

## ABSTRACT

“Education, Community Organisations and Gender Among the Indo-Muslims of Trinidad, 1917-1962”

Halima-Sa'adia Kassim

This study seeks to explore the evolution of the Indo-Muslim community in Trinidad in relation to education and community organisations and how these impacted upon gender development. The Muslim community is part of, yet separate from the Hindu society. The Indo-Muslim sector, although adamant about cultural and religious retention were making overtures for accommodation. Consequently, within the community there were contradictions.

The study embraces formal and non-formal education systems. The 1930s and the 1940s saw an increase in Islamic and Indian consciousness among the Muslim population. During this period Indians concentrated less on the acquisition of land and more on the acquisition of knowledge as a means of social mobility. Muslims formed part of the movement to establish their own schools. By 1949 the government had authorized the establishment of non-Christian formal schools. In fact the first non-Christian school to be granted official recognition was a Muslim School, the El Socorro Islamia in 1949. The Muslim bodies began their co-

educational primary school building projects from 1952 and single sex secondary schools in 1960s. The development of these schools saw increased literacy.

The increasing trend towards formal education did not witness a decline in the existence of non-formal institutions. There were also growing demands on the part of newly educated females for employment. Employment and education provided socialization into the values of the wider society and as such, the institution of marriage underwent changes. Thus this thesis seeks to link education, Islamic consciousness and Western socialization and to ascertain the effects which these had upon Muslims.

**Key Words:** Halima-Sa'adia Kassim, education, community organisations, gender, religion, Indo-Muslims, retention, accommodation.