

SOCIOCULTURAL STUDY OF YOUNG WOMEN STUDYING IN COLLEGES
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Abstract:

Young students are the future citizens of our country and as such a subject of great importance. It has been seen that some female students prefer to study in educational institutions meant exclusively for women students. This study is an attempt to find out the socio economic and family backgrounds these girls come from. It is also an endeavor to ascertain their attitudes/ opinions on subjects like education and marriage. The limitation of the study is that no comparative indices for women studying in co-educational colleges has been taken, which can be a scope for further study.

Introduction

Access to education has been one of the most urgent and important demands of Women Rights Movements. Women's education has also been a chief preoccupation of both the government and social or civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of a country. Many exclusive women's institutes have been established in India, over the years, to battle the inhibitions felt by others regarding sending their daughters to Coeducational institutes. These exclusive girls' schools and colleges allow for focused education and comprehensive development of the girl child and later woman.

Young adulthood stage is a period when personal life cycle develops. Choice of educational institution can have a profound effect on a person's cognition, affective and social development. An individual may choose to study in co- education or single sex educational institutions. Co-education means the education of boys and girls in the same school, college and university.

From its beginning, as an enterprise established by men for women , to early experiments in co – education marked by isolating women and limiting their participation in university life (Kinzie, Thomas, Palmer, Umbach, & Kuh, 2007), women have been considered as an afterthought. Given this historical legacy, it is just short of remarkable that today women outnumber and in many respects outperform men. Indeed, despite the advances made by women in higher education some argue that women continue to be treated as ‘second class citizens’ (Holland & Eisenhart, 1990). Since 1982, when Hall and Sandler reported a chilly climate for female undergraduates, the quality of the learning environment for women at coeducational colleges and universities has been a topic of justified concern. Though the evidence supporting the chilly climate thesis is somewhat limited, what does exist suggests that compared with men, many women students perceive their campus to be less supportive of their academic and social needs and that, as a result, their learning and personal development is adversely affected (Drew & Work, 1998) (Rice, 1991) (Pascarella, Whitt, Edison , & et al, 1997). It had been observed that the single sex college experience accounted for greater academic involvement, more interaction with faculty, higher intellectual self -esteem, and greater satisfaction with college life “(except for social life with men)” (Astin, 1977).

The present study aims to explore the socio cultural aspect of young women studying in exclusive women's education institute. It is of prime importance to understand the factors contributing to the choice of such institutes, the circumstances, attitudes and opinions of the female students. Also, a comprehensive understanding of the demographic variables unique to such institutes could provide for a better awareness of the facilities required and to be focused on for the female students.

Methodology:

Participants: the sample comprised of 124 female students from exclusively Girls College. With a mean of 17 years (SD =1.51). All were undergraduate university students.

Measures: A self-designed questionnaire was used to collect demographic data and opinion survey.

Procedure: The research was carried out in one educational institution exclusive for women, located in central Mumbai. Following informed consent, participants were required to complete the self-designed questionnaire. Data was collected in group administrations. The duration of each student's participation was approximately 30 minutes. While the data was collected, the researcher provided information regarding the objectives of the research, the questionnaire and the principle of confidentiality.

Results and Discussion:

The data was analyzed in terms of percentages. The following demographic details were obtained. A majority of the women students studying in exclusively girls colleges belonged to Hindu religion (74.19%) followed by Muslims (12.90%), Buddhists (7.26%) and Christians (4.84%). There was no representation of the Parsi and Sikh religions with others comprising of (0.81%)

As regards to Fathers' Profession the largest segment was in private service (33.87%) followed by Government service (29.03%) and business (24.19%). Only (2.42%) of the fathers of the girls students taking education in Women's colleges were professionals and for (10.48%) the kind of work they do was unspecified.

The mothers of these students were mostly Homemakers (79.03%) while only (14.52%) were in service. A miniscule section (0.81%) were entrepreneurs, & (3.23%) mothers were classified as others. And the kind of profession was unspecified for (2.42%) of them. This indicates that most of the girls in this study came from tradition oriented conservative families where men are supposed to be the bread winner and women, the home makers.

However a very encouraging trend noticed was that these girls do not see themselves following this norm. Only 0.81% see themselves as Homemakers as against 38.71% wanting to be in the service sector with an additional 20.16% wanting to get into teaching. A significant number (12.10%) aspire to be business women and 28.23% want to take up other choices.

Hence it is clear that women students from the new generation want to carve a niche for themselves and do not expect themselves to fit into the stereotypical role, their earlier generation of women accepted.

The results also show that the next generation is patriotic towards our country with an overwhelming majority (85.48%) wanting to reside in India. Only 14.52% said they would like to settle abroad of which 7.26% would prefer US, 1.61% the UK and 0.81% Europe.

Most of the students came from middle income families with 50 % in the Rs.10,000-25,000/-, (28.23%) earning between Rs. 25,000/- to Rs. 50,000/- per month, only 14.52% in the Rs. 50,000/-to 1 lakh segment and further on only 6.45% earning a lakh and more.

The family pattern reflects changes predicted by sociologists earlier on, with a growing number of Nuclear families (70.97) as against Joint families (18.55%) and the emerging Single parent families (10.48). Smaller families seem to be the norm. A maximum percentage (40.68%) have two siblings , (25.42%) have one sibling and 20.34% have three. The percentage declines further as the number of siblings increase- four (7.63%) five (3.39%) and (0.85%) had 6, 7 or even 8 siblings.

An analysis of students place of residence indicates that 85.48% reside in the city, 8.87% in the central suburbs , 4.03% in the western suburbs, 1.61% in Navi Mumbai, but maximum (14.52%) come from close by Wadala and 13.71% Sion and 5.65% from Matunga area

When quizzed about their reason for joining girls college an overwhelming majority (50%) said it was either personal choice, 32.26% reported parental wish, 9.68% said they wanted to be company for their friends and 8.06% said they joined a girls college because of their siblings. Regarding their opinion about studying in a 'Girls only college' 39.52% said they felt comfortable , 23.39% said they felt good, 16.94% felt secure ,19.35% felt happy and a very minor segment 0.81% felt bad and interestingly 0% felt pressurized. Asked whether they would like to be shifted to a co-educational college a thumping majority (74.19%) said 'No'. And only 25.81% said a yes. The reasons given were 46.77% felt comfortable with girls, 27.42 % said they did not want to shift to co-educational because they would lose their friends, 11.29% did not like

coeducational colleges , 8.87% said parents wouldn't allow them to shift and 5.56% admitted they would like to study with boys.

A majority of students (92.74%) said that their parents expected them to complete their graduation and only 7.26% said their parents wanted them not to study further. Out of the total sample 97.58% had passed their first year of graduation and 2.42 % had cleared their 2nd year of graduation, 20.16% wanted to go in for post-graduation , none wanted to discontinue their studies and 19.35% expected to take up something other than graduation and post-graduation.

Finally analysis of results shows that a majority of the girls coming from exclusively women's colleges (56.45 %) would prefer to have an arranged an own choice partner , 33.87% would prefer an arranged marriage and 9.68% would like to get married to someone of their own choice.

Table 1 presents the mean and the SD of 124 candidates on the basis of their age, where the maximum age of the candidate was 21 years and the minimum age was 15. The mean obtained was 17, whereas the SD found was 1.15.

A chi square was done to compare experimentally obtained result with those to be expected theoretically on the hypothesis. Table no 2 presents the chi square value obtained on the students attitude survey. The main objective of the research was to understand students attitude towards their religion, father's profession, mother's profession, number of siblings (brother and sister) distance of home from college area, income group of parents, family pattern, reason for joining girls college, opinion about studying in girls college, their opinion about shifting to co-educational colleges and their reasons , future plans for profession, their preference to stay in India , area of residence, food habits , education, type of marriage they would go for and joining girls college.

A chi square was computed to compare the obtained with the expected result. The chi square ranged from a minimum of 0.64 to a maximum of 343.26. It was observed that the factors, food habits and number of siblings (brothers) were not significant. Father's profession was significant at 0.05 level whereas all the others were significant at 0.01 level.

Conclusion

The study found that though girls studying in women's colleges come from traditional conservative background their expectations and aspirations indicate an emancipated outlook. They aspire for higher studies and expect to be constructively occupied in the work world thereafter. The emancipated and empowered outlook influenced their choice of marriage partner too.

References

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Appendix

Tables and Figures

Table 1: religion

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
fo	74.19	12.90	4.84	0.00	7.26	0.00	0.81
fe	14.28	14.28	14.28	14.28	14.28	14.28	14.28
fo-fe	59.91	-1.38	0.33	0	0.50	0	0.05
(fofe) ²	3589.2	1.904	0.108	0	0.25	0	0.25
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	251.34	0.13	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01
fe							

$$X^2 = 251.5$$

$$df_{(6)} = K-1$$

$$= 7-1$$

$$= 6$$

$X^2_{(6)} = 251.5$, significant at 0.01 level.

Table 2: Father's occupation

	A	B	C	D	E
fo	24.194	33.871	29.032	2.4194	10.484

fe	20	20	20	20	20
fo-fe	4.194	13.871	1.45	0.120	0.524
(fo-fe) ²	17.59	192.40	2.10	0.014	0.274
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	0.87	9.62	0.105	0.0007	0.075
fe					

$$X^2 = 10.67$$

$$df = K-1$$

$$= 5-1$$

$$= 4$$

$$X^2_{(4)} = 10.67, p < 0.05$$

Table 3: Mother's profession

	A	B	C	D	E	F
fo	79.03	14.52	4.84	0.00	7.26	0.00
fe	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66
fo-fe	62.37	-2.14	-15.86	-16.66	-13.43	-14.24
(fofe) ²	3890.0	4.57	251.53	277.55	180.36	202.77
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	233.4	0.27	15.09	16.65	10.82	12.17
fe						

$$X^2 = 288.4$$

$$df = K-1$$

$$= 6-1$$

$$= 5$$

$X^2_{(5)} = 288.4$, significant at 0.01 level

Table 4 : Number of siblings

	A	B	C	D	E	F
fo	74.47	23.40	1.06	0.00	0.00	1.06
fe	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66
fo-fe	4.46	1.40	0.06	-16.66	-16.66	0.06
(fofe) ²	3890.0	4.57	251.53	277.55	277.55	0.0036
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	233.4	0.27	15.09	16.65	16.65	0.00
fe						

$$X^2 = 1.31$$

$$df = K-1$$

$$= 6-1$$

$$= 5$$

$X^2_{(5)} = 1.31$ non -significant

Table 5: Sisters

	A	B	C	D	E	F
fo	52.81	29.21	11.24	3.37	3.37	0.00
fe	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66
fo-fe	36.15	12.55	0.67	0.20	0.20	0
(fofe) ²	1306.8	157.5	0.44	0.04	0.04	0
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	78.43	9.45	0.02	0.002	0.002	0
fe						

$$X^2 = 87.90$$

$$df = K-1$$

$$= 6-1$$

$$= 5$$

$$X^2_{(5)} = 87.90; p < 0.01 \text{ level}$$

Table no 6: Total

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
fo	25.42	40.68	20.35	7.63	3.39	0.85	0.85	0.85

fe	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50
fo-fe	12.92	28.18	7.84	-4.87	0.271	-11.65	-11.65	-11.65
(fofe) ²	166.9	794.11	61.46	23.71	0.07	135.7	135.7	135.7
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	13.35	63.52	4.91	1.89	0.00	10.85	10.85	10.85
fe								

$$X^2 = 116.22$$

$X^2_{(7)} = 116.22$; significant at 0.01 level

Table 7: Income group of parents

	A	B	C	D	E
fo	50.00	28.23	14.52	6.45	0.81
fe	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
fo-fe	30	8.23	-5.48	-13.55	19.9
(fo-fe) ²	900	67.73	30.03	183.60	396.01
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	45	3.38	1.50	9.15	19.80
fe					

$$X^2 = 78.83$$

$$df = K-1$$

$$= 5-1$$

$$= 4$$

$X^2_{(4)} = 78.83$, significant at 0.01 level

Table no 8: family pattern

	A	B	C
fo	70.968	18.548	10.484
fe	33.33	33.33	33.33
fo-fe	37.63	-14.78	22.846
(fo-fe) ²	1416.01	218.44	521.93
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	42.48	6.55	15.65
fe			

$X^2 = 64.68$

$df_{(2)} = 64.68$, significant at 0.01 level

Table no 9: Reason for joining girls college

	A	B	C	D
fo	50.00	32.26	9.68	8.06
fe	25	25	25	25
fo-fe	25	7.26	15.31	16.94
(fo-fe) ²	625	52.70	234.70	286.96
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	25	2.10	9.36	11.47
fe				

$$X^2 = 47.93$$

$$df = K - 1$$

$$= 4 - 1$$

$$= 3$$

$$X^2_{(3)} = 47.93; P < 0.01 \text{ level.}$$

Table 10:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
fo	23.39	16.94	39.52	0.00	0.81	19.35
fe	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66
fo-fe	1.40	0.28	22.86	16.66	15.85	2.69
(fo-fe) ²	1.96	0.078	522.57	277.55	251.22	7.236
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	0.11	0.00	31.36	16.65	15.07	0.434
fe						

$$df = K - 1$$

$$= 5$$

$$X^2_{(5)} = 63.62, p < 0.01 \text{ level}$$

Table 11:

	A	B
fo	25.80	74.19

fe	50	50
fo-fe	24.2	24.19
(fo-fe) ²	585.64	585.15
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	11.71	11.70
fe		

$$X^2=23.41$$

$$X^2_{(1)}=23.41, p < 0.01 \text{ level}$$

Table 12: reason

	A	B	C	D	E
fo	8.87	27.42	11.29	46.77	5.65
fe	20	20	20	20	20
fo-fe	-11.13	7.42	-8.71	26.77	-14.35
(fo-fe) ²	123.87	55.05	75.86	716.63	205.92
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	6.19	2.75	3.79	35.83	10.29
fe					

$$df = K-1$$

$$=5-1$$

$$=4$$

$$X^2_{(4)}= 58.85 , \text{ significant at } 0.01 \text{ level}$$

Table 13:

	A	B	C	D	E
fo	0.81	38.71	20.16	12.10	28.23
fe	20	20	20	20	20
fo-fe	19.19	18.71	0.16	-7.9	8.23
(fo-fe) ²	368.25	350.0	0.025	62.41	67.73
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	18.41	17.5	0.001	3.12	3.38
fe					

df =K-1

=5-1

=4

X²₍₄₎ = 42.41, significant at 0.01 level

Table 14:

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	A	B	C	D	E	F
fo	85.48	4.84	0.81	0.00	1.61	7.26
fe	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66
fo-fe	68.82	11.82	-15.85	-16.66	15.05	9.4
(fo-fe) ²	4736.19	139.71	251.22	277.55	226.5	88.36
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	284.27	8.38	15.07	16.65	13.59	5.30

fe						
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df =K-1

=6-1

= 5

$X^2_{(5)} = 343.26$, significant at 0.01 level

Table 15: area of residence

	A	B	C	D	E
fo	85.48	8.87	4.03	0.00	1.61
fe	19.99	19.99	19.99	19.99	19.99
fo-fe	65.49	-11.12	-15.96	-19.99	-18.38
(fo-fe) ²	4288.94	123.65	254.72	399.60	337.82
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	214.99	6.18	12.74	19.98	16.89
fe					

df =5-1

= 4

$X^2_{(4)} = 270.34$, significant at 0.01 level

Table 16:

	A	B
fo	45.96	54.03
fe	50	50

fo-fe	-4.04	4.03
(fo-fe) ²	16.321	16.240
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	0.32	0.32
fe		

df =2-1

= 1

$X^2_{(1)}=0.644$, non-significant

Table 17:

	A	B	C
fo	51	49	01
Fe	33.33	33.33	33.33
fo-fe	17.67	15.67	-32.33
(fo-fe) ²	312.22	245.54	1045.22
<u>(fo-fe)²</u>	9.367	7.367	31.36
fe			

df =3-1

= 2

$X^2_{(2)}=48.087$, significant at 0.01 level

Table 18: Results of previous years

	A	B
fo	97.58	2.42
fe	50	50
fo-fe	47.58	47.58
(fo-fe) ²	2263.85	2263.85
<u>(fo-fe)²</u> fe	45.27	45.27

df = K-1

= 2-1

= 1

$X_{(1)} = 90.54$; $p < 0.01$ level

Table 19

	A	B
fo	92.74	7.26
fe	50	50
fo-fe	42.74	42.74

$(fo-fe)^2$	1826.70	1826.70
$(fo-fe)^2$	36.53	36.53
fe		

$X^2_{(1)} = 73.06$; $p < 0.01$ level

Table 20

	A	B	C	D
fo	0.00	60.48	20.16	19.35
fe	25	25	25	25
fo-fe	-25	35.48	4.84	5.65
$(fo-fe)^2$	625	1258.83	23.42	31.92
$(fo-fe)^2$	25	50.35	0.93	1.27
fe				

$df = K-1$

$= 4-1$

$= 3$

$X^2_{(3)} = 77.55$; $p < 0.01$ level

Table 21

	A	B	C
fo	33.87	9.68	56.45
fe	33.33	33.33	33.33
fo-fe	0.54	23.45	23.12
(fo-fe) ²	0.2916	559.32	534.53
<u>(fo-fe)²</u> fe	0.008	16.78	16.03

df = K-1

= 3-1

= 2

$X^2(2) = 31.82$; $p < 0.01$ level

Table 22

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H

fo	31.45	0.81	4.03	0.00	5.65	7.26	0.81	50.00
fe	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5
fo-fe	18.95	11.69	8.47	-12.5	6.68	5.24	11.69	37.5
(fo-fe) ²	359.1	136.65	71.74	156.25	44.62	27.45	136.65	1406.25
<u>(fo-fe)²</u> fe	28.72	10.93	5.73	12.5	3.56	2.19	10.93	112/5

df = K-1

= 8-1

= 7

$X^2_{(7)} = 187.06$; $p < 0.01$ level

Table 23

Sr. No.		Value of X^2	Significant at / ns
1	Religion	251.5	0.01
2	Father's profession	10.67	0.05
3	Mother's profession	288.4	0.01
4	Brothers	1.31	ns
5	Sisters	87.90	0.01
6	Total	116.2	0.01

7	Distance	57.63	0.01
8	Income group	78.83	0.01
9	Family pattern	64.68	0.01
10	Reason for girls college	47.93	0.01
11	Opinion	63.62	0.01
12	Shifting to co- education	23.41	0.01
13	Reason	58.85	0.01
14	Future plans	42.41	0.01
15	Stay in India	343.26	0.01
16	Area of residence	270.34	0.01
17	Food habits	0.644	ns
18	Education as per	48.08	0.01
19	Results of previous year	90.54	0.01
20	Parents education	73.06	0.01
21	Wish education	77.55	0.01
22	Marriage	32.81	0.01
23	Joining girls college	187.06	0.01