

CHAPTER - 5
EDUCATION OF WOMEN
AND
SOCIAL STATUS

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Education is the most important cultural trait since it embraces all others. It is indispensable to any society for the transmission of social heritage of traditions and to help others to acquire new knowledge and techniques. The process of diffusion and acculturation can easily take place through education.

Islam prescribes that "education is essential for men as well as women to acquire knowledge". Education is a necessary condition which helps women to develop their personality. Though Prophet Muhammad favoured women's education, yet in actual practice the injunction of the Quran in this respect is completely ignored by the Muslims. The Muslim community considers education of girls as unnecessary. As a result, a situation has been developed where Muslim societies are found to be educationally most backward in the contemporary world (Kabir, 1969).

According to the Quran there is no distinction between men and women in the matter of education. It asserts "they are losers who be sottedly have slain their children by keeping them in ignorance" (Q :6:14).

The educational status of the Muslims in India is highly depressing and disheartening. They are educationally lagging behind. It has been noted that, the Muslims have entered into the field of modern education at a very late stage. Though correct

census data is not available, it can be estimated that the literacy rate of the Muslims in India is about 48% for male, and 19% for female, with a total of 34% for both the sexes (Hamid:1985).

It has been observed that the female literacy among the Muslims is significantly low and this is one of the important reason of perpetuating low social status of the women. It is also reported that the Muslim educational situation is quite 'dismal'. Out of a total of 3604 Degree Colleges in the country, only 54 are managed by the Muslims, and the Muslims account for 3.5% of all seats available in the technical institutions of the country (Khan : 1978).

It has also been reported that the drop out of the Muslim students from schools and other educational institutions is also of quite a high rate. A sample survey on the educational status of the Muslims of some selected regions of West Bengal reveal the facts that, the enrolment figures of the Muslim students at school level is about 46.38% and it's drop out rate is about 58.97% (Government of India : 1983).

Siddiqui (1984) pointed out that the recession of the Muslims towards socio-economic backwardness and their systematic withdrawal from the mainstream of the country's economy is the legacy of the colonial rule. In his opinion the main factor of socio-economic backwardness of the Muslims is their ignorance and lack of education.

Engineer (1991) has noted that the Muslims in India lag behind other communities in education to a significant extent. He has observed that the percentage of Muslim students, both boys and girls, decreases as the level of education rises, and that of non-Muslim students increases with the level of education. At high school and at higher level, Muslims are at least three to four times behind other communities.

According to Islam acquisition of knowledge is a great duty of woman as of man. Islam suggests the women folk to develop their rational faculties along with physical ones and thus ascend to higher planes of spiritual existence (Qutb 1964).

The Muslim women in India are still very far behind the men in the matter of literacy and education, though increasing efforts are being made to improve this condition. In 1914 the 'All India Women's Conference' was organized, and held its first meeting. Since then meetings have been held annually in various centres of India. The main aim of these organization is the improvement of social condition of the women.

In Muslim society the Mullahs are more powerful on the uneducated masses and they are always opposed to the education of women. But, the educated women have supported girl's education, for instance, the Dowager Begam of Bhopal who came out of her own adherence to parda, for educational and social reform.

Bengal was the typical example of educational backwardness of the Muslims. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the

Bengali Muslims lagged far behind the English education for various socio-economic reasons. But during the mid-nineteenth century there was a change towards English education. Sir Syed Ahmed fought against this tendency and set his co-religionists on the road of modern education during the middle of the nineteenth century. In Bengal the same process was started by Kazi Abdul Bari, Sayed Amir Ali and others during the late nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century a movement was started towards formal education among the upper stratum (Asraf) of the Muslim society. The Muslim masses are gradually realising the necessities of formal education. Now-a-days the Muslims of both upper and lower strata who ^{have} better economic position are taking modern education. But due to their various economic and social problems the spread of formal education is not still very remarkable among them.

Educational Problems in Chakmodhu and Kochutia:

Illiteracy is a major social problem of the Muslim women of Chakmodhu and Kochutia villages. Generally they avoid modern education due to various reasons. Between eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were several religio-political movements in Bengal in the name of religious revivalism for 'jihad' against the British power and to resist the diffusion and acculturation of western culture. As a matter of fact modern education which was started by the British completely bypassed the Muslim society of that period (Dey, 1982, Mondal, 1989).

Apart from this socio-historical factor, the other major reasons for educational backwardness of the Muslims are as follows:

- (1) The economic condition of most of the Muslims is so poor that to spend even a very negligible amount of money for education is a luxury for them.
- (2) The social atmosphere is not at all favourable for the spread of education among their women.
- (3) Most of the mothers of the villages are illiterate. So they fail to provide any guidance to their children in education.
- (4) Due to the parda system most of the women have to discontinue their studies at the primary level.
- (5) Lack of awareness on the part of parents regarding importance of female education.
- (6) Scarcity of separate educational institutions for women.

Peer (1991) has pointed out that there have been two major reasons for educational backwardness of the Muslims. Firstly, they fear that modern education undermines their religious faith, and secondly discrimination against the Muslims by the other in education and employment.

The educational problem of the women is undoubtedly due to the early age of marriage for which the girls discontinue their education. The parda system is equally responsible for discontinuation of girls' education (Ahmed: 1974, Ahmed: 1981, Mondal: 1987 and Karim: 1980).

The state of education of the Muslims of Chakmodhu village reveals that, out of the total 961 individuals, 314 (32.68%) are illiterate, and 62 (6.45%) are literate. Only 313 (32.57%) and 241 (25.08%) of the villagers have primary and middle education. The percentage of the school final and graduate degree holders are 23 (2.39%) and 8 (0.83%) respectively.

In Chakmodhu, out of 504 males, 136 (26.98%) are illiterate and 25 (4.96%) are literate. The frequency of primary, middle, school final and graduate standards are 168 (33.33%), 158 (31.34%), 12 (2.39%) and 5 (0.99%) respectively.

Of the 457 females of Chakmodhu, 178 (38.95%) are illiterate and 37 (8.10%) are literate. The frequency of primary, middle, school final and graduate standards are 145 (31.73%), 83 (18.16%), 11 (2.41%) and 3 (0.66%) respectively.

By contrast the educational status of the villagers of Kochutia reveals that out of 1015 individuals, there are 622 (61.28%) illiterate, and 89 (8.77%) literate persons. The frequency of primary, middle, school final and graduates are 122 (12.02%), 125 (12.31%), 43 (4.24%) and 14 (1.37%) respectively.

In Kochutia out of 550 males, 281 (51.10%) are illiterate and 74 (13.45%) are literate. The frequency of primary, middle, school final and higher standards are 68 (12.36%), 81 (14.73%), 33 (6%) and 13 (2.36%) respectively.

Of the 466 females of Kochutia, 341 (73.18%) are illiterate and 15 (3.22%) literate. The frequency of primary, middle, school final and higher standards are 54 (11.80%), 44 (9.44%), 10 (2.15%) and 1 (0.21%) respectively.

The comparative picture of educational status of the people of two villages reveal that, the rate of overall literacy is slightly higher at the urban adjacent village i.e. Chakmodhu. But the most notable picture is that, the rate of higher education is comparatively better in the interior village (Kochutia) than that of the urban adjacent village. The probable reason behind this is that, the people of the fringe village have no ambition for higher education as there are job opportunities in urban and industrial sector, while in the interior village there are a few landed aristocrats who are in a position to afford sufficient time and money for higher education. Tables 31 and 32 represent the educational status of Chakmodhu and Kochutia.

Attitude Towards Modern Education:

From empirical study it is observed that, among the Muslims there has been less demand for modern education. Among them the old and traditional minded men and women have less interest in modern education for their sons and daughters though they understand the value of it. They are satisfied with their present day situation and always try to solve their immediate economic needs by putting their sons to varieties of occupations, thus they have

Table - 31

Educational Status of the People of Chakmodhu

Age group	Male							Female						
	Ill. Lit.	Lit.	Primary	Middle	Passed SF/HS	High	Total	Ill. Lit.	Lit.	Primary	Middle	Passed SF/HS	High	Total
6-10	16		69				85	22		65				87
11-15	17	4	31	25			77	15	17	30	20			82
16-20	21	3	8	37	2		71	14	12	15	22	3		66
21-25	16	5	16	14	3	1	55	14	4	9	12	4		43
26-30	12	4	10	26	4	1	57	14	1	8	14	3	1	41
31-35	8	3	3	15	-		29	16	1	9	7	1	1	35
36-40	7	2	9	14	-	3	35	13	1	4	3		1	22
41-45	7	1	3	10	2		23	11		1	3			15
46-50	7	1	4	6	1		19	23		3	-			26
51-55	6	1	8	5			20	12	1	-	1			14
56-60	8	-	4	2			14	11		1	1			13
61-65	3	1	-	2			6	7						7
66-70	3		2	1			6	2						2
71-75	5		-	1			6	2						2
76-80	-		-				-	2						2
81 & above	-		1				1	-						-
Total N	136	25	168	158	12	5	504	178	37	145	83	11	3	457
%	36.98	4.96	33.33	31.34	2.39	0.99	100.00	38.95	8.10	31.73	18.16	2.41	0.66	100.0

Note: Ill. Lit. (Illiterate): The person who can not read and write in his mother tongue
 Lit. (Literate): The person who can read and write with understanding but not holding school certificate

Primary: The person who passed class IV standard or read beyond the primary stage

Middle : The person those who studied upto class X.

SF/HS : The person who passed school final or higher secondary examination

High : The person who passed the B.A., B.Sc., B.Com or M.A., M.Sc. or M.Com examination.

Table - 31 (Contd..)

Age group	Total						Total
	Ill. Lit	Lit.	Primary	Middle	Passed SF/HS	High	
38	-	-	134	-	-	-	172
32	21	61	45	59	5	-	159
35	15	23	26	7	1	-	137
30	9	25	40	7	2	1	98
26	5	18	22	1	1	2	98
24	4	12	17	-	1	4	64
20	3	13	13	2	-	-	57
18	1	4	13	6	1	-	38
30	1	7	6	6	-	-	45
18	2	8	3	2	-	-	34
19	-	5	2	1	-	-	27
10	1	-	1	1	-	-	13
5	-	2	-	1	-	-	8
7	-	-	-	1	-	-	8
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	314	62	313	241	23	8	961
	32.68	6.45	32.57	25.08	2.39	0.83	100.00

Table - 32

Educational Status of the people of Kochutia

Age group	Male							Female						
	Ill. lit.	Lit.	Primary	Middle	Passed SF/HS	High	Total	Ill. Lit.	Lit.	Primary	Middle	Passed SF/HS	High	Total
6-10	50			49			99	49		33	1			83
11-15	39	3	6	23			71	34	1	7	15			57
16-20	28	10	4	17	6	1	66	38	2	3	9	3		55
21-25	27	8	2	14	7	4	63	47	2	3	9	4	1	66
26-30	29	18	2	10	4	2	65	36	1	1	3	1		42
31-35	23	12	1	3	3	2	45	23	3	1	1	-		28
36-40	14	12	1	4	1	2	34	24	1	1	1	1		28
41-45	12	2		2	-	1	18	26	2	2	4	1		35
46-50	20	2		4	2	1	29	22	2	2	1			27
51-55	16	3		2	4		25	7		-				7
56-60	9	3		-	3		15	15		1				16
61-65	10	-		2	1		13	7						7
66-70	3	1			-		4	8						8
71-75	-				1		1	2	1					3
76-80	-				1		1	2						2
-85	1						1	1						1
Total N	281	74	68	81	33	13	550	341	15	54	44	10	1	466
%	51.10	13.45	12.36	14.73	6.00	2.36	100.00	73.18	3.22	11.80	9.44	2.15	0.21	100.00

Table - 32 (Contd..)

Ill. Lit.	Lit.	T o t a l				High	Total
		Primary	Middle	Passed SF/HS			
99		82	1			182	
73	4	13	38			128	
66	12	7	26	9	1	121	
74	10	6	23	11	5	129	
65	19	3	13	5	2	107	
46	15	3	4	3	2	73	
38	13	2	5	2	2	62	
38	4	3	6	1	1	53	
42	4	2	5	2	1	56	
23	3	-	2	4	1	32	
24	3	1	-	3		31	
17	-		2	1		20	
11	1			-		12	
2	1			1		4	
2				1		3	
2						2	
622	89	122	125	43	14	1015	
61.28	8.77	12.02	12.31	4.24	1.37	100.00	

least interest in education. Only a few families in both the villages try to educate their children at the higher standard for getting white collar jobs and high social status in the society. Though the village women generally realise the importance of education, yet due to economic backwardness and various other social reasons they feel no eagerness to educate their sons. They generally try to educate their sons upto the primary or the middle stage for achieving the ability to read and write Bengali and English languages as well as knowledge in simple mathematics so that they may take up semi-skilled or skilled jobs in factories. It is observed that most of the Muslims favour modern education for their children only under good economic condition. They never try to educate their children if they are in adverse economic condition. Therefore in most of the cases they remain illiterate.

In both the villages a very few men and women (estimated about 5.9%) are properly trying to educate their sons and daughters upto higher level for securing skilled, highly skilled and white collar jobs. This is particularly noticed in upper strata of the Muslim families of the villages under study. In general, parents are not ambitious about their children's future career. For various socio-cultural reasons they favour early employment for their children. In Chakmodhu and Kochutia some of them just send their children to school but do not take any proper care to sharpen their performance and withdraw them from school as soon as they develop the earning capability. This is due to the parents illiteracy, poverty, lack of awareness and so on. The proper educational

atmosphere is lacking both in Chakmodhu as well as in Kochutia. The impoverished economic condition of the Muslims is seriously hampering their women's education. It is observed that, the level of education among the economically well-off families in both the villages are higher than that of the economically backward families. Most of the girls are withdrawn from schools at the age of ten or eleven due to poverty. Girls are also withdrawn from the schools at their early age for arranging their marriage. "Poverty rather than religion is responsible for educational backwardness of the Muslims" (Chitnis : 1983).

Objectives of Education:

The average women of Chakmodhu and Kochutia have reported that their parents do not have any definite aim for their daughters. Basically they want to educate their son to acquire knowledge which would help them in getting a job. They also said that very recently there has been a change in this attitude. Parents now a days have the desire to educate their daughters also.

The educated women have expressed their views that, the major contribution of education has been towards improving their position and has helping them in securing job in necessity. It also gives them a higher position in the family and in the society.

The women who are illiterate or less educated have no clearcut notion about the future aims for their children, while the educated parents are aware of the situation and ambitions for their children. The female students of Chakmodhu remarked that,

'their parents do not have any definite aim for their daughters' education because they do not consider education as an important aspect of social life'. But they think that, education is the most important thing for them as it gives higher status and superior position to the women. In their opinion the girls must continue their studies for the sake of their future life. It has been observed that girls of the younger generation today views education as a direct means of achieving higher social status through employment and economic betterment.

Traditional and Religious Education:

The muslims always try to teach their children about the principles of Islam. So, religious education is an imperative for a Muslim. The Muslims of Chakmodhu and Kochutia believe that religious education is an essential aspect of their education. For the traditionalists the entire function of education is the ability to read and understand the Quran. Traditionally, a person's education should start at the age of four years four months and four days. In upper and middle class families it is done by a Moulvi or a learned religious man, who guides the child to hold a pen and to trace the word Bismillah i.e. the name of Allah on a takhti or a small board. The takhti, and a pen are both made of gold, silver or lesser materials depending on the status of the family. Subsequently, a moulvi is engaged to teach a child or a child is sent to a maktab or Madrasha.

In both the villages it has been noted that girls are more frequent than boys among the maktab goers. The Maktabs or seminaries are usually maintained along with the mosques. Here children are taught Arabic of primary level. They also learn Urdu from this institution. It is a prestigious qualification for the Muslim to know how to read the Quran. In Chakmodhu as well as in Kochutia, it has been found that more women than men are acquainted with the reading of the Quran.

Now-a-days the school-going children have given less emphasis on the reading of the Quran. At present the parents seem to be concentrating more on school home work rather than on the Quranic lessons. Today, the boys and girls do not find enough time to read the Quran due to their parents' emphasis on school education. So, with the increase of school education, the enthusiasm for the Quran reading is decreasing. Thus it can be said that changes in traditional religious education and the parents' attitude towards it have a very significant impact on the life of the Muslim children, particularly in the context of their school education.

In Muslim society Maktab and Madrasha (seminaries) play the most significant role as sacred institution, particularly in the context of religion and religious education. In Chakmodhu and Kochutia students are given meticulous training in the correct reading of Quran and namaj. They learn how to make the appropriate niyat for each religious performance and how to do wazu properly. They also learn the correct way of greeting. They are taught how

to behave at the time of listening to Khodba and how to recite the appropriate dowa and darud at the time of milad.

In both Chakmodhu as well as in Kochutia girls are more frequent than boys among maktab or madrasha growers. It is a prestigious qualification for Muslim women of both the villages to know how to read the Quran. It was noticed that more women than men know how to read Quran.

Some house wives in Chakmodhu and Kochutia are running maktabs at their own residence. It was observed that the maktabs running by the women are very popular in the villages, mainly because parents and guardians did not like to send their grown-up girls to the maktabs attached with mosques which are administered by the men mauluvis. Again the teaching hours in the maktabs of house wives were adjusted to suit the majority of the girl students.

Attitude Towards Women Education:

The study of the attitude towards education of women of different ages reveal that there are differences in opinion between the younger and the older generations. The old and traditional minded people and the Mullahas generally oppose modern education for women beyond the acquisition of some ability to read the verses of the Quran (of course without understanding their meaning). A great majority of the middle aged women are of opinion

that, women may have education upto the elementary stage to enable them to read the Quran and to read and write in Bengali. This group of women seem to express the extreme traditional view. Yet a few of the middle-aged women as well as a section of the youths have agreed that, some knowledge of Bengali, English and mathematics in addition to reading the Quran is a desirable equipments for the women. They also admit that education of the women at least upto secondary standard is essential for teaching their children at the initial stage. All these people opposed the education of women beyond secondary stage, on the ground that higher education would spoil the girls. They think that with higher education they would not do household work and they would not maintain the rules of parda. They might even run away with some one or arrange their own matches.

Only a few of the educated and modernized women definitely supported higher education for the women. But they say that the increase of educational facilities need not necessarily increase the number of literate women among the Muslims. This is mainly due to the opposition the women receive from their family members. They stated that more education is important for both boys and girls, because it not only awakens an urge for a prestigious position, whether at home or society as a whole, but also helps to retain that position against many hazards of life. Though there are variations in the degree of women's education from urban to rural, the status of women in relation with education is neither possible nor justified.

A middle aged informant of Chakmodhu has stated that in Muslim society education for girls is not considered as an important one. Majority of Muslim mother are against of their daughters' education for various social reasons. But they consider the importance of girl's education and viewed that education gives superior status to the women. The educated mother are of opinion that, education can build up a strong nation by rearing able and ideal citizen, so all mother must be educated. Primary teaching of the children begins from their home . So mothers must be educated.

In the present situation, it has been noted that parents have realised the importance of modern education. In the urban or fringe village modern education has been becoming popular among the Muslim girls particularly among the middle class group. Small group of affluent families still oppose it for traditional reasons, while others regard it as a symbol of modernization. In urban as well as interior areas, the majority of the village people belong to poor economic category, hence poverty is the predominant factor that governs their negative attitude towards girls' education, although they support it.

The respondents feel that education for girl's is not only desirable but also necessary for their children. An informant of Kochutia has expressed that education is essential for girls for improving their social position in the family and in society. Education has become necessary for every female not only for marriage but for her economic independence and social prestige.

Now-a-days, men prefer marrying educated girls. In Chakmodhu about 68% of the respondents agree that education help to improve the girl's status and marriage prospects. While in Kochutia the corresponding figure is nearly about 39%. The respondents have the desire to educate their daughters. They thought that one of the major role of a mother is to supervise her children's education at home, and to give necessary encouragement to them. It is very interesting to note here that, the Muslim mothers who were against of their daughter's education even two or three decades ago, now pays attention to their children's education. The table 33 represents respondent's attitude towards girl's education.

Table - 33
Attitude Towards Girl's Education

Age category		Chakmodhu			Kochutia		
		Agree	Dis-agree	Total	Agree	Dis-agree	Total
16-30	No	109	37	146	103	60	163
	%	37.98	12.90		31.69	18.46	
31-45	No	59	16	75	38	53	91
	%	20.56	5.58		11.69	16.31	
46-60	No	30	23	53	22	28	50
	%	10.45	8.02		6.77	8.62	
61 & above	No	9	4	13	9	12	21
	%	3.14	1.39		2.77	3.69	
Total	No	207	80	287	178	147	325
	%	72.13	27.87	100.00	52.92	47.08	100.00

Attitude Towards Co-education:

Co-education is a long standing controversy in India. Among the Muslims seclusion of women is strictly observed and to come in front of strangers is a sin. Most of the men and women are against the system of co-education. Mrs. Ansura a middle aged women remarked, 'the girls will be spoiled if they allow to go to a co-education school'. She also feels that, for adolescent and adult girls the system of co-education is not convenient as it affects the system of parda observance. But today the value system of parda is gradually changing. Even now though the Muslim girls are increasingly going to schools and colleges including the co-educational institutions, yet the old attitude still continues. However, the women of both the villages always prefer the girl's schools or girl's college for their daughters' education.

Even in such an environment there are some progressive families. A respondent of **Chakmodhu** remarked that her guardians do not feel that the girls will be spoiled if they go to co-education school or college. She herself is a student of co-education college and interacting with other fellow students both boys and girls as friends.

When the question was asked whether co-education was desirable or not, 61.67% percent of respondents in Chakmodhu said that it was undesirable. On the contrary 56.31% in Kochutia objected to sending their daughters to such an institution. The respondents' attitude towards co-education has been shown in the table 34.

Table - 34
Attitude Towards Co-Education

Age category		Chakmodhy			Kochutia		
		Unfavourable	favourable	Total	Unfavourable	favourable	Total
16-30	No	94	52	146	119	44	163
	%	32.75	19.12	50.87	36.61	13.54	50.15
31-45	No	47	28	75	42	49	91
	%	16.37	9.76	26.13	12.92	13.08	28.00
46-60	No	34	19	53	19	31	50
	%	11.85	6.62	18.47	5.85	9.54	15.39
61 & above	No	2	11	13	3	18	21
	%	0.70	3.83	4.53	0.92	5.54	6.46
Total	No	177	110	287	168	142	325
	%	61.67	38.33	100.00	56.31	43.69	100.00

So, from the above discussion it may be noted that, the changes in the attitude of men towards the emancipation of women is due to the impact of modern education on them. Now-a-days the uneducated women are facing various difficulties not only outside but also at their own home. As for example, the mothers of school going children have today realised the importance of modern education while helping their children in doing day-to-day home-work of their school. It is found that, the members who were initially opposed for girls education, now realized the importance of sending their daughters to schools and colleges for education. Now-a-days aspiration for girls' education is gradually increasing .

Due to spread of education and urbanization some changes have taken place in the family and in society by which women's roles have also changed.

The women, who were interviewed, whole-heartedly supported formal education as necessity for their life. Only the old and illiterate women have advocated that formal education is not essential for their girls. But the educated women have stated that education leads women to economic independence and enlightenment. Thus it can be said that education has definitely contributed to improving their status.

Observation

Islam is never against the education of women. The prophet has proclaimed that one of the most important responsibilities of a father to give education to his children, both boys and girls.

Education plays the very important role in every society. In Muslim society the spread of formal education is not yet very remarkable. Illiteracy is a major social problem of the Muslim women due to social environment, low level of economy, lack of awareness and strict parda practices, etc.

The state of education in Chakmodhu village reveals that there are 32.68% illiterate, 6.45% literate, 32.57% primary, 25.08% middle, 2.39% School Final/Higher Secondary and 0.83 graduate degree holders. While in Kochutia the corresponding figures are 61.28%, 8.77%, 12.02%, 12.31%, 4.24% and 1.37% respectively.

The state of female education in Chakmodhu reveals that there are 38.95% illiterate and 8.10% literate women. The frequencies of primary, middle and school final or higher secondary standards are 31.73%, 18.16% and 2.41% respectively. There is only 0.66% female graduates in this village. While the corresponding figures in Kochutia are 73.18%, 3.22%, 11.80%, 9.44%, 2.15% and 0.21% respectively.

Education of parents seems to be significantly related to the educational level of the respondents. Income also seems to be

another factor with which the education of the respondents is significantly related.

In Chakmodhu and Kochutia it has been noted that old and traditional minded women are less interested in their children's education, especially in girls' education. The women of both the villages have thought that their parents did not have any definite aim for their education. The majority of the women have said that education is necessary for acquiring knowledge and for achieving higher position in family and society. In Chakmodhu 68% of the women have thought that education is an agency which will improve the status of women, while in Kochutia only 39% of the women have the similar kind of thinking.

The positive response to female education is not very enthusiastic in both the villages. Poor economic condition, lack of awareness etc. are seriously affecting education of the women. Majority of the aged women have the idea that higher education will spoil the girls and they will not maintain the rules of parda. In their view the women must stay at home and should not go out for education and employment. Only a few educated and forward looking women whole-heartedly supported higher education for girls. They consider that primary teaching of the children begins from their mother, so all mothers should be educated.

In Chakmodhu only 61.67% of the parents object to send their daughters to co-educational schools, while in Kochutia the

corresponding figure is 56.31%. This is due to the system of parda and the traditional conservative attitude of the village people.

Due to impact of modern education, urbanization and modernization some changes have taken place in family and in society and through which women's role have also changed to a certain extent. The above findings clearly indicate that education has definitely contributed to improve the status of Muslim women in both the villages under study.