

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter - VI

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"Momentous changes have taken place in India since independence. These changes offer to-day numerous challenges and new opportunities. Their objective analysis is necessary to evaluate and to set out new policy directions to augment the process of social transformation. To accomplish this task a sound 'theoretical perspective is essential'.

Yogendra Singh.

The process of social transformation have left any society unaffected and researchers in every society seem to be concerned with studying different aspects of social change. Contemporary western societies have achieved a substantial degree of modernization, whereas the societies of Asia and far East are developing rapidly to gain an even ground with the developed societies. Due to the impact of social transformation Indian society has been experiencing rapid development. When social change takes root in a society, it not only affects the structure of that society but also the values and attitudes that are held by members of that society. When the structures of a society is in the process of social change it is bound to affect the values of the relative position of men and women in that society as it is evident from the cultural history of India.

How does social change occur? There are two fundamental responses to the query. The First one is based on the premise that attitudes determine behavior and that ideology is the crucial variable affecting the process of change. According to this argument, people act on the basis of their values and beliefs. Therefore, a change in society can come about only through persuading the public that a given set of values is wrong and must be modified.

The second position-far more skeptical operates on the assumption that attitudes especially those involving emotional matters as sex, almost never change except under compulsion.

Before concluding this research study, it would be in place to recapitulate the findings. This study cannot be said to have discovered anything extraordinarily different from what is apparent to many who are interested in the problems of Muslims in India and the process of social transformation. However, a few observations emerging from the data may be pointed out.

This research work is an empirical analysis on the nature and extent of different aspects of social transformation experienced by Muslim women in Mysore. The city was considered appropriate for making a comprehensive analysis. The study confines itself to examine trends in the structure of the urbanized, educated, employed and home makers Muslim Women. A procedure of purposive sampling was adopted for all the three categories of respondents. A sample of three hundred women (100 from each group) residing in the seven Mohallas of Mysore city was drawn carefully for the in depth enquiry. Based on empirical data collected with the help of personal interviews by means of a largely structured interview schedule supported by field observation forms the basis of study. The data has been analysed in tabular form with the percentages calculated for the frequencies obtained. Also, the study has reviewed major works relating to social change in Indian society with special reference Muslim Community in general and Muslim women in particular.

There is no single, effective approach to the study of women's history. The subject is a elusive as it is large, and it is brought with methodological and conceptual difficulties. We know very little about the experience of women. Although speculation has been abundant, accurate historical information has been in short supply. As a result a gap in our knowledge exists. In tradition and practice, most societies have developed on elaborate and segregated network of roles for each sex, with little interaction or exchange between the two. The division of labour in most cases, has led to the division of authority as well .The very existence of different sets of activities for men and women has been a means of maintaining and reinforcing an imbalance of power between the sexes. In practice, if not in principle, separate has meant unequal. Within such a frame

work, the most reliable barometer of change is whether the distribution of roles between the sexes has altered over time. From one point of view, women clearly fit Louis Wirth's definition of a minority group. They have been "singled out for differential or unequal treatment.... because of their physical and cultural characteristics" and they have been excluded from full participation in society."¹

Historians have generally neglected the role of women in India. Text books have dismissed women in a few lines or pages with one or two exceptions, most of the writings on women in India has been limited to popular articles or books and surveys by Sociologists, Psychologists and Anthropologists. The past history of Indian society indicates the existence of super-ordination and subordination in the relation of men and women. The principal values of earlier societies were dominance, dependence, segregation, servility, obedience and loyalty. Nevertheless, contemporary societies lay emphasis on the independence, individuality, equality and companionship in the relations of men and women. Since India is experiencing rapid social change, it was thought relevant to study, whether the structural changes towards social transformation are also interlinked with the changes in cultural and personality system of the society and whether changes are considering with the existing structures of Indian Society. Hence, the need to make a study of the attitudes of educated and working women towards the position of women in modernizing societies of India.

Accordingly, the important assumption advanced was that education (formal schooling) and employment in bureaucratic organization, of women are connected with the changes in the attitudes of women in favour of equality, individuality and independence and the changes in the differential status of role of Muslim women are related to the changes towards social transformation of society.

¹ Wirth, Luis, 1945. "The Problem of Minority Groups", in Ralph Linton, ed., *Man in the world Crisis*, New York, pp.347-48.

India has a rich cultural history. We find many similarities in the position of women in pre-modern and modern times. The position of women was subordinate to that of men. With the process of social transformation, it is assumed, that segregation between the sexes will be no longer emphasized and in place of subordination position of women, present day women will enjoy greater equality in their relation with men. If the status of women has not altered, it is important to know why. And if changes has occurred, it is equally important to know how the shift came about. The present study is an effort to answer these questions, at least partially, by examining the social, economic and political roles of women from 1950 to the present. Its main assumption is that sexual inequality is rooted within the social structure itself, through the allocation of different spheres of responsibility to men and women.

The main objects of my research work was to study the nature of social structure of Muslims in India; Assess the impact of social transformation on the beliefs and values in respect of institutional structure and to understand how far they are pro-social change; identify the groups of Muslims that have a greater tendency to social transformation and identify the barriers to social transformation among Muslim women in Mysuru. Finally some of the hypotheses formulated for the purpose of study are given here: The impact of social transformation is proportionately related to educational achievements and economic roles; The more a person is exposed to different media of communication and outside society the more likely the person is to adopt the more likely the person is to adopt the new ideals of life; and that there is a direct relationship between the high level of aspiration and high degree of confidence for achieving different aspirations. The research work is basically exploratory in nature and examines some of the major issues pertaining to the process of social transformation among Muslim Women.

The general principle in social research is to make our concepts as clear as possible so that one can identify the empirical data which are covered or not covered by the concepts. Besides, concepts are important components of theory.

In the case of social science research the dictionary meanings do not help us. The tasks of organizing the data and formulating generalization from them do not go hand in hand with the concept formulation. In the ordinary sense the term social transformation explains a situation with marked change in the form of society.

In the second chapter of this study attempt is made to examine within a sociological framework some hurdles which encounter Muslims in India in so far as the acceptance of change and social transformation are concerned. This task is made difficult due to non availability of empirical studies and data relating to Indian Muslims. This situation prompted me to adopt a theoretical approach to the subject matter by considering appropriate concepts and suitable techniques. The change resistance attitude of the Indian Muslims has been depicted with much confusion and misunderstanding in the academic writings these days. Giving prominence to religion and religious outlook some studies consider religion as an independent variable. Unaffected by existential circumstances. Sociologically we cannot consider Indian Muslims as one monolithic entity. A common religious affiliation does not let any group transcend and demolish the barriers of class, education and so forth. Therefore, blanket generalizations involving all Muslims in India are not reasonable especially in the absence of scientific data.

The relative slowness of change among Indian Muslims does not mean there is absolutely no change occurring among them. However, the rate of change is slow. It is not due to Islamic values and prescriptions as to the minority status of the Muslims. Also, not due to the lower class status of majority of Muslims. Minority status has given the Muslims a feeling of anxiety and insecurity and due to this they tend to be suspicious of change. Further, since the Indian Muslims are generally found to be traditional in socio-cultural matters, there is an expectation that they should modernize themselves. But this position is unrealistic. Change for Muslims can come from the process of economic modernization. A significant change occurring among the Indian Muslims is the gradual efforts towards the emancipation of the Muslim women. Many of them

are in colleges and universities these days. An educated middle class is emerging among Muslims. The educated exposed to electronic and print media are becoming aware of their rights. A healthy change is that parents resistance for girls education is less these days. In many cases Muslims women are greater achievers in education field. The condition of Muslim women is the outcome of their being Indian, being Muslim and being women. Consequently, those have a bearing on the attitudes, practices and capabilities of Muslim women to adopt social change and modernization prevalent in various form in the Indian society.

The ecological and demographic conditions of India are diverse. Because of this the distribution of population varies from one region to another. Except Muslims, all the other religious minority group have concentration only in certain areas. Social scientific look at the demographic features while considering social problems. Data pertaining to major religious communities as in census, decadal growth pattern of Muslims, their distribution in different states and districts of Karnataka have been included. In Mysore city Muslims are in large number in some Municipal wards. It is in these areas their educational institutions, religious organizations and places of worship are concentrated, which forms the northern part of the city. Also included in this chapter the sociological background of Muslims in India. To say that the Muslims attempted to preserve separate trends is not correct because the same tendency prevailed among the Hindus. The fact that the Muslims were already an integral part of the socio-economic structure of the country was ignored and exploited by some vested interests.

The social structure of the Muslims community in contemporary Indian cannot be explained easily. It is a hierarchical system of stable social groups differing in wealth, privilege and power. Though equality and brotherhood are ideal, in actual practice there have been unequal social groups within Muslim community. They have come to accept the social segmentation of caste system as practiced among the Hindus. Cast-like structures exists among the Indian Muslims.

Details of field data in the study provide insights into the socio-structural aspects of Muslim women in Mysore city. To begin with a general study of the demographic, socio-economic and related aspects of the population as represented by the sample has been included in chapter four. The general characteristics show that there are more women in the age group of 21-40. Sunnis form the large section of Mysore Muslims. Arranged marriages are popular among the Muslims here. Conforming to the recent trends majority of the family members are living in small families. As regards the educational attainments, one half of the women in the study had formal school education beside madrasa training. A significant number went to college. Muslim women in the study had not problem regarding their medium of instructions. While Urdu is their mother tongue, English is popular. Economic reasons are the main motivating factors for respondents to take up employment. Among parents, a large number of fathers of the respondents are doing job while the mothers are housekeepers. Significantly a large number are doing business. Data pertaining to income of parents and spouse is not dependable as is true in all social science research surveys.

The social structure of Indian Muslims predominantly consists of traditional cultural aspects. While the external forces of change affecting it the internal aspects reinforce. The economic growth, demographic pressure and scientific and technological development have brought about significant changes in the social system. Nevertheless the Islamic culture by and large reflects conservatism and remains in good measure slightly modified in its basic value orientation. The fundamental question for our analysis has been, how far the Muslim women think about the process of social transformation and changes taking place among them and in the Muslim social structure as a whole.

Socio-Cultural Life:

Our analysis shows that Muslim family in Mysore is by and large patrilineal. The pattern of roles performed by men and women are divided into two different segments. While authority is a matter central to any analysis of

family organization, authority differs from coercive control. The expected roles of men and women of different age groups are assigned by tradition. Areas such as inter family relations. Family budget, schooling of children, house hold earnings, marriage of children are the fields of men. The women are responsible for house hold tasks including cooking, fetching water, cleaning and other domestic work. Also, children are entirely their responsibility. The expected roles of men and women are assigned by tradition. Besides tradition, age continue to be the major criteria in determining the authority rather than competence and consensus. The family among Muslims in Mysore city is a cohesive and stable group. As organized now, it does not provide any scope for new experiences emanating from social transformation.

Most of the respondents in the study have expressed their feeling that they are less fortunate compared to men. Being economically dependent, women lean towards personal relationships. When asked to explain the reasons for their present day plight, nearly one half of the respondents in the study are of the opinion that male domination and patriarchy as stumbling blocks in the development of personality of Muslim women in India.

One of the main features of Islamic culture has been imposition of restrictions on women. One such manifestation is the rule of 'Purdah' which is sanctioned by Islam. Being an important part of Muslim social structures, superior social status is attributed to families observing 'purdah'. Violation of this rule is interpreted as anti-religion. The seclusion of women from men who are not relatives is being practices by a large number families in the study.

When mobility of women outside the home became inevitable the use of 'Burkha' increased. Also, its shape and size changed for the convenience of the wearer. Days have changed when a Muslim woman has to cover herself from head to foot in a most ungainly, usually black or white garment while going out. But this practice has continued though thinned by time. The system of 'Purdah' persists, marriages are still arranged, byganamous marriages do occur, girls are

educated, if at all, less than their brothers irrespective of relative merit; and the role of women is still conceived predominantly as submissive. The Muslim women of Mysore, by and large accept religion as unalterable and resist changes.

Religion and Social life:

Islam includes the observance of five 'Ibadats' (Pillars). All the believers in order to be good Muslims have to practice at least three of the pillars. In the case of 'Namaz' (Prayer), it is common to all and has a more or less uniform rule for men and women with minor differences. For Muslims, the mosque is not only place of worship but it is also the cultural center of Islam. The fact that a large number of respondents in the study have indicated that they do not have a place of worship other than home confirms that women are not allowed to pray at mosques. Another aspect of the Muslims society is that even when prayers offered at home men and women never stand in the same line. Normally women stand seven steps behind men in such gathering. Further, as a rule men are required to speak every word of the prayer aloud but women are not to join them with loud voice. These factors have a bearing on attitudes, practices and capacities of Muslim women to experience the fruits of social transformation. The claim of superiority of men over women is based the false understanding of men being rulers and women ruled. Very often, men try to give rational explanation on their claims of superiority and ascribe it to God.

On the question of mis-interpretation of Quran and Hadith and misguidance by Moulvis, Pir/Murshids, it was found that under the influence of the Ulema and the reactionary Muslim political/religious leadership, the Muslim community has demonstrated little enthusiasm for social reforms. Such attempts were interpreted as efforts to destroy 'Muslim identity'. The Muslim orthodoxy still holds a strong and strict adherence to the letter of the law. Also they have succeeded in building a defense mechanism to protect their cultural and religious interests.

Politicisation

Muslim occupy a unique place in Indian society. Their share in population, urban and semi-urban habitation contrasted with their educational and economic backwardness, concentration in certain economic activities, fear of the majority, lack of pragmatic leadership and puzzled political consciousness as a community makes it all the more significant to initiate empirical studies. Presently, the Muslims comprising about 14 percent of India's population are faced with different situation. There is a view that Muslims in India are in a dilemma. They look like lost and out of grips with the evolving reality of contemporary Indian political life. Political behavior is complex and multidimensional. Two major fields can be distinguished for the purpose of understanding of political behavior. One is political participation and the other refers to political policies. The chances to participate in the political system depends upon the individual's sense of political competence and the resources which provide him/her with the skills for political interaction. Political party activities require money and time and active participation in such tasks are not rewarding many a time. Majority of the Muslim households in the city are poor and are engaged in earning out their livelihood. A large number of respondents in the study have stated that no one in the study have stated that no one in their family took part in various activities of political parties. It was found that seventy per cent respondents in the sample had voted in the last elections. But this activity depends on the community leaders. In fact many Muslim women respondents did say at the time of interview that they vote according to the advice of the local leaders.

Family and Marriage

Marriage is the road to family life and family is the only social institution other than religion which is formally developed in all societies. Family duties are the direct role responsibility of everyone in society with rare exceptions. Almost every person is born into a family and founds one of his own. For Indian Muslims, religion regulates the social practices. The man-woman relationship and the authority structures in the family are rooted in traditional sanctions as in

the sacred texts. Here, the composition of family, the family organization, interpersonal relations within the family, the objects of marriage, the pattern of mate selection and the age at marriage have been analysed and an attempt has been made to assess the change.

Marriage

Under Islamic law marriage is a contract which is considered as essential for both men and women. Parents think that they are not free unless they see their daughters and sons happily married. The terms of marriage are verbally announced to the bride and groom before the marriage. The 'nikahnama' is signed by either witnesses or the bride and the groom.

Choice of mate

Modern pattern of mate selection is not yet popular among the Muslims of Mysore city. Our data does not support the fact that the process of social transformation of the individuals makes them more tolerant of inter-religious marriages. The keeping apart of women from males who are not their relatives was still practiced and the 'purdah' was most frequently adhered to by the respondents. Also, segregation of the boys and girls after puberty was still the norm. It was, therefore, difficult for men and women to meet before marriage and continue a friendship in the same way that young people in the west develop relationship. However after 1950s, the movement of girls outside home has increased. Some parents of girls these days, allow the prospective groom to meet girl prior to marriage apart from negotiations through electronic media.

Age at marriage

We find that, in the entire sample of 300 women highest frequency of about 59.0 percent indicated that the correct age of marriage was between 21-25 years. Another 28.0 per cent were in favour of 18-20 years. This shows that the respondents were no longer in favour of child marriage, but instead prepare marriages of full grown adult women who are capable of looking after themselves and their interests.

Mehar

Mehar has played a significant role in the process of mate selection among Muslims. It has religious sanction. Islamic law considers Mehar as a gift of love and affection showed by the husband to his wife. The amount of mehar and the mode of payment is included in the 'nikahnama'. It is normally based on the social position of the bride's family and depends upon her qualification. Generally mehar is considered by Muslim Women as a security in the event of difficulties in their married life. Though marriage customs provide for mehar instances of women claiming the same and men giving the mehar amount are very rare.

Marital Relationships

Interpersonal relations among family members and changes in the family system have been studied by sociologists. With the family the relationship are generally depends upon the obligations and authority. For purposes of convenience they are classified into three broad areas. Relations between husband and wife; relations between parents and children's and between mother-in-law and daughter in law. In every culture an institutionalized pattern of man-woman relationship occupies a central stage of the family system. Husband enacts the role of leader in the family. He is the spokesman, takes care of security of the members of family and educating children is his task. These roles demand higher competence and superior knowledge. Side by side woman in the family playing the role of wife acts as an integrative force. She helps resolve conflict within the family. Her role was organized along personal and emotional lines, whereas the instrumental role of the husband was organized in terms of personal considerations. The values in earlier society emphasise subordination-superordination and dependence-dominance in the relation of husband and wife. On the other hand the major values of present society are equality, individuality and independence. In consonance with the social transformation changes in the ideas on marital relationships also take place. However, a large majority of respondents in the study believe the natural superiority of husbands. Husband's economic and social roles almost automatically gave him pre-eminence. In the

study majority of the families were small. In such a situation the relationship between husband and wife was characterised by warmth and involved an intimate interplay between familiar and the wider community life.

Girls Education

Many studies have confirmed that the level of education of Indian Muslims is lower as compared to that of other communities. However, data on this topic are very scarce. Unfortunately the census data on literacy have not been analysed in terms of religion. many reasons are given to explain the educational backwardness of Muslims in general and Muslim women in particular. Some are traced to historical factors while others refer to the attitude of the people and their apathy. Conservatism and patriarchy played a major role in discouraging Muslim women going for higher education. In the past, we find the position of women was subordinate to that of men. Many writers have explained that fact that man was the dominant partner in his relationships with women and she had to show difference to him. It was found that nearly one half of the respondents have indicated that Muslim men opposed higher education to girls. Studies of education show that a large majority of people in society consider education in mercenary terms. They see it as a means of entry into a job and a source of social mobility. On the contrary a large number of women in our study believed that education equips women face difficult life situations in society. For some education helps them to be a good mother and a few respondents have stated that education will improve their social status.

Women and Employment

There are two types of explanation for women's weak status in area that have been dominated by men especially in the field of employment. They are branded as passive, traditional lack self confidence and are short of time; they have little stomach for speaking their minds or for joining issue. They find it hard to compete on equal terms with men since they suffer from 'defective masculinization'. The other approach searches for that which distinguishes women from men.

The Muslim women in our society, were traditionally not permitted to work or take up job outside home. In addition to poverty, cultural factors like the 'purdah system' are the major constraints coming in the way of the pursuit of employment by Muslim women. It would be a mistake to view a job as a panacea for women, or a solution to the problems of inequality. These days, most employed women hold jobs which pay low wages and offer little possibilities for advancements. Although one third of the sample account for employed women seventy per cent are employed as school teachers clerical or subordination positions in offices and earned relatively small amount. The research data suggest that respondents believe that a woman's primary responsibility is in the home, especially during the early years of child rearing. One common element in the life of working women in our society is that the responsibility of running the household and caring for the children rests on their shoulders. Women normally have to take the responsibility for the drudgery or household work and care of the children even when they work long hours in the family and at the work place. It is heartening to note that 86 per cent of the respondents say that they are satisfied with the present job and working environment.

We have been observing that things are not totally stagnant on Muslim women's front. According to Asghar Ali Engineer "an educated middle class is emerging among Indian Muslims" which is well aware of changing society and need for change among Muslim women". By and large Muslim working women have the support of their family members having to work with their men colleagues. About 74 per cent of the respondents have confirmed that their seniors/colleagues do not create any problem for them in their work place.

Finally it is appropriate to conclude with a happy note by Anwar Azeem "The Muslims of India as a community are neither impassive nor indifferent. Nor are they silent spectators. By and large they are in the mainstream of national endeavors, despite that odds they had to face".

Findings of the hypotheses

H1 The impact of Social transformation is proportionately related to educational achievements and economic roles.

The fact that because of educational achievements a person's economical conditions changes, and the impact of social transformation is related to educational achievements and economic role. Hence, the above hypothesis accepted according to the data analysis.

H2 The More a person is exposed to outside society the more likely the person is to adopt the new ideals of life.

Though a small number, an educated middle class is emerging among Muslims which is aware of changing society and need for change among Muslim women. The educated exposed to electronic and print media are becoming aware of their rights and are not prepared to follow what is being imposed on them in the name of religion.

It is interesting to note that the educated and employed Muslim women are exposed to electronic and print media and to democratic ideals. They are in turn becoming aware of their rights. Hence, the above hypothesis accepted according to the data analysis.

H3 There is a direct relationship between the high level of aspiration and high degree of confidence for achieving different aspirations.

The findings clearly indicate that the Muslims have recognized the need for education in terms of their future aspirations about occupational options. It is a reality that higher education leads for white collar Jobs. The prevalent public opinion was against any higher education for women. So far we have tried to show that, women feel that education is necessary for girls and they go on aspiring for more and more education. Hence, the above hypothesis accepted according to the data analysis.