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PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AMONG MUSLIM WOMEN: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Any alteration or modification in social-economic life may be termed as social transformation. It is a process wherein visible or invisible transition occurs in the structure and functions of society. Sometimes these transformation may happen due to natural calamities. But most of the time it takes place due to man-made factors. Therefore every society is influenced by these socio-economic, politico-cultural transformations. India is not exception to these transformations. In India transition for the first time started with Western contact especially with the British rule. From the time of their rule several structural and cultural changes have taken place among Indians. However these changes have not taken place uniformly among all the groups and communities. Urbanized, dominant, middle class and educated transformed



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relatively faster than other categories of people. In the beginning Muslims in India were reluctant to accept western culture and values. As result they remained backward in most of the socio-economic and political spheres of the country. But in recent times Muslims too have started to transform themselves to the changing conditions. This may not be true with regard to the Muslim women of our country. Even today they remained severely backward compared to their counterparts of other religious groups. In this background a study has been conducted to find out the impact of social transformation on the Muslim women. . It has been conducted in Mysore city of Karnataka state.

Objectives: 1. To study the socio-economic, educational conditions of the Muslim women.

2. To identify the problems faced by the Muslim women in the process of Social Transformation.

3. To suggest remedies to control the existing problems of Muslim women

Methodology: The present study is both descriptive and exploratory in nature. Muslim women of Mysore city have been selected for the study. The purposive stratified random sampling method has been used to select 80 Muslim women, they comprise of working women and homemakers 40 each. Tools and techniques used for the study were participant observation, structured interview and group discussion.

Results and discussion: The study observed the occurrences of social transformation among Muslim women of Mysore city. Change is in the nature of human being; hence Muslim women are also getting influenced by the structural and cultural changes happening around them. Employed Muslim women stressed more upon the importance of education. They were of the opinion that through education women can be more self-efficient and self-reliant. Further the educated homemakers' attitude was entirely different when compare to uneducated homemakers. Educated homemakers support and promote higher education of Muslim girls.

Conclusion: Growth and development of primary and higher education in India helped the women in general and Muslim women in particular to transform themselves from the shackles of conventional and traditional systems. Muslim women too have influenced by the modern values and culture. Social development has occurred among Muslim women due to the factors of social transformation.

KEYWORDS: Social Transformation, social-economic life, functions of society.

INTRODUCTION :

Any alteration or modification in social-economic life may be termed as social transformation. It is a process wherein visible or invisible transition occurs in the structure and functions of society. Sometimes these transformation may happen due to natural calamities. But most of the time it takes place due to man-made factors. Therefore every society is influenced by these socio-economic, politico-cultural transformations. India is not exception to these transformations. In India transition for the first time started with Western contact especially with the British rule. From the time of their rule several structural and cultural changes have taken place among Indians. However these changes have not taken place uniformly among all the groups and communities. Urbanized, dominant, middle class and educated transformed relatively faster than other categories of people. In the beginning Muslims in India were reluctant to accept western culture and values. As a result they remained backward in most of the socio-economic and political spheres of the country. But in recent times Muslims too have started to transform themselves to the changing conditions. This may not be true with regard to the Muslim women of our country. Even today they remained severely backward compared to their counterparts of other religious groups.

Menon (1981) has examined the attitude and practice of Muslim men as factors contributing to the perpetuation of inferior status of women in their community. To begin with he found that nearly three-fourth of the men believe that woman should not have equal status with men and this belief is translated in to actual practice through several institutions, customs and practices which are nurtured by them. Almost all factors that he examined, as contributing to women's low social status have been found to exist because men support them either overtly or covertly. Thus in the matter of education of girls, seclusion and veiling of matured girls, payment of dowry, family decision making, limitation of family size, women's property rights, employment, political participation, social and cultural activities outside home, and visit to mosques, the vast majority of men either actually practice methods or at least nourish attitudes which undermine women's equality with men. As a result, these beliefs and practices have hardened into traditions, customs and institutions and have found a place in the value system of the Muslim community. The present inferior status of women in Islam is the result of these elements in value system of the Muslim community though this has no basis in Islamic religion.¹

On the other hand, because most of Muslim women are illiterate and they don't participate in

social, economic, and political activities of their society. Hence, it effects on the progress and development of Muslim women. As a result of their ignorance, they accept to practice those traditions and customs, considering it as laws that God have stated for women and women should obey these laws in their lives.

Fundamentalism and ignorance of a few men have also prevented Muslim women from enjoying rights and privileges of Islam. As a result, they are lagging behind than women of other religions, and their participation is very less in social and economic activities.

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Social transformation is a philosophical, practical and strategic process, to effect revolutionary change within society. It is systematic approach applied to social change, which is comprehensive and progressive approach to social change. That is why social transformation is different from ordinary or conventional social change. When social transformation is applied, identity (way of seeing, thinking, reflecting on ourselves and others) will be altered, not only this but emotions, embodiments (relationship and connectedness to and within our bodies how we show up), actions, creativity and paradigm (overall perspective and mode of operating).

UNESCO describes that in social scientific literature the term social transformation is increasingly used to describe societal changes and generally indicate a critical stance towards older notions of the idea of development, Genova, N. (1999).²

Mondal(2016) defines that the process of Social transformation in India has been conceived through transition of various aspects of society – structure, culture, institution, ideology etc. The objectives of social transformation in India as envisaged ideologically could be characterized as ‘revolutionary’ in content and ‘evolutionary’ in strategy.³

Castles (2000) opines that Social transformation is a commonly used expression and not particularly new. Generally it implies an underlying notion of the way society and culture change in response to such factors as economic growth, war or political upheavals.

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS:

1. Social transformation affects all types of society in both developed and less-developed regions, in the context of globalization, regionalization, and the emergence of various forms of supranational governance.
2. Globalization is leading to new forms of social differentiation at the international and national levels. Polarization between rich and poor, and social exclusion are problems affecting most countries as well as the relations between them.
3. The principal goals of development can no longer be defined in terms of economic growth and modernization on the western model. Uneven growth and social polarization may actually increase the disadvantage and marginalization of significant groups. In view of differing cultures and group values it is impossible to put forward a universally accepted goal for processes of change.
4. Studying social transformation means examining the different ways in which globalizing forces impact upon local communities and national societies with highly-diverse historical experiences, economic and social patterns, political institutions and cultures.
5. Social transformation can have both positive and negative consequences for local communities and nation-states. Moreover, some countries and groups may be by-passed or excluded. The response of affected groups may not be adaptation to globalization but rather resistance. This may involve mobilization of traditional cultural and social resources, but can also take new forms of ‘globalization from below’ through transnational civil society organizations.⁴

Social transformation has been broadly defined by Alvi (2002) he says, social transformation may involve changes in social structures, labour relations, urbanization, attitudes, beliefs, views and values, freedoms and rights, the quality of education, competitive and comparative advantages and effective

governance. The process may also involve political transformation.⁵

The last quarter of the 20th Century was a period of rapid growth in transitional linkages and flows affecting all areas of human life: economy, politics, environment, culture, society and even interpersonal relations. These transitional linkages have also affected women, one can see more women representations in these fields, and the question arises that how far Muslim women has gone through these changes.

Tugal (2009) in an article about "Transforming everyday life: Islamism and Social Movement Theory", says that the Islamist movement in turkey bases its mobilization strategy on transforming every day practices. "A situation of very rapid and generalized changes, Tugal refers to this process as social transformation, as a convenient label to facilitate the discussion of the complexity, interconnectedness, variability, and continuity and multi-level mediation of global change".⁶

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AMONG MUSLIM WOMEN

Muslim women are in need of social transformation for their own progress and development. Until and unless Muslim women themselves take an initiative to transform themselves, it is impossible for them to have a better life. Othman (2006) argues that in order for Muslim women to advocate reforms and change of laws that are detrimental to them there is a need for Muslim women's groups to form broad coalitions and alliances and to work with progressive and democratic Muslim intellectuals and scholars. In order to reclaim their rights and justice in Islam and under its laws, Muslim women must also be actively engaged with the project of interpretation of texts (Holy-Quran and Hadiths) and laws (shariah).⁷

Ignorance and lack of knowledge of Muslim women is an obstacle in the way of process of social transformation. Badri (1989) says that, the general problem undermining the women's ability to uphold their rights under (shariah) is their lack of knowledge of the rights which do exist and of procedures for enforcing them. Along with this they are neither aware of right to education provided by the constitution of India.⁸

Education is also one of the very important factors of social transformation. Nahid Sarikhani (2008) says that, education has been regarded as an important instrument for bringing about social, cultural and economic changes and development. It is essential for all the aspects of development- physical, mental and spiritual- of an individual as well as a nation. Shankar (1991) stated that, education brings the individual nearer to the perfection of his nature through the development of character and innate capacities, which are understood to be permanent attitude in the sense that these are universal which distinguish men from other creatures.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the socio-economic, educational conditions of the Muslim women.
2. To identify the problems faced by the Muslim women in the process of Social Transformation.
3. To suggest remedies to control the existing problems of Muslim women

METHODOLOGY:

The present study is both descriptive and exploratory in nature. This study not only about fact gathering and tabulation, but also it deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data for understanding the process of social transformation among Muslim women in Mysore city. The purposive stratified random sampling method has been used to select 80 Muslim women, they comprise of working women and homemakers 40 each. Tools and techniques used for the study were participant observation, structured interview and group discussion. The study is based on both primary as well as secondary data. Descriptive research design has been used to examine the process of social transformation of Muslim women in Mysore city.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study observed the occurrences of social transformation among Muslim women of Mysore city. It is taking place through their participation in the field of education. Change is in the nature of human being; hence Muslim women are also getting influenced by the structural and cultural changes happening around them. Employed Muslim women stressed more upon the importance of education. They were of the opinion that through education women can be more self-efficient and self-reliant. Further the educated homemakers' attitude was entirely different when compare to uneducated homemakers. Educated homemakers support and promote higher education of Muslim girls.

Table. 1
Showing percentage of age of Muslim working women and home makers.

Age	Working women	Home makers
18-25	02 05%	04 10%
26-30	06 15%	16 40%
31-40	14 35%	12 30%
41-50	10 25%	6 15%
51-60 & above	08 20%	2 05%
Total	40 100%	40 100%

Source: primary data

When we analyze table no.1, we find that 5 per cent of Muslim working women comes under the age group of 18-25 years old, 15 per cent are in age group of 26-30 years old, 35 per cent are in age group of 31-40 years old, 25 per cent are in age group of 41-50 years old, 20 per cent are in age group of 51-60 and above. Whereas home makers are 10 per cent of them are under the age group of 18-25 years old, 40 per cent are in age group of 26-30 years old, 30 per cent are in age group of 31-40 years old, 15 per cent are in age group of 41-50 years old, 5 per cent are in age group of 51-60 and above.

Table. 2
Showing educational qualification.

Qualification	Working women	Home makers
Up to high school	04 10%	20 50%
UG	28 70%	12 30%
PG	06 15%	04 10%
Diploma/professional	02 05%	04 10%
Total	40 100%	40 100%

Source: primary data

Findings revealed that out of the total working women 10 per cent of women are working as

attendees or peons in government offices and academies, hence they have formal education only up to primary/High School, 70 per cent teachers who are Under graduates, 15 per cent are lecturers and professors having Post graduate Degree and 5 per cent are qualified with Diploma/Professional Courses. Whereas, 50 per cent of the Home Makers have formal education only up to primary/High School, because of the family as well as financial problems they could not continue education. 30% have Pre-University College/Under Graduate/Post-Graduate qualification 10 per cent Post graduate Degree and 10 per cent Diploma/Professional Courses.

Besides the above table, study has also shows that, there is no doubt that education is one the major tools of transformation. It is clear by the result that 100 per cent of working women think that education is important for both girls and boys. 75.5 per cent give the reason that education is one of the basic need, 20.5 per cent think that education gives secure future for girls. 25.5 per cent Homemakers think that education is basic need, 55.5 per cent are of the opinion that education gives secure future for girls.

Education also empowers woman, it is clear by results that 90.5 per cent of working women says that education helps women to be empowered. Only 20.5 per cent says that women education does not empower women. 75.5 per cent of home makers are also of the opinion that education helps women to be empowered. Only 20.4 per cent of them says that education does not empower women. 10 per cent of women said they can't say whether education empowers women or not.

It is commonly found in the society that there is a difference in access to education among girls and boys. 15.5 per cent of the working women found that while giving education people differentiate between girls and boys. 70.5 per cent said that there is no difference made in providing education 10 per cent said they can't say whether people differentiate between girl and boy. Whereas 35.5 per cent of home makers said yes that they have also found that people make differentiation between a girl and boy. Nearly 60.5 per cent of women think that there is no differentiation.

Table.3
Showing opinion about age at marriage of Muslim working women and home makers

Age at Marriage	Working women	Home makers
16-20	06 15%	04 10%
21-25	24 60%	26 65%
26-30	08 20%	08 20%
30 & above	02 5%	02 05%
Total	100	100

Source: primary data

Under the table no.2, results show that the opinion of respondents about the age at marriage that is, 15 percent working women think that girls should get marry between the age group of 16-20 years old. 60 per cent says 21-25 years, 20 per cent suggests 26-30 years, and only 5 per cent are of the opinion that girls can also marry in the age between 30 & above. The percentage of opinion of homemaker about the same matter indicate that 10 per cent say 16-20years, 65 per cent say that marriage should happen between the age group of 21-25 years, 20 per cent said 26-30 years and only 5 per cent of them are of the opinion that, girls can marry between the age group of 30 years and above.

Table 4
Showing type of family of the respondents

Type of Family	Working women	Home makers
Nuclear	28 70%	22 55%
Joint	08 20%	14 35%
Extended	04 10%	04 10%
Total	100	100

Source: primary data

As a matter of fact the joint family system has become traditional in Indian society. The results of the study shows the same 70 per cent of working women are having nuclear family system, 20 per cent live in joint family system, whereas, only 10 per cent of working women are living in extended families. The results indicate that 55 per cent of home makers are having nuclear family, 35 per cent have joint family and only 10 per cent are living in extended type of family. This is because of the impact of urbanization on the members of the society.

Along with this the study has also found that, decision making authority is one which shows the social transformation happening among Muslim women. Results indicate that 30.5 per cent said that the major decision of their family are taken by husband, 40 per cent said that mutually decision are taken, because of the self-reliance 25.5 per cent of the working women take decision by themselves. Percentage of home makers is different, it indicate that the 65.5% of them said that major decision of their family are taken by their husband, 25.5 % mutually take decisions, only 15% take decision by self.

Table. 5
Showing percentage of Management of Economical Resources

	Working women			Total	Home makers			Total
	Husband	Self	Collective		Husband	Self	Collective	
Who Manages financial resources of your family	18 45%	16 40%	6 15%	40 100%	28 70%	4 10%	8 20%	40 100%
Who has property ownership	20 50%	12 30%	8 20%	40 100%	28 70%	4 10%	8 20%	40 100%

Source: primary data

Table no. 5 indicates management of economic resources by women. 45 per cent of working women says that financial resources of their family are managed by their husbands. Whereas 40 per cent of women they themselves manage financial matters. Almost 15 per cent opined that they collectively manage financial matters. In the case of Home makers almost 70 women's family financial matters are handled by their husbands. Only 10 per cent manage financial matters, whereas 20 per cent collectively manage their financial matters.

50 per cent of working women's husband has ownership of properties. Only 30 per cent themselves have ownership of properties. Whereas collectively 20 per cent have ownership of properties. In the case of

Homemakers 70 per cent of the husbands have ownership of properties only 10 per cent of women enjoy property ownership 20 per cent have collective ownership of property.

Table. 6
Showing political awareness of the respondents

	Working women			Total	Home makers			Total
	Yes say	No	can't		Yes	No	can't say	
Do you think that Muslim women should participate in political affair?	22 55%	14 35%	4 10%	40 100%	12 30%	20 50%	8 20%	40 100%
Do you cast your vote according to the direction of your male family member?	38 95%	2 5%	0 0%	40 100%	34 85%	6 15%	0 0%	40 100%
Do you cast your vote?	4 10%	32 80%	4 10%	40 100%	28 70%	12 30%	0 0%	40 100%
Do you update daily about politics?	28 70%	12 30%	0 0%	40 100%	20 50%	18 45%	2 05%	40 100%
Do you have interest to join politics?	4 10%	34 85%	2 05%	40 100%	12 30%	26 65%	2 05%	40 100%

Table no. 6 shows that, when asked about their opinion of Muslim women participation in political affairs 55 per cent working women supported the participation of Muslim women in politics 35 per cent did not want Muslim women in politics, nearly 10 per cent said they can't say anything about this. Homemakers 30 per cent of them suggested Muslim women should participate in politics. Around 50 per cent did not support Muslim women to participate in politics. Almost 20 per cent of them said they can't say much about it.

Political awareness of respondents indicates that 95 per cent of working women cast their vote only 5 per cent said they were not able to cast their vote. 85 per cent home makers also participate in political affair by casting their vote 15 per cent of them were not able to cast their vote.

While casting vote 10 per cent of working women does not take opinion or follow direction of male family members, 80 per cent of them cast their vote by themselves. 10 per cent of them they can't say anything about their voting. Whereas 70 per cent of Home makers follow the direction given by their male family members while casting vote. 30 per cent of them cast their vote by their own opinion.

It is very necessary to be updated daily about the politics. 70 per cent of working women update themselves about politics. Only 30 per cent of them are not updated about the political activities. 50 per cent of home makers get updated about the politics. Whereas 45 per cent do not get updated about present politics. 5 per cent of respondents they cannot say about updates of politics.

10 per cent of working women have interest to join politics. 85 per cent of them are not interested to join politics may because of their jobs, 5 per cent can't say anything. Whereas 30 per cent of Home Makers are interested in joining politics 65 per cent them also are not interested in joining politics, 5 per cent can't say anything about it.

Table.7
Showing opinion of Muslim women regarding the problems in process of social change

	Working women			Total	Home makers			Total
	Yes	No	Can't say		Yes	No	Can't say	
Do you think attitudes of Muslim men towards women is orthodox or traditional	24 60%	12 30%	4 10%	40 100%	28 70%	8 20%	4 10%	40 100%
Patriarchy is an obstacle in progress of women	18 45%	14 35%	8 20%	40 100%	34 85%	6 15%	0 0%	40 100%
Women are not allowed to move freely	26 65%	10 25%	4 10%	40 100%	28 70%	12 30%	0 0%	40 100%
Women are under the bindings of traditions	20 50%	18 45%	2 5%	40 100%	20 50%	16 40%	4 10%	40 100%
Do you think that there is lack of effective programmes to empower Indian muslim women	28 70%	8 20%	4 10%	40 100%	24 60%	8 20%	8 20%	40 100%

Table no. 5 showing problems of Muslim women in process of social change is the attitude of Muslim men towards women is orthodox and traditional. 60 per cent of working women agreed. 30 per cent are did not agree. 10 per cent were of the opinion that they can't say that Muslim are orthodox and traditional. 70 per cent of Home makers agreed orthodox and traditional attitude of Muslim men. 20 per cent did not agree. 10 per cent said can't say.

Patriarchy is an obstacle in progress of women. 45 per cent of working women said yes. 35 per cent said No. 20 per cent said can't say. 85 per cent of Home Makers also agreed that Patriarchy as an obstacle. 15 per cent said no it.

Freedom enjoyed by Muslim women 65 per cent of working women said women are not allowed to move freely for their own betterment whereas 25 per cent are of the women opinion that the women completely enjoy freedom, 10 per cent said can't say. 70 per cent of Home makers were of the opinion that women are not allowed to move freely. 30 per cent women enjoy freedom.

Generally it is considered that Muslim women are more under traditional bindings. 50 per cent of working women agreed about traditional bindings of women 45 per cent did not agree about the traditional bindings 5 per cent said they can't say whether Muslim women have traditional bindings or not. 50 per cent of Home makers agreed about traditional bindings and 40 per cent did not agreed, 10 per cent were not able to say whether traditionally women are bonded or not.

There is lack of effective programs to empower Muslim women specially. 70 per cent of working women agreed about lack of programs. 20 per cent did not agree, 10 per cent they did not know about the program. Whereas 60 per cent Home Makers also said there is lack of effective programs to empower Muslim women specially. 20 per cent said that there is no lack of programs. 20 per cent said that they cannot say about the programs.

CONCLUSION

Issues and challenges such as illiteracy because of lack of proper education, gender discrimination, gender bias, gender inequality, poverty, lack of decision making power, patriarchy, superstitious, blind beliefs, domestic violence, dowry, problems related to unemployment,

Growth and development of primary and higher education in India helped the women in general and Muslim women in particular to transform themselves from the shackles of conventional and traditional systems. Muslim women too have influenced by the modern values and culture. Social development has occurred among Muslim women due to the factors of social transformation.

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