

Muslim Women in India: Education and Exposure to Media

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Gender inequality still remains a major social issue in India. Apart from gender, religion is also one of the markers of substantial socio-economic inequality in the Indian society. Sachar Committee report, a high level committee report on socio-economic situation of Muslims in India, placed Muslims as the most backward community, below Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. While women are at an overall marginalized socio-economic position, Muslim women are the most disadvantaged among all religious groups. With a share of 14.2% of population, Muslims form the largest minority in India. India has world's fourth largest population of Muslims. The socio-economic backwardness of Muslims in general and Muslim women in particular requires the intervention and efforts from government and non-government organizations towards the socioeconomic development of Muslims. Dr. Mistry's recent book 'Muslim Women in India; Education and Exposure to Media' is an important work in bringing attention towards the situation of Muslim women by providing empirical evidence in a comparative perspective across different religious communities.

The book is based on the findings of the four rounds of National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) from 1992-93 to 2015-16 and Census reports of 2001 and 2011. NFHS is one of the most comprehensive surveys on health and demography in India. The author complies and critically examines the findings of these two comprehensive sources of data to bring about analysis of educational levels and exposure to media among Muslim women. The book observes that Muslim women have the lowest educational attainment among all the religious groups in India. Author concedes at the outset that poor socio-economic status is one of the main reasons for educational backwardness of Muslims. Overall education levels of all the communities is rising, yet Muslim women remain at the lowest end of educational attainment among all communities.

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