

PRIVATE LIFE OF EDUCATED MUSLIM WOMEN IN A RELIGIOUS TOWN

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INTRODUCTION:

There are many studies on Muslim educated women but these studies focus on private life of educated Muslim women in a religious town, which highlight the practices of Muslim women in their private life and the changes taking place in their status and interaction patterns. Sushila Jain¹ has highlighted the problem of the status of women involves equality between men and women. The women throughout the world have been considered the second sex the inferior sex equality and status closely associated with power. There is nothing in the Quran which asserts non equality of sexes, nor there is any positive statement asserting the equality of sexes and adds that "interference can be drawn either way depending upon once point of view and social conditions". Bunting² speaks of the nature of the liberation of women in Islam. In the modern world, London is the most developed city but the atmosphere of London is also influenced by Islam. Major example is that the some Muslim women, sitting in a stylish club, all are wearing the scarf and discussing about the position of women while that club also shows the Muslim identity because there is no alcohol and down stairs there is a prayer room. H.A. Jawad³ has highlighted that it has become apparent from this study the contrary to the general microconceptions, women in Islam - at least theoretically speaking are entitled to full rights at citizens. These rights were put into practice during the prophet's time and in the period of early califate during which women enjoyed the privilege of full filling their private as well as their public duties. Early Muslim society never embraced the concept of social division of level between the two sexes. James Davison Hunter⁴ has found that education in Muslim countries is divided between modern (National)schools and traditional (Islamic) schools. Not only do these reflect different and completing world views as well. Yet where the pressure of privatization creates the greatest tension in the case of islamism in the area of "family law" as a body of Legal doctrine, it requires the technical knowledge of legal experts and the sanctioning of the state. In its substance though , it impinge on the most personal areas of private life. Because family law bridges public and private realms, the tension are indeed, great. Accommodation in this situation has meant a separation of traditional religious and political authority from the family. Surya Narayan Singh⁵ states that with the spread of education and process of modernisation, a change has occurred in the social position of Muslim women, however, the over all situation is not very satisfactory. It is also true that Muslim women are still among the most backward section of the society. Education both secular and religious is the keyword to the progress of

Muslim women. The positive impact of education on the lives and status of Muslim women has been highlighted in various studies. The media should also play a most constructive role. Qasim Amin⁶ states that women is like a man. Her body and its functions, her feeling and her ability to think are same as man. She has all the essential human traits, differing only in gender. In the opinion of Amin a woman cannot run her household well unless she attains a certain amount of intellectual and cultural knowledge. So this is the main factor which is responsible for the change in women's condition. This would ensure her grasp of some introductory principle and allow her to make her own choices. She could master her principles and be involved whenever she wished. Bani Banerjee⁷ has focused on the modernisation of women is the great significance in any community. It is they in whose lapse the coming generation learns the primary lesson of civic life. It is assumed that the Muslim women suffer from many disabilities under the patriarchal Islamic traditions. The polygamy, the institution of view and almost absolute right of a Muslim male to divorce his wife at will are considered as shackles of the Muslim women. It is however to be noted that the prophet infact unshared in a liberating moment for women. He played restrictions on four wives went an Arab could have kept as many wives as he like during those days. In the same way, he granted the right of properly to women which is definitely a very revolutionary act in medieval Times. Besides, he commanded the male Muslim to observe absolute equality while treating their wives. It would be really interesting to see how for the Muslim women have been affected by the forces of mordernization. Some studies reveal that Muslim women are now attracted to modern education and gainful employment outside the home.

1.Area of study and Methodology:

Deoband town has been taken up for the empirical study. Here is Asia's number one Islamic University. Dar-al-uloom it is situated here. Deoband is situated in North India on 29° 58° latitude and 77'35° altitude. The Deoband railway station is 144 km north of Delhi on the Delhi- Meerut- Saharanpur section. Being a religious seat, Dar-al-uloom Deoband has fame for "fatwa giving" in a legal (shari'i) matters. The main business is related to the publication work of religious books and literature in Urdu and Arabic language. Islam is the major religion observed by large segment of the resident of Deoband. Apart from Islam, the other religion followed by citizens are Hindus, Jainism and Sikhism. Thus, it provides a situation where we can see clearly study impact of Islam on Muslim women's life style. The number Of literate Muslim women in the town is 11,667 out of a total of 23,588 approximately (i.e. about 65%) women are approximately 20% of the literate. Thus, about 2000 + highly educated (graduate and above) women constitute the universe of study. Of these, abroximately 10% sample (in round figures 200) has been drawn by a combination of sampling methods. Web approach was also used in identification. For the study, historical fact has been collected from the secondary sources. Case study method has been used for collecting primary data at the first stage for exploring maximum possible aspects, by using observation and informal interviews. Later on, interview guide was

prepared . After necessary modifications this was finalized and data were collected by using interview guide. The interviews were conducted mostly, at workplace and some at the place of living of respondents. Most of the interviews were held in strict privacy, while starting interview, purpose of the study was always explain very clearly to the respondents, and a near complete integrated of the interview was maintained. Case Studies data collected with the technique of observation, interview (Muslim women) from respondents, were analysed quantitatively. Simple statistical technique like tabulation, percentage and comparative analysis have been used to analyse quantitative data collected from 200 respondents to look into the extent of relationship between background variables and the aspect of attitude of Muslim women and their pattern of adjustment in private and public life.

2.Terms/ concept/ operational definitions:

Following terms/ concept have been used in the domain of the study. There are operationally defined and classified here.

2.1 private life and public life

Public life is related to the workplace of the women where she needs to interact with the number of people from largest society related to her work and has to maintain professional relations with the people according to the need of time which are must in public life. Public and private spheres consequently and time, but also at any moment within the same cultural setting and performed according to certain point of view. Rehana Ghadially⁸ has highlighted major group purpose a comprehensive set of laws that would collapse the destruction between the public and the private domains and D-Link personal laws from religion. The major problem with this is that religion and personal laws are seen as occupying separate compartments, whereas, the interviewing the religion, culture and personal law is complex and historically determine. Hence, the disentangling of these strands is a difficult task that cannot be affected by administrative all legal fiat, what would be possible only through a comprehensive social movement that engages politically and practically with these questions, besides, religion is a way of life for the vast majority of men and women, comprising world view that shapes people perceptions and influences their life choices. This is something that cannot simply we wished a legislated away. Moreover, there is a more fundamental question before us: does a democratic society presuppose space where in community groups of people can enter into a dialogue with each other and renegotiate the public and private dichotomy on their own terms that is keeping in mind there is specific histories, culture, social structures and specific operations. Mustafa Ozbilgin⁹ has found that starting from the Early years of the empire women gradually become confined to the private women, whereas man were allowed to roam freely in both the public and private domains by the 15th century head and body covering was introduced for women, justify in terms of modesty and prosperity, and womens mobility in public spaces became restricted. Women was not permitted to travel alone without the company of male member of their family. By the second half of the 15

century, women in the city centres of Ottoman Empire faced stronger religious and social control that pertained in rural areas. Joseph Benjamin¹⁰ states that the representation of Muslims in public and private sector services is quite low, firstly because of discrimination and secondly because of low level of literacy beside being self employed. The Muslim population, according to 1991 census (last census figures available) is 12.12% but Muslim representation in IAS is below 3% and is even less in IPS and IFS. This has been main grievance of Muslim elite. Muslims in India lack strong middle class due to various reasons over being its migration to Pakistan in 1947. In India it is taking a long time for new middle class to emerge. Also the low caste poor Muslims have not much Incentive to send their children to school particularly for higher education beyond primary one. Thus, it is difficult to find a suitable candidate, of course they are also complaints for discrimination. But slowly Muslims are realising the importance of joining higher civil services and even special training courses are been organised by some people to make them more suitable for these services.

2.2 Hijab and Niqaab

The differentiation between hijab and Niqaab is that hijab is more usually understood to mean simply covering encompassing the hair and neck, but not the face itself while niqaab is face veiling.

2.3 Shariah

Shariah is defined as "Islamic laws" on the other hand we can explain those Islamic rules and regulation which are governed under cover of four fundamental universal facts of Islamic religion no .1. Quran 2.Hadith 3. Unanimous decision of Islamic religious intellectuals 4. Thinking based in the light of Hadith and Quran.

2.4 Hadith

Hadith stands what was transmitted on the authority of the prophet (pbuh), his deeds, sayings, tacit, approval or description of his sifat (features) meaning his physical appearance.

3. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND IMPACT OF RELIGION ON PRIVATE LIFE

Different educational background of people may have differential impact or they may experience different impact on any phenomenon. Thus, the impact of religion on private life of Muslim women maybe differentially distributed with different educational background of the respondents. In this section, different walks of the impact of religion on private life of Muslim women have been described in relation to different variables of educational background. These variables are independent variables and the variables of impact of religion are dependent variables. Variables, namely religious education and secular education have been found more important than other variables. These variables have been described in relation to the aspects (variables) of impact of religion namely putting on veil at workplace, meeting outside gents in function, going to market And other places, appreciation (criticism) by relatives and neighbours.

Thus, facts on the relationships in a bivariate distribution have been described here.

3.1 Religious education and impact of religion on private life

Facts of religious education in relation of 5 variables of impact of religion are described here. These are putting on veil at workplace, meeting outsider gents at home, meeting outsider gents in function, going to market criticism (appreciation) by relatives and neighbours.

3.1.1 Is veil compulsory for every Muslim women

It is an important variable because put on the veil or put off the veil depends upon the family background in the religious town and sometimes on the mentality and social requirements of the respondents. Responses of the respondents about to put on or put off the veil are given in the following table.

Table 1- Is veil compulsory for every Muslim women facts of this impact of religion are given in the following table.

Responses	No. of respondents	%
YES	13	6.5%
NO	187	93.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

The above table shows two categories of responses about that is veil compulsory for every Muslim women yes or no: 6.5% respondents said that veil is compulsory for every Muslim women while 93.5% respondents said that veil is not compulsory for every Muslim women. Thus, the facts show that largest majority 93.5% of the respondents said that veil is not compulsory for every Muslim women while 6.5% respondents said that veil is compulsory for every Muslim women.

3.1.2 Pressure of religious atmosphere of the town to put on the veil.

Responses of this relationship are presented in the following table.

Table 2- pressure of religious atmosphere of the town to put on the veil.

Responses	No. of respondents	%
Always	132	66%
Sometimes	61	30.5%
Never	07	3.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

Above table shows three categories of responses to put on the veil due to the pressure of religious atmosphere of town: always, sometimes and never 66% respondents always put on the veil due to the pressure of religious town atmosphere, 30.5% respondents sometimes put on the veil due to the pressure of religious town atmosphere 3.5%

respondents never put on the veil.

Thus, the facts show that majority 66% of the respondents always putting on veil due to the religious town.

3.1.3 do you agree that veil protect you from the sexual harassment.

Facts of this relationship are prevented in the following table.

Table 3- Do you agree that veil protect you from the sexual harassment.

Responses	No. of respondents	%
Always	04	2.0%
Sometimes	136	68%
Never	30	15%
TOTAL	200	100%

The above table shows three categories of responses about do you agree veil protect you from sexual harassment: always, sometimes and never. 2.0% respondents always feel protected from sexual harassment after putting on veil, 68% respondents sometimes feel protected and 15% respondents never feel protected after putting on the veil.

Thus, the facts show that majority 68% of the respondents sometimes feel protected from sexual harassment after putting on the veil.

3.1.4 Out of the town put on the veil.

Facts of this relationship as presented in the following table.

Table 4-Out of town put on the veil.

Responses	No. of respondents	%
Always	04	2.0%
Sometimes	138	19%
Never	128	64%
TOTAL	200	100%

The above table show three categories of responses about that respondent put on the veil out of town: always, sometimes and never. 2% respondent always put on the veil out of town, 19% sometimes put on the veil out of town and 64% respondents never put on the veil out of town.

Thus, the facts show that majority 64% of the respondents out of town never put on the veil.

3.1.5 Put on the veil when participate in family and social functions.

Facts of this relationship are present in the following table.

Table 5- Put on the veil when participate in family and social functions.

Responses	No. of respondents	%
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Always	11	5.5%
Sometimes	34	17%
Never	127	63.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

Above table shows that three categories of responses about to put on the veil when participate in family and social functions: always, sometimes and never. 5.5% respondents always put on the veil when participate in family and social functions, 17% respondent sometimes put on the veil in the family and social functions while 63.5% respondents never put on the veil in family and social function.

Thus, the facts show that the majority 63.5% of the respondents never put on the veil when participate in family and social function.

3.1.6 Aware of rights at home (private life):

Facts of this relationship as presented in the following table.

Table 6- Aware of rights at home

Responses	No. of respondents	%
YES	165	82.5%
NO	35	17.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

The above total shows two categories of responses that respondents are aware of their right at home: yes and no. 82.5% respondents are aware of their rights at home and 17.5% respondents are not aware of their rights at home.

Thus, the facts show that large minority 82.5% of the respondents are aware of their rights at home.

3.1.7 Decision related to daily routine problems

It is an important variable which may focus on the importance of respondents in their private life. Responses of the respondents about the decision related to daily routine problems are given in the following table.

Table 7- Decisions related to daily routine problems.

Responses	No. of respondents	%
Always	60	30%
Sometimes	130	65%
Never	10	5%
TOTAL	200	100%

The above table shows three categories of responses about decisions related to daily

routine problems: yes , somewhat and not. 30% respondents have liberty to take decisions related to daily routine problems, 65% respondents have some what liberty to take decision related to daily routine problem and 5% respondents have no liberty to take any decisions relatedto daily routine problems.

Thus, the facts show that last majority 65% of the respondents have somewhat Liberty to take decision related to daily routine problem while a large segment 30% respondents have full liberty to take decisions related to daily routine problems.

3.1.8 Use of salary for their own needs.

Facts of this relationship are presented in the following table.

Table 8- Use of salary for their own needs.

Responses	No. of respondents	%
Always	30	15%
Somewhat	133	65.5%
Never	137	18.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

The above table shows three categories of responses about respondent's use of salary for their own needs: yes, somewhat and no. 15% respondents always use their salary for their own needs, 66.5% responded use sometimes their salary for their own needs and 18.5% respondents never use their salary for their own needs.

Thus, the facts show that large segments, 15% of the respondents always use the salary for their own needs and 18.5% respondents never use the salary for their own needs.

Findings:-

1. Large majority 93.5% of the respondents said veil is not compulsory for every Muslim women while only 6.5% respondents said that veil is compulsory for every Muslim women.
2. Large majority 66% of the respondents put on veil due to religious town pressure.
3. Majority 68% of the respondents sometimes feel protected from the sexual harassment after putting on the veil.
4. Majority 64% of the respondents never put on veil out of town.
5. Majority 63.5 % of the respondents never put on veil when participate in family and social functions.
6. Large majority 82.5% of the respondents are aware of their rights athome.
7. Majority 65% of the respondents have somewhat liberty to take decisions related to daily routine problems.
8. Large segment 15% of the respondents always uses their salaries for their own needs.

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