

The Shrines for Non Muslims in an Islamic State-- An Islamic Perspective

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Islam is not only a religion of peace itself; rather it advocates and ensures peace in the world. Dispensation of religious freedom for every citizen is a pre-requisite for peace in the world. The Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW) has categorically guided his followers. He (SAW) issued the orders of rights for the non-Muslims when the whole world was under the dark clouds of dictatorship, inhumanity and lawless situation. It was a revolutionary step taken by Islam to provide the best rights to the minorities in the above mentioned situation.

According to the teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW), the minorities have all the human rights. The Islamic states are bound to bestow all the rights prescribed by Quran and Sunnah for the non-Muslims e.g. beliefs, protection and provision of facilities as provided to the Muslims. Due to the prevailing stereotypical image of Islam after 9/11, the Issue is portrayed negatively and it is being mediated that Islam deprives the minorities off their basic rights in Muslim states. This claim is based on false and baseless conjectures.

It is the call of the time to step forward and portray the real image of Islam regarding the rights for non Muslims to have their shrines and placed for worship within an Islamic state. The researcher has tried his best to elaborate the issue and present the real picture of Islamic perspective regarding the shrines for non Muslims within an Islamic state.

The Construction of Shrines for Non-Muslims in An Islamic State

First of all we should have a brief detail of the division of Muslim state as per their administrative perspective. The Muslim jurists have divided the Islamic states into three types:

- 1) The territories conquered by force.
- 2) The territories submitted with agreement.
- 3) The territories built and populated by the Muslims.

Muslim jurists have different stance for all of three types of Muslim territories.

The States Populated by the Muslims

Majority of the Muslim Jurists don't allow building shrines for non-Muslims in a state populated by Muslims.

Iman Kasani writes about it

"واحداث الكنيسة في مصر من امصار المسلمين ممنوع منه شرعا"⁽¹⁾

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- ¹ Sunnah denotes the practices of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which he taught and practically instituted as a teacher. (retrieve from Wikipedia)
 - ² Al Huda International is an Islamic institute. It provides Islamic education which based on Quran and Sunnah. It has many campuses in Pakistan, Canada and USA.
 - ³ Hadith is is a saying or an act or tacit approval or disapproval ascribed either validly or invalidly to the Islamic Prophet Muhammad. (Retrieved by Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadith>)

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acquisition of religious knowledge in females. The research article has elucidated another dimension where religion has been portrayed as a mechanism of security, protection and panacea for all problems. Therefore, it offers an elementary means of developing the necessary shield of cardinal virtues that ensure the integrity and empowerment of the young educated females. In a nutshell, it has lent a purpose to their life.

CONCLUSION:

It can be concluded that several social institutions like mass media, formal education system and family has played a significant role in the motivation of young females towards the study of Islam. Media has increased awareness and curiosity about Islam. It has stimulated young females to study Islam in detail. There was a dearth of Islamic knowledge in the institutions of family and formal education system. In fact, the participants were inspired by educated people in the field of religion who had a sense of religious authority. So, they joined Islamic foundation because it had provided them an opportunity to study Islam by highly qualified religious scholars. This organization offered a chance to collaborate with publicly committed Muslims who are engaged with Islam on a collective, institutionalized level. Hence, all of above mentioned social institutions are important in inculcating religiosity among young educated females.

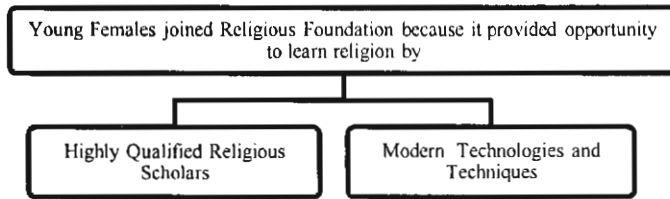


Figure1: Grounded Theory: Factors of Religiosity among young educated females

Grounded Theory: Need and Opportunity Theory of Religiosity

From the above mentioned factors, it can be stated that Media has developed a need among young females to enhance their knowledge about Islam with its practical implementation. This need was accomplished by religious institute or foundation because it has provided an opportunity to young educated females to learn in-depth knowledge of Islam.

Thus, data analysis in the present study has explored the need and opportunity theory of religiosity. In short, it is based on two important findings:

- i. Need developed by Media
- ii. Opportunity provided by religious foundation

It is the viewpoint of researchers that media has developed a need to study Islam among young females by increasing their awareness, curiosity and inspiration. It has also realized them about life after death as well as diminishing spirit of Islam. This need of young females was accomplished by religious foundations. The religious foundation has provided an opportunity to study Islam by highly qualified scholars with modern techniques and technology.

Thus, media and modern religious foundation both has played a crucial role in the religiosity of young educated females.

DISCUSSION:

In the course of this article, the focus was drawn on a quite diverse scope of aspects surrounding the relationship of young educated females with religiosity. It was assessed that media plays a significant role to educate and to motivate young females about Islam in the true letter and spirits. The act of instilling desire and curiosity, socio-religious awareness, stoic realization of death, exposure to religious authority and religious discourses has been facilitated by media. The insufficiency of religious knowledge, the gradual detachment from religious authorities and the stereotypical association of Islam with fundamentalism have facilitated the

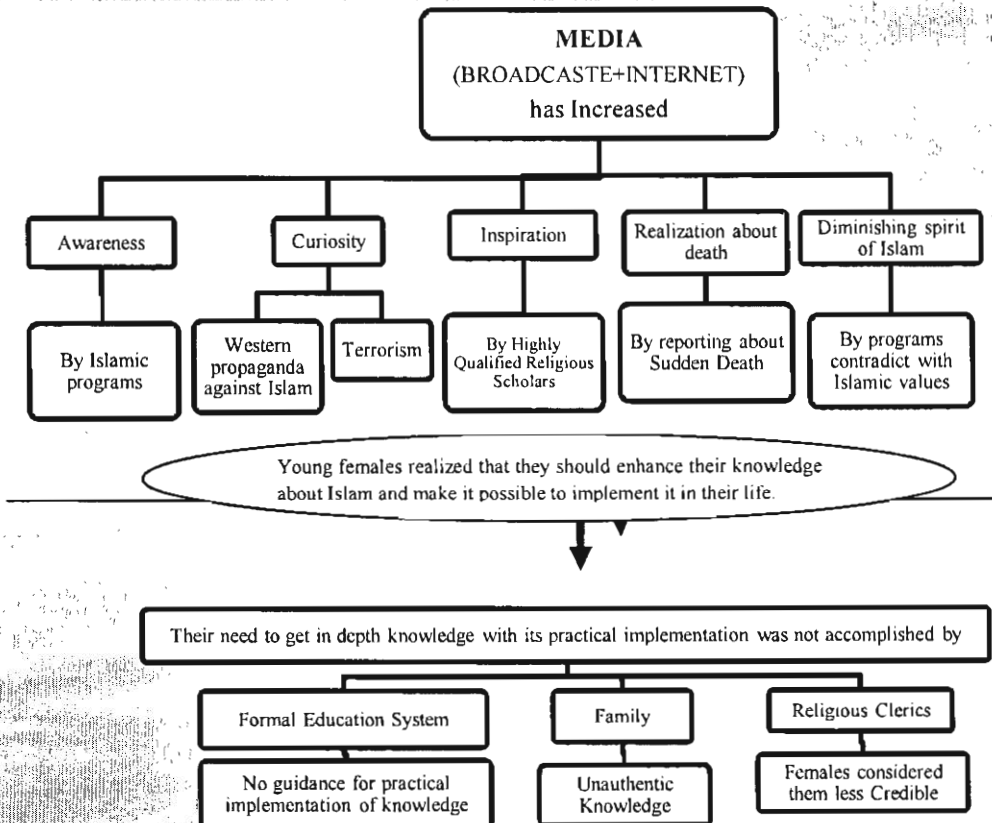
Furthermore, the participants also stated that the religious scholars at Al-Huda tried to explain every Islamic concept with logic. They had adopted an effective teaching methodology. They were soft spoken and did not force students to practice Islam in their daily life.

Thus, this institute has provided a great opportunity to females to study Islam according to the requirements of this modern age.

GROUNDING THEORY:

All of the above mentioned factors contributed in the formulation of a new grounded theory. It is quite evident from above mentioned factors that young females realized through media that they have to increase their knowledge about Islam. The respondents felt that the formal education system, family and religious clerics had not provided sufficient knowledge about their religion. This gap was filled by religious foundations based on highly qualified religious scholars. Therefore, young females joined these religious institutes to get authentic and adequate knowledge about Islam.

The following diagram presents a clear picture of this scenario.



atmosphere filled with divine presence, which the females experience as mostly nonexistent in secularized societies.

Although the formal education system offers a compulsory subject of Islamic Studies but it is based on theoretical concepts only. The formal educational set up did not provide any guidance to the participants about the practical implementation of Islamic principles. Therefore, it was difficult for the young females to practice Islam in their daily life.

It is quite evident from above mentioned narrative that formal education system did not provide sufficient knowledge and guidance as the requirement of young females. Therefore, they moved towards alternative resources like Al-Huda to accomplish their need.

Role of Family:

Family plays a significant role to motivate young females towards religion. Parents want to motivate their children to move towards religion to abstain from social evils in the society. Family does not provide sufficient and authentic knowledge about Islam. Therefore, to gain an in-depth knowledge of Islam in the light of Quran and Ahadis, the young females join religious institutions.

Role of Muslim Clerics:

Similar to the institution of family and formal education, Muslim clerics did not provide sufficient knowledge about Islam. According to the participants, there is no credibility of clerics because they are not competent enough. They memorize few principles only in spite of getting detailed and comprehensive knowledge of Islam. Therefore, they cannot deliberately explain the religious issues according to the requirement of the current age.

It is clear from the above mentioned response that young educated females did not consider clerics as the reliable religious authority. Therefore, they did not want to depend on clerics to study about the religious matters. In this scenario, young females preferred to study Islam by themselves with the help of competent and qualified religious scholars.

Role of Religious Institutes:

Above all, the religious institutes like Al Huda have played a major role in the religiosity of young educated females. This institute was inspiring for the participants because it was based on highly qualified religious scholars. Al Huda offers an engagement in the acquisition and circulation of religious knowledge and for the processes of incorporating piety and self-reformation, which the women deem central for their self-understanding as Muslims. It provides an opportunity to young females to learn about Islam through modern techniques and technology like multimedia and internet.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The research explored numerous themes and sub themes during the data analysis. Below, some of the key findings like role of mass media, formal education system, family and religious foundations have been discussed.

Role of Mass Media:

The role of media in the context of feminine religious configuration is manifold. Different religious discourses highlight varied socio-religious perspectives. They try to empower young females through attainment of correct religious knowledge. They redress the case of religion clearing all ambiguities and doubts. Moreover, they draw a link between knowledge appropriation and transformation of religious authority.

The participants mentioned different religious scholars who signify the aforementioned authority. They are Dr. Zakir Naik, Yusuf Estes, Ahmed Deedat, Bilal Philips, Yusuf Islam, Farhat Hashmi and Nauman Ali Khan during their discussion. These scholars have inspired the educated females and motivated them to learn more about the Islam. They provided a logical explanation for every aspect of religion. The logical explanation is helpful in the understanding of Islamic principles. This logical underpinning has fortified the position of religion and the religious authority itself amongst the hearts of the participants ultimately strengthening their faith.

The misconception and the negative portrayal of Islam have made the participants question and investigate about Islamic value system. It has stimulated them to get involved in the detailed and intricate study of Islamic principles.

The temptation of secular values that are contradictory to the religion, the social evils prevalent in our society and the detachment from religious knowledge have unleashed a pedagogical and emotional turmoil in participants to move towards religiosity. The incidence of sudden deaths as portrayed on media have been instrumental in the evolution of young minds to think about death and life hereafter.

All of the above mentioned aspects depict that media has strong influence on the religiosity of young educated females. It has developed a need among them to know more about their religion. It has also influenced them to practice Islam in their daily life.

Role of Formal Education System :

Formal educational institutions have failed to impart religious education as it contradicts with the materialistic values of the contemporary society. A unified system of formal education along with Islamic values and teachings based on the Holy Quran and Ahadis should be the part of the curriculum. Islamic knowledge should immerse the believer in a permanent