



Problems and Educational Needs of Muslim Women

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Abstract

Education is regarded as an only mechanism that leads to social, economic, political and cultural development of the individuals, society and the nation. It is an instrument of change and development of the society. In the training and development of human resources, to carry out all the important activities, education plays an imperative part. Amongst all the religious communities, Muslims are in the least educated section of the Indian society. There are number of reasons that contribute towards the backwardness of Muslim communities. The main purpose of this research paper is to look into the problems and educational needs of Muslim women. Educational attainment amongst the Muslim women is low, the main reasons are, existence of large families, unawareness regarding the significance of education, lack of connection between madarsa education and modern education, conditions of poverty, possession of negative attitudes towards the education of girls, security of girls and so forth.

Keywords: Education; Muslim Women; Problems; Empowerment; Political Development; Schools; Measures

Introduction

The Constitution of India grants Muslims and other minorities equality of status and opportunities with the other citizens to accelerate the process of educational and socio-economic justice. The Constitution of India grants the rights to equality and Right to Freedom of Religion and Protection of Interest of Minorities in regard to educational rights. For six decades, the nation has worked and progressed towards structuring and supporting a secular democracy and evolving the interests of the socio-economically backward and disadvantaged sections to include women, the Scheduled castes (SC), the Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the minorities. Determined efforts have been made towards equivalence and removal of inequalities. Major policy and programmatic contributions are being made to upgrade the entire state of the socially and economically disadvantaged sections of the society with the primary focus on women and girls. In the last two decades with major emphasis put upon education and empowerment [1].

Muslims constitute India's largest minority as well as the second largest Muslim population in the world after Indonesia. Regarding education, Muslims are the most backward communities. Muslim girls and women are behind in their acquisition of education and empowerment as compared to males and women belonging to other communities. The nation is dedicated to educational advancement and empowerment of all Indian women in acquirement of the Constitutional assurance of equality and life with self-respect as stated in the National Policy of Education 1986 and its Revised Programme of Action in 1992. Programme of Action, 1992, first identified the existing programs for the Muslim Minorities and suggested a large number of short term, medium term and long term measures to promote education amongst them and lead to the formulation of major programmes like the Area Intensive Educational Development and Modernization of Madrasas as Central Government Schemes of the MHRD [1].

Education and the Muslim women in India

Muslims comprise of 12% of the population, i.e. India's largest minority [2]. Education is considered to be an indispensable source that contributes in making provision of assistance to the Muslim women in alleviating the conditions of poverty and socio-economic backwardness. The Muslim women are made to recognize the significance of self-sufficiency and independence through education so that they are not economically dependent. The reason being, economic dependency largely contributes to their low status. After India achieved its independence, there has been a considerable improvement in the education of women. There was an increase in schools and colleges for girls and women. Enrolment of Muslim girls and women in schools and colleges was slow and there was prevalence of anxiety amongst the Muslim parents to send their girls to schools and colleges [3].

The individuals in urban as well as rural areas began to realize the significance of education. There has been an increase in the enrolment of girls in schools and higher educational institutions. The transformations that have been brought about in the lives of Muslim women have been slow, the reason being, for a long time, they have been secluded and lived a life of submission. In most cases, Muslim women get used to this kind of life and are not able to easily accept transformations. The participation of Muslim women in educational activities has been low and there are few of them who are engaged in high status jobs. Generally, they are self-employed or are engaged in home-based labour. This leads to an increase in the drop-out rate amongst them. The parents also possess this viewpoint that education is not meant for girls. Even when girls get enrolled in educational institutions, there is a high rate of drop-out, the primary reason is marriage. Parents believe in marrying their girls off at an early age and hence, there is an increase in the drop-out of Muslim girls from educational institutions [3].

It is vital for the Muslim women to develop a will power or determination. If the women themselves develop an interest and enthusiasm towards attainment of education, they will be able to convince their families as well as overcome all the obstacles that may arise within the course of acquisition of education. They need to understand that education will enable them to raise their status within the society. Due to the influence of ancient traditions and practices within the Muslim society, especially in remote areas, women become more vulnerable and are dependent upon their male counterparts for their existence [3].

Women in Muslim communities have lesser freedom and are largely dependent, they are obliged to obey their parents and are not able to speak out for themselves. These are the main reasons that education is low amongst them and they are largely discouraged towards attainment of higher education or get engaged in employment opportunities. There is shortage of schools and colleges in the areas, where there is a high concentration of Muslim population. Girls are enrolled in schools located nearby and are not sent to distant places, due to safety reasons. Therefore, Muslim women are required to develop their capabilities and put in more confidence amongst themselves to improve. For the development of Muslim women regarding education, they are required to have a thorough discussion with the policy makers, academicians and community leaders [3].

Educational achievement among Muslim Women

Educational achievement is entirely dependent upon the abilities and commitment of individuals towards their work and learning. It is vital that they should be made available the appropriate opportunities that may facilitate their progress. Muslim Girls and women were behind in the attainment of education and progression of their skills. Education of Muslim girls and women cannot be seen in isolation from the overall situation of development of women in India. The rural-urban, regional and inter-group disparities and the conditions of poverty and backwardness are stated to be the factors that prove to be impediments within the course of acquisition of education. Education has been viewed as a vital intervention to address the problems of backwardness of any community. There has been implementation of measures that would contribute in leading to educational achievement amongst Muslim women. The measures have been stated as follows: [1].

- The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme aims at the holistic development of the children and expecting mothers who belong to the deprived, under-privileged and the marginalized sections of the society. This scheme makes available educational and nutritional inputs. Blocks and villages with substantial population of minority communities will be covered by ensuring a certain percentage of ICDS projects and centres in these areas.
- There have been improvements in accessing school education. There have been initiation of elementary schools in areas where children from all the communities can get enrolled. The schemes that have contributed in the initia-

tion of elementary schools are, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme and other government schemes.

- There have been development of greater resources for the teaching of Urdu language. Central assistance will be provided for the recruitment of Urdu language teachers in primary and the upper primary schools that address the needs of the individuals, out of which at least one fourth belong to that language group. The opportunity to study the Urdu language would reflect in a better way the linguistically diverse nature of the communities. Greater time and resources are required to be devoted towards the training of teachers regarding religious awareness [4].
- Modernising Madrasa Education is imperative. The Central Plan Scheme of Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernisation Programme will be reinforced in a considerable manner and put into operation in an efficient manner. Educational resources within the Muslim community are available for deployment within the mainstream sector. These resources could assist in the provision of citizenship education, particularly among non-Muslim children, and allow the provision of teaching in Islam to Muslim children who are withdrawn from statutory worship [4].
- There were availability of scholarships for meritorious students belonging to minority communities. A scheme for Pre-Matriculation and Post-Matriculation scholarships for students from minority communities will be framed and put into operation. It is vital to ensure that poverty and backwardness do not hinder continuation of studies of meritorious students from minority communities.
- To facilitate the achievement of education, it is vital to improve the educational infrastructure through the Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF). Government shall make provision of all the possible assistance to the MAEF, to enable it to develop its undertakings with the objective of promoting education amongst the educationally backward minorities.

Educational requirements of Muslim women

The Muslim communities do not possess strong viewpoints regarding the prevalence of positive culture within the school environment. Muslim girls consider enrolment in educational institutions as the last priority and they are the first ones to drop out of

school in case of any adversities or problems. It is essential to formulate appropriate measures that would lead to understanding of educational requirements and generation of positive school culture and these have been classified as follows: [5].

- Within the school environment, it is vital that all individuals should be treated equally and there should not be any kind of discrimination. In schools, there are organization of various activities, competitions and so forth. In all these areas, it is vital that Muslim girls should be allowed equal participation and opportunities. They should not feel neglected or alienated within the school environment. Emphasis should be put on common values of respect and broad-mindedness.
- Principals, teachers and the staff members are required to work towards creation of a pleasant, amiable and approachable environment within the school and classroom. When the teachers possess efficient knowledge about the subjects, they are effectual in teaching, they are approachable in attitude and possess a caring and a helpful nature. These attitudes and behavioural traits enable the students to take pleasure in learning and there is a decline in the rate of absenteeism. The senior and experienced teachers need to consider their students and other individuals as family and community members to develop mutual understanding and provide solutions to their problems in an adequate manner.
- There are students who experience learning disabilities and problems. These factors have also led to an increase in the drop-out rate amongst the Muslim girls. To provide solutions to this problem, it is vital that teachers should understand the problems of the students and provide them explanation of the concepts in an understandable manner. Extra classes should be organized by the teachers in the form of tutorials, which may contribute in facilitating the learning of difficult concepts. Learning is regarded to be an imperative aspect in schools and Muslim girls would need help from their teachers as well as other fellow students to develop their learning.
- The teachers should develop this viewpoint amongst the students that they should always be sociable and approachable in attitude towards their fellow students. In

some instances, students belonging to Muslim and marginalized communities are not regarded by the fellow students. They do not create speaking terms with them and there are occurrence of conflicts and disputes. In schools and educational institutions, there should not be any kinds of conflicts and disputes and individuals should communicate with each other in an appropriate manner. It is vital to formulate rules and policies, so that students are obedient and disciplined within the classrooms and schools.

- It is vital to formulate policies and rules within the educational institutions. The first and the foremost rule should be the availability of equal opportunities for all the individuals. In schools, Muslim girls should not possess the viewpoints that they are visiting places where they are not given any recognition. A culture of openness and trust is required to get created amongst the teachers and the students that is based on the valuing of the teachers and listening to the problems of the students. For instance, when Muslim girls approach their teachers with grievances or concerns, they should render an effective contribution in providing solutions.
- The teachers and the staff members are required to develop effective terms and conditions to address the educational requirements of Muslim women. They are required to collaborate with each other, give ideas and suggestions and work together in development of the curriculum and the instructional systems. The curriculum and instructional strategies, teaching-learning methods, textbooks, technology, infrastructure and other materials are required to be well organized to promote learning. For Muslim women, language may be a problem, they may experience language difficulties in learning, hence, measures should be initiated to make sure that they develop their language skills in an effective manner.
- It is vital to get involved with the local community associations to recognize and overcome specific problems and issues, for example, relating to the behaviour of pupils. The Muslim girls and students belonging to other communities should be well aware of the fact that they should maintain discipline and decorum within the school environment. Initiatives to get more minority ethnic governors. Schools are enthusiastic to test new initiatives such as, aiming at high or similar strategies and methods to raise the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

- The schools were dedicated towards the continuous development of the teachers and staff members as a means to understand and develop operative strategies to increase the attainment of mixed and mono heritage groups. Schools are open to new ideas, suggestions and viewpoints of the parents and to make provision of learning opportunities to assist in meeting the educational requirements of their children. Teachers and parents communicate with each other in parent-teacher meetings to discuss about the progress of the children. Their main objective is to make sure that learning, growth and development of the children take place in an appropriate manner.

Education as an instrument of political development of Muslim women

Education have contributed an imperative part in the political development of the individuals. When individuals are not able to recognize their rights and duties, when they are not allowed to have a say or are unaware, these factors largely contribute in having an adverse impact upon their development. Education contributes an imperative part in elimination of the unawareness on the part of Muslim women, so that they can have an effective contribution in the decision making matters and in leading to their development. Education at various levels makes provision of knowledge and development of skills amongst the individuals so that they are able to contribute towards the welfare of the community. It is regarded to be more meaningful in the third world countries, the reason being, otherwise democratic institutions will not be able to implement all the required tasks and functions. For the functions of democracy, it is vital that people should be informed and aware about the ideas and information [6].

The all-round development of the nation is the main objective of the political leaders and other individuals. In order to bring about all-round development of the individual, society and the nation, it is vital to politically as well as socially empower Muslim women. Progress and empowerment largely depends upon augmenting the dexterity, skilfulness and abilities of all segments of the society regardless of the caste, class, colour, creed and gender category. On the other hand, women are discriminated against for ages and also have been experiencing from given inadequate treatment in connection with the opportunities, rights, privileges and status in many socio-economic and cultural domains of the society. Lacking

the participation of women in the programmes and performances of progression, does not only basically impede their own development, social change and movement towards social progress but also have an effect on the development of the entire nation. The concern of women's studies, having its essential objective to collect information on women and to discover their social position as well as problems and opportunities, is acquiring a great extent of enormosity during recent times in social scientific examination and discourse [7].

Empowerment of Muslim women in their movement for liberation and struggle against the problems that they have experienced is their primary objective. Muslims in India are the largest minority so far as the minorities within the country are concerned and the majority of this largest minority community is unpleasantly in the backward state with regards to education and economy, where more or less of all other minorities are in a more prosperous and wealthy state. Moreover, Muslim women insufficiently have not been skilled enough to find their due share in the well-being efforts made by the government in the country since freedom for the economically weaker sections of the society. To find out the causes of the backwardness of Muslim women, various governments, from time to time, appoint committees; among which the latest one is the Sachar Committee which has noticeably exposed that the Muslims of India are the most educationally and economically backward minority within whom merely four percent of the population is educated [7].

Creativity in education

Creativity in the field of education is defined in two ways, one is teaching creatively and the other is teaching for creativity. The improvements can be brought about in the field of education in the teaching-learning methods. When the teachers make use of innovative techniques, ideas, viewpoints and explanations in order to facilitate learning amongst the students, then it is termed as being creative in teaching. Imaginative approaches are employed to make learning more interesting, involving, enriching and effectual. The main outcome of creative teaching is when students are taught to develop their own creative ideas, viewpoints and behaviour [8]. For instance, an art teacher has assigned a classwork to the students to make a painting of a scenery, then creativity amongst the students will enable them to make a painting using innovative ideas and concepts. To develop creativity amongst the students, it is vital for the teachers to develop creative skills and abilities within themselves.

Creativity in education involves high motivation, high expectations, ability to communicate with each other in an efficient manner, and the ability to arouse interest, enthusiasm and stimulation. Creativity involves the utilization of techniques, methods and strategies that would inspire the students to learn; opportunities are available for self-direction, and the management of the groups while giving attention to the individuals. Creativity for teaching is stated to be pleasurable, gratifying and fulfilling. In the teaching methods, the development of new ideas, suggestions and viewpoints are time consuming and require planning to develop and generate the ideas and evaluate whether they have proved to be beneficial [8]. Creativity also involves the development of confidence amongst the individuals, they evade the attitudes of reluctance and vulnerability and develop themselves as good and capable human beings.

There are certain aspects that need to be understood in the encouragement of creativity in the teaching-learning and instructional methods. The students should be allowed enough time in the implementation of the task or an assignment; when they feel that they have enough time, then they analyse their work and accordingly develop creativity. Students should not be pressurised to complete the task in a hurried manner. The classroom environment should be pleasant, and amiable, so that the teachers and the students feel pleasurable. If the task has not been completed in one day, then the students should be allowed to complete it the other day. Materials and resources are regarded as imperative in order to develop creativity in the teaching-learning methods; the performance of an art assignment or making of a handicraft or even writing of a paper or an article require materials and sources, that should be sufficiently available. The classroom climate should be created in such a manner, where errors and mistakes are improved upon with assistance and support; students do make mistakes in the first attempt, but with the development of creativity, they are able to improve upon the mistakes and perform up to the class standard [8].

Adult education and development

The role of adult education in bringing about socio-cultural changes and development is multi-dimensional. Adult education is an underpinning for progress in areas such as, human capital, health, nutrition and the development of institutions and democracy. Therefore, the role of adult education in development can be detained through the multifaceted relationships existing between all its forms and the economic, political, social and cultural determinant factors. The economic role of adult education in development

is apparent in its contribution to human capital formation. It is in the present existence, well established that, alongside health care, sanitation, and nutrition that are vital in making improvements in the people's standards of living and enhancing productivity by reducing illness and mortality rates and by increasing life expectancy, adult education, by equipping recipients with essential literacy and numeracy skills, and yielding high rates on investment, thereby, augmenting labour productivity. An educated population also provides a more attractive investment climate. Thus, investment in the development of human capital, through adult education is fundamental for developing a labour force and administrative know-how, able to compete in the present day's worldwide economy [9].

Formal education alone is not satisfactory for playing this role as even those categories of the population, who have had formal education and training might need to get reorganized and reskilled through adult education, primarily because in the present existence, knowledge society tends to render previously acquired knowledge and skills, unsuitable and outdated. Adult education is also instrumental in familiarising the individuals with Information Communication Technology (ICT), a significant tool for the smooth integration of economies within the global economy. The significance of ICT cannot be overemphasised, as the world is speedily moving towards knowledge-based economic structures and information societies that include networks of individuals, firms, and countries connected electronically in inter-dependent and co-operative relationships [9].

Adult education also plays a major role in social development. It is in the present existence, broadly admitted that growth will not reduce poverty unless the poverty stricken people are able to participate in it. Such participation can become operative to a large extent through adult education. There is a need of some kind of formal and non-formal education and training to be able to benefit from basic health care, including sexual and reproductive health services, the development of new medicines, and thus be in a position to free itself from diseases that cause distress among poverty stricken people, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other illnesses and diseases. Adult education will also be needed to enable these individuals to actually take advantage of the programmes aimed at protecting orphans and vulnerable children or drastically reducing the number of people without access to safe water and basic sanitation [9].

The role of adult education in development is not only limited to economic and social spheres, but it also has a political dimension. There is a strong connection between adult education and democracy. The reason being, as acknowledged at the UNESCO Fifth International Conference on Adult Education held in Hamburg in 1997, substantive democracy and a culture of peace are not given, they need to be constructed. For democracy to be achieved, adult education is required as to inform them of their rights and responsibilities, as democracy also requires people to energetically participate at local, national and global levels. It is in the present existence, admitted that the lack of recognition of the need to comprise civil society, especially grassroots organisations, by giving them a voice in the decision making processes and the means to participate effectively within the society, is one of the major causes of impediments within the course of development. Exploitation of human rights and social injustice leading to the exclusion of important sections of society, have also established uncertain blocks to economic and social progress on the continent and paved the way to violence and conflicts [9].

Adult education may prove to be an authoritative tool for supporting inclusive development through democracy, thereby ensuring harmony and constancy, as a number of studies have shown that prevention through adult education is much more operative than intervention. Prevention of political disorders and civil unrest can be made possible through various adult education strategies. A number of adult education policies encourage democracy and peace have been proposed during the fifth international conference on adult education. They tend to achieve their objectives through various strategies that promote an active civil society, strengthen gender democracy and help to solve conflicts between different countries and groups to the extent that the world on the whole is experiencing the effects of multi-faceted globalization with varying degrees of impact upon the individuals, values and cultures. It is apparent from the foregoing that adult education is an essential area for social, economic and political development in any society and the country [9].

Problems in education of Muslims

Culture in India is diverse in nature, where each ethnic group has the freedom to maintain their religion. Muslim society in India is heterogeneous because of the influence of the caste system. They are considered to be the most backward communities, the problem

of backwardness is regarded to be a long term process. In social, economic, political and educational aspects, Muslims are behind as compared to other communities [3].

- India has been under the rule of British for over three centuries. The British people possessed the anti-Muslim attitude before India achieved its independence to curb the educational and the employment opportunities of the community that laid a severe impact upon the socio-economic conditions of the Muslims. The similar problem is experienced by the Muslims in the present existence and this attitude has led to their backwardness.
- Problems, such as occurrence of riots, communal violence and insecurity amongst the individuals, especially women have become a reality in modern India. Women have been subjected to criminal and violent acts, such as rape, sexual harassment, verbal abuse, physical abuse and are even murdered. The majority of victims of riots in India are Muslims and this situation has largely affected their social and economic conditions.
- Muslims have been residing in the conditions of socio-economic poverty since the past period. Majority of the Muslim families do not possess education, this is the reason, their viewpoints are not strong towards acquisition of education. They are unaware about the significance of modern education. When individuals do not recognize the significance of education, then they will not possess interest towards learning. They live in large families and give greater significance to early marriages. Women get married at an early age and devote themselves towards carrying out of the household functions and taking care of the members and hence, they remain deprived of education.
- Muslim communities possess a negative attitude towards the education of girls. The families discourage girls from acquiring education, in this way, they lose the enthusiasm towards acquisition of education. In some cases, Muslim girls do get enrolled in schools but they do not obtain the opportunity to go for higher education. The main viewpoint that Muslims possess is, if the girls become highly educated, then it would be difficult to find appropriate matches for them.
- The living standards of the Muslim communities are largely in a backward state. They live in deprived conditions, where there are not availability of civic amenities, such as electricity, clean water and other requirements that are necessary for a good living standard. The Muslims are residing in the conditions of poverty and backwardness. They have severe financial problems due to which they are not able to afford education for their children.
- In order to facilitate education in schools and educational institutions, it is vital to have proper facilities, infrastructure and equipment. The schools should have proper furniture, sitting arrangements, technology, cooling and heating equipment in accordance to the weather conditions, clean drinking water and restrooms. The lack of these facilities and equipment would lead to a high rate of absenteeism and there will be low enrolment of students in schools.
- The organization of curriculum and instructional methods within the schools is not available. Most of the schools are traditional and they have a problem of medium. The teaching-learning methods within the schools are not organized in a proper manner. These factors prove to be impediments within the course of acquisition of education. Madarsa and Maktabas are still operating in accordance to the traditional norms and patterns. There is not any kind of influence of modern education in the syllabus and students possess low levels of knowledge and information regarding commerce and computer. The system of education is not connected to the availability of employment opportunities.
- Amongst the Muslim communities, there is absence of genuine and dedicated leadership. Individuals need appropriate guidance, direction, supervision and regulation from their parents, family as well as other community members in order to implement all the tasks in an appropriate manner. When there is absence of proper leadership skills amongst the individuals, they would experience problems in the making of decisions, therefore, absence of leadership skills are one of the vital concerns in the acquisition of education.

Remedial measures

In the present existence, there have been formulation of measures, which are focused upon enhancing the status of not only Muslim women, but also women, belonging to other categories and backgrounds. Educational development of Muslims is a gradual

phenomenon. The emergence of some premier Muslim educational institutions across the country such as, Darul Uloom Duyuband, U.P, Aligarh Muslim University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Maulana Jauhar Ali University, Osmania University etc. have immensely improved the viewpoints of the community in the sphere of both streams of education. Some recommendations are given below regarding the educational enhancement [3].

There should be generation of awareness amongst the Muslims about the significance of education and its outcomes. The outcomes may be generation of employment opportunities, empowerment opportunities, self-employment schemes and so forth that would contribute in an efficient manner in leading to their well-being. The Muslims should be aware of the fact that education and employment opportunities would result in economic gains.

Muslims normally have large families. There are even six to eight children in one family. It is difficult for the parents to attain education for each child, hence, emphasis should be put on having small families. It is manageable to lead to improvements in the socio-economic conditions of small families. Managing all the needs and requirements, providing education and overall sustaining the living conditions of small families is effortless and undemanding as compared to large families.

There were some concessions for Muslims to enter in government jobs, but after 1857, these concessions were withdrawn. Government of India is required to reconsider the development of some concession policy and programs with an aim to lead to an increase in the share of Muslim work participation in government jobs.

Governmental incentives and scholarships are also vital for the poverty stricken and deprived Muslims. Muslims should be provided registration in higher education and prominent institutions such as, the IITs and IIMs. Thus, for the development of Muslim communities, it is vital that they should be provided with opportunities to get enrolled in higher education with the availability of financial assistance.

Modernization of Madarsa education has the main purpose of increasing the standard of education amongst the Muslims and there should be incorporation of vocational education with reli-

gious instruction in Madarsas. There is also a need to connect Madarsas with higher secondary school board. The curriculum and the instructional methods should be organized in an appropriate manner so that students take pleasure in learning.

For Muslim girls, in some cases, accessibility to the schools is a problem. Therefore, there is a need to develop girl's school to minimize the problem of accessibility to the schools. Whether parents are educated or not, but it is vital that they should recognize the significance of education and develop positive viewpoints regarding the attainment of educational qualifications for the girls.

Government should open high quality Urdu medium schools wherever they are in demand and make sure high quality textbooks for students are available in the Urdu language. To make provision of education to the students in a well-organized manner, it is vital to make sure teachers are well qualified and possess adequate knowledge to provide instruction to students.

Government should develop a strong organization for improving the condition of all centres of primary, secondary and higher learning in India. Various educational schemes identified for the implementation are, recognition of minority education, conducting coaching classes for competitive examination, vocational education, training centres regarding various areas such as technology, and so forth.

To create reformation and formulate appropriate measures that would lead to up gradation of Muslims in India, it is necessary to implement effective leadership skills. The major roles of the leaders are to direct, control, manage, regulate and supervise the individuals in the right direction. They are required to provide solutions to all their problems and concerns. With the implementation of effective leadership skills on the part of the teachers or parents, individuals will be able to acquire self-sufficiency, organize their living conditions in a proper manner and proceed towards development opportunities.

Measures to improve the participation of muslim girls in schools

Amongst the Muslim communities, girls and women are more at a disadvantaged state as compared to men. It is vital to look into the measures to improve the participation of Muslim girls in schools: [10].

- The barriers that arise within the course of education of the Muslim girls should be adequately identified. These may be marriage at an early age, discouragement towards education by the parents and other family members, viewpoints that girls are meant to perform only the household chores and education and employment opportunities are not meant for them and so forth. These factors should not become impediments within the course of education of girls.
- There is a high rate of drop-out amongst the Muslim girls. The primary causes that lead to drop-out of girls from school are, financial problems, accessibility to schools, transportation problems, unable to understand the curriculum and the instructional methods, lack of infrastructure within the schools, unable to develop amiable terms and conditions with the teachers and students belonging to other communities and lack of other facilities. Therefore, measures should be implemented to make sure these problems are solved and Muslim girls develop motivation towards acquisition of education.
- Activists, organizations and policy makers are required to make the data available to the general public and for utilization. Such information would need to be quantitative, qualitative as well as comparative. The quantitative data would make available the numbers and the quantitative information, qualitative data makes available information that is based on characteristics and facts and comparative data makes available the information so that conditions between Muslims and other communities can be compared. On the basis of these kinds of information, policies and procedures should be framed to make sure there is equity and justice.
- In schools and other institutions, it is vital that there should not be any kind of discrimination on the basis of caste, class, creed, religion, gender, ethnicity or socio-economic background. Emphasis should be put upon the data keeping on the basis of these factors so that equal opportunities should be available for all individuals. It is vital that in Muslim areas, there should be proper allocation of resources, so that they are able to alleviate any kinds of deprivations that they are experiencing. When there will be equal opportunities available and proper distribution of resources, then they would largely contribute in bringing about empowerment of individuals.
- Development schemes must also be ethnically profound so that they are acceptable to the Muslim community. For instance, obligatory co-education after a certain level or Hindu or anti-Muslim prejudices in textbooks often act as a major hindrance to the Muslims, particularly education of Muslim girls. These issues need to be sensitively addressed and approached. Muslim girls in some cases feel vulnerable and apprehensive to some issues, which prove to be impediments within the course of their attainment of education, hence, it is vital to make sure that all barriers are adequately identified.
- The functions of planning, organizing, directing, controlling, managing and administrating are an integral part of any organization or an educational institution. In some cases, when any planning is implemented, or any event or activity is supposed to be organized, then in some cases, students are also encouraged to share their ideas and suggestions. Muslim girls should also be allowed to give suggestions and be encouraged to participate. In the planning and implementation of the development schemes, it is vital to ensure the participation of Muslim girls and other marginalized sections. They should contribute in the organization of activities and other tasks.
- To acquire educational qualifications and development of skills, it is vital to obtain support and encouragement from the family members and especially parents. Within the Muslim communities, parents may discourage their girls from acquiring education. They may acquire school education but due to other factors such as, marriage, family issues, household tasks and so forth are discouraged from acquiring higher education. Therefore, it is vital to arouse the understanding among the parents for the education of girls. Sensitization of religious Ulema to organize parents for their girl's education is a need of Muslim Community. So they can assist and activate the public through their speeches and works.
- In educational institutions, the various problems that Muslim girls experience need to be identified and measures should be formulated to improve them. To improve the educational status amongst the Muslim girls and minorities, it is vital to make progress in their socio-economic status. Besides the provision of education, it is vital to make sure that Muslim communities, women and girls are aware of their constitutional and legal rights. Amongst the Muslim communities, it is vital to make efforts to make them realize the significance of education. Attainment of education would contribute in acquisition of self-sufficiency and empowerment.

Conclusion

The attainment of education amongst the Muslim women is low. There are many factors that are responsible for the low education amongst the Muslim women. These are, parents possess the viewpoint that girls should be married off at an early age and education is not meant for them. There have been shortage of schools in Muslim communities and girls are not sent to distant places for safety reasons. Muslim girls and women are mainly home-based and carry out all the household chores and hence, do not recognize the significance of education. The inability to understand the educational concepts, feelings of vulnerability and apprehensiveness within the school, inability to develop effective communication skills are some of the factors in educational institutions that prevent the girls from getting enrolled. Families do not make provision of education to their daughters with interest and enthusiasm and they experience severe financial problems.

To develop education amongst the Muslim women, it is vital for the Muslim communities to realize the significance of education. Madarsas should transform into modern educational centres where both religious and vocational studies may be imparted. The Muslims are required to change their vision from traditional to modern education. It is the job duty of Anthropologists and Sociologists to find out the educational status of Muslim women, conduct an analysis of the state of education amongst them, identify all the impediments and formulate measures to overcome them. Finally, it can be stated that education and employment opportunities are regarded as major factors that would lead to up-gradation of not only Muslim but women belonging to other categories and backgrounds as well.

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