

How to cite:

Farooqui, N., Bansal, A., & Agarwal, A. K. (2018). *Impact of financial aid as scholarships on educational attainment & quality of life among Muslim adolescent girls in madrasas*. *International Journal of Health & Medical Sciences*, 1(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.31295/ijhms.v1n1.33>

Impact of Financial aid as Scholarships on Educational Attainment & Quality of Life among Muslim Adolescent Girls in Madrasas

Neelo Farooqui

Psychologist Career Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow. drneelofarooqui@gmail.com

Abhishek Bansal

Assistant Professor, Pediatrics, Carrer Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow

Anand K. Agarwal

Professor & Head, Pediatrics, Career Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow

Abstract

The Madarsa system of education has been an important institution for education in India. However, the relevance of the import system education as per the changing needs of the society has been still a debate topic in India. The majority of the Muslim girls are illiterate and low educated while their living conditions are poor. Moreover, most of the Muslim families cannot afford modern education and thus they are forced to send their wards to traditional educational institutions where fee charges are normal or free education is being provided. Which also correlates directly to their quality of life. The government has realize the weakness of the system in terms of expediently to provide education to Muslim children which relevant from day to day needs of the society as result government has initiative Madrasa modernization programme. Many Scholarship and fellowship programmes have been redesigned to bring it at par with mainstream educational system in the country. Scholarships to the students of Madrasas are being provided to enhance their good self. In the light of these facts the present study is designed to explore the impact of financial aid as scholarships on educational attainment & quality of life amongst Muslim adolescent girls in Madrasas. The present study is empirical in nature and based on mainly primary data. The field survey has been conducted in 3 districts of Uttar Pradesh. The sample covers Gonda, Rampur and Aligarh districts from Uttar Pradesh. In each Institution 15 scholarship awarded students have been randomly selected and interviewed. The sample size includes 3 districts, 20 Institutions and 300 adolescent girls. Our survey highlights that the scholarships significantly affect the educational attainment and their quality of life. Government tried their best to enhance the educational standard of Muslim girls. For this purpose government initiated scholarship programmes to uplift the status of Muslim adolescent girls in the society.

Keywords: Madrasa; Attainment; Scholarship; Financial Aid; Quality of Life

Introduction

The Madarsa system of education has been an important institution for education in India. However, the relevance of the system to impart education as per the changing needs of the society has been as debates issue. Muslim girls in India are influenced by the Islamic injunctions and also the impact of Hindu culture and traditions. Muslim girls are educationally backward and mainly engaged in unpaid domestic work while a few are employed in an unorganized sector where the enforcement of legal provisions for protecting their rights is found to be low. The majority of the Muslim girls are illiterate and low educated while their living conditions are poor. Moreover, most of the Muslim families cannot afford modern education and thus they are forced to send their wards to traditional educational institutions where fee charges are normal or free education is being provided. Another interest of Muslims is to maintain their cultural heritage and thus they are sending their wards where Islamic teaching is also imparted to children. Though, the Government and nongovernment Organizations and institutions are provided financial support for attainment and imparting modern education. Scholarships to the students of Madrasas are being provided to the interns so that they may sustain their education for their attainments. An attempt has been made to assess Impact of Financial aid as scholarships on Educational Attainment & Quality of life amongst Muslim Adolescent Girls in Madrasas.

Central and State Government tried their best to enhance the educational standard of Muslim girls. For this purpose, the government initiated a scholarship program for Muslim girls to attend schools either in Muslims owned schools i.e., Madarsas or in other schools. But it is found that the presence of Muslim girls in schools is not very encouraging. The present study is to assess Impact of Financial aid as scholarships on Educational Attainment & Quality of life amongst Muslim Adolescent Girls in Madrasas. The study examines the critical areas of growth and challenges being faced by the Muslims adolescent girls. It may be useful for policy implementations for both for State and Central Government.

Review of Literature

Several types of research have been conducted in research institutions and universities about girls education in Madrasa. Few of them are quoted here.

[Fahimuddin \(2004\)](#), emphasized in his book on “Modernization of Muslim education in India” that the proposed plan of Madrasa modernization is not at all needed to be applied to the Jamias or the Madrasa of higher Islamic teachings like Nadwatul Ulum, Lucknow. The modernization of curriculum is needed in smaller Madrasas which are larger in number and are growing day by day. He concluded in the study that Muslims in India must strive to break the shackle of educational backwardness as fast and early as possible.

[Moh. Haleem Khan \(2003\)](#) has written in his study on minority issues and state intervention. He pointed out the status of Muslim girls who are getting their education in schools and other institutions.

[Noor Mohammad \(2003\)](#), highlighted in his study on Scope of Modernization of Madarasa in India suggested that Islamic Institutions meant for imparting religious education among Muslim can be given the responsibility of coordinating government efforts facilities with the community leaders in their areas. These Institutions should be modernized to impart modern and secular education among Muslims.

Seema Parveen emphasized in her study on Educational Development among Muslim Women: Emerging Perspective and Trends focused on educational development among Muslim women for their socio-economic development.

Fatima Alam has written in her paper on Study of Girls’ Madrasa Education in India focused that In the context of present-day madrasas, the paper looks at how discourses of nationhood and liberal feminism, with their ideas of freedom and individual autonomy, inform the debate on Muslim women’s education in India

Justice M.S.A. Siddiqui, Chairman of Ministry of HRD submitted in his report as per the Census of 2001, only 55% of Muslim men and 41% of Muslim women in India are literate; whereas the corresponding figures for non-Muslims are 64.5% and 45.6%. Only one in 101 Muslim women is a graduate, whereas one out of 37 women in the general population is a graduate. What is even more worrisome is the fact that the drop-out rate for Muslims rises steeply as they move up the pyramid of education. Muslims are 53% worse off as compared to the national average in respect of higher education. Muslim women at the graduate level are fewer by 63%.

Sachar Committee Report (India, 2006) has surveyed the educational condition of Muslims in India. The condition as presented in the presents a very pathetic situation. Consider some of the observations, Many so-called literacy did not have the ability to apply their reading and writing skill to real life situations, and often a substantial proportion reverted to illiteracy within 4-5 years of leaving school....Muslim have not been able to respond to the challenge of improving their educational status....the literacy rate among Muslims in 2001 was far below the national average....the literacy gap between Muslim and the general average is greater in urban areas and for women....Dropout rates among Muslims are highest at the level of Primary, Middle, and Higher Secondary compared to all the SRC’sOnly one out of the 25 undergraduate student and one out of the 50 Post Graduate student is a Muslim in premier college.....The provision of education through Urdu medium is precarious in Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.... Muslim parents are not average to mainstream education or not to send their children to affordable government schools” (India, 2006).

Interestingly, in any society, education is the most effective vehicle for socialization, social change and increase the quality of life. However, the Muslim of India did not progress much in terms of modern education, attending schools outside their homes. Traditional outlook, poverty, and backwardness were the primary reasons for educational backwardness and decrease the quality of life among Muslim women in India.

Need of the study

It is a general notion that quality of life of Muslims are economically and educational backwardness in India and they believe in greater adherence to religious teachings and traditions. The Muslims masses also prefer Madrasas for

the education of their children. It is believed that only poor Muslims opt for Madrasa education. The quality of education among Muslim in comparison with non-Muslim in India has become a matter of concern at present. Madrasa education has played a pivotal role in sustaining the Islamic knowledge among the Indian Muslims but the education imparted here have proved to be of little relevance to fulfill the contemporary educational needs of Muslims in terms of providing competitive capabilities to get jobs, economic justice and equality of life and status. On account of the low quality of life and low educational attainment, some of the Indian Muslims girls could not have an option in the employment market.

A large number of Muslims girls in India, in fact, a vast majority, is of poor and illiterate variety. Very few have emerged successfully from their inherited position to take up modern professions. These poor Muslims cannot afford, even if they want, to send their children to Madrasa.

State Government tried their best to enhance the educational standard of Madrasa education. For this purpose government, Waqf Boards and Minority welfare initiated many programs for improvement of madrasa education. But it is found that the presence of Madrasa education is not very encouraging. Against this backdrop present study is proposed “impact of financial aid as scholarships on educational attainment & quality of life amongst Muslim adolescent girls in Madrasas”.

Research Methods

The present study is empirical in nature and based on mainly primary data. The primary data has been collected from a field survey in Muslim concentrated areas of Uttar Pradesh. Besides the collection of primary data, secondary data and pertinent literature have been compiled from published and documented sources.

Selection of Districts

The field survey has been conducted in 3 districts of Uttar Pradesh. The sample covers Gonda, Rampur, and Aligarh districts from Uttar Pradesh Thus, the selection of districts is purposive.

Selection of Institutions

Muslim educational Institutions have been surveyed. The priority has been given to government added and run by Waqf Board or NGO's/Trust's educational institutions. The shortlisting of educational Institutions has been in such a way that all important levels of educational institutions viz. Primary, Junior High School, High School, Intermediate, Graduate, Post Graduate Colleges and Technical Institutions are covered in the sample. The selected Madarsas represent in the sample focus on educational attainment, challenges being faced and educational standards achieved so far. The students belonging to different levels of education have been randomly selected.

Selection of Beneficiaries

In each Institution, 15 scholarship awarded students have been randomly selected and interviewed. In the sample size include 3 districts, 20 Institutions, and three hundred students.

Results and Analysis

Purpose of Scholarship

Purpose of scholarships has been mentioned in table 1, which clearly depicts that the main expenditure is on tuition fee, purchase of textbooks and other reference material. Very few students were found to be utilizing the scholarship amount for payment of hostel fee and other charges.

Table 1
Purpose of Scholarship

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Tuition Fee | 20 [20.0] | 58 [58.0] | 32 [32.0] | 110 [36.67] |
| Books & reading materials | 27 [27.0] | 42 [42.0] | 17 [17.0] | 86 [28.67] |

| | | | | |
|------------|--------------|-----|--------------|--------------|
| Hostel Fee | 10 [10.0] | - | 7 [7.0] | 17 [5.67] |
| Others | 43 [43.0] | - | 44 [44.0] | 87 [39.0] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Adequate Amount of Scholarship

The students were asked whether the amount of scholarship is adequate for educational attainment. About half of the students reported that the amount of scholarship is not adequate to meet the expenses of education. (Table 2).

Table 2
Whether Amount of Scholarship is Adequate

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Yes | 12 [12.0] | 21 [21.0] | 14 [14.0] | 47 [15.67] |
| No | 55 [55.0] | 52 [52.0] | 56 [56.0] | 163 [54.33] |
| Some extent | 33 [33.0] | 27 [27.0] | 30 [30.0] | 90 [30.0] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Get scholarship in time

The students were asked that whether they get a scholarship in time. Only 6.0 percent respondents said that they get a scholarship in time and the majority of students do not get a scholarship in time. Thus, they suffer in terms of mobilizing resources for educational attainment. (Table 3).

Table 3
You get a scholarship in time

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Yes | 8 [8.0] | - | 10 [10.0] | 18 [6.0] |
| No | 64 [64.0] | 80 [80.0] | 60 [60.0] | 204 [68.0] |
| Some Time | 28 [28.0] | 20 [20.0] | 30 [30.0] | 78 [26.0] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Utilization of scholarship amount

The scholarship utilization pattern is shown in Table 4. These are tuition fees, books and reading materials and hostel accommodation. More than one-third respondents reported that they utilized money for the purchase of books and reading materials. About 16 percent students reported that they utilized the amount of scholarship on tuition fee. Again it was recorded high in Aligarh as compared to Gonda and Rampur. The expenditure on hostel has been reported to be low i.e. only 3 percent of students. The students were further asked that whether the scholarship was utilized for the same purpose for which it was sanctioned.

Table 4
Utilization of scholarship amount

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Tuition fee | 10 [10.0] | 18 [18.0] | 18 [18.0] | 46 [15.33] |
| Books & reading material | 17 [17.0] | 22 [22.0] | 26 [26.0] | 65 [21.67] |
| Hostel accommodation | 5 [5.0] | - | 3 [3.0] | 8 [2.67] |
| Others | 68 [68.0] | 60 [60.0] | 53 [53.0] | 181 [60.33] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Use of scholarship for more than the specific purpose

Use of scholarship for more than one specific purpose is shown in Table 5. More than one-fourth students reported that they utilized the amount of scholarship for more than one specific purpose. Those who reported that they utilized scholarship for more than one specific purpose said that they mainly utilized scholarship for the purchase of assets and payments of dues.

Table 5
Use of scholarship for more than the specific purpose

| | Yes | No | Some extent | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| Domestic | 3 [12.0] | 2 [10.0] | - | 5 [6.17] |
| Repayment of fees | 6 [24.0] | 7 [35.0] | 10 [27.78] | 23 [28.39] |
| Purchase of assets | 12 [48.0] | 6 [30.0] | 12 [33.33] | 30 [37.04] |
| Others | 4 [16.0] | 5 [25.0] | 14 [38.89] | 23 [28.39] |
| N | 25 | 20 | 36 | 81 |

Source: Field Survey

Scholarship significantly contributed to the continuation of education

The students were asked that whether scholarship significantly contributed to the continuation of education. Only 6.67 percent students were found in this favor while about two fifth students reported that scholarship has not contributed significantly in continuation of their education. However, about 30 percent students said that scholarship has contributed in the continuation of their education to some extent (Table 6).

Table 6
Whether scholarship significantly contributed to the continuation of education

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Yes | 5 [5.0] | 6 [6.0] | 9 [9.0] | 20 [6.67] |
| No | 65 [65.0] | 54 [54.0] | 70 [70.0] | 189 [63.0] |
| Some extent | 30 [30.0] | 40 [40.0] | 21 [21.0] | 91 [30.33] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Scholarship led to quality of employment

The students were asked that whether the scholarship has led to quality employment. More than 29.33 percent students said that scholarship has led to employment. However, more than half of the students reported that scholarship has led to employment to some extent (Table 7).

Table 7
Whether scholarship led to quality of employment

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Yes | 30 [30.0] | 26 [26.0] | 32 [32.0] | 88 [29.33] |
| No | 16 [16.00] | 10 [10.0] | 15 [15.0] | 41 [13.67] |
| Some extent | 54 [54.0] | 64 [64.0] | 53 [53.0] | 171 [57.0] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Level wise contribution of scholarship in development of quality of Education

Again, the students were asked to report the level of contribution of scholarship in educational development. More than 61 percent students reported that their scholarship has contributed in educational development to some extent. It was recorded high in Rampur and Aligarh, while 35 percent students said that scholarship has contributed to the greater extent in educational development. It was reported high in Rampur and Aligarh (Table 8).

Table 8
The level-wise contribution of scholarship in development of quality of Education

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| To greater extent | 32 [32.0] | 40 [40.0] | 30 [30.0] | 102 [34.0] |
| Some extent | 61 [61.0] | 60 [60.0] | 63 [63.0] | 184 [61.33] |
| Not at all | 7 [7.0] | - | 7 [7.0] | 14 [4.67] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Level of Burden reduced by scholarship

The students were asked to report the level of burden reduced by scholarship (Table 9). About one-fourth respondent reported that there has been reducing of a burden to the greater extent. Those who reported that burden has reduced to some extent have been reported high in Aligarh and Rampur.

Table 9
Level of Burden reduced by scholarship

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| To greater extent | 18 [18.0] | 20 [20.0] | 22 [22.0] | 60 [20.0] |
| Some extent | 76 [76.0] | 67 [67.0] | 69 [69.0] | 212 [70.67] |
| Not at all | 6 [6.0] | 13 [13.0] | 9 [9.0] | 28 [9.3] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Satisfaction level of the present system of scholarship

The respondents were asked about their satisfaction regarding present system of scholarship distribution. Only, 3.00 percent respondents were found satisfied with the present system of scholarship distribution. Interestingly, 69.33 percent students were found ignored on this issue because of the facts that they are too small to give their opinion on this issue (Table 10).

Table 10
Whether you are satisfied with the present system of scholarship

| | Aligarh | Gonda | Rampur | Total |
|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Yes | 2 [2.0] | 3 [3.0] | 4 [4.0] | 9 [3.0] |
| No | 38 [38.0] | 21 [21.0] | 24 [24.0] | 83 [83.0] |
| Cannot say | 60 [60.0] | 76 [76.0] | 72 [72.0] | 208 [69.33] |
| N. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |

Source: Field Survey

Conclusion

Our study demonstrates that the scholarship provided by government is quite inadequate, the processes in terms of delay and distribution are clumsy. The main purpose of scholarship has been reported to be aimed towards tuition fee, books, and reading materials etc. This has been noted that the amount of scholarship is inadequate and not timely distributed. The scholarships have significantly contributed to the educational purposes. Better financial conditions and quality education have significantly changed the quality of life. Therefore, these adolescent Muslim girls would definitely enjoy the liberal and democratic advantages and benefits of such initiatives. Quality of education increase the better opportunity for placement in society, competitive capabilities to get jobs, economic justice and equality of life and status. It is found that there is no significant involvement of scholarship in the encouragement of the life attainments of Muslim girls. Hence, there is no significant change in the quality of life and in the status of Muslim adolescent girls in the society.

Policy Recommendations

Madarsa certificates need to be declared equivalent to high school and secondary board certificates. Madarsas that are providing facilities for graduate and post-graduate studies similarly be made eligible for affiliation with the universities in relevant subjects.

- 1) The amount of scholarship should be increased and the quantum of the amount (grant) should be based on strength of students of various classes in institutions. There should be uniformity of scholarship channelizing agencies to the traditional educational institutions.

- 2) Distance education for Muslim girls using modern communications technology needs particular attention. The possibility of linking up IGNOU and other open universities with Muslim educational institutions for girls needs to be seriously explored.
- 3) Institutions of higher education run by minorities should receive special grants from the government to start centers of excellence, training programmes etc. in order to promote professional and technical education among Muslim students.
- 4) Educational programmes for the development of Dalit Muslims should be extended to the Muslim community as well. Good quality government schools providing free education to Muslim girls should be set up in districts of high Muslim concentration. Special measures should be taken to promote modern school education for Muslim girls

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the editor for their valuable time and advice.

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