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**Title of the Thesis : Education and Muslim Women: A Qualitative Study of a Muslim Habitation in Seelampur, North East Delhi**

**Key Words : Education, Muslim Women, School, State Institution, Family, Social Institution**

### **ABSTRACT**

This study is a qualitative study based on the school experiences of grade XII Muslim girls of two State funded schools, one government and another a government aided school. The study was undertaken in a Muslim ghetto, Shahbadpur of Seelampur in North East Delhi.

The two highlights of the schools - discipline and good result made them 'good schools' for the parents living in the habitation. The study examined two research questions: how School as a State institution contributes in shaping the Muslim girls' understanding on their own education? How Family as a social institution contributes in shaping the Muslim girls' perception on their own education? The research questions had further six specific research questions. The first research question was studied in the light of Muslim girls' participation in school and classroom practices and how that gets influence their understanding of schooling and the formation of their aspirations for later lives. The second research question focused on the transition from school to home to understand how family dynamics influence girl's aspiration to study further. The available literature on education of Muslim women projects a macro view of the poor educational status of Muslim women and presents her as a monolithic category. There is inadequate literature available on the subjective conditions contributing to the community girls' subjective realities.

As this study required long and consistent engagement with the girl students to evoke responses and understand the phenomena to be studied in schools. The researcher adopted a methodology inspired by ethnographic approach, so participant observations remained the key method, complemented by a set of formal and informal methods. The **first theme**(chapter-5) emerged while analyzing the data on the geographical location of the habitation and pattern of school choice made by the Muslim parents for their children, to understand on how they decide for right school for their children's education. **Second theme**(Chapter- 6) reflected at the School-culture, that emerged out of organizational ethos related to discipline and teaching and teaching learning process for good school functioning. In the study, discipline emerged as the dominant feature that casted its shadow in every aspect of schooling. This contributed in building and affirming notions on teacher, school and teaching-learning process and teacher-student relationship that indicated reaffirming hierarchical relationship. The emerging school culture was preparing the girls for good adulthood. The **third theme**(Chapter- 7) was to understand how life after school at home contributes in pursuing or restructuring their aspirations. The absence of college going culture in the habitation, in spite of improvement in school education enrolment re-establishes the dissociation between the school and the community to address the core issue of poor educational status of Muslim in India. Last chapter threw light on the how 'good school' access to girls has transpired into exposing girls to an extended social space where the girls learn, unlearn, affirm and reaffirm the notions on different aspects of schooling. The process thus fails to instill confidence among girls to prepare them to pursue their aspirations in life. The study threw light on the aspect that how school as State institution and family as social institution sometimes work in consonance and sometimes dissonance depending upon institutional requirements.