



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### MUSLIMS IN OKHLA VIHAR, NEW DELHI: A SOCIO-ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

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#### ABSTRACT

Muslim population is the highest minority in India by occupying a modest equivalent status as others in the society but it has been degrading due to the uneven opportunities in the fields of education, economic participation, health etc. This manuscript is an attempt to assess the socio-economic conditions of Muslim population in urban areas. A cross sectional investigative survey among the 150 migrant Muslims residing in Okhla Vihar, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi, was conducted in the month of March 2015. The outcome of this survey was very surprising which represents a different level of socio-economic phenomena. About 2/3rd Muslim are having very low income i.e. Rs. 35000 per month and rest of them earn more than Rs 35,000 per month. So, low income and high income definitely lead to worst and better living conditions respectively. The reasons for such conditions have been discussed in the following in-depth analysis.

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#### INTRODUCTION

In some countries, Muslims are the dominated population and some countries gave them an identity of minority. Socio-economic conditions are associated with the size of population in a particular area. According to Pew Research Centre, the total number of Muslim population is 1.6 billion which make up 22.32 per cent, standing at the second position after Christians. The highest share of Muslim population in a country is recorded by Tunisia and Afghanistan, each consists 99.8 per cent which is followed by Iran, Western Sahara, Morocco, Yemen etc. Muslims have become the largest minority by accounting 14.2 per cent of the total population of India in 2011 while it was 13.4 per cent in 2001 Census. The decadal growth of Muslims is 24.6 per cent between 2001 and 2011 which has exceeded the decadal growth of Hindu population i.e. 16.8 per cent. According to the 2011 Census, NCT Delhi has recorded 33 per cent decadal growth of Muslims. The socio-economic conditions of Muslims in urban areas are getting deplorable with increasing numbers of population where rural areas have maintained the consistency in case of decadal growth rate of Muslims. Increasing numbers of population lead to the shrinking of opportunities in economic activities, education, infrastructure, health facilities etc. Lack of education among Muslims contribute a major share in poverty, crimes, unhygienic health conditions, poor

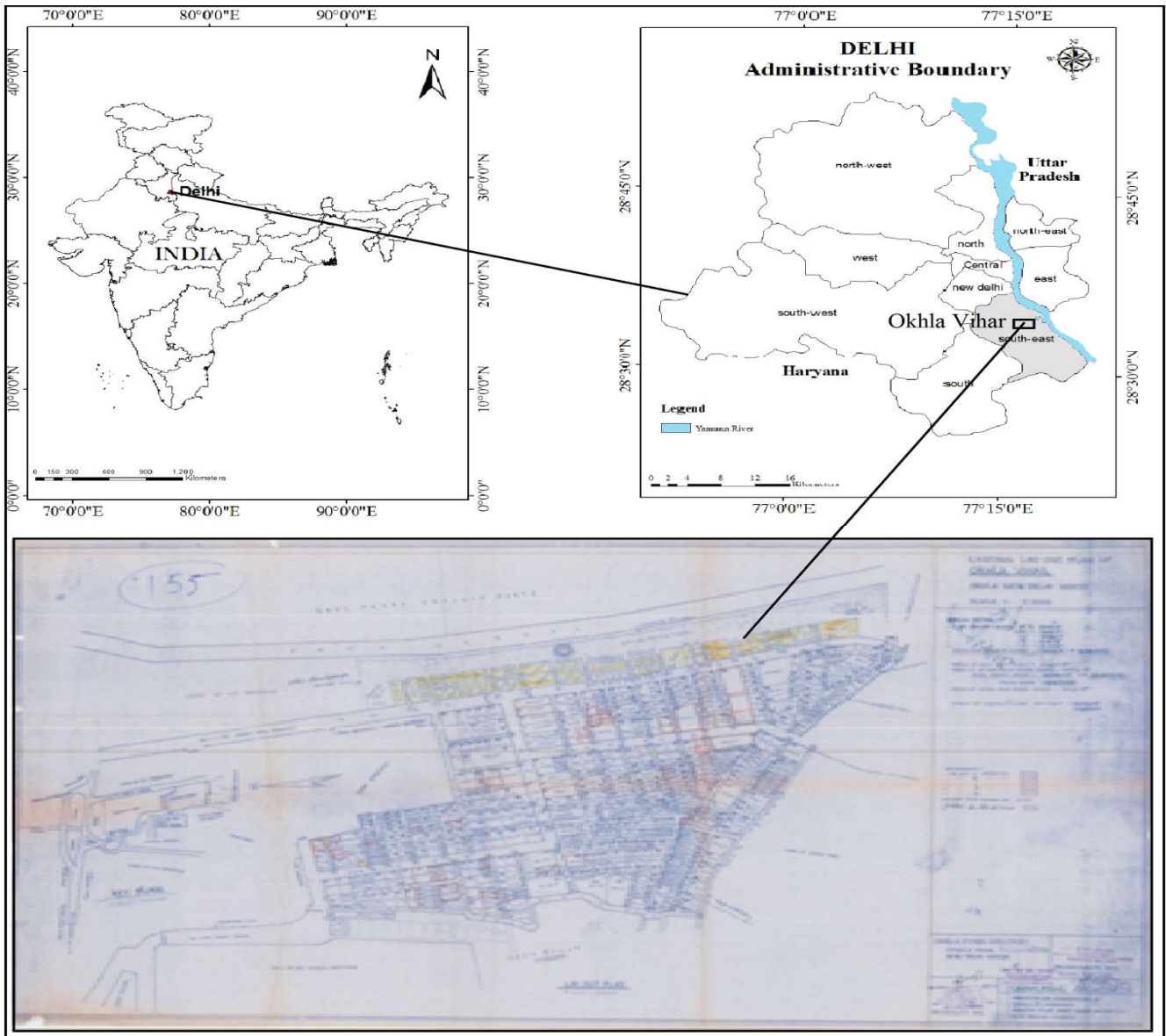
social communication and less participation in economic activities. Moreover, Muslims are considered as so much backward in terms of education of females due to early child marriage, demotivation, crimes against women etc. and all these curses are more predominant in urban areas as compared to rural areas. Delhi is the vulnerable mega city regarding crimes against women irrespective religion, cast, age etc. So, the social and economic conditions of Muslims are degrading day by day with taking into account all the drawbacks prevailing among Muslims in urban areas.

#### Literature review

Mainuddin, M (2011) in his research paper "Socio-economic Conditions and Political Representation of Indian Muslims: A Study of West Bengal" has fixed his focus on socio-economic conditions and political representations which indicate the development level of any community. He has discussed the secondary data with keeping in mind the objective to explore the socio-economic conditions and political representations of Muslims in West Bengal. He has taken some indicators like population, educational attainment, sex ratio, literacy, work participation rate and political participation rate. Siddiqui, F.A, Hussain, N and Hannan, A (2011) in their research paper "Literacy and Work Participation among Muslims in Uttar Pradesh" have attempted to present a demographic and socio-economic profile of the Muslim in Uttar Pradesh including population distribution, work participation, literacy and occupational groups.

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### Location of Okhla Vihar



This paper is entirely based on religious data of 2001 Census. They have proved that increase in inequalities and backwardness directly affects women as well as the overall development of the state in particular and nation in general.

Basant, R (2012) in his work "Education and Employment among Muslims in India-An Analysis of Patterns and Trends" has emphasized the education of Muslims that can be the only way to empower their socio-economic conditions. He has highlighted the pattern of educational and economic participation. His study is based on the secondary sources of data of National Sample Survey (1999-2010). The author has concluded that discrimination, opportunities and supply direct the pattern of educational and economic participation.

Shazli, T and Asma, S (2015) in their combined research paper "Educational vision of Muslims in India: Problems and Concerns" have gave importance education that enhances the overall development including social, economic and cultural development.

They have traced out the reasons the reasons of backwardness of Muslims like economic poverty, family size, lack of link between Madrasa education and modern education, negative attitude towards girl's education. The main objective of their paper is to examine the educational vision of India. The entire study is based on secondary sources of data of Sachar Committee Report and Census report. At last, they have searched the problems and represented suggestions and measures for improving their vision.

Biswas, M.Z.H (2015) in his work "Socio-economic Conditions of Muslims of West Bengal: An Enquiry to Their Social exclusion" has discussed the issue of social exclusion of Muslims. He has also attempted to manifest the fact that Muslims are marginalised, disadvantageous, and socio-economically backward in West Bengal. This paper is also based on secondary sources of data. He has pointed out the fields of social living like government opportunities, education, health, employment and social and physical infrastructure where segregation is found. Finally, the author

has suggested that reservation of Muslims and other effective step should be taken by the government.

### Study area

Delhi is located in northern India between the latitudes of 28°24'17" and 28°53'00" North and longitudes of 76°50'24" and 77°20'37" East. Delhi shares its borders with the States of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Delhi has an area of 1,483 sq. kms. Its maximum length is 51.90 kms and greatest width is 48.48 kms. Delhi is situated on the right bank of the river Yamuna at the periphery of the Gangetic plains. The meandering course of the river Yamuna meets the ridge of Wazirabad to the north; while to the south, the ridge branches off from Mehrauli. The main city is situated on the west bank of the river. Delhi constitutes 10 districts and Okhla Vihar is one of the residential colonies of Okhla assembly constituency in the district of South East Delhi. Okhla Vihar is located at latitude 28°55'49" N and longitude 77°29' E on the western bank of Yamuna River. It is surrounded by Agra Canal to the southern part and Jamia Millia Islamia to the north, Okhla Head to the eastern side and Jasola Vihar to the Western side.

### Physiography

The river Yamuna, the Aravalli range, and the plains in between is made of alluvium deposits of recent formation, dominate the physiography of Delhi. The Delhi Ridge and its four sections, the northern, the central, the south central and the southern constitute the farthest extension of the Aravalli range, its spurs meeting the Yamuna at two points, in the north and the east. Ecologically, the Ridge acts a barrier between the Thar Desert and the plains and slows down the movement of dust and wind from the desert. Okhla Vihar is located very close to river Yamuna and is mainly composed of plain.

### Climate and Soil

The average annual rainfall in Delhi is 714 mm, three- fourths of which falls in monsoon season, i.e., July, August and September. Heavy rainfall in the catchment areas of the Yamuna can result in a flood like situation for the city. During the summer months of April, May and June, temperatures can rise to 40-45 °C; winters are typically cold with temperatures during December and January falling to 4 to 5 °C. February, March, October and November are climatically the best months. Okhla Vihar records more rainfall than average rainfall of Delhi. Apart from this, the entire climatic condition is same as of Delhi. As regard the soil types, western part of Delhi covers heavy rocky soil while soil becomes light and loamy towards bank of Yamuna River. Whole area of Okhla Vihar is also covered with loamy alluvial sandy soil.

### Population

Delhi has been one of the most popular cities in the country since ages. The Population of Delhi according to 2011 census, stands at about 16 million, making it the 18<sup>th</sup> most populated State/UT and second highest populated metropolitan city in India. But according to 2015, the population is over 20 million and is considered as highest populated metropolitan city. The

Union Territory of Delhi is the capital of India and as a result it is a home to considerable amount of population. Literacy rate and sex ratio in India are recorded as 86.34 percent and 866 females per 1000 males respectively. On the other hand, sex ratio in Okhla Vihar is recorded as 925 females per 1000 males and the literacy rate is 82.32 per cent, but female literacy is very low, i.e., 78.25 percent.

### Objectives

- To interpret the growth of Muslim population in NCT Delhi.
- To find out the educational status of Muslims in the study area.
- To examine the socio-economic conditions of Muslims.
- To emphasize upon the relevant issues concerned with Muslims residing in Okhla Vihar.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper is entirely based on primary survey that was done in March, 2015. The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The total 150 households were surveyed in all the five blocks (A, B, C, D and E) in Okhla Vihar. The households were selected randomly from all the five blocks of Okhla Vihar. The present study is also based on secondary sources of data such as census of 2001 and 2011. Simple percentile method has been used and Simple Bar and Pie diagrams have been drawn.

### Socio-economic conditions of respondents

#### Male Female Break-up

**Table 1. Male and Female Break-up of Respondents**

Respondent	Male	Female	Total
No. of Respondent	101	49	150
Percentage	67	33	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

One hundred fifty (150) respondents have been interviewed during the primary survey in the study area. Out of 150 respondents, male and female respondents are 101(67per cent) and 49 (33per cent) respectively.

### Education

**Table 2. Educational Status of Respondent**

Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Illiterate	24	16.6
Pre-primary	0	0
Primary	20	13.3
Upper Primary	34	23.3
Matric/ SSC	25	16.5
H.S/ SSSC/ 10+2	15	10
Graduation	14	10
Post-Graduation	18	16.6
Diploma	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

As far as the educational status of the respondents in Okhla Vihar is concerned, there has been a great variation. Out of the total surveyed respondents, illiterate people constitute 16.6 per cent. Whereas, above 10 percent respondents were educated up to Primary, Upper Primary, Matric and Post graduate, and 10 percent were educated up to Higher Secondary and Graduate. It shows that most of the respondents are educated.

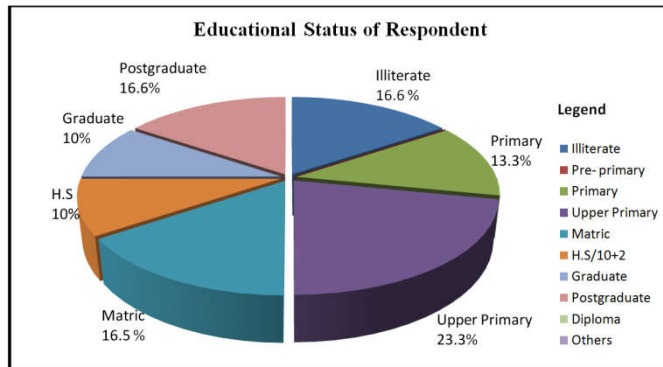


Figure 1. Educational Share of respondents

## Occupation

Table 3. Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Wage Labourer	10	6.67
Shop Keeper	25	16.67
Govt. Services	12	8
Private Jobs	30	20
House Lady	42	28
Student	10	6.66
Unemployed	21	14
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

As regards the occupation, out of the total respondents, house lady constituted the maximum share, i.e., 28 per cent. 20 per cent of the respondents were engaged in private jobs, such as driving, carpentry, plumbing, welders, electricians etc. About 17 per cent of the respondents have their own shops. Wage labourers and students constituted about 7 per cent share. Wage labourers were not present at home, instead they present at work place at the time of interview. On the other hand, 14 per cent reported unemployed status.

## Socio-economic conditions of households

**Male Female Break up:** There is marked difference between male and female numbers. The male population is recorded as 318 persons and female population as 282 persons and their percentage share is 53 and 47 respectively. Accordingly, the sex ratio is 925 females per 1000 males.

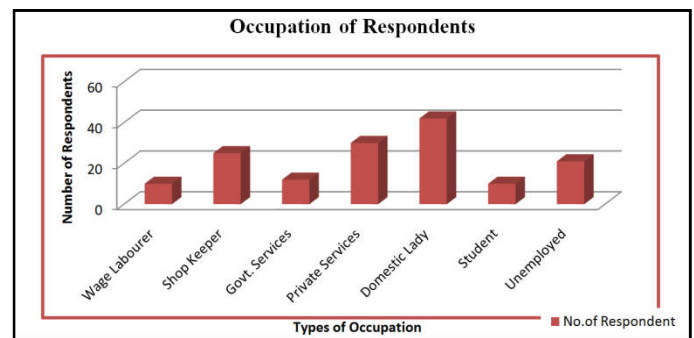


Figure 2. Occupation of Respondents

Table 4. Male Female Break-Up

Member of Households	Male	Female	Total
No. of Members	318	282	600
Percentage	53	47	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

## Education

Education is divided into two parts for Muslim in present days. One is known as modern education and another is religious education. Muslims were so much backward in terms of education and they could not participate rapidly in working sectors earlier but now days it is possible due to modern education. There is an importance of religious and moral education side by side. The table 5 represents the male and female educational status. Females are much more educated before upper primary as compared to males, but at Matric, the percentage of males is more as compared females. Among most of the lower income group, females generally got married at an early age because their family could not afford the educational expenses. Whereas, the High income group, females got education even up to higher level. Out of the total number of residents, about more than 23 per cent people are illiterate and it is followed by upper primary (20.62 per cent), primary (15.7 per cent), Matric (14 per cent), Higher Secondary (8.26 per cent), graduation (8.26 per cent), pre-primary (5.7 per cent), post-graduation (4.13 per cent) and diploma (1.65 per cent).

## Economic Conditions of Households

According to table 6, the maximum percentage of households is under BPL (Below Poverty Line) category, i.e., 50.66 percent. While 43.34 per cent of the households are in the category of APL (Above Poverty Line) and the rest are Red Card holders, i.e., only 6 per cent. It is found that lower income group people are predominant in the study area.

Table 5. Educational Status of Households

Education	No. of Female	Percentage of Female	No. of Male	Percentage of Male	Total Number of Residents	Percentage of Residents
Illiterate	54	19.3	84	25.61	138	23.1
Pre-primary	20	7.01	15	4.57	35	5.7
Primary	49	17.47	45	13.72	94	15.7
Upper Primary	64	22.8	60	18.28	124	20.62
Matric/ SSC	30	10.5	54	16.46	84	14
H.S/ SSSC/ 10+2	30	10.5	20	6.09	50	8.26
Graduation	25	8.77	25	7.62	50	8.26
Post-graduation	5	1.75	20	6.09	25	4.13
Diploma	5	1.75	5	1.52	10	1.65
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

**Table 6. Economic Status of Households**

Economic Level	APL	BPL	Red Card	Total
No. of Households	65	76	9	150
Percentage	43.34	50.66	6	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

**Table 7. Income of Households**

Income of Households (p.m.)	Number of Households	Percentage of Households
Low income group (Below Rs. 35,000)	100	66.67
Middle income group (Rs. 35,000- below 1 lakh)	40	26.67
High Income group (1 lakh and above)	10	6.66
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

**Table 8. Types of House**

House Type	Kachcha	Semi Pucca	Pucca	Apartment	Duplex	Total
Number of Households	25	35	50	40	0	150
Percentage	16.66	23.33	33.34	26.67	0	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

**Table 9. Types of Toilet Arrangement**

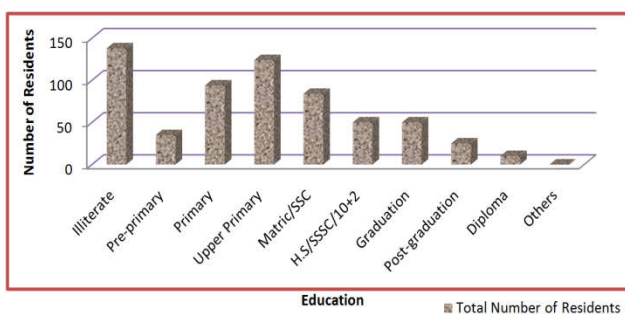
Toilet Type	Private	Common	Open Field	Others	Total
No. of Households	100	30	20	0	150
Percentage	66.67	20	13.33	0	100

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

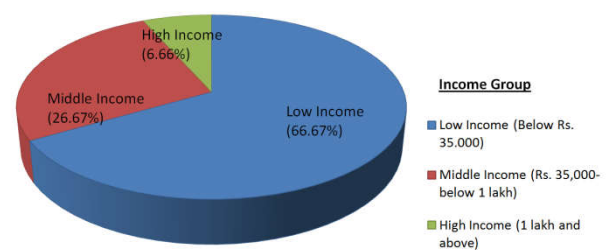
**Table 10. Assets of Households**

Types of Assets	No. of Assets	Percentage with Respect to Total Number of Households
Electric Mixer	20	13.34
Refrigerator	55	36.67
Air Cooler	75	50
Air Conditioner	10	6.67
Washing Machine	45	30
Computer	10	6.67
Two Wheeler	50	33.34
Car	20	13.34
Television	55	36.67

Source: Primary Survey of Okhla Vihar, New Delhi (2015)

**Education of Muslim Residents****Figure 3. Educational Status of Muslim Residents**

All the surveyed 150 households are divided into three categories, such as low income, middle income, and high income groups. According to table 9, 66.67 percent households are under the category of low income group which is followed by middle income group, i.e., 26.67 per cent. While very less percentage of 6.66 is shared by high income group people. Thus one can say that the entire area is very poor as far as income level is concerned.

**Income Groups of Households****Figure 4. Income Groups of Households**

### House Types

According to table 8, the highest percentage of the population is living in pucca houses, i.e., 33.34. While about 27 per cent of people are living in apartments as most of the middle income group prefers to live in apartments. But this is not the real picture, as 17 per cent are still living in kachcha houses or tents which are made of brick, mud and plastic sheet and they are scared of losing their kachcha house and becoming homeless any time.

### Toilet arrangement of Households

As far as the arrangement of toilets in the houses is concerned, the result is positive, i.e., 66.67 percent households have private toilets. While 20 per cent households are sharing their toilets i.e., they have common toilets. On other hand, the sad picture is that 13.33 percent people are still bound to go to open field for defecation.

### Assets of Households

Most of the households generally prefer to have moderate assets like electric mixer, refrigerator, air cooler, washing machine, television and two wheeler but they cannot afford luxury car, computer, air conditioner etc. These differences clearly show the gap between high income and low income group.

### Types of Cooking Fuel

The table 11 clearly shows that 83.33 percent households of middle and high income group are commonly using gas. But on the other hand, 16.67 per cent households who belong to lower income group are still using firewood as a cooking fuel as they are poor and they could not afford the cost of LPG. Such is the situation which still exists in the capital of country after 68 years of independence.

### Current problems of Okhla vihar

There are number of crucial problems prevailing in Okhla Vihar. These problems are mentioned below:

- Unemployment
- Bad condition of roads
- Frequent load shedding of electricity
- Absence of government hospital in the locality
- Overflow of drainage and sewage
- Lack of sanitation facility
- Lack of social communication among the people of the locality
- Less government school for lower income group

### Conclusions

The main findings of the present study are as under:

- Female education is better than male education, but the drop-out rate of females is more as compared to males.
- Muslim female sex ratio is low but better as compared to average of Delhi. It accounts 925 females per 1000 males (approximate).
- Economic condition of Muslims in Okhla Vihar is very poor. Almost 67 per cent Muslim households have the monthly income of less than Rs 35,000 due to lack of economic participation by female family members. Most of the women are bounded within their houses. They are not allowed to participate in any economic activities even in high class family.

- Some of the households are very poor as far as the quality of their house is concerned, i.e., they are living in Kachcha houses.
- More than half of the total population are availing BPL card that means they are lying below poverty line.

### Suggestions

- Government should be aware about providing basic needs to Muslim people as well, such as drinking water, electricity, school for lower and middle class family children, hospital, road connectivity, drainage and sewage system, and sanitation facility etc.
- There must be scholarship and financial assistance to Muslim girls for doing higher studies that would help to minimize the drop-out rate at graduate or postgraduate level.
- There should be few Women Organisations which will give advice to parents regarding the marriage age (not before 18 years), education and caring of their girl child.
- Many households in the study area are having Kachcha houses, i.e., tents, *jhuggis*, small hut etc. So, government should provide free housing facilities for them who cannot afford normal house otherwise they will become homeless soon due to natural calamities.
- The large number of males and females are unemployed since long. In this area, rich people are becoming richer and poor people are becoming poorer day by day. Therefore there should be some more employment opportunities from government as well as non-government side for the poor people.

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