community as well. Some of the respondents have been able to shake and storm the mind of cousin but not enough to bring her into line of education. Father was extremely opposed. Muslim women who have pursued higher education become guide and source of inspiration for families in the community. They have become source of inspiration for not only to their family but also for their community as well. Muslim women and their parents sometime guide girls and their parents about entrance examination, college and course. Respondent provide parents and insisted on the completion of education before marriage. One of the respondents provided tuition to financially challenged girls in her vacation. There is also change of heart in the community as it also happened in the case of family. Parents who were critical about respondent education, they made respondent a role model for their daughter. Muslim women seem to become reference for girls in community to persuade parents for getting demand accepted by parents.

Conceptual Understanding about the Problem

On the basis of the findings and researcher self-reflection a conceptual framework has been developed which explains the phenomenon of pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. This framework incorporates challenges, supports and consequences that are related to the phenomenon of pursuance of higher education. The phenomenon also includes Muslim woman (individual), family and larger community.

Attitude, Manifestation and Transfer

Figure 8.1 Attitude, Manifestation and Transfer



Attitude

Attitude of Family, Community and Muslim Women towards Daughter, Muslim Women and Herself Respectively in reference to Higher Education

Attitude of parents towards daughters' higher education seems to have emerged from gender discriminatory attitude and progressive attitude. There was not a single instance where there was absolute gender discriminatory attitude or absolute gender progressive attitude. Absolute gender discriminatory attitude

means boys and girls are treated in differing ways. Progressive attitude means boys and girls are not treated perfectly in the same manner. But tends to more inclined towards treatment of boys and girls alike. The shift from gender discriminatory attitude to progressive attitude is expression of change taking place in matters of pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. Attitudes of family, Muslim women, and community manifest in action taken by them. Attitude of family (parents, siblings, grandparents, close relatives) and community was found to be discriminatory as well as progressive. Discriminatory attitude manifests in action. That become challenging to pursuance of higher education. Progressive attitude manifest into action. That become supportive to pursuance of higher education. This study shows the reason behind two different and opposite attitudes. The reason behind the emergence of discriminatory and progressive attitude has been drawn from the meanings of narratives shared by respondents. Those narratives point to ‘Concept of women’ and ‘Place of higher education in that concept’ by family, Muslim women and larger community.

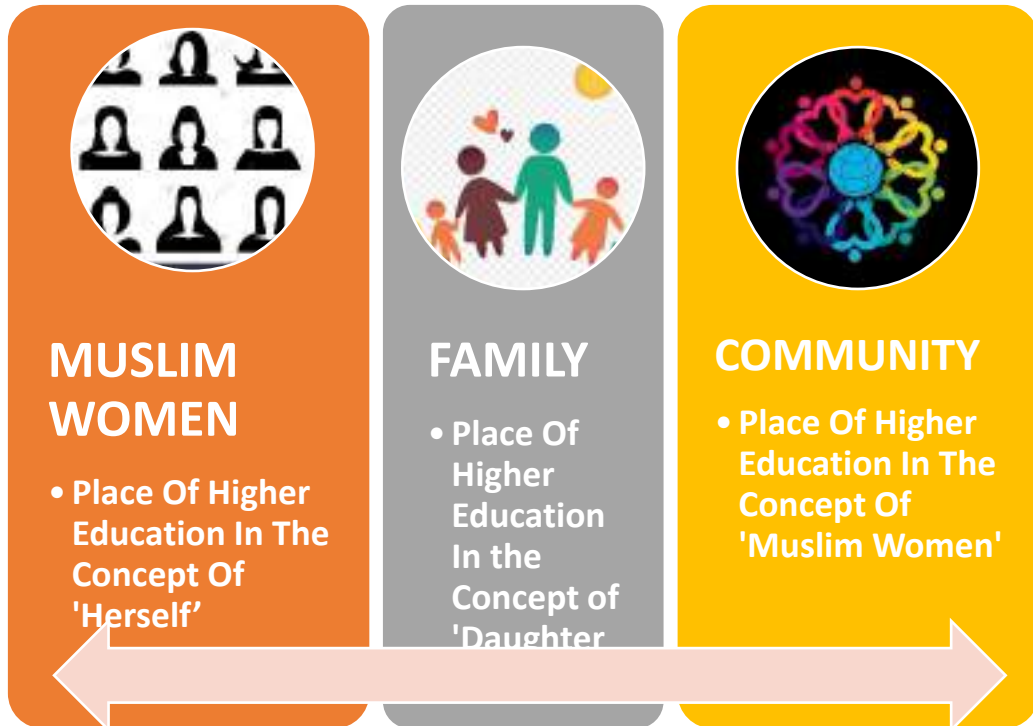
Concept of Women and Place of Higher Education in that ‘Concept’

Concept of Women by family, Muslim women and community illustrates how they have conceived and want daughter, herself and Muslim women respectively to be. And within that concept, what is place of higher education in terms of its significance that shapes the attitude of family, Muslim women and community toward pursuance of higher education. Attitudes are shaped by element of patriarchal mind-set and progressive mind-set. Patriarchal mind-set means controlling the behaviour of Muslim women and taking decision for

them. All challenges faced by Muslim women cannot be attributed to patriarchal mind-set and gender discriminatory attitude. The challenges faced by Muslim women like absence of quality institution of learning and classes not taking place in colleges cannot be attributed to patriarchal mind-set and gender discriminatory attitude. Progressive mind-set means willingness to bring change in role of Muslim women and significance of higher education in the formation of role of Muslim women to synchronized with demand of time. Formation of 'concept of women' and 'place of higher education in that concept' seems to be complex process as per narrative analysed. There are contests among Muslim women, her family and community. Muslim women, family and community are bound to go through this process. This process results into negotiation, denial or submission.

Negotiation, Denial and Submission

Figure 8.2 Negotiation, Denial and Submission



Muslim women, family and community are in conflict with each other at the level of mind-sets. Muslim women normally contest with Family. Because family has to take decision in matters of education of daughter. Family contests with daughter and community. Community is indirectly and sometimes directly in contest with family. Community is indirectly in contest with Muslim women through family. Sometime community directly operates on Muslim women. These Contests take place only because Muslim women, family and community have different kind of conception of Muslim women and place of higher education in that concept. These contests of mind-sets result into negotiation, denial and submission. There was no example of submission in my research. Muslim women who dropped out and could not make higher education might

have submitted herself before family. It may be possible family could not deny or negotiate with community. Eventually, family might have compelled daughter to submit herself. It seems to be very complex process. One interesting thing is needed to be brought into notice that uncle of a Muslim women was not in favour of education to his niece. After two years, he sent her daughter with niece for education. Muslim women denied to conform mindset of uncle. She succeeded in changing the mind-set of uncle. It happens at the level of community as well. It shows that, mind-set and attitude of person in family and community get changed over the period of time. In this research, Muslim women went against the resistant member of family by showing adamant behaviour. Some Muslim women persuaded their family for their pursuance of higher education through negotiation. Parents negotiated with social pressure put by community in order to allow daughter to pursue higher education from distant place. This implies that mind-set and attitude are not static but dynamic which keep changing and evolving.

Manifestation

Manifestation of Attitude into Action by Family, Community and Muslim Women

Manifestation of attitude into action is the extension of mind-set and attitude. Attitudes manifest into action by family, community and Muslim women in two ways. That can be either supportive or challenging to pursuance of higher education. Supportive manifestation of attitude into actions by family are like negotiation with distance and lonely movement, ignoring social pressure, showing trust in daughter, moral support, negotiation with age of marriage etc.

Challenging manifestation of attitude into action by family are like not allowing daughter to take admission away from home, engagement at early age, not allowing for particular course of her choice. Supportive manifestation of attitude into action by community are like random support by people (teacher, college, educated sister from village) in community in matters of locating education institution, guidance in selection of course and getting motivation and confidence for pursuing higher education from distant place. Challenging manifestation of attitude into action by community are raising question on lonely movement of Muslim women over distance for higher education, putting emphasis on marriage at 'right age'. Supportive manifestation of attitude into action by Muslim women are like persuading parents for higher education and winning trust of mother. Sometime Muslim women become adamant for their aspiration therefore, parents had to change their decision. Challenging manifestation of attitude into action by Muslim women was not found.

Table 8.1 Critical Juncture and supportive/challenging manifestation of attitude into action

Critical Juncture and Supportive/Challenging manifestation of attitude into action		
SUPPORTIVE	Distance Lonely Movement	Negotiation
CHALLENGING	Lonely Movement Over Distant Marriage (Age)	Non-Negotiation
TRUST	Parents put themselves in the risk of uncertainty	Decision Making
ANTICIPATORY MISTRUST	Parents Unwilling to Face Risk of Uncertainty	Dependency

Critical juncture in the Muslim women life comes when they have to move over distance, move alone, move lonely over distance and the age at which they will be married. Since family is the unit which have to make decision for her daughter's higher education, they undergo a process which have some pattern. The pattern is shown in table-2 and described as follows. Supportive family negotiate with lonely movement of daughter over distance and age of marriage for higher education. Parents supports their daughter by showing trust in them. Parents put themselves in the risk of uncertainty by ignoring negative thought about what would happen to my daughter. Supportive parents give scope to their daughter to develop agencies in themselves. Decision making is one of important agency. Supportive family are making conscious and deliberate effort. They have forward looking approach who are facilitating change by denying/negotiating community status quo. This creates an opportunity for Muslim women. All Muslim women could reach to the level of higher education because weightage of support was more than Challenge. Pursuance of higher education by Muslim women does not mean the absence of challenge. It means challenge was not intense or big enough than support. For those Muslim women who could not make higher education, it can be said that they might have the

family who could not negotiate with above mentioned issues. As a result, parents could not support their daughter by showing trust in them and put themselves in the risk of uncertainty by accepting negative thought about what would happen to my daughter. Those parents could not provide scope to their daughter to develop through education. Thus, those families might have not made conscious and deliberate effort. They might have stagnant or backward-looking approach who could not facilitate change by conforming the traditional mind-set of community. Consequently, they could not create opportunity for their daughter. Manifestation of attitude into action further trigger transfer as a result of pursuance of higher education.

Transfer

Transfer of Attitude and Action on Family, Community and Muslim Women

Manifestation of attitude into action had impact on family, Muslim women and community as a result of pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. That led to the development of consequences (change) on family, community and Muslim women as transfer. Consequences were found to be positive and negative at one instance in this study. Overall, there was positive consequence (change). Consequences developed on family was found that siblings in the family got inspired and guidance. It was matter of joy and happiness for parents. There was change in the mind-set of close relatives towards girls getting higher education away from home. There was not negative consequence found. Moreover, Consequences developed on community that Muslim women become role model, guide and source of inspiration. Muslim women become reference for other Muslim women in the community to persuade their parents for higher education. Consequence developed on Muslim women was immense. Muslim women received direct impact by pursuance of higher education. There was change in persona and change in mind-set towards life. They had raised self-esteem, sense of righteousness. They viewed education as tool of empowerment, self-dependency, and elevation in status. Family started to

engage them in decision making process. One thing regarding consequence is important to mention, while dealing with challenge the resistance, they developed advance skill like persuasion, resilience, struggle and trust making. Muslim women converted challenge into opportunities. It is to conclude that the patriarchal mind-set and progressive mind-set form 'concept of Muslim women' and 'place of higher education in that concept'. Conception of Muslim women and significance of education further form discriminatory and progressive attitude. Discriminatory and progressive attitude manifest into action as support or challenge. Those supports and challenges lead to change in Muslim women, family and Society. This pattern looks static but it is dynamic in nature. This is best possible comprehensible patter in the phenomenon of 'Pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. The following points can be said illustrated on the basis of above discussion

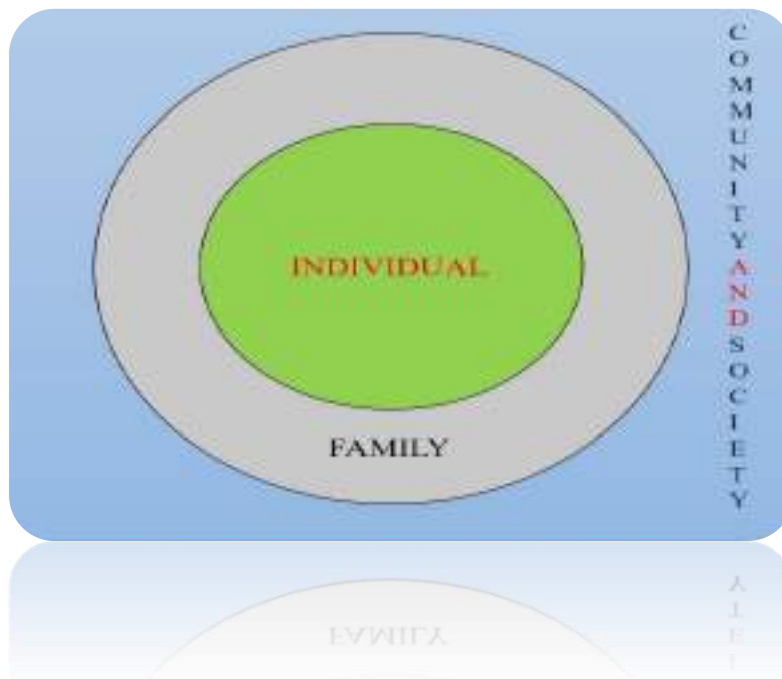
- Family (Parents) is immediate context in which respondent lives and at the same time respondent is in the peripheral context for the family. Interaction between these two contexts lead to bilateral changes. Moreover, Muslim women live in the family as one of the elements of family. Family influence Muslim women and Muslim women also influences other members of the family (mother, father, siblings)
- Likewise, society is the contexts for family and at the same time family is one of the elements of what society's context is comprises. Society in simple term is composed of families. Society influences families what it has accumulated over the period of time in the form of values, tradition, and culture. Families due to its dynamic nature are potential entity which influence society and bring change in already existing tradition and culture.

Inference: Thus, individual (Muslim women), families, society are in dynamic relationship with one another and constantly influencing one another. Through their structural positioning, it can be inferred that families play a symbiotic role in transfer of attitude, values, tradition to individual (Muslim women).

Family as Primary Intervention Level

Understanding the dynamics and mutual relationship among Individual (Muslim women,) family and society/ community and the symbiotic nature of family is very essential. It is the critical juncture where community's effect gets accumulated and further carry forwarded to the individuals.

Figure 8.3 Family as Primary Resource Person



Resource Persons

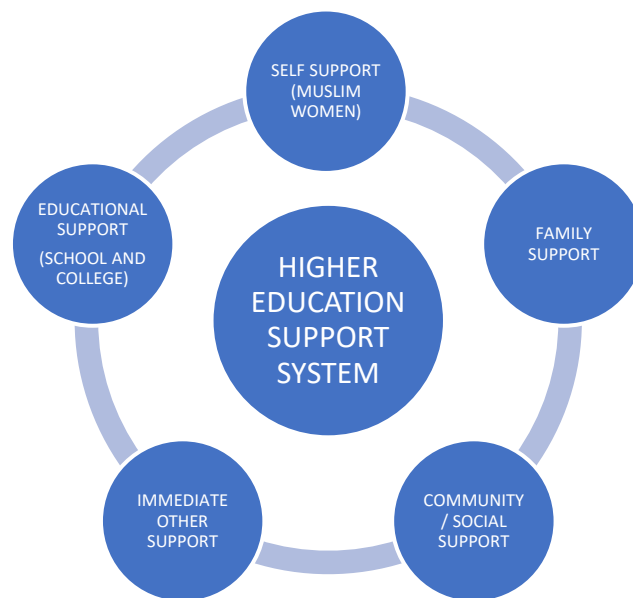
Apart from traditional resource persons (Community leaders, religious persons and influential personalities of the community) in social work, Muslim women who have acquired higher education, their parents and teacher with good reputation in the community can play instrumental role in modifying the attitude, behaviour and overall concept of daughter. The Muslim women who have completed their higher education or pursuing higher education can be considered as resource person or change agent for the community. Since they

are exemplary in this case. They have played the role of educator, motivator, and guide in the study. They will be very effective in convincing the apathetic parents and further can motivate and guide their daughters. Parents of the Family who have allowed their daughter for the higher education are potential resource persons who can hopefully convince other person of the community. Parents-Parents communication can better facilitate change in the behaviour.

Higher Education Support System

Institutional support refers to, support by the education system. Support by educational institutional means, conduction of regular classes, quality education. This Higher Education Support System shows constituent elements which facilitate the higher education among Muslim women and enhance the

Figure 8.3 Higher Education Support System



likelihood for women for further educational trajectory.

1. **Muslim Women:** Muslim women is first of all very close to herself. It is very crucial whether she has made herself realize the importance of higher education. To what extent she needs higher education. If she is passive seeker of higher education, she will not be able to negotiate with other unfavourable conditions. She must have desire for the higher education. Further by being adamant she must try to negotiate with family, go against the family will, sometime rebellious attitude all these come after strong urge or desire.
2. **Family:** Family is the immediate context she lives in. Family supports the Muslim women in direct and indirect way. Educational environment at home, educated parents, sibling pursuing education, reading writing habit of members of the family are indirect ways that motivate Muslim women for education. Extending financial support, making aware with different educational and career opportunities, allowing the daughter's mobility for the pursuit of higher education. Bear the pressure created by community and society or relatives so that daughter could groom in pressure free environment.
3. **Community or Social Support:** Society or community operates in the value and tradition it has created. These values and traditions are summation of attitude, opinion, perception, perspectives and deliberate deviation of individual and generation, and over the period of time forming the social psyche or community psyche. Society and community create an invisible environment which have mix perspective toward acquisition of higher education by Muslim women. Negative as well as positive. Such perception like, women are weaker than men, boys are breadwinner, girls are other's wealth (*ladki parai dhan hoti hai*) create an unequal field in the home for Muslim women. Such perception generates negative feeling among parents towards women education. But, contrary to these perception and action play a positive role as the support to higher education.
4. **Relative Support:** Relatives' support indirectly influence the decision making of parents towards the education of their daughter. For example, the concern raised by paternal and maternal uncle, 'why there is need to send the daughter to very distant place for education, matriculation or intermediate education is enough for girls, now it is time to marry her'. These concerns may be raised by

like grandfather, maternal grandfather and others relatives. If the nature of these type of concern transforms in to like, ‘brother I appreciate your courage to send your daughter far for higher education, you should educate your daughter as much as she like. Through their positive attitude towards women education relatives can also play a good supportive role.

5. **Educational Support (School and Colleges):** Educational support refers to support extended by school and colleges that enable Muslim women to have effective quality education so that they could survive competition and grab opportunities in higher education and could lead academic course or career of her choice. In order to strengthen the support around Muslim women, social worker is required to intervene at different levels in different role like counselling and advocacy.

Social Work Intervention at Micro, Mezzo and Macro Levels

Since social work engage people and structure to enhance wellbeing. The objective of enhancing wellbeing is social change and development, social cohesion and liberation and empowerment of people (IASSW & IFSW; 2014).

In the light of social work practice, this study intends to enhance the graduation of pursuance of higher education among Muslim women for their betterment, liberation and empowerment. So, study purpose intervention at three level; micro (Muslim women), Mezzo (family and community), Macro (policy) levels.

Intervention at Micro Level (Muslim Women)

- Encouraging them to navigate their interest at least from 8th standard and inform and discuss same with parents
- Encourage them to share, convince, negotiate and engage with their parents about their interest, aspiration, career and opportunity
- Educate them to be resilient to deal with hardship and uncertainty of educational life
- Educate them to be trustful and faithful towards their parents and individual capabilities

- Provide special treatment and assistance to students who are unable to get proper guidance due to uneducated parents

Intervention at Mezzo Level (Family)

- Help daughter in locating her interest from early stage
- Enable them not to impose any course or career on daughter, if parents wish their daughter to opt for particular course. Negotiate with daughter through bilateral communication, strictly not unidirectional
- Avoiding the year's gap in the daughter education
- Allowing movement of daughter for all her educational aspirations
- Counsel parents to negotiate with their feeling of fear, insecurity and uncertainties. And encourage them to train their daughter to negotiate with felling of fear, insecurity and uncertainties
- Counsel parent to negotiate with movement of daughter over distance and moving alone and train their daughter for same
- Counsel them to manage unfavourable condition and aspiration of their daughter
- Counsel parents to negotiate with uncertainty of being first to allow their daughter for education
- Make room for every sibling to move after their aspiration
- Enable them to allow elder siblings to cooperate with female siblings rather dominating over female siblings with their opinion, priorities and assumptions
- Enable them to train their daughter against odds
- Inculcating decision-making agency in their daughters
- Encourage them to educate their daughter with multilingual approach from early stage (Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, and English) and prime focus must be given on any one of them, depending on daughter interest towards higher education or inclination towards any specific career
- Inform and Connect parents with state, central and other scholarship schemes if there are financial constraints

- Enable parents to negotiate and deal with ‘anti-daughter education’ pressure exerted by relatives, community and society, simultaneously encourage parents to engage them for positive Change
- Encourage them to show trust in their daughter
- Convince parents to make education friendly discourse and environment in home with forward looking approach
- Enable mother to negotiate with her fear and insecurity associated with mobility of her daughter

Intervention at Mezzo Level (Community)

- Empower already existing community leadership and institution who can counsel, educate and guide parents and Muslim women in matters of locating interest, academic and career opportunity, academic institution and all other valuable inputs
- Motivate and convince educated family, parents, Muslim women to engage with reluctant family, parents, and Muslim women respectively towards education
- Educate the Muslim parents about different avenues for acquiring education and make them aware with different opportunities in career
- Sensitize the parents on the issue like marriage of girl, girl going distant place, girl going alone, and girl going not only distant but also alone within the purview of importance of education (Higher Education) for girls
- Sensitize community towards the age of marriage of their daughter and convince them to start their daughter’s education so early so that they could complete their graduation or post-graduation at least at the time of marriage
- Encourage prospective bridegroom (father and mothers-in-law) to allow your bride to pursue her educational and career aspiration if she wishes
- Convince husbands to allow his wives to pursue their educational and career aspiration if they wish. And motivate wives to engage her husband for their perusal of education or career if they wish

- Encourage abled people to take long term initiative by establishing school, college and university education for their community besides government initiative and effort
- Teachers in community, college should help Muslim women to navigate their educational and career aspiration, and they can convince parents as well can be very effective
- Educated person from community should be motivate to at least propagate what are different educational and career opportunity for the Muslim women

Intervention at Macro (Policy) Level

- Ensuring women safety for their mobility and exposure to external world so that they can groom
- Ensuring regular classes, quality of education in educational institution
- Locating interest by school and college of student at early stage on the basis of pupil perpetual academic performance and observation made by teacher and communicate same to parents
- Making mandatory arrangement for academic and career counselling from 8th class to 12th class at least
- Ensuring periodic parental orientation and counselling by schools and colleges.
- Encourage and make mandatory for all sort of media (print/electronic) especially television to give space and cover the story on at least weekly basis about common Muslim women in particular from different field who succeed in their lives by pursuing education and career
- Bridging the gap between presence of resource (school, colleges, universities) in rural and urban areas
- Arrangement of hostel facilities in town and urban areas for rural Muslim women
- Intervention at micro, mezzo and macro level will enable hopefully an ecosystem in which participation of Muslim women in higher can be improved. That will lead to social change and development not only to Muslim women but also to community and nation

Conclusion

On the basis of findings and correspondence among challenge, support and consequence it was found that pursuance of higher education by Muslim women is mainly determined by concept of women and place of higher education in that concept (mindset), attitude, manifestation of attitude into action (challenges & supports) and transfer of action (consequences). Patriarchal/progressive mindset was found be main factor in shaping concept of women and place of higher education in that concept. Those mindsets institute the discriminatory/progressive attitude that manifest into challenging or supportive actions. And those action transferred and developed consequences on Muslim women, family and community. Study further suggested what could be possible object of intervention to improve pursuance of higher education at micro (Muslim women), mezzo (family and community) and macro (policy) levels from social work practice perspective.

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APPENDICES

Appendix-1 Consent Form

The present study is part of an academic research. This study seeks to understand nuances related to pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. Further experiences of the participants will be helpful for academic research and also help the researcher to have insight about the pursuance of higher education by Muslim women. And, to know What context Muslim woman come from, what challenges she faced, what support she avails and what consequences she perceived or developed at individual, family and community level. I will be thankful to you, if your spare time with us for an in-depth interview. Since your understanding related challenges, support and consequences related to pursuance of higher education are very important to us and we do not want to miss any aspect of our conversation, for this reason, I request your permission to record the interview. You can discontinue or withdraw from the interview at any point of time without assigning any reason. The information collected from the interview will only be used for research purpose and all the details shall kept confidential.

I request you to give your written/oral informed consent with following understanding

I agree to take part in this study

I know that my participation in this study is completely voluntary

I am aware of the fact that the data collected in this study will only be used for research related activities

I know that I will not be known by my original name in the final analysis

I will get a copy of the consent form to keep it, my signature/ thumb impression/oral consent will specify that I have read/informed fully about the research

I am aware of the fact all records will be kept confidential and in the secure possession of the institution/researcher

Note: The Consent Give: Oral/Written (Tick the appropriate)

Participants' Full Name & Signature:

Researcher's Name & Signature:

Mobile Number:

Appendix-2 Interview Guide

This interview is perhaps to take more than an hour and the respondent has a right to take a break or stop/quit the interview at any stage without assigning any reason. The interview may extend to multiple sessions. The information collected shall remain confidential except for research analysis and shall be used only for the research study and related future researches. The first part of the interview is expected to take 20-25. The interviewer must attempt to obtain responses latter in the middle and final stage of the interview. The interviewer is encouraged to elicit the narratives with nominal interruption when the research participant talks or narrate about their experiences.

Part-I Profile of the Respondents

Name of the Muslim women: Age:
Course Pursuing: Marital Status: (Married /unmarried)
Number of Siblings (Male + Female):
Father Occupation: Mother Occupation

Part-II Context

1. Share with me the educational qualification of the family across three generation?
2. Start with third generation, what is educational qualifications of brother and sisters. And what they are doing?
3. Share about educational qualification of father and mother and about their occupation?
4. Have you seen your grandparents, share about their educational qualifications?
5. If you are married, what your husband is doing and what is his educational qualification. Has he been supportive to you?
6. What type of family you live in (Joint/Nuclear). In what ways family type has played role in you education?
7. Where is your home located. Either in rural areas or urban areas. In what way your place of residence has challenged or supported your education?

8. Share in detail about the education environment inside the family. In what ways environment inside family help you. Whether it also disturb you?
9. What is educational environment outside your family. Share about what woman are doing in your neighbourhood. What your friend or you women of your age are doing nowadays?
10. If you want to add something about which you think is important and have not shared yet?

Part-III Challenges

11. You have shared very valuable information so far, now tell me about what are the challenges you have faced so far. Start from beginning, from your school days. How those challenges hampered your education?
12. Has any member of the family challenges your aspiration for higher education. Tell us about parents, siblings and close relatives whether they did anything which become obstacle in the path of your education?
13. Have your male or female sibling has ever come in the way of aspiration for higher education?
14. What are the challenges you faced from community. Or community has put any kind of obstacle in your path indirectly via family. Share your experience and try to call the answer from your past experience?
15. If you are married, do you think, husband or husband family has put any sort of obstacle in the path of your education?
16. If there is anything left about challenges faced by you and challenge put by family and community to share, please share now. Anything comes important during interview, please share?

Part-IV Support

17. How you supported yourself to pursue higher education. In what ways, what you did in order to support yourself?
18. You have reached to this level, there must be support of family. Share in what way family members and close relatives have supported you?

19. If your siblings have supported you in any way. Please share in detail
20. Do you think, community has also supported you in anyways. Share in detail?
21. You have given very valuable input so far, anything you want to add something that you have shared earlier?
22. You must have understood the intent of study, anything which you think is important to share. Please do not hesitate to share?
23. If you are married, tell me how your husband and his family supported you?

Part-II Consequences

24. You come from particular context, you faced challenges from family and community level, you availed support as well. Since you have reached to this level, how do you find change in yourself as a result of education?
25. What do you understand by purpose of education/higher education. Has the meaning of education changed for you?
26. In what ways, education is useful in your life?
27. How you find your family behaviour towards you now in comparison to earlier?
28. How your education has been helpful for your siblings in the family and cousins in your relatives?
29. Do you think, in any ways, your education has brought any kind of change in the community?
30. Share in detail with instances that community developed change by virtue of your pursuance of higher education?
31. What you have shared so far is very valuable for my study, one last request, just reflect on what you have shared, do you think anything important left to share?

Appendix-3 Brief Profile of Researcher

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Educational and Professional Development

2014-2022: PhD social Work; Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad Telangana; Department of Social Work

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2010-2012: Masters in Social Work (MSW)

Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh UP: Department of Social Work

2006-2009: Bachelors in Psychology (Hons.)

Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh UP: Department of Social Work

Publications

Ahmad, (2022). Muslim Khwateen aur Ta'aleem: Mawaaq' e aur Darpesh Masael, Sabaq-e-Urdu, 7 (4), 67-70

Presentations

Presented a research paper titled "Muslim Women and Education: Challenges and Opportunities" in *Two Day National Seminar on Social Work and Marginalised Groups organized* by Department of Social Work Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Gachibowli Hyderabad (Dated- 20/03/2018)

Presented a research paper titled "*Role of Support Availed by Muslim Women to reach the level of higher education in their educational trajectory*" in the ICSSR Sponsored National Seminar on "Recent Trends and Future Perspective of Teacher Education in 2047" organized by the Department of Pedagogy of

Science, Salt Christian College of Teacher Education, Dimapur, Nagaland.

(Dated 4th & 5th August, 2022)