

## PROBLEMS FACED BY MUSLIM GIRLS

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### Abstract:

This study explores the challenges faced by Muslim girls in India, focusing on issues such as early marriages, gender discrimination, decision-making, financial independence, and societal stereotypes. Through a mixed-method approach, data was collected from 66 Muslim girls attending Aishabai College of Education. The analysis revealed that while some problems persist, such as societal norms and stereotypes, there is evidence of progress towards equality. Importantly, the study found that these challenges are not inherent to Islamic teachings but are rooted in societal attitudes. Additionally, employment status and sub-caste did not significantly influence the problems faced by Muslim girls. The findings highlight the importance of challenging traditional mindset and fostering greater gender equality within Muslim communities. It reflects a positive trend towards empowering Muslim girls, although efforts are needed to challenge traditional mindset and foster greater equality. Overall, the study highlights the need to address societal attitudes to ensure the well-being and empowerment of Muslim girls.

**Key Words** – Muslim girls, Islam Religion, Employment Status, Sub Caste

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### Introduction:

The National Commission of Minorities in India had identified Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsees which constitutes 18.8% of the total population of the country. Among these various minorities, Muslims occupy an important position in India. Muslim comprise 12% of the population i.e. India's largest minority. Indian constitution grants Muslim and other minorities' quality of status. Islam has given women the right to live an honourable life in the community and allowed them to participate in educational and social activities subject to compliance with Sharia standards. At the beginning of Islam, when the absolute majority of the people did not have the blessing of literacy, there were women scholars like Bibi Hafsa (R.A.) who had the ability to read and write and were the masters of Mushaf like men. According to many literature review it has been observed that Women and girls have been victims of ruthless power struggles for centuries in all societies and cultures around the world. Sadly, but truly, many societies including some Muslim societies continue to exercise this patriarchy in different forms such as the denial to education, unequal salaries compared to men in workplaces, forced marriages and many others. The researcher is working on the area i.e. Gender Education, while going through literature review researcher came across many researches focusing on various problems of Muslim girls. Since the researcher is working in Muslim minority girl's institution where more than 90% girls are Muslim in religion, researcher decided to explore the real situation of Muslim girls with respect to the problems related to early marriages, , decision making , financial independence, gender stereotypes, uncomfortableness while wearing Abaya and Hijab etc. The researcher wanted to know which problems exactly

Muslim girls are facing and what their perception is towards various gender issues of the society. It is very important to study whether problems of muslim girls are originated from religious traditions of Islam or it is simply the traditional rigid mindset of the society. Another important aspect in this study was to find out whether these problems are correlated with employment status of the girls as well as sub caste i.e. Shiya and Sunni. This is important because many times financial independence may give rise to power of decision making and ultimately empowerment. Sometimes with respect to particular sub caste also rigidness of mindset might get vary , hence the researcher was very curious to know whether there is any significant difference in the problems of Muslim girls with respect to two major sub caste i.e. Shiya and Sunni.

#### **Aim and Objectives:**

The aim of the study was to find the problems faced by Muslim girls.

The objectives were as follows –

1. To study the problems faced by Muslim girls with respect to early marriages, Gender discrimination, decision making, financial independence, gender stereotypes uncomfortableness while wearing Abaya and Hijab etc.
2. To compare the problems faced by Muslim girls across their employment status.
3. To compare the problems faced by Muslim girls across 2 major sub caste i.e. Shiya and Sunni.
4. To study the opinion of the Muslim girls towards religious traditions framed for women and men.

#### **Hypothesis:**

1. There is no significant difference in the problems faced by Muslim girls across their employment status.
2. There is no significant difference in the problems faced by Muslim girls across their Sub caste i.e. Shiya and Sunni.

#### **Methodology:**

The study reported in this paper used mixed method approach. The Descriptive survey method was used to conduct the research. The researcher has made the tool consist of 23 statements. Out of which 22 were the statement of yes/ no type and 1 open ended question was asked to know any other problem of Muslim girls other than previously asked issues. The final sampling frame of the survey contains total 46 Muslim girls of Aishabai College of Education. To select the students Simple Random Sampling method of Probability Sampling was used.

#### **Data Analysis :**

The obtained data was processed using Jamovi software. The analysis of the collected data consist of Descriptive analysis and Inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis was done with mean, median, mode, Standard deviation. Inferential analysis was done with Independent sample t test to compare 2 groups employed/ unemployed and Shiya/ Sunni.



Figure 1

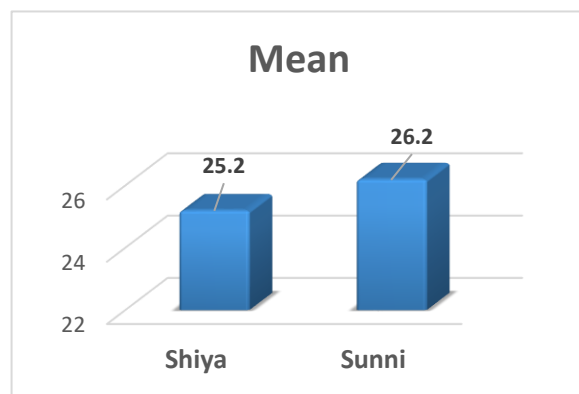


Figure 2

**Interpretations:**

Figure 1 explains the difference in mean values of problems faced by the Muslim girls across their employment status. The employed girl’s mean value is 25.5 whereas unemployed girl’s mean value is 26.3. It indicates that unemployed girls are facing more problems with little margin.

Figure 2 explains the difference in mean values of problems faced by Muslim girls across their sub caste. The Shiya girl’s mean value is 25.2 whereas Sunni girl’s mean value is 26.2. It indicates that Sunni girls are facing more problems as compare to Shiya girls with little difference.

**Hypothesis Testing:**

**1. Hypothesis 1**

**Null Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference in the problems faced by Muslim girls across their employment status.

Independent Samples T-Test			
		Statistic	p
Total	Mann-Whitney U	128	0.338

**Interpretation:** Since the p value is greater than 0.05, Null hypothesis is accepted and Alternate hypothesis is rejected. Thus we say that there is no significant difference in the problems faced by Muslim girls across their employment status.

**2. Hypothesis 2**

**Null Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference in the problems faced by Muslim girls across their Sub caste i.e. Shiya and Sunni.

Independent Samples T-Test			
		Statistic	p
Total	Mann-Whitney U	79.5	0.754

### **Interpretation:**

Since the p value is greater than 0.05, Null hypothesis is accepted and Alternate hypothesis is rejected. Thus we say that there is no significant difference in the problems faced by Muslim girls across their Sub caste i.e. Shiya and Sunni.

### **Analysis of problems of Muslim girls:**

#### **1. Early marriages:**

Majority of the girls are having the right to decide the age of their marriage as well as allowed to do job even after marriage. But in most of the families inter caste marriage is not allowed. It indicates that there is so much advancement in the mindset of the society against early marriages but still rigidity is there with respect to inter caste marriages.

#### **2. Gender Discrimination & Stereotypes:**

In most of the families Gender discrimination is not observed. Girl's birth is equally celebrated as boy's birth, brother and sister are getting equal opportunities in all aspects, in very few families girls are not getting equal financial assistance as that of boys. Stereotypical mindset is still observed in some families. Child care and domestic work is still assigned to women only. Girl's dashing nature is not sportingly appreciated in some families. On the contrary many women are allowed to work outside by keeping servant for domestic work.

#### **3. Decision making & Financial Independence:**

In most of the families girls have got sufficient freedom of doing desire expenses. Women in the families have got maximum rights in decision making and scope is there for doing job also by keeping servant for kitchen works but travelling for job is not allowed in many families.

#### **4. Uncomfortableness while wearing Abaya and Hijab:**

Most of the Muslim girls don't feel any kind of uncomfortableness while wearing Abaya or Hijab. It is not by forced on them. They wear it willingly as per Muslim tradition. Some girls feel that women and men are not treated equally in terms of opportunities for education, employment, and leadership roles but this is not the problem of religious tradition, it is because of rigid mindset of the society only.

### **Conclusion and Discussion:**

In conclusion, the study aimed to understand the challenges faced by Muslim girls, including early marriages, gender discrimination, decision-making, financial independence, and societal stereotypes. Through a mixed-method approach, it was found that while some issues persist, such as rigid societal norms and stereotypes, there's evidence of progress towards equality in many areas. Importantly, the research revealed that these challenges are not inherent to Islamic teachings but stem from societal attitudes. Furthermore, employment status and sub-caste did not significantly impact the problems faced by Muslim girls. Overall, there's a positive trend towards empowering Muslim girls, although there's still work to be done in challenging traditional mindset and fostering greater equality. Whatever gender issues Muslim girls are facing that is not because of Muslim religious traditions, it is just because of society's mindset.

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