

A Study of Effect of Socio-economic Status on the Career Preferences of Rural and Urban Muslim Women

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Abstract—This paper is focused to study the effect of SES on the career preferences of rural & urban muslim women of District Haridwaar. The objectives of this study were to find the rural-urban difference in the career preferences of muslim women and to find the relationship between career preferences and SES of rural and urban muslim. A sample of 1000 muslim women (500 rural & 500 urban from district Haridwaar) was selected by simple random sampling method. Career Preference Record by Vivek Bhargava and Rajshree Bhargava and SES Scale by Rajeev Lochan Bhardwaj were used for data collection. Mean, S.D., t-test & Pearsonian coefficient of correlation were used for data analysis. The findings reveal a significant difference between rural and urban muslim women in their career preferences in the area of Mass-media & Journalism; Artistic & designing; Science & technology; Commerce & management; Medical; Defence; Tourism & hospitality; Law & Order and Education. Very low significant negative correlation was found between SES & Career-preference of rural muslim women in Medical field. No significant correlation was found between career preference and SES of urban muslim women.

Keywords: Career-preference, SES, Rural, Urban, Muslim women.

Introduction: The constitution of India is committed to the protection and promotion of minorities, the marginalized and underserved communities of the country. The Central Government notified Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis as religious minorities for the purpose of the *National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992*. Muslims are the largest minority community, as they constitute 73% population of religious minorities and 14.2% population of the country according to census 2011. It is amazing to note that the largest minority community of a democratic, socialist, and secular country has lagged far behind other communities in all indicators of human development. This is against the teachings of Father of the Nation, **Mahatma Gandhi** who said “*the claim of a country to civilization depends upon the treatment it extends to the minorities*”. It is also against the ideals of Indian constitution. Hence, Justice **Rajinder Sachar**, Chairman of the Prime Minister's High Level Committee, set up on 9th March, 2005 for the preparation of a report on the

Socio-Economic and Educational Status of Indian Muslims, writes that “*the faith and confidence of the minorities in the functioning of the State in an impartial manner is an acid test of its being a just state.*”

Muslims constitute about 14.2 percent of total Indian population, which is quite sizeable by any account. Hence, their economic and educational progress is very crucial for the progress of the country. Muslims are not a homogeneous community. They have sectarian, regional, caste and cultural differences which are quite significant in the analysis of their status.

Although educational growth and development has been noticed in our overall Indian population but the pace is very slow among Muslims. The **Gopal Singh Committee (1983)** instituted by Government declared Muslim as ‘a backward community’ in India. **National Family Health Surveys (III) (2006)**; studies by **Zoya Hasan** and **Ritu Menon (2005)** and the works of **Abusaleh Shariff (1995)** show that Muslim are comparatively educationally backward minority community as compared to other minority communities. Study by **Usha Nayar (2007)** indicated that Muslim girls and women lag far behind their male counterparts. After six decades of independence the majority of Muslim women are among the most disadvantaged, least literate, economically impoverished and politically marginalized section of Indian society. The social and economic issues confronting women in Muslim communities mandate attention as does the violation of their rights as citizens of India.

The issue of female education was taken up by the Muslim communities at the turn off 20th century. However, the reasons accounting for their educational backwardness are diverse and complex. Educational status is contingent on socio-economic status of the family/household in principal, area and region of residence. Many studies revealed that S.E.S. influences the choice of career. (**Gottfredson, 1981; Sellers et.al., 1999**). **Bhatnagar (1983)** found that girls belonging to higher income

group have similar occupational choices. It has also been revealed by **Penick and Jepsen (1998)** that a number of family background factors have been found associated with the career-decision of female students one of which is the socio-economic status. Youth from higher socio-economic status were more likely to be knowledgeable of and choose professional occupations **Sellers et.al., (1999)**. **Mau and Bikas (2000)** cited previous findings showing positive associations between family's socio-economic status and aspirations. **Herr and Cramer (1996)** stated that socio-economic status affects information about work, work experience and occupational stereotypes, which influences vocational interests. In contrast, **Brown and Barbosa (2001)** found career aspirations of young females from low income families were confined to experiences of their relatives and friends.

Locality plays an important role in the development of attitudes, interests and values of an individual. It has been found that children from rural area get lesser exposure than those from urban area. Hence, they differ in their attitudes, values and interest. Studies have revealed that the locality makes a difference in the career preferences also. **Desai (1974)** found that for occupations such as medicine, engineering and accountancy, urban students showed higher preferences. On the other hand rural students showed higher preferences for the jobs like teaching and clerical. However, **Jansari (1993)** found that the area of residence acted as an insignificant factor in business and executive areas of vocational interest in favour of rural students. **Chanda (1983)** also reported urban rural differences in career choices **Mehta (1987)** showed that residential status did not influence level of career choice of people.

It is to be mentioned here that Islam identifies women in the role of a mother and wife more than her role in the earning of family. But there are instances of Muslim women in ancient, as well as in modern period when women supported their families financially by adopting various careers from self employment activities or working for others. Now, the times have changed and Muslim women are entering into various professions. Hence, the present study is focused to study the effect of SES on the career preferences of muslim women from rural and urban area of district haridwar of uttarakhand.

Objectives of the study:

1. To compare the Career Preferences of Rural and Urban Muslim Women.
2. To find the relationship between Career Preferences and SES of Rural Muslim Women.
3. To find the relationship between Career Preferences and SES of Urban Muslim Women.

Hypotheses of the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the career-preference of rural and urban muslim women.
2. There is no significant relationship between Career Preferences and SES of Rural Muslim Women.
3. There is no significant relationship between Career Preferences and SES of urban Muslim Women.

Method: Normative survey method was used for the present study.

Population of the study: The population of this study comprised of all the muslim women studying from 10th standard to graduation residing in rural and urban area of district Haridwar.

Sample and sampling technique: The sample of this study comprised of 500 rural and 500 urban muslim women selected by simple random sampling technique.

Variables of the study:

- Dependent variable: Career preference is the dependent variable in this study.
- Independent variable: Locality and Socio-economic-status are independent variables in this study.

Tools used:

1. Career Preference Record developed by Vivek Bhargav & Rajshree Bhargava .
2. Socio-economic-status scale developed by Rajeev Lochan Bhardwaj.

Statistical techniques used:

Mean, S.D. and Pearson's coefficient of correlation were used for analyzing the data.

Delimitations of the study: The present study is delimited to only muslim women from both rural and urban area of district Haridwar of Uttarakhand.

Results and discussion:

Objective – 1 To compare the Career Preferences of Rural and Urban Muslim Women.

Table -1: Critical Ratios for comparison of Career Preferences of Rural and Urban Muslim Women

Career Area	Locality	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value	Result
MMJ	Rural	500	9.92	3.78	998	2.76*	Significant
	Urban	500	9.28	3.58			
AD	Rural	500	11.77	3.73	998	3.78*	Significant
	Urban	500	12.67	3.84			
ScT	Rural	500	11.56	4.04	998	2.12**	Significant
	Urban	500	12.08	3.82			
AG	Rural	500	7.89	4.33	998	0.14	Insignificant

	Urban	500	7.93	4.03			
CM	Rural	500	9.83	3.95	998	4.40*	Significant
	Urban	500	10.95	4.13			
M	Rural	500	9.15	4.02	998	2.82*	Significant
	Urban	500	8.45	3.78			
D	Rural	500	9.75	4.09	998	3.80*	Significant
	Urban	500	8.78	4.03			
TH	Rural	500	10.13	3.97	998	4.85*	Significant
	Urban	500	8.92	3.93			
LO	Rural	500	12.55	3.73	998	9.69*	Significant
	Urban	500	10.09	4.26			
E	Rural	500	12.31	3.70	998	2.70*	Significant
	Urban	500	12.93	3.60			

* = Significant at 0.01 level. ** = Significant at 0.05 level.

The critical ratios for comparison of career preferences of rural and urban muslim women have been shown in the above table. At df 998, nine out of ten critical ratios are found significant which are discussed below.

The critical ratios for the difference in career preferences of urban muslim woman in mass media and journalism ($t = 2.76$), artistic and designing ($t = 3.78$), commerce and management ($t = 4.40$), medical profession ($t = 2.82$), defence services ($t = 3.80$), tourism and hospitality industry ($t = 4.85$), law and order ($t = 9.69$) and education ($t = 2.70$) are found highly significant at 0.01 level of significance. These values suggest that there is a highly significant difference in the career preferences of rural and urban muslim women in the above career areas. Urban muslim women have better career preferences in artistic and designing, commerce and management and education as compared to their rural counterparts, while the rural muslim women have better career preferences in mass media and journalism, medical profession, defence services, tourism and hospitality industry and law and order as compared to their urban counterparts.

The critical ratio for the difference in career preferences of urban muslim women in science and technology ($t = 2.12$) is found significant at 0.05 level of significance. It means that there is a significant difference in the career preferences of rural and urban muslim women in the above career area. Urban muslim women have better career preferences in science and technology as compared to their rural counterparts.

Insignificant critical ratio has been obtained for agriculture ($t = 0.14$). It means that rural and urban muslim women do not differ significantly in their career preferences in agriculture.

Singh Ibotombi (1999) found insignificant difference in career preferences of rural and urban pupils which is similar to the above findings in the career preferences in agriculture, but the findings contradicts with the findings for personality career areas which show significant difference between rural and urban muslim women.

Objective – 2 To find the relationship between Career Preferences and SES of Rural Muslim Women.

Table 2: Pearsonian Coefficients of Correlation between Career Preferences and SES of Rural Muslim Women (N=500)

Variables		df	Coefficients of Correlation	Result
MMJ	SES	498	-0.035	Insignificant
AD	SES	498	-0.059	Insignificant
ScT	SES	498	-0.028	Insignificant
AG	SES	498	-0.051	Insignificant
CM	SES	498	-0.044	Insignificant
M	SES	498	-0.092**	Significant
D	SES	498	-0.085	Insignificant
TH	SES	498	-0.081	Insignificant
LO	SES	498	-0.031	Insignificant
E	SES	498	-0.077	Insignificant

** = Significant at 0.05 level.

The above table shows that at df 498 the coefficient of correlation between career preferences in medical profession and socio-economic status of rural muslim women is -0.092 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. It suggests a very low significant negative relationship between career preferences in medical profession and socio-economic status i.e. higher SES lowers the career preferences in the medical profession. Career preferences in remaining areas have been found insignificantly correlated with the socio-economic status of rural muslim women.

Penick and Jepsen (1998) found that SES influences the career decision of female students which mostly contradicts with above findings.

Objective – 3 To find the relationship between Career Preferences and SES of Urban Muslim Women.

Table -3: Pearsonian Coefficients of Correlation between Career Preferences and SES of Urban Muslim Women (N =500)

Variables		df	Coefficients of Correlation	Result
MMJ	SES	498	0.013	Insignificant
AD	SES	498	-0.020	Insignificant
ScT	SES	498	-0.032	Insignificant
AG	SES	498	-0.011	Insignificant
CM	SES	498	0.048	Insignificant
M	SES	498	-0.025	Insignificant
D	SES	498	-0.012	Insignificant
TH	SES	498	0.022	Insignificant
LO	SES	498	0.044	Insignificant
E	SES	498	-0.027	Insignificant

The table-4.14 shows that all the coefficients of correlation at df 498 have been found insignificant. It suggests that all the ten areas of career preferences are insignificantly related to the socio-economic status of urban muslim women i.e. socio-economic status of urban muslim women does not affect their career preferences. The socio-economic status has been found to affect the career preferences of high school students in the study of **Sellers et.al. (1999)** which contradicts with the above findings.

Findings of the study: 1. Significant difference has been found in the career preferences of rural and urban muslim women. Mass media and journalism, medical profession, defence services, tourism and hospitality industry, law and order have shown better career preferences of rural muslim women while urban muslim women have shown better preferences in artistic and designing, science and technology, commerce and management and education.

2. The area of agriculture has shown insignificant difference in their career preferences between rural and urban muslim women.
3. Career preferences of rural muslim women in the medical profession has been found to have a very low significant negative relationship with their SES i.e. rural muslim women who have high SES are likely to have low career preferences in medical profession. However, the career preferences in the nine career areas have been insignificantly related to their SES.
4. Career preferences of urban muslim women in all the ten career areas have been found insignificantly correlated to their SES.

Educational Implications of the study: The study is of enormous importance to the teachers, administrators, planners, policy makers' curriculum experts, counselors, social activists, muslim religious leaders, parents and muslim community. Government and Non-Government schools which have thick population of Muslims should organize such awareness programmes which could enhance the educational aspirations of not only muslim females but of their parents too. In these programmes schools should invite such muslim dignitaries who in spite of social, economical and religious constraints achieved great positions in various career areas. This will motivate both muslim students as well as their parents to acquire higher education and refine their views regarding various careers. Educationists such as teachers, principles etc. should develop theories programmes and principles for enhancing educational aspirations of students in general. Schools should provide opportunities to muslim women from low socio-economic backgrounds to choose careers which they can easily obtain. Curriculum makers should frame such a curriculum which could open various career options to the muslim women There is an utmost need of such a curriculum for muslim girls which could provide them with the opportunities to explore their own potentialities and utilize their education for their own upliftment at school level. Counsellors and guidance worker may enable muslim women for making appropriate decisions about careers and their personals and educational problems. Guidance workers will make them aware of the options of being self-employed at home in various career areas if they are not able to go out due to economic, social and religious barriers.

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