

# **WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA: THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE**

**By Dr Abroo Aman Andrabi**

My talk to you this time is about a subject which is very important to every human being. It is about education of a woman. The subject is important because this can be addition to social and economical development. Women constitute almost half of the population of the world. To acquire a better quality of life, education is highly essential for women. It is the best way to improve the health, nutrition and economic status of a household that constitute a micro unit of a nation economy. The word “education” implies the characteristics of both types of knowledge, material as well as spiritual. The current population of India in 2011 is 1,210,193,422 (1.21 billion).

Table 1

<b>Total Population of India in 2011</b>	<b>1,210,193,422</b>	<b>(1.21 billion).</b>
<b>Total Male Population</b>	<b>623,700,000</b>	<b>(623.7 million)</b>
<b>Total Female Population</b>	<b>586,500,000</b>	<b>(586.5 million)</b>

Women in India constitute 50% of the country’s human resources and their contributions are vital for the nation’s progress. Women achieve far less education that of men. In all the years, male literacy rates were higher than that of female literacy rates. In the year 1981, the male literacy rate was 56 per cent while the same for female was

only 29.75 per cent. In the year 2001, the male literacy rate has reached to 76 per cent and female literacy rate to 54 per cent. As per the Census report 2001, the literacy rate of women is 54.16 per cent and that of men is 65.38 per cent and as per the Census report 2011, Literacy rate in India is just 74.04% in 2011. 82.14 males per 100 male are literate, and only 65.46 out of 100 females are literate. There has been a sincere effort to improve the education attainment of women by both government and voluntary organizations. The changes in the policies and infrastructural supports on primary, secondary and higher education reflect the initiatives of the Government of India towards women education.

This is a fact that literacy represents a measure of educational status of any community. Literacy rate is estimated as the percentage of people educated to the respective total population. Though literacy is very important for both males and females, there exists a wide gap between both male and the females in India. The trends in total literacy rates for both male and female in India between the years 1981 and 2001 are given in table 2.

**Table 2**

**Trends in Literacy Rates male/female in India: 1981-2001**

<b>Particulars</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>56.37</b>	<b>64.13</b>	<b>75.85</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>29.75</b>	<b>39.29</b>	<b>54.16</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>43.56</b>	<b>52.20</b>	<b>65.38</b>
<b>Divergence (Male-Female)</b>	<b>26.62</b>	<b>24.84</b>	<b>21.69</b>

Source: Registrar General of India, Census of India, for relevant years.

The total literacy rate in India during the year 1981 was 43.56 per cent which increased steadily and reached to 65.38 per cent by 2001. Though there is an increase in the literacy rate, it provides us a clue that there is still scope for further developing the literacy levels as the maximum achievable limit is 100.

When we looked at the literacy rate by male and female separately, interesting observations could be made. In all the years, male literacy rates were higher than that of female literacy rates. In the year 1981, the male literacy rate was 56 per cent while the same for female was only 29.75 per cent. In the year 2001, the male literacy rate has reached to 76 per cent and female literacy rate to 54 per cent. The divergences in the literacy rates between sexes indicate the difference in the growth rate of literacy levels between males and females over a period of time. In our analysis, the divergence in the literacy rates between the male and female showed a declining trend from 26.62% to 21.69% between 1981 and 2001, indicating the reduction in the gap between literacy rates between male and females over time. This can be attributed to the faster growth of female literacy rate compared to that of males during the period of reference.

A strong commitment towards education for all has been expressed by the government of India. However, India still has one of the lowest female literacy rates in Asia. In 1991, less than 40 percent of the 330 million women aged 7 and over were literate, which means today there are over 200 million illiterate women in India. This low level of literacy not only has a negative impact on women's lives but also on their families' lives and on their country's economic development.

Numerous studies show that illiterate women have high levels of fertility and mortality, poor nutritional status, low earning potential, and little autonomy within the household. A woman's lack of education also has a negative impact on the health and well being of her children. For instance, a recent survey in India found that infant mortality was inversely related to mother's educational level. Additionally, the lack of an educated population can be an impediment to the country's economic development.

Although literacy levels are low, there has been progress in improving educational attainment for both men and women in India over the last several decades. The literacy rate went up from 64.83% in 2001 to 74.04% in 2011 showing an increase of 9.21%. Interestingly, female literacy level saw a significant jump as compared to males between 2001-2011. The female literacy in 2001 was 53.67 per cent and it has gone up to 65.46 per cent in 2011. The male literacy, in comparison, rose from 75.26 to 82.14 per cent.

**Table 3**

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Total literacy rate</b>	<b>64.83%</b>	<b>74.04%</b>
<b>Male literacy</b>	<b>75.26%</b>	<b>82.14%</b>
<b>Female literacy</b>	<b>53.67%</b>	<b>65.46%</b>

Kerala, with 93.91 per cent, continues to occupy the top position among States as far as literacy is concerned, while Mizoram's Serchhip district (98.76 per cent) and Aizawl (98.50 per cent) recorded the highest literacy rates among districts. Madhya Pradesh's Alirajpur district has the lowest literacy rate of 37.22 per cent as also

the naxalite-affected Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, where the literacy rate is 41.58 per cent.

Lakshadweep followed Kerala with a literacy level of 92.28 per cent, while Bihar remained at the bottom of the ladder at 63.82 per cent, followed by Arunachal Pradesh at 66.95 per cent. Ten States and Union Territories, including Kerala, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Tripura, Goa, Daman and Diu, Puducherry, Chandigarh, NCT of Delhi and Andaman and Nicobar Islands achieved a literacy rate of above 85 per cent, which met the Planning Commission's target set to be achieved by 2011-12. The gap of 21.59 percentage points recorded between male and female literacy rates in 2001 census has reduced to 16.68 percentage points in 2011. The Planning Commission is targeting a reduction of this gap to 10 percentage points by 2011-12.

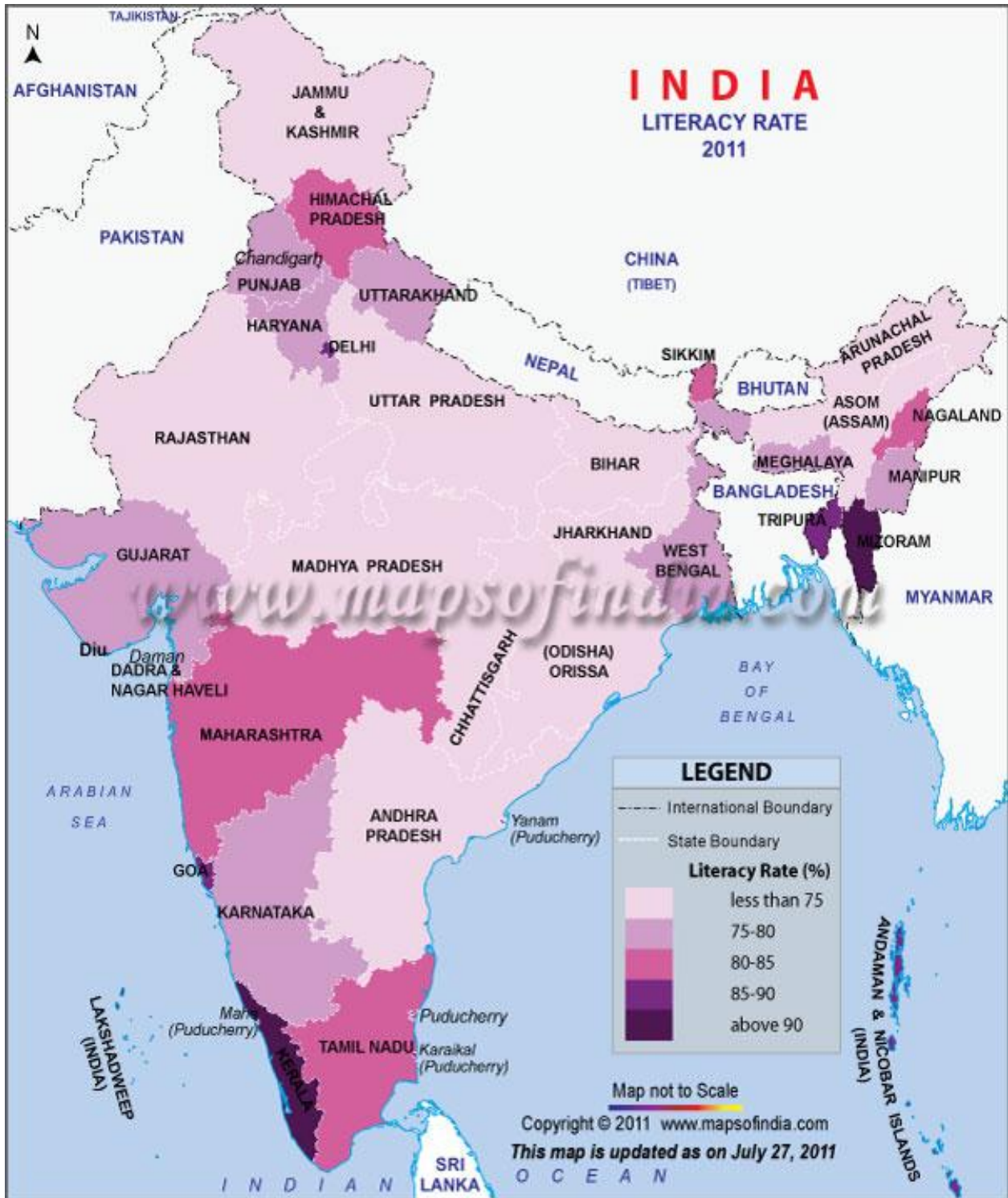
Therefore, the provisional data of the 2011 census gave the country some good tidings on the literacy front, as the literacy level has increased by 9.21 percentage points in the past decade to touch 74.04 per cent. Literates constitute 74 per cent of the total population aged seven years and above and the data shows 26 per cent of the population is still unlettered. The literacy rate went up from 64.83 per cent in 2001 to 74.04 per cent in 2011 — showing an increase of 9.21 percentage points. Significantly, the female literacy level saw a significant jump as compared to males.

A significant milestone reached in the 2011 census is the fall in the number of illiterate persons by 31,196,847. Of the total decrease in the number of illiterates, women comprise 17,122,197 and men were 14,074,650. It was also encouraging to note that out of a total of 217,700,941 literates added during the decade, females outnumbered males by 110,069,001 to 107,631,940.

**Table 4****Literacy Rate In Indian State: Census 2011**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Literacy rate (2011 Census)</b>	<b>Literacy rate- Male (2011 Census)</b>	<b>Literacy rate-Female (2011 Census)</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands</b>	<b>86.3%</b>	<b>90.1%</b>	<b>81.8%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Andhra Pradesh</b>	<b>67.7%</b>	<b>75.6%</b>	<b>59.7%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	<b>67.0%</b>	<b>73.7%</b>	<b>59.6%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Assam</b>	<b>73.2%</b>	<b>78.8%</b>	<b>67.3%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Bihar</b>	<b>63.8%</b>	<b>73.5%</b>	<b>53.3%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Chandigarh</b>	<b>86.4%</b>	<b>90.5%</b>	<b>81.4%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Chattisgarh</b>	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>81.5%</b>	<b>60.6%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli</b>	<b>77.7%</b>	<b>86.5%</b>	<b>65.9%</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Daman &amp; Diu</b>	<b>87.1%</b>	<b>91.5%</b>	<b>79.6%</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Delhi</b>	<b>86.3%</b>	<b>91.0%</b>	<b>80.9%</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Goa</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>92.8%</b>	<b>81.8%</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Gujarat</b>	<b>79.3%</b>	<b>87.2%</b>	<b>70.7%</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>85.4%</b>	<b>66.8%</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	<b>83.8%</b>	<b>90.8%</b>	<b>76.6%</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Jammu and Kashmir</b>	<b>68.7%</b>	<b>78.3%</b>	<b>58.0%</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Jharkhand</b>	<b>67.6%</b>	<b>78.5%</b>	<b>56.2%</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Karnataka</b>	<b>75.6%</b>	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>68.1%</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Kerala</b>	<b>93.9%</b>	<b>96.0%</b>	<b>92.0%</b>

19	Lakshadweep	92.3%	96.1%	88.2%
20	Madhya Pradesh	70.6%	80.5%	60.0%
21	Maharashtra	82.9%	89.8%	75.5%
22	Manipur	79.8%	86.5%	73.2%
23	Meghalaya	75.5%	77.2%	73.8%
24	Mizoram	91.6%	93.7%	89.4%
25	Nagaland	80.1%	83.3%	76.7%
26	Orissa	73.5%	82.4%	64.4%
27	Puducherry	86.5%	92.1%	81.2%
28	Punjab	76.7%	81.5%	71.3%
29	Rajasthan	67.1%	80.5%	52.7%
30	Sikkim	82.2%	87.3%	76.4%
31	Tamil Nadu	80.3%	86.8%	73.9%
32	Tripura	87.8%	92.2%	83.1%
33	Uttar Pradesh	69.7%	79.2%	59.3%
34	Uttarakhand	79.6%	88.3%	70.7%
35	West Bengal	77.1%	82.7%	71.2%
-	Whole INDIA	74.04%	82.14%	65.46%





## District wise Literacy rate in India - 2011 census

Top five districts according to literacy rate in India are:

1. Serchhip in Mizoram has the highest literacy rate of 98.76%.
2. Aizawl in Mizoram has a literacy rate of 98.50%.
3. Mahe in Puducherry(U/T) has a literacy rate of 98.35%
4. Pathanamthitta in Kerala has a literacy rate of 96.93%
5. Kottayam in Kerala has a literacy rate of 96.40%

Table 5:

	Top five districts	Highest literacy rate
1	Serchhip in Mizoram	98.76%.
2	Aizawl in Mizoram	98.50%.
3	Mahe in Puducherry(U/T)	98.35%
4	Pathanamthitta in Kerala	96.93%
5	Kottayam in Kerala	96.40%

Bottom five districts according to literacy rate in India are:

1. Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh has the lowest literacy rate of only 37.22%.
2. Bijapur in Chhattisgarh has a literacy rate of just 41.58%.
3. Dakshin Bastar Dantewada in Chhattisgarh has a literacy rate of 42.67%
4. Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh has a literacy rate of 44.45%.

5. Nabarangapur n Orissa has a literacy rate of 48.20%

Table 6:

	Bottom five districts	Lowest literacy rate
1	Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh	37.22%.
2	Bijapur in Chhattisgarh	41.58%.
3	Dakshin Bastar Dantewada in Chhattisgarh	42.67%
4	Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh	44.45%.
5	Nabarangapur n Orissa	48.20%

Top five districts according to Male literacy rate in India are:

1. Mahe in Puducherry(U/T) with 99.24% male only literacy rate.
2. Serchhip in Mizoram with 99.24% male only literacy rate.
3. Aizawl in Mizoram with 99.01% male only literacy rate.
4. Alappuzha in Kerala with 97.90% male only literacy rate.
5. Pathanamthitta in Kerala with 97.70% male only literacy rate.

Table 7:

	Top five districts according to male literacy	Highest literacy rate
1	Mahe in Puducherry	99.24%
2	Serchhip in Mizoram	99.24%
3	Aizawl in Mizoram	99.01%
4	Alappuzha in Kerala	97.90%

5	Pathanamthitta in Kerala	97.70%
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**Bottom five districts according Male only to literacy rate in India are:**

1. Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh with 43.58% male only literacy rate.
2. Bijapur in Chhattisgarh with 51.42% male only literacy rate.
3. Dakshin Bastar Dantewada in Chhattisgarh with 52.69% male only literacy rate.
4. Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh with 54.65% male only literacy rate.
5. Kurung Kumey in Arunachal Pradesh with 57.28% male only literacy rate.

**Table 8:**

	Bottom five districts according to male literacy	Lowest literacy rate
1	Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh	43.58%
2	Bijapur in Chhattisgarh	51.42%
3	Dakshin Bastar Dantewada in Chhattisgarh	52.69%
4	Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh	54.65%
5	Kurung Kumey in Arunachal Pradesh	57.28%

**Top five districts according to Female only literacy rate in India are:**

1. Serchhip in Mizoram with 98.28% female only literacy rate.
2. Aizawl in Mizoram with 98.00% female only literacy rate.

3. Mahe in Puducherry(U/T) with 97.61% female only literacy rate.
4. Pathanamthitta in Kerala with 96.26% female only literacy rate.
5. Kottayam in Kerala with 95.67% female only literacy rate.

**Table 9:**

	<b>Top five districts according to Female literacy</b>	<b>Highest literacy rate</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Serchhip in Mizoram</b>	<b>98.28%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Aizawl in Mizoram</b>	<b>98.00%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Mahe in Puducherry(U/T)</b>	<b>97.61%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Pathanamthitta in Kerala</b>	<b>96.26%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Kottayam in Kerala</b>	<b>95.67%</b>

**Bottom five districts according to Female only literacy rate in India are:**

1. Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh with 30.97% female only literacy rate.
2. Bijapur in Chhattisgarh with 31.56% female only literacy rate.
3. Dakshin Bastar Dantewada in Chhattisgarh with 32.88% female only literacy rate.
4. Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh with 34.29% female only literacy rate.
5. Shrawasti in Uttar Pradesh with 37.07% female only literacy rate.

**Table 10:**

	<b>Bottom five districts according to Female literacy</b>	<b>Lowest literacy rate</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh</b>	<b>30.97%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Bijapur in Chhattisgarh</b>	<b>31.56%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Dakshin Bastar Dantewada in Chhattisgarh</b>	<b>32.88%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh</b>	<b>34.29%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Shrawasti in Uttar Pradesh</b>	<b>37.07%</b>

These tables show that there is a need of education for women. In India women education never got its due share of attention. From the medieval India women were debarred from the educational field. According to medieval perception women need just household education and this perception of medieval India still persists in villages of India even today. The girls of medieval India and especially Hindu society were not given formal education. They were given education related to household chores. But a famous Indian philosopher 'Vatsyayana' wrote that women were supposed to be perfect in sixty four arts which included cooking, spinning, grinding, knowledge of medicine, recitation and many more.

In some villages girls are supposed to fulfill domestic duties and education becomes secondary for them whereas it is considered to be important for boys. Although scenario in urban areas has changed a lot and women are opting for higher education but majority of Indian population residing in villages still live in medieval times. The people of villages consider girls to be curse and they do not want to waste

money and time on them as they think that women should be wedded off as soon as possible.

The main reason for not sending girls to school is the poor economic condition. Lack of female teachers is another potential barrier to girls' education. Girls are more likely to attend school and have higher academic achievement if they have female teachers. This is particularly true in highly gender-segregated societies such as India. Currently, women account for only 29 percent of teachers at the primary level (MHRD, 1993). The proportion of teachers who are female is even lower at the university level, 22 percent of instructors (CSO, 1992). These proportions reflect the historic paucity of women with the educational qualifications to be teachers. However, the proportions are likely to change in the future as women currently account for nearly half of those being trained as teachers.

Another barrier to education in India is the lack of adequate school facilities. Many states simply do not have enough classrooms to accommodate all of the school-age children. Furthermore, the classrooms that are available often lack basic necessities such as sanitary facilities or water. In Uttar Pradesh, a recent survey found that 54 percent of schools did not have a water supply and 80 percent did not have latrines. Lack of latrines can be particularly detrimental to girls' school attendance. In some states, the inadequate supply of classrooms is further compounded by the large increase in the number of school-age children due to high population growth rates. For instance, in 1993, Uttar Pradesh needed to build 284,000 additional classrooms to achieve full enrollment of children age 6 to 10 (The World Bank, 1997b). The need for new classrooms will persist as the population continues to grow. On the other hand,

in states where population growth rates are low (e.g., Kerala), the number of primary-age children is beginning to decline and state governments can focus on improving the quality of education rather than increasing the supply of classrooms.

The lack of education is the root cause for many other problems. An uneducated mother cannot look after her children properly and she is not aware of the deadly diseases and their cure, which leads to the poor health of the children. An uneducated person does not know about hygiene this lack of knowledge of hygiene may lead to poor health of the whole family.

In past women of India used to write, but their work did not get the recognition. Today they are getting their dues. Arundhati Roy, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Shobhaa De, Jhumpa Lahiri are famous names in Indian literature. Not just in India now these women are recognized all over the world. Arundhati Roy has been awarded with the Booker Prize of 1997 for her work "God of Small Things". Kiran Desai has been given Booker Prize of 2006 and Jhumpa Lahiri got recognition in the form of Pulitzer prize.

It is only because of the education that Indian women have achieved great laurels for the nation in every sport. Whether it is cricket or hockey India have national women team for every game. Indian women cricket team has won Asia Cup of 2004 and 2005 and made country proud. Some women sports icons of India are:

- P.T. Usha (Athletics)
- Kunjarani Devi (Weight lifting)
- Diana Edulji (Cricket)
- Sania Mirza (Tennis)

- Karnam Malleshwari (Weight lifting)

In fact:

- India has world's largest number of professionally qualified women.
- India has largest population of working women in the world.
- India has more number of doctors, surgeons, scientists, professors than the United States.

The education of women especially in the higher stages has made available to the country a wealth of capacity that is now largely wasted through lack of opportunity. It is through education that Indian women are able to increase measure to culture, the ideals and activities of the country. Also largely high enrollment in primary school indicates that the old time apathy of masses is breaking down, which leads to empowerment of a girl and later of women.

Jawaharlal Nehru had once said; *“Educate a man and you educate one person. Educate a woman and you educate the whole family.”*

In reality, woman is the person who has in her hands the capacity, the instinct and the natural way of life to prepare, and to bring up the future leaders to mankind. She is the one who molds the child to become the best or the worst leader in the world. If a girl is educated then she can also opt for a job if the need arises. So she would not be considered as a burden on the family. This would also control female infanticide. Also infant mortality is inversely related to the educational level of the mother. For example, in Kerala female literacy ratio is highest (87.86%) and has lowest infant mortality rate with



highest life expectation. On the other hand in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar where female literacy ratio is lowest, life expectation is also lowest. This is one of the main reasons as to why female education is necessary in India. If a woman is educated then it will build self-confidence among them and this will result in empowerment. If women are educated and empowered they will also be a source of income for the family. This will not only raise the standard of living of the family but also the economic condition of the country. After all the economic conditions of a country will grow only if all the citizens are prosperous.

### **Women Education in Islamic Perspective:**

Now let us see what Islam says about the education of women. Education and knowledge are highly emphasized in all religions as it is in Islam. At the beginning of Islam it is reported that only 17 people in Makkah could read and write. Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) encouraged his followers to seek knowledge even in China (a distance place).

According to one of his traditions the duty, not the right,

*“the duty of education, is a duty on every Muslim, man and woman.”*

A study of the life of the Prophet of Islam tells us that education, whose actual goal from the Islamic point of view is the arousal of human awareness, is as essential for women as it is for men. Indeed, it is only aware men and women who can conduct the practical matters of life smoothly. There are such traditions as tell us that the Prophet's conversations with his wife Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) were aimed at educating her. Aishah says that when the Prophet of Islam would get up at night after a few hours of sleep, he

would converse with her at length in that peaceful atmosphere. (Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim) This course of informal education, continuing uninterruptedly, even while traveling, so benefited Aishah that she became the most distinguished authority on religious knowledge. She survived the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) for a full fifty years, during which period she remained a truly valuable source of religious knowledge. Her house served as a school of religious learning. As in the first era of Islam, academic activity centered mostly on the Hadith and Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet's Companions. It is said that 'Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her), herself handed down to posterity a substantial portion (2210 traditions) of the vast whole of Islamic knowledge. Among her pupils were such eminent scholars as 'Urwah ibn Zubayr, Sa'id ibn Mussayyib, 'Abdullah ibn 'Amir, Mashrug, 'Ikramah and 'Alaqamah. A jurist of high caliber, she used to explain the wisdom and background of each tradition that she described.

The next generation of women in their turn handed down the traditions, which they had heard, at first hand from the Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) or his Companions or from religious scholars to whom they were related. History shows that Muslim women were largely engaged in the field of education. Almost all the Muslim houses functioned as primary schools (madarsa). This tradition was practiced in almost all Muslim communities well into the 20th Century when the modern system of education took over this function. In the biographies of the narrators of Hadith literature, mention is made of the far-reaching effect of the academic services of women. For example, Imam Bukhari, whose al-Jaami' as-Sahih is by far the most authentic source of Hadith

learning, set off, when he was 14 years of age, to acquire knowledge from far distant scholars: if he was in a position to appreciate the lessons given by the great teachers of the time, it was because his mother and sister had given him a sound education at home. It is said that Imam ibn Jauzi, the famous religious scholar, received his primary education from his aunt.

Ibn Abi Asiba's sister and daughter were experts in medicine – the lay doctors of their time. And among the Hadith teachers of Imam ibn Asakir, several women teachers are mentioned. An example of a woman making a key contribution to the spread of religious learning is that of the daughter of Imam Abu Ja'far, Tahavi (220-321 A.H) the famous traditionist whose book, Sharh Ma'ani al-Athar, is regularly included in the syllabuses of Arabic schools. He dictated his book of traditions to his daughter and, as he read out the Hadith, he would explain its finer points to her and then she would write it all down. This is one of finest examples of a woman helping her family members in matters of religion.

*“Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.”*

The first word revealed of the Quraan was "Iqra" READ! Seek knowledge! Educate yourselves! Be educated (Male and Female).

The Verse 33, chapter 35 of the Qura'n reflects the unity of all believers and their identical moral and spiritual obligations,

‘For Muslim men and women,

For believing men and women,

For devout men and women,

For true [truthful] men and women,

For men and women who are Patient and constant,

For men and women who humble themselves,

For men and women who give in charity,  
For men and women Who fast [and deny themselves],  
For men and women who Guard their chastity, and  
For men and women who Engage much in God's praise,  
For them has God prepared Forgiveness and a great reward.'

The Holy Quran is no barren in this context. In Quran alone there are 704 verses in which either the word ilm (knowledge) or the words of the same derivation are used in the following order:- a'lam 49 times, al-ilm 80 times, a'lamu 11 times, alim 162 times, a'lim 13 times, ilman 14 times, i'lamu 27 times, ma'lum and ma'lumat 13 times, ya'lamun 85 times, ya'lamu 93 times, ta'lamun 56 times. Pen and books are essential aids of knowledge, and for them, the qalam occurs 2 times and al-kitab 230 times. In addition, a number of words related to writing, like kataba, katabna, kutiba, katib, yaktubu, naktubu are used in a number of verses. The total number of the Quranic verses using the words related to writing is 319, and the word kitab for the Quran is used on 81 different occasions. This is enough to show to what extent knowledge and the means of its acquisition are emphasized in the Quran. Quran does not address men alone, it address both men and women.

A woman's role on earth is not limited only to childbirth. According to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) woman is very important in the society. She is to play a very effective role as a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister, an aunt and a grandmother. She is the one who molds, who trains and who makes the future generation and the future leader to mankind. Therefore, she has to be treated kindly and to be trained properly.

During the reign of caliph Umar (May Allah be pleased with him), women participated in law making. Umar made a proposal of a certain regulation concerning marriage. An educated woman in the mosque stood up and said, "umar, you can't do that." Umar did not tell her, "Shut up, you are a woman; you have nothing to do with politics" He asked, "Why?" She made her argument on the basis of Qur'an. In front of everybody, he stood up and said, "The woman is right and I (Umar) is wrong," and he withdrew his proposal. That was the spirit in the early days of Islam. Islam has give women to acquire knowledge:

**"To acquire knowledge is binding upon all Muslims, whether male or female.' (Sunan Ibn Mâjah, Sunan Al-Bayhaqî)**

Acquire knowledge, because he who acquires it, in the way of the Lord, performs an act of piety; who speaks of it praises the Lord; who seeks it, adores God, who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms; and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; lights the way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our companion in solitude, it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends; it serves as armor against our enemies. With knowledge the creatures of God rises to the heights of goodness and to noble position, associates with the sovereigns in this world and attains the perfection of happiness in the next.

Women enjoy complete freedom in Islam. Throughout the Islamic period, women were allowed to visit mosques and say their prayers either in congregation or individually. Moreover, throughout the history of Islam, women have been free to perform significant roles

and have demonstrated not only the vast arena which Islam affords them for the performance of noble and heroic deeds, but also the exaltedness of the position accorded to women in Islamic society.

*"Women are the other halves of men."*

Education in Women under Islamic Law is the key to the success of society. In Brief you cannot have a well decent and educated society without educated Female. If Females are left behind then it will lead the society poor and backwards, what is happening in most parts of the world. If Women are left uneducated the whole race of humans may be left uneducated. Wherever Allah mentioned about education, it also includes Female as well. Female is the principal part in a family success. "RABBEE - ZIDNEE - ILMAA" is mentioned in the Quran is for both men and women to get education more and more.

So acquisition of knowledge is an obligation as established by the Holy Qur'an and the Sunna. All schools of thought also agree to the fact that an outright rejection of an obligation is infidelity. Therefore if anyone considers the women education as prohibited irrespective of whatever justification he may present, he is committing an outright rejection of an obligation. Such type of baseless religious edits, which end up disfiguring the real face of Islam, putting up concocted picture and causing the ridicule of Islamic teachings, should be discouraged.

## **Conclusion:**

"Education is a liberation factor. It's something no one can take away from you. And really, with education, you can empower yourself," Islamic history has proved that lack of women education affects the general health of the family. Besides general health inculcating good

moral values in her children would be one of the top priorities of any educated mother. In the long run, well brought up children are assets which any society would love to possess. This is how the civilization progresses and grows.

India did extremely well on literacy front, which is an encouraging development. But it is also clear that much more must be done at the governmental level to provide women equal opportunity in education and to ensure that they benefit from full education, the eradication of illiteracy, and vocational training. The central and state governments should ensure the implementation of primary, secondary education programmes for women. A survey of availability of textbooks in minority languages should be undertaken, after which printing and distribution of textbooks should be taken up by state governments. The central and state governments must take measures to ensure the availability of teachers for girls, the appointment of women teachers. Development of women will not only be a social benefit but also an economic benefit. It increases the Gross national product, National Income of the country; it will also increase the per capita income. Female education is one of the most vital needs in today's world since it will help the country progress. Education does not only mean literacy but literacy is definitely one of the main factors affecting education and development of women. One of the main factors affecting the education and development is literacy.

The overall success of women's education requires changes in the conduct and actions of all major actors, including the government, policy officials and educational authorities. Among the major actions required at high government level are:

- Establish a national commission for women's social affairs to participate in high-level decision-making;
- Implement a National Educational Strategy for girls and women that takes into consideration women's social and economic needs;
- Revise, evaluate and reform women's curricula for all phases of education; it should emphasize foreign language, mathematics, sciences, health, computer sciences, information technology and programs physical education and national education, community services, environmental education;
- Replace traditional methods of girl's teaching such as rote learning and memorization with good learning techniques and skills;
- Recruit and evaluate qualitative teachers on the basis of competence and skills.

Hopefully by 2020 we would have achieved 85 to 95 percent literacy rates overall and female literacy of 75 percent. Education is the best weapon to enable the girl child in her battle for survival in our country.

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**Dr. Abroo Aman Andrabi**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Department of Islamic Studies**  
**Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi-62**

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