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Factors affecting Occupational Congruence and Career Choice - A Study of Muslim Community in Mysore city, Karnataka

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Abstract

Occupation among the Muslim community of Mysore is of very high importance. Social, economic, religious, ethical, and cultural as well as communication development are factors that influence occupational opportunities as well as the priorities of the Muslims in the current paper. More self-employed occupational opportunities among the Muslim community of Mysore City have emerged after social media and up-to-date technology had taken over the community. Lack of having an interest in applying for governmental section jobs has resulted in a decreased level of obtaining educational degrees; therefore, they mostly become self-employed. The occupations in private and self-employment sectors are more diverse than in governmental sectors therefore, are more preferred by the Muslim community in Mysore city. Muslim women in Mysore city have less occupational opportunities due to religious restrictions and family impulsion. These are the statements that the current paper will shed light upon.

Keywords: *occupation, diversity, Mysore city, opportunities, Muslim community*

Introduction

The occupation has a greater impact as the class structure and on the social status viewed from this perspective. The concept of the occupational structure has great sociological significance. The primary occupational group of the Muslim community is self-employment. This is reflected in the social structure. India, because of including a collection of religions and religious minorities altogether in itself, especially in this modern era, is a remarkable case of study and consideration. This study also, as anthropological research and in order to get familiar with the religious identity of Muslims of Mysore in particular, has played its role. This is a case study



about the Muslims in Mysore; it has also a historical look upon the formation of the cultural identity of Mysore and Karnataka. During the reign of the Arab traders, they brought Islam into the South Indian state of Karnataka almost as soon as the faith was initiated in Arabia. Along with their faith, Muslims brought many products to the region. The Islamic presence and power in the state reached its greatest heights during the reigns of Hyder Ali and his son Tippu Sultan. Though killed by the British in 1799, Tippu Sultan was one of the only national leaders to defeat the British in battle and is still considered a hero for many Indians. The internal structure of Mysore Muslims as a religion-ethnic group was quite complex. Islam has a deep-rooted influence on present and history of Mysore from North to South with various Muslim kings ruling the province from time to time. In the current research work, the current occupational diversity of the Muslim community of Mysore was investigated to bring out the fact that how is the economic situation of Muslims and how they enter various businesses and moreover, what factors are in direct relationship to the income of Muslims in Mysore city. It has been observed that there are various occupations available in Mysore city which are chosen as temporary or permanent jobs by Muslims. Some of these occupations are in direct relationship with the level of studies of Muslims in Mysore city and some of them do not need any specific level of education or degree. As seen in the study area, the poverty among Muslims and a large number of individuals in each family, make it harder to earn sufficient income for monthly expenditure. In the current era which is the era of technology, social media makes it easier to advertise certain jobs and therefore it makes Muslims more income while they can do several businesses at the same time.

Review of Literature

Hutton, (1946) Occupation is mainly divided into two types; these are primary and secondary occupation. The primary occupation concentrates on converting raw materials into finished products. Secondary occupation offers service of different kinds. In occupational communities, people (those who have the ability and inclination) Try to get a region, where they stay in industrial, locates in this way labor communities are gradually formed. The literature about India provides two contrary views on the effect of the caste system on occupational choice and mobility. According to one school of thought, caste not only



prescribes for each person a hereditary occupation, but also discourages his attempts to surmount the occupational barriers existing for his group.

Treiman (1970) and Matras (1967) made early attempts to separate structure and circulation, mobility led to various formulations of the relationships between (a) intergenerational changes in the occupational composition of the labor force and (b) amounts and patterns of mobility. The most frequently expressed versions of this relationship hold that the market and technological changes-prior and exogenous to the social mobility the regime and involving diminishing agricultural employment and greatly increases in professional, administrative and other non manual employment "forces" enough intergenerational mobility to fill the new jobs.

Mainuddin (2011) in his article "Social, Economic and Political representation of Indian Muslims: A study of West Bengal" tries to explore the socioeconomic condition of Muslims in West Bengal. The paper is based on secondary data. The major challenge was the scarcity of data of this category of people. This study concludes that Muslims were lowest in terms of education development and work participation rate ratio. They were also underrepresented in various aspects. Hence, educational upliftment of Muslims through various programs was suggested.

Basant (2012) in their article "Education and Employment among Muslims in India, An Analysis of Patterns and Trends" highlights Muslim participation in Education and Employment. It is based on Secondary Data. The study reveals that Muslims have a higher perception of unfairness as compared to other groups. The school enrollment rates were among the lowest for Muslims but had improved in recent years. Muslims were dependent on education to improve their socioeconomic status. The condition of Muslims is particularly bad in urban areas while in rural areas they more or less seem to be on par with STs and in some cases SCs which have the lowest educational attainments among all groups. Creation of common public spaces for interaction among SRCs can be facilitated through the state. Private sector partnerships will only solve the problem.

Girija and Basavaraja (2014) in their study attempts to highlight the educational and occupational status of Muslims in Karnataka. They have presented the literacy rate of Muslims. But their status needs to be improved further. Hence, they suggest that instead of formulating policies like Shaadi Bhagya and other



government must take daring steps to introduce other education and Employment Guarantee Programs which would really benefit the community at a large.

Henry and Zbigniew (1987) have studied Occupational mobility patterns are assumed to be an accurate description of the process of social structuration. Through a canonical analysis of occupational mobility tables from nine countries is made to reveal dominant patterns of intergenerational movements. His findings show that, as indexed by mobility patterns, basic aspects of social structuration are cross-nationally invariant. These are: (I) a pointed distinction between farm and non-farm occupations; (a socioeconomic hierarchy of non-agricultural categories; (iii) a distinctive location of the occupational elite; (IV) a white-collar/blue-collar division; (v) an individual location of non-farm proprietors. The penalty calls in question the traditional notion, claiming the strong predominance of the socioeconomic status dimension in the social gap.

The Concept of Occupation

Occupation is an activity that serves as one's regular source of livelihood; a talent. Sociologist, Miller (1960) in his study viewed work as an action performed with the object of achieving some particular objective. This gives two meanings. In the first place the player gets some satisfaction of his physical and psychological need. In the second place, it is not possible to draw a dividing line between play and work. The same activity may be a game for one individual and work for another. Many researchers like, Becker and Tomes (1986), Behrman and Taubman (1985), Haider and Solon (2006) opined that the occupation of a person reflects his socio-cultural position.

The anthropologist conceived with the purpose of as the movement from one occupational category to a different occupation, the person's category consists of physical to non-physical, semi-skillful to skillful and several ranks which consists with the social and cultural prestige. The occupational mobility in the present study context refers to the transition from one occupation to that of another. This may come about in two different guidelines horizontally and vertically.



Factors of Occupation Preference

Among the Muslim community of Mysore, there are certain factors and criterion that determines the occupational preference of the community. In this section, major factors will be explained as observed in various localities of Mysore city.

Educational qualification: It is publicly accepted notion in Mysore that in general, the economic condition of Muslims in Mysore city is not encouraging. As mentioned before, the economic background and education level of Muslims in Mysore are highly correlated. The two factors amplify each other as financial difficulties led to less education and less education hamper economic improvements. Due to the low level of education, a great portion of the Muslim population of Mysore work as unskilled and semi-skilled workers followed by fewer skilled workers and those who own small and medium size businesses. Few of them are professionals. However, as the education level of the new generation has improved, the number of professionals is increasing among them. Certain jobs need adequate education level and since not all Muslims in Mysore have that level of education, therefore they are not able to get the chance to enter such jobs and have to go for other options depending on their budget, expectations and needs. Occupations like medical related jobs, engineering, teaching, programming, etc. are not suitable for Muslims of Mysore especially those who stay in Muslim areas within the social community.

Rules and obligations: Jobs that are preferred by the Muslim community, especially young Muslims are affected by several factors. Such factors exist not only in the Muslim community among Muslims but also among Hindus and followers of other religions. Muslim Mysoorians prefer to enter businesses and choose occupations which do not need much struggle, education, fund, specialty, language skills as well as jobs that makes them travel distant places such as other states or even countries. They prefer to stay in their own community along with other Muslims and live a life as their father did, choose a job as their ancestors have chosen and stay close to Muslim praying locations like mosques, etc. As the collected data shows, a new generation of Mysore Muslims prefer to choose jobs such as handling or owning restaurants, food courts, fruit



shops, butcher shops, juice shops, cloth and shoes selling shops and businesses that don't make them leave the Muslim area.

Interest and ambition: It is a common tradition among Muslims in Mysore city to continue their family occupation; many families are known by their family occupations. However, it is less trendy nowadays, particularly among educated young Muslims. Considering the lower rate of social engagement among Muslim women, it is not surprising that the main earning members of families are men. In many families there is more than one earning member. Usually women and the female children are housewives and/or internal cooperators and are responsible for cooking, cleaning and domestic tasks.

Family compulsion: Sometimes, it has been seen that even though young Muslims are well educated and talented in certain jobs, family will not allow them to enter the jobs that are chosen by them. The data collected through this research shows that many of the youth, Muslims both male and female (especially female) are forced to either stay at home or do the jobs as their fathers tell them to. In this case, even individuals who have sufficient education and skills, should obey their family and enter businesses as their fathers and grandfathers have already chosen. In other cases, as seen in the Mysore Muslim community, in both Shia and Sunni families (especially Sunni), children are taught to go to mosques and perform prayers from a young age to prepare them for the future in such a way that they may not pay attention to the needs and ideas, talents and skills of their children. There were respondents who were very smart, skilled and talented, were able to speak English fluently, but were involved in jobs that are of low credit, without needing any talents and education just because their families forced them to keep working as their fathers used to.

Religious restrictions: Sometimes, it has been seen that even though young Muslims are well educated and talented in certain jobs, family will not allow them to enter the jobs that are chosen by them. The data collected through this research shows that many of the youth, Muslims both male and female (especially female) are forced to either stay at home or do the jobs as their



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Discrimination issue: There are other occupations that are not restricted by religions, but family and culture will automatically stop Muslims from entering them. As the gathered data shows, there were respondents who did not prefer to enter certain jobs because they had no option but to continue their fathers' jobs such as being a butcher, taxi driving, involving in agriculture and farming etc. In the current research and among the respondents, there were individuals who informed the researcher that despite having all the factors and characteristics, the society is not accepting them for certain jobs due to discriminations related to religion, culture, social backgrounds etc. Even though in Mysore the level of social and cultural discriminations is low, but still there are families, industries, institution etc. that only prefer individuals who are from the same cast, religion and cultural-social backgrounds and this fact often rises a problem for Muslims who are seeking jobs across the city.

Muslims and family impulses: Sometimes, it has been seen that even though young Muslims, especially women are well educated and talented in certain jobs, family will not allow them to enter the jobs that are chosen by them. The data collected through this research shows that many of the youth, Muslims both male and female (especially female) are forced to either stay at home or do the jobs as their fathers tell them to. In this case, even individuals who have sufficient education and skills, should obey their family and enter businesses as their fathers and grandfathers have already chosen. In other cases, as seen in the Mysore Muslim community, in



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Community needs and demand: According to the information retrieved from the respondents, there are jobs and businesses that are easy to start, not needing a specific level of education, talent, etc., but the only problem is that the demand for the products of such jobs are low compared to the supply. In this case, Muslim individuals may enter such businesses like producing goods that are used only by a certain number of people, Muslims for example, and since the population of Muslims are not reaching to the level that the business creates satisfactory profit, Muslims should take risks while choosing such jobs. Repairing and mechanical works for expensive vehicles are among those jobs that one can start, but there would not be sufficient customers to make a profit for the business owner.

Communication issue: As the English language is the most important language of India after Hindi which is the national language, every Indian should learn and master English language skills. It is a means of communication among Indians as well as between Indians and foreigners. In today's world when English language is an international language, most of the daily communication, social media, electronic devices, internet, book, schools, financial, legal and business needs an adequate level of proficiency in English language. Muslims of Mysore are not exempted from this fact. If they are not able to communicate in English language, automatically many opportunities will be lost. As seen from the collected data, Muslim individuals who live in Mysore are both talented and unskilled in English language. Those who interact more with foreigners or with people from other cities, states and individuals with different language backgrounds, have come across the fact that without proficiency in English, interaction with them is almost impossible so is earning money by giving services to them.



Conclusion

After going through the gathered data from all the respondents, interviewing them and observation of the study area as well as reading about the previous similar researches on the Muslims of Mysore, the following suggestions for future work as well as to make more job opportunities for Muslims are as follows; There should be more academic institutions for Muslim communities in order to make a more educated generation of Muslims. There should be more practical instructions as well as workshops to introduce various occupations in relation with the characteristics of Muslims. To establish a network between various occupations in order to link certain jobs, to introduce newly emerged jobs to individuals, to establish a network between the suppliers and buyers to find more customers and to expand the business, to create and expand jobs that need speciality for Muslim women, to establish teaching institutions exclusively for women since they want to get well educated in a peaceful environment without breaking religious law and to establish house-organised jobs like handcrafts for women who have limitations to work outside the house.

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