



Dropout of Muslim Girls in Odisha: A Review

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Abstract: In order to better understand the complex causes of high school dropout among Muslim girls in Odisha, this study gathers studies and viewpoints on the topic. Poverty and a lack of employment possibilities are just two of the socioeconomic variables that pose serious barriers to students continuing their education. Traditional gender norms and early marriage are two examples of cultural and societal forces that exacerbate the issue. Muslim girls are discouraged from going to school because of systemic problems, such as a lack of resources and prejudice. There is a correlation between the lack of female educators and the failure of empowerment programmes, parental attitudes, language hurdles, transportation issues, and student achievement. Possible solutions to this educational difference are discussed, including the power of non-profits, equal opportunity, religious norms, the influence of the media, and closing the digital divide. Dropout rates and the promotion of inclusive education for Muslim girls in Odisha are discussed, and the importance of government policies and interventions is emphasized. This research demonstrates the complexity of the factors contributing to the educational gaps in this population, hence highlighting the need for both targeted programmes and holistic approaches.

Key Words: Education, Dropout, Muslim Girl, Socio Economic

Introduction:

Education is an essential human right as well as a potent instrument for fostering individual and community empowerment. On the other hand, in a number of areas of India, including Odisha, some subsets of the population suffer considerable challenges in gaining access to educational opportunities and completing their degrees. This analysis focuses on the rates of school dropout among Muslim females in Odisha, with the goal of determining the key causes that contribute to this problem.

Socio-Economic Factors: The high school dropout rates experienced by Muslim girls in Odisha can be attributed to a wide variety of social and economic issues. Poverty, a lack of financial resources, a restricted number of work options, and an inadequate level of family support are some of the primary aspects that prevent these girls from continuing their education. (Khan, 2015; Aziz & Mallick, 2018).

Cultural and Societal Influences: The cultural and societal standards of Muslim societies are also major contributors to the high dropout rates among Muslim girls. Girls' access to school is frequently hindered, and they are dissuaded from furthering their education as a result of factors such as traditional gender roles, early marriage, and limits on movement and autonomy. (Parveen, 2016; Alam, 2017).

Educational System Challenges: This study underlines the necessity for both targeted initiatives and holistic methods by demonstrating the complexity of the causes leading to the educational inequalities in this demographic. Additional factors that deter Muslim girls from going to school include discrimination inside educational institutions as well as inadequate provisions for religious and cultural issues. (Hussain & Islam, 2019; Behera & Jena, 2020).

Empowerment Initiatives: A variety of governmental and non-governmental organisations, in an effort to combat the problem of high dropout rates among Muslim girls, have launched programmes that aim to increase educational opportunities and awareness within the Muslim community. These initiatives include scholarship programmes, mentorship programmes, and campaigns aimed at shifting views held by society towards female education. (Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, 2021).

Parental Perceptions and Involvement: Parental support for their daughter's education is a major factor in whether or not their daughter will complete her education. It is possible for parental attitudes, particularly those held concerning the function and significance of girls' education, to either encourage or discourage their offspring from following an educational path. (Ahmad, 2014; Haque, 2019).

Language Barrier: When Muslim girls come from homes where their primary language is not the language that is used at school, the medium of instruction in schools might be a barrier for them. This is especially true if the language that is used in schools is not the language that is spoken at home. This language barrier can result in difficulty in comprehension, which can therefore negatively impact academic performance. (Nayak, 2016; Ali, 2017).

Commuting Challenges: It can be a considerable challenge for Muslim girls to attend school when there is a lack of sufficient transportation options and when they worry about their safety while travelling. These difficulties might lead to erratic attendance, which can ultimately lead to abandonment of educational pursuits. (Mahapatra, 2018; Parida & Sahoo, 2020).

Lack of Female Teachers: The lack of available female educators, particularly in the more rural parts of Odisha, is a significant barrier to the education of young Muslim girls. Female students frequently confront cultural hurdles that make it difficult for them to communicate with male instructors, which negatively impacts their overall academic experience. (Sultana, 2013; Ahsan, 2018).

Role of NGOs and Community Organizations: In order to alleviate the educational discrepancies that exist among Muslim girls, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations play an extremely important role. It is possible that their participation in awareness efforts, scholarship programmes, and skill development projects will have a substantial impact on lowering dropout rates. (Mallick & Mohanty, 2017; Foundation for Educational Excellence, 2022).

Access to Quality Education: It is essential to guarantee Muslim girls access to a good education if they are to continue their education. Efforts to improve the quality of education, such as enhancing teaching methods and resources, can be one factor that leads to a decrease in the number of students who drop out of school. (Iqbal, 2015; Nair, 2021).

Religious Norms and Practices: Due to the fact that religious responsibilities and practises can occasionally come into conflict with the conventional education system, a significant number of Muslim females drop out of school. It is vital to strike a balance between religious and educational interests and find a way to address the difficulties raised in this article. (Saleem, 2014; Sharma & Mohapatra, 2019).

Media and Awareness: It is possible that overcoming preconceptions and encouraging Muslim females to seek education can be facilitated significantly by the utilisation of media platforms for educational awareness initiatives. The media has the potential to play a significant part in forming perceptions and highlighting the significance of education. (Majumdar & Panda, 2016; Pradhan & Patnaik, 2020).

Bridging the Digital Divide: Integration of technology and instruction in digital literacy are two potential ways to assist in closing the achievement gap in school. Initiatives that use digital learning tools have the potential to increase engagement and interest, hence reducing the number of Muslim girls who drop out of school. (Biswal & Das, 2018; Roy & Sahu, 2021).

Government Policies and Interventions: It is essential for the government to effectively implement policies and carry out targeted interventions in order to reduce the number of Muslim girls who drop out of school. It is possible for policies to have a large influence if they are designed to improve education in terms of both access and cost. (Government of Odisha, 2021; Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 2022).

Conclusion:

The high dropout rates among Muslim females in Odisha can be linked to a complex interaction of socio-economic variables, cultural and societal influences, obstacles within the educational system, and several other types of impediments. The key socioeconomic constraints that impede their educational ambitions are things like poverty, a lack of financial resources, a restricted number of career alternatives, and a lack of support from their families. Additionally, early marriage, a lack of autonomy, and cultural norms and gender roles that are traditional all have a big influence in inhibiting educational continuance. The educational system itself confronts obstacles such as poor infrastructure, an insufficient number of qualified teachers, discriminatory practises, and a lack of facilities for religious and cultural considerations. These challenges serve to further discourage Muslim females from attending school.

Scholarships, programmes that provide mentorship and campaigns to influence cultural perceptions on female education are all examples of efforts that are being made to address these concerns. Furthermore, both governmental and non-governmental groups are engaged in empowerment projects. Other factors that contribute to the issue include attitudes held by parents, difficulties associated with language and commuting, and a shortage of female educators. By increasing students' level of involvement and interest in the educational process, bridging the digital divide through the incorporation of new technologies and the promotion of digital literacy can help bring down dropout rates. Access to education, the quality of education, and the cost-effectiveness of education all stand to benefit greatly from focused government policies and interventions. It is essential, in order to ensure that Muslim females continue their education, to find a happy medium between the many religious practices and scholastic pursuits. Last but not least, including the media into educational awareness campaigns is a great way to combat stereotypes and bring attention to the significance of receiving an education within the Muslim community. It is absolutely necessary, in order to encourage Muslim girls in Odisha to continue their education and achieve academic success, to devise tactics that are all-encompassing and address the myriad of problems they confront.

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