

**IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN KERALA -
A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
MALAPPURAM DISTRICT**

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Women and their empowerment are the burning issues among the researchers in the field social science and inter disciplines. Girls and women from the Kerala are also facing some of the problems, especially Muslims women from the region of Malabar, although Kerala is leading many of the social indicators. Muslim women from the Malabar region still under the clutches of narrow religious boundaries. The Muslims of Malabar were one of the earliest traditional communities in South Asia with their own socio-cultural entity. Women were the most marginalized group within the community. Twentieth century witnessed a rapid and visible change in each and every aspect of their life. According to the Literacy Rate 2011 census, the female literacy level is 65.46%, whereas the male literacy rate is over 80%. According to 2001 census report, overall literacy of Indian women was 54%. The Muslim women's literacy rate was 50.1 per cent against 53.7 per cent of Hindu women. There is an obvious contrast between Muslim women in Kerala and their counterparts in other states. In Kerala, they have achieved some enviable status in literacy and social fields. As per the latest reports of Census 2011 Directorate, the average national sex ratio in India is 940; child sex ratio is 965 girls per 1000 boys compared to figure of 960 girls per 1000 boys of 2001 census data. Still, Kerala is continuing with the best sex ratio in India with 1084 for 1000 male.

On analyzing and examining the process of modernization and social inclusion of Muslim women in Malabar, the quality and quantity of the changes are unexpected comparing to the past days. New avenues have been opened up to enter into social, economic and political aspects of their lives. The socio-economic life of the women in Malabar before independence has been explored and detailed in the project report. The process and changes in the field of education of Muslim women

in Malabar with special reference to Malappuram district has been traced and analyzed the transformation process of the community during the last century. The economic growth of the region and its impact on women has been traced.

In the present study the investigator addresses the socioeconomic empowerment of Muslim women in Malappuram district of Kerala of by assessing the impact of education. In the present investigation, the researcher undertakes to find the answers to the problem and these are generally stated in the form of conclusions. The present study, entitled **“Impact of Education on Socioeconomic Empowerment of Muslim Women in Kerala-A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District”**, is an attempt to explore the impact of the education on socioeconomic empowerment in the women from Muslim community

5.1 MAJOR FINDINGS

The educational status, economic empowerment, political empowerment and social empowerment of Muslim women respect to municipalities of Malappuram district were analyzed; the following are highlighted as major findings that have emerged from the present investigation. The study results reveal that:

Economic and financial empowerment of Muslim women

- 55.3 % of participants have reported that any of family members working at Gulf countries
- 56% of women having financial savings at bank
- 42.7% of women contributed money to buy land or house
- 58% of participants engaging in kudumbasree activities

- 17.7% of women have been providing financial support to the education of children in family and 82.3% of women are not providing financial support to the education of children in family.
- 30.3% of the participants have the power to take economic decisions on financial matters in the family. 69.7% of the participants does not have the power to take economic decisions on financial matters in the family
- 86.3% of women reported that they have freedom to purchase or shop dress materials or cosmetics
- 62% of participants reported that they have vehicles in their family
- 24.7% of women reported that they have own vehicle whereas 75.3% reported they do not have own vehicle.

Political empowerment of Muslim women

- 72% of participants have interest in the political parties
- 69.3% of participants reported that they are a member of political party
- 100% of participants have reported that they do participate in voting without fail.
- 26.3% of participants have reported that they were placed their candidature in whereas 73.7% reported that they were not placed candidature yet.
- 59.3% of participants have reported that they have participated in political meetings and rallies.

- 31.7% of participants reported that they are working in leadership positions whereas 68.3% reported that they are not working in leadership positions.
- 18.4% of participants reported that they capable of delivering public speech related to political issues whereas 81.6% reported that they are not capable of delivering public speech related to political issues.

Social empowerment of Muslim women

- 95% of participants have reported that they are belonging to community and social organizations rather than political parties
- 12.3% of participants have reported that they are belonging as leaders whereas 87.7% reported that they are belonging as members of the organization.
- Participants have reported that 9.3% of them are belonging to GIO, 7% belonging to MES, 23% belonging to Vanitha League, 22% belonging to Mujahidin Women Wing and 38.7% of participants belonging to other organizations.
- 55.3% of participants have reported that they participants reported that they are participated in community welfare activities
- 59% of women have participated in anti-sexual harassment awareness programmes
- 79.3% of participants reported that they are able to influence family members in moulding their socio-religious behaviours.

- 59.6% of participants reported that they are being able to decide if when and whom marry whereas 40.4% reported that they are being unable to decide if when and whom marry.
- 61.7% of participants reported that they have participated in art and cultural activities /programmes.
- 98.6% of participants have reported positive attitude on vaccination and immunization
- 64.7% of participants reported that they have education and employment in equal opportunity
- 63% of participants reported that they have clear knowledge and views on sexuality and reproduction.
- 66% of participants reported that they have raised voice against physical, psychological and sexual harassment issues in the society.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the present study, we can conclude as follows.

The present study reveals that Gulf migration and the resultant economic progress have led to an educational renaissance among the Muslim women .when looking into economic and financial empowerment of Muslim women the study results also reveal that most of the participants having financial savings at bank, they contributed money to buy land or houses, they have freedom to purchase or shop dress materials or cosmetics and also they are engaging in Kudumbasree activities for the uplift. At the same time, for most of the participants, could not able to provide

financial support to the education of children in family, does not have the power to take economic decisions on financial matters in the family. Participants also reported they do not have the freedom to purchase gold and does not have own vehicles.

When analysing Political empowerment of Muslim women in the Malappuram district, more than half of the participants have reported that they are interested in politics and political parties, they are belonging to as a member of political party and they have participated in political meetings and rallies. 100% of participants have reported that they do participate in voting without fail. 26.3% of participants have reported that they were placed their candidature in election. This is strongly indicating that Muslim women from Malappuram district have entered into political activities by removing the barriers from the family as well as the society. They are also well aware of their rights and responsibilities to the nation.

The Social empowerment of Muslim women in the Malappuram district shows that that they are belonging to community and social organizations rather than political parties. Among them, 12.3% of participants have reported that they are belonging as leaders. Participants have reported that 9.3% of them are belonging to GIO, 7% belonging to MES, 23% belonging to Vanitha League, 22% belonging to Mujahidin Women Wing and 38.7% of participants belonging to other organizations. More than half of the participants have reported that they participants reported that they are participated in community welfare activities, anti-sexual harassment awareness programmes, art and cultural activities /programmes and they have raised voice against physical, psychological and sexual harassment issues in the society.

The result also found that an interesting fact that 59.60% of participants reported that they are being able to decide if when and whom marry and 98.6% of participants have reported positive attitude on vaccination and immunization. 64.7% of participants reported that they have education and employment in equal opportunity. While analysing the sexuality and reproduction, 63% of participants reported that they have clear knowledge and views on sexuality and reproduction.

The history of education is the history of the lives and experiments of great thinkers of education whose gems of ideas continue to inspire worldwide educational thinking and practice. As a major social and political reformer, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi played an important role in trying to remove the social wrongs committed against the country's women over the ages. The educational ideology of Gandhiji is complex and practical. Gandhiji's Education Vision For the betterment of society as well as of the entire world, it was very civilized. It is no wonder that he grew out of faith in education. Training not only educates pupils, it also brings about a new trend in education.

Gandhiji encouraged free and compulsory education for both boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 14. Education in the student's mother tongue should be taught at the primary stage. All children in the village should receive a free universal primary education. Gandhi was an educational protagonist for women. He argued that there should be no difference between men and women in society in terms of equality of status. He vigorously rejected the scheme of purdah and widowhood. He wanted women to be freed from social servitude. So in various educational institutions within the county, the number of girl students increased considerably.

Thus, Gandhi stressed the need for women's education to be strengthened in order to change society. Every educational aim that Gandhi envisaged was actually in accordance with others. With its spiritual and moral ideals, he pleaded for character development. Thus, education for social development aims to build education in order to number of social values that relate to the social environment in which each person has to adapt himself. Women were not for Gandhi, mere toys or dolls in the hands of men or their rivals. Intellectually, mentally and spiritually, women are equal to a male, according to Gandhi, and she can participate in any activity." In his speeches and writings, Gandhi said that Indian women are superior to the male in many matters especially those of tolerance, patience and sacrifice." Without any doubt, it can be said that a century ago, Mahatma Gandhi experimented in all these three fields and showed the way to empower women and improve the status of women in the world. We can literally see an entirely opposite picture of women's empowerment. For us it is a great regret that women's work is still limited even today. Studies show that all of the benefits of society are funded and empowered by women. But even today, at the start of the 21st century, the vision of Gandhi remains unfulfilled.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS

Researchers from social sciences have long been fascinated by impact of education. Education is an important indicator of human development. It resists oppression, encourages meaningful participation in development, and empowers the individual to make better choices and enhances person's awareness about life. India being one of the largest countries in the World as per population has the highest number of illiterates and breeds inequality the most. The development of the country

depends on the development of its individuals. Education has been regarded as a powerful instrument for changing women's position in the society. It enhances them socially, economically and culturally. This, in turn, reduces the gender based inequalities and discriminations. In the present study, the investigator attempts to find out to throw light on the impact of education of Muslim women on the socio-economic empowerment in Kerala.

The results of the present study indicate that only when a woman attains economic empowerment she will be feeling the freedom of the air, and the women empowerment will attain at its top, so without the attaining of economic security, it will be highly harder or challenge of women to come forward. Under these circumstances, the women cannot able express their feelings in the society like their innate quality and instinct ideas, as a contribution towards the progressive society.

Many show that empowerment in education has naturally resulted in the improvement of employment positions too. Unlike in the past, educated Muslim Women are at the present time employed in schools, colleges, banks, Government organizations and private firms. There are professionals such as doctors, engineers, lawyers and scientists among Muslim women.

In spite of a change in orthodox views and progress made in Muslim education in the state, studies still present dismal picture, Muslims need to take a more scientific approach towards popularizing education, and to ensure that its importance percolates down to all levels. Muslims intellectuals and educationists feel that Muslim organizations have to draw up a long-term plan to consider aspects related to education and other social issues.

Education is considered as a potent instrument through which processes of modernization and social change come to existence. Education exposes people to new thoughts and ideas and provides necessary skills. Hence, to think harmonious development of the country without educating women is impossibility. Moreover, it has been rightly said that to educate a woman is to educate the whole family. Therefore, the emphasis with regard to women education should be to equip her multiple role as citizen, housewife, mother, and contributor to family income, builders of new society and builder of the nation (Sonowal, 2013).

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The investigator initiated and adopted all possible steps to make the study as reliable and generalized as possible. A few limitations, though, were evident and are listed below:

1. The sample size in the present study was limited to 300 participants.
2. The investigator limited certain socio demographic variables for the convenience of the study.

Despite these limitations, the researcher has made sincere efforts to make the study meaningful, truthful and valid.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The present study can be an effort to understand the impact of education on socio-economic empowerment of Muslim women. The further study can be bring them into the main stream by removing remaining barriers

- The present study could provide better understanding about the social, religious and familial attitude on education.
- The study can motivate researchers and scholars to formulate new approaches; this study is an excellent baseline for future research in this field.
- The results of the study help to eradicate common misconceptions regarding the Muslim women in the Malappuram district.
- The study will help to give realistic and increased understanding about the importance of the education for women.

5.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study has opened the gateway to new areas of further research. The following suggestions can be considered while conducting studies in related areas.

- The same study can be repeated with larger samples covering all districts in Kerala (and possibly other regions of India) so that more generalized results could be obtained.
- The same study can repeated and include more number of participants
- The same study can be replicated with male participants
- The same study can be replicated with other socio demographic variables.
- The same study can be replicated with other religions around the India