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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN MUSLIM COMMUNITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON SHOPIAN DISTRICT, JAMMU AND KASHMIR.

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Abstract:-Empowerment of women has become one of the most important Concerns of 21st century not only at national level but also at the international level. Effort to ensure gender equality alone would not be sufficient to achieve this goal of human development; society must take initiative to create a climate in which there is no gender discrimination, and efficiency in resources allocation. Islam establishes complete and genuine equality between man and woman and asserts the equality of men and women in their creation right from the evaluation of Islam, particularly to protect the dignity of women. However, there prevailed a misconception that Islam has nothing to empower the women's status and neglected their sustainable roles in human betterment and upliftment of human prosperity. The present study will address the present status of Muslim women's in District Shopian Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: Women empowerment, equality Gender discrimination, Pardah system.

INTRODUCTION

Women have always played a vital role in every field of human development, but their role has largely been unsung and unrecognized. In very few cultures recently women have been acknowledged an equal role with men, and as having equal rights to participate in all social spheres. Numerous means, including selective interpretation of key religious like Islam were wrongly interpreted to deny women rights. Islamic texts have been subverted in this way, against the spirit of the true meaning, rather it highlights that society is dependent on women as nurturers, carers and professional caretakers, both at home and in the workplace.

The Quran states that God has created all mankind from a single soul and from it, He created its mate, and from the two of them, he spread abroad so many men and women. [4:1]. He also says: to Mankind, I have created you all out of a male and a female. [49:13]. Under Islam, man and woman are also equal in the reward they receive from God Almighty: Islam assigns equal political responsibility to both man and woman with regard to maintaining proper order in society: The believing men and the believing women are close allies of one another: [9:71]. According to Islam, men and women are equal in their marital status. Both retain their respective surnames as they were before marriage. A woman does not adopt her husband's surname after marriage; as though she is annexed to him Islam establishes true and complete equality between man and woman, it is to be noted from this rule that Islam sets the relationship between men and women in a form of fraternity and not in a form of a strife or struggle as it was set in some of the feminist movements of today. In fact, this fraternal relationship and mutual support was, and still is, the main approach to empower both men and women on the same footing, God Almighty says: The believers, men and women, are close allies to one another: They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. [9:71]. God commands us in these words: Do what is good. [22:77]. And He says: Let them become of you a nation that invites to all that is good. [3:104]. yet half the Muslim community is deprived of the ability to do good or to invite others to do it. God tells us: Spend on others out of the good things that you have earned. [2:267]. But half of the people in the Muslim community are not allowed to work and earn and spend on others out of their good earnings. God calls on us to associate faith with good deeds, which include every action that benefits people. He says: Whoever does righteous deeds, whether man or woman, and is a believer, we shall most certainly give a good life. [16:97]. "Islam wants men and women, both have to progress. Islam has protected women from the societal ills. As men perform their daily important tasks, women must also perform. Islam has wanted that a female keep safe her dignity and value. In fact, there is no other example of women empowerment as Islam empowers".

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Al-Khayat. H. M, (2003) stated that only course of action will ensure progress and success for the Muslim community that is to follow the footsteps of its first generations, to hold fast, with all our strength, God's book and the Prophet's sayings and practices. It will take courage to scale the ascent that may delay our way towards the activation of the role of Muslim women as it was practised during the time of the Prophet and the rightly guided Caliphs. It is to such a goal that the efforts of the Islamic community should be dedicated.

Human Development Report 1995. Gender and human development, the report examines the place of women in the various societies and emphasises that no country in the world treats its women as well as its men. It quantifies the non-remunerated contribution made by women and men to the functioning of society. The report studies the progress made over recent decades in combating sociological gender disparities, highlights the incredible paradox of women's expanding capabilities and the limited opportunities open to them. It also presents two new criteria for ranking countries on a global scale by their performance in gender equality in the social context, analyses the bases for the under-valuation and no recognition of the work of women,

Economic Survey, J&K 2012-13 states that empowerment of women has become one of the most important Concerns as to ensure gender equality, the survey addressed that Government alone would not be sufficient to achieve this goal, rather social agencies must take initiative to create a climate in which there is no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities of Self decision making and participating in the Social, Political and Economic life of the Country with a sense of equality.

Syed, Waseem.et. al., (2012), states in their study that education of women is a supreme instrument for the development of individuality. It is also an instrument for strengthening socially useful skills, habits and attitudes of common citizenship. Education assumes great importance to enable them to get the fullest benefit of globalization. The study reveals that socio economic conditions are the major determinants of women liberation than the religion. The study illustrates the fact that family structure has an association with the participation of women in the decision making process as well as the status of women. Women are conscious about family welfare but still they are to depend on husband because in most of the cases they are out of the access to money. The study further confirmed that most of the respondents agreed for existing equal rights in society but they were not enjoying freedom of exercise regarding their opinion about vote, freedom of movement away from home without husband's permission, daily household expenditure and child health care.

Sharma, (2002), says that the greatest problems discerned by the Muslim women are that women lack proper knowledge of their faith, and that this is why Muslim men sometimes mistreat their women. Decision making is the main constituent of empowerment especially in the case of household level.

Hema, Swaminathan. (2012), examines the impact of rural women's property ownership (agricultural land and house) on decision making and mobility outcomes. The decisions we choose to examine employment choices, accessing healthcare for oneself, having own money and being able to use it, and ability to move outside the home independently—are decisions where women should be active participants in the process. Employment choices can be life-altering, and the other decisions and the ability to move freely outside the home can affect day-to-day activities with implications for welfare. Our findings suggest that women's property ownership can largely enhance their ability to travel alone and independently make decisions about processes that play a significant role in their lives. In addition to the obvious impact on individual welfare, if one considers this decision making abilities as a proxy for relative status or bargaining power within the household, then they also have implications for other development outcomes. The ability to exercise greater control over one's earnings could be particularly important for children's nutrition and health outcomes.

Women for Women International Afghan report (2009). The study stated that the Afghan attitudes towards women, their roles and their economic, social and political participation have evolved over hundreds of years and generations that required gender equity which will take time and will require long-term commitment from the Afghan government, civil society, the international community and Afghans themselves. The report further mentioned the recent events have catalysed change, and it is now up to each of these stakeholders to grow the momentum within their spheres of influence. By their own accounts, if Afghan women can participate shoulder to shoulder with men in rebuilding their country, all of society will benefit. Before this can happen, though, women need access to the health, education, economic, civic and security resources that are their rights as humans.

Augusto Lopez-Claros, (World Economic Forum), revealed that true models of gender equality do not exist however some countries are getting closer, leading the way in providing women with a quality of life almost equal to that of men, with almost comparable levels of political participation, and with relatively equal educational and economic opportunity and participation. Yet, as this study indicates, other countries show wide variation, lagging far behind in particular areas. The study suggested that by concentrating on Economic participation, Economic opportunity, Political empowerment, Educational attainment, Health and well-being can improve the economic, political, social potential of women's empowerment.

METHODOLOGY:

The present paper examines the Women empowerment in Muslim Community in District Shopian, Jammu and Kashmir. Among the districts of Jammu and Kashmir, majority of the population are Muslims, only a minute percentage of the

population are non-Muslims in the study area. The performance of Muslim women are examined regarding their education, family affairs, marital status, financial performance, decisions making policy, political rights, political participation, family planning and use of family savings. At the next level, the Block Wachi has been chosen. The researcher makes an analytical study of the Muslim women's families who are married. Simple random sampling method has been introduced to collect data from the women's (employed or unemployed). Further, Muslim families were chosen and a particular design has been introduced by assessing the ground realities. Since the study addresses different walks of Muslims women's, the researchers has used a questionnaire to study and assess the ground realties for gathering data.

Objectives:

- 1.To examine the educational status of Muslim women's in district Shopian.
- 2.To study Women's control over economic resources in Muslim communities
- 3.Women's control over household decision making in Muslim communities
- 4.Women's political awareness in Muslim communities

Data collection

The study consists of 100 samples chosen for study, the data consists of primary data as well as secondary data the primary data has been collected with the help of structured questionnaire from the families of married Muslims women's of Block Wachi, District Shopian, Jammu and Kashmir. Whereas the secondary data has been collected from Social Welfare Office Shopian, ICDS, Social Welfare Office Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Table I: Educational Status of Muslim women in shopian district

S. No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	22	22
2	Primary	18	18
3	Secondary	30	30
4	Higher	30	30
	Total	100	100

Source: Computed

The above table highlights the educational status of Muslim married women in the study area; the variable (educational status) has been divided into four categories as illiterate, Primary, Secondary, and Higher. Out of the 100 samples18 per cent are illiterate, 30 per cent are having primary education, 30 per cent are having secondary education and 30 per cent are having higher education. So it is clear from the above table that majority of the Muslim married women are educated. Hence we can conclude that Islam provides “right to education” to the women equal to men.

Table II: Economic resources control of married Muslim women's.

Variables	Buying day routine household amenities		Education and other expense of children		Sale or exchange of property		Use of family saving		Family planning	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
Husband	28	28	26	26	56	56	8	8	4	4
Wife	10	10	16	16	16	16	80	80	6	6
Both	62	62	58	58	28	28	12	12	90	90
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Computed

The above table exhibits the control of Muslim married women's over economic resources. The variable has been categorized into five headings in order to measure the economic resources control of Muslim married women in the study area out of the 100 surveyed samples, 28 per cent of day routine household amenities are purchased by the husbands of the Muslim women's. Were as only 10 per cent of day routine household amenities are purchased by Muslim married women's however 62 per cent of day routine household amenities are purchased jointly. Regarding the educational expenses of the children of Muslim married women 26 per cent of the children's educational expenses are beared by the husbands of the Married Muslim women's, however 16 per cent of the children's educational expenses are beared by the Married Muslim women's, however 58 per cent of the children's educational expenses are beared jointly. Regarding the use of family saving by the married Muslim women's out of the 100 surveyed samples, 8 per cent of the family savings are only used by the husband of the Married Muslim women's, 80 per cent are enjoyed by the Married Muslim women's and both the uses the 12 per cent of the saving. Under the family planning contribution of Married Muslim women's, out of the 100 surveyed samples the husbands contribution is only 4 per cent, were as 6 per cent contribution is made by Married Muslim women's and the joint contribution of both the Married Muslim women's and their husbands is 90 per cent.

From the above interpretation, it can be concluded that the Muslim women's are occupying a reputed status regarding their control over economic resources; the cooperation from the family side is also improving the main reason is that most of Muslim society are now become aware about the rights and dignity of Muslim women's in Islam and their role in the human development and human betterment.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The regression analysis has been used for the above given variable and the regression equation so formed is given below

(Educational Status of Women) = -214 +1.386(Buying day routine household amenities) + 0.625 (Buying expensive items) – 1.131 (Education and other expense of children) – 0.274 (Sale or exchange of property) + 0.965 (Use of family saving) – 0.541 (Family planning).

Table III: Political and social rights Muslim married women's.

Variables	Visiting market		Going to cinema		Attending religious riotous		Participation functions		Casting of vote		Participating in elections		Participation in any political protest or programmes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
yes	94	94	22	22	72	72	54	54	78	78	8	8	18	18
No	6	6	78	78	28	28	46	46	22	22	92	92	82	82
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Computed

The above table depicts the political and social rights of Muslim married women's. The variable has been categorized into seven items in order to measure the Political and social rights of Muslim married women in the study area. Out of the 100 surveyed samples, 94 per cent of Muslim married women are visiting market and only 6 per cent of Muslim married women are not visiting market. Regarding to Going to cinema Fairs by the Muslim married women only 22 per cent are going to cinema women's, were as 78 per cent of Muslim married women are not going to cinema. Under the heading of attending religious riotous, out of the 100 surveyed samples, 72 per cent of Muslim married women are attending religious riotous, were as 28 per cent of Muslim married women are not attending religious riotous. Out of the 100 surveyed samples, 54 per cent of Muslim married women are participating in functions other than religious functions, and 46 per cent of Muslim married women are not participating in functions other than religious functions.

Out of the 100 surveyed samples, 78 per cent of Muslim married women have casting their votes (in their life time), and only 22 per cent of Muslim married women have not cast their votes .Under the heading of participating in elections, out of the 100 surveyed samples, only 8 per cent of Muslim married women have participating in elections, were as 72 per cent of Muslim married women has not participated in elections. Regarding the heading of participating in any political protest or programmes, out of the 100 surveyed samples, only 18 per cent of Muslim married women have participating in any political protest or programmes, were as 78 per cent of Muslim married women has not participated in any political protest or programmes

From the above interpretation, it can be concluded that the Muslim women's has improve the political and social rights; most of the surveyed samples are visiting market under the (Pardah system). Most of the surveyed women's are not going to cinema, as the cinema system is not good from the Islamic prospective. Muslim married women are mostly participating in

the religious functions as they are not important not only from the Islamic prospective but from the scientific and economic point of view. In the surveyed area most of the surveyed have cost their votes, whereas the condition is totally changed which can be observed from the column of participating in elections because of the rape and civilian killings by the state government of the Jammu and Kashmir which is anti-Islamic.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis has been applied, the independent variables are participating in functions, casting of vote, standing for elections, Participation in any political protest or programmes and Dependent variable is Education status of Women. The regression equation is given as

Education status of Women = 5.735 – 0.159 (Participating functions) + 0.275 (Casting of Vote) – 0.530 (Standing for Elections) -1.081 (Participation in any political protest or programmes)

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Educational status has been improved which can be stated from the literacy ratio of the surveyed 100 samples of the married Muslim women i.e. 82 per cent. The control on economic resources by the married Muslim women regarding the Sale or exchange of property, Use of family saving and Family planning of the surveyed samples 16 per cent married Muslim women are involved in the sale or exchange of property and 28 per cent are done jointly by the married Muslim women along with their husbands, 80 per cent of married Muslim women are using family savings and 6 per cent of family planning is done by married Muslim women and 90 per cent is done jointly by the married Muslim women along with their husbands Out of the 100 surveyed samples, 94 per cent of Muslim married women are visiting market, 22 per cent are going to cinema women's, and 78 per cent of Muslim married women have casting their votes (in their life time),

Empowerment of Muslim women is now increasingly seen as a process by which the ones without power gain greater control over their lives. This means control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. It involves power to, power with and power within. With reference to women the power relation that has to be involved includes their lives at multiple levels, family, community, market and the state. Importantly, it involves at the psychological level women's ability to assert them and this is constructed by the 'gender roles' assigned to her especially in Islamic prospective.

The only course of action that will ensure progress and success for the Muslim community is to follow in the footsteps of its first generations, to hold fast, with all our strength, to Allah's book and the Prophet's sayings and practices. It will take courage to scale the ascent that may impede our way towards the activation of the role of Muslim women as it was practised during the time of the Prophet and the rightly guided Caliphs. It is to such a goal that the efforts of the Islamic community should be dedicated.

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