

## The Female Factor: A Socio-Historical Analysis of Women Scholars' Role in Shaping Hadith Discourse

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### Abstract:

*The female companions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) played a crucial yet often underappreciated role in the development of Islamic thought, Quranic interpretation, and Hadith preservation. This article delves into the lives and contributions of these remarkable women, focusing on their scholarly insights and their impact on the Muslim community. The research study seeks to reclaim the intellectual contributions of women scholars in Hadith literature in early Islamic history. By focusing on the exegetical roles of the female companions, the article provides valuable insights into how these women shaped the understanding of the sayings of the prophet Muhammad (SAW). The main objective of the study is to highlight the significance of female scholars in the early centuries of Islam and its relevance to contemporary Islamic thought. This paper provides the role of selected prominent female companions in the area of Hadith narration. Through an analysis of historical sources and intellectual insights, this paper explores these prominent women scholars' intellectual and spiritual legacy in shaping Hadith discourse, whose wisdom continues to resonate within Islamic scholarly works in contemporary times.*

**Key Words:** *Hadith Discourse, Women Scholars, Scholarly Insights, Socio-Historical Influence.*

### Introduction

The history of Islam is replete with influential figures who have shaped its perspectives and practices. Among these figures are the Sahabiyat (female companions) of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), whose contributions to exegesis (Tafseer) and Hadith narrations are invaluable. Despite the patriarchal context of the time, these women emerged as scholars, teachers, and leaders, providing critical insights into the interpretation of the Quran and Hadith. The scholarly insights of the women scholars,

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Particularly figures such as Hazrat Aisha bint Abi Bakr (RA), Hazrat Umm Salama (RA) Hazrat Hafsa bint Umar (RA), Hazrat Sawdah (RA), Hazrat Umm Habibah, Hazrat Asma bint Abi Bakr (RA), Hazrat Asma bint Yazid (RA), and Hazrat Umm 'Atiyyah (RA) have been the subject of various studies. Women's role as scholars and their deep engagement with the hadith narration is well-documented in numerous research works. This research study aims to explore the contributions of these female scholars, shedding light on their roles in the transmission and preservation of hadiths.

### **Literature Review**

The exploration of the contributions of female scholars to hadith preservation has gained prominence in recent times. This literature review aims to examine previous research works that have addressed similar themes, including the intellectual and religious roles of these women, and their contributions to the traditions of the Prophet (SAW). A substantial body of research has documented the roles of women in early Islamic scholarship, focusing particularly on their contributions to hadith transmission and legal interpretation. Aisha Bewley's book "Wives of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)"<sup>1</sup> is a detailed exploration of the lives of the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) wives, who are revered in Islam as the "Mothers of the Believers" (Ummahat al-Mu'minin). Published by Ta-Ha Publishers in 1995, the book aims to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the individual personalities, contributions, and roles of these women within the early Muslim community. Mohammad Akram Nadwi's "Al-Muhaddithat: The Women Scholars in Islam"<sup>2</sup> is a monumental work that challenges the conventional narrative about the role of women in Islamic scholarship. By meticulously documenting the lives and contributions of female hadith scholars, Nadwi restores a vital part of Islamic history that has long been neglected. Thus, 'Al-Muhaddithat' is an essential contribution to the field of hadith studies and a must-read for anyone interested in the intellectual role of women in Islamic history.

Asma Sayeed's book "Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam"<sup>3</sup> is foundational in this regard. She meticulously documents the active participation of women in the intellectual life of early Islam, emphasizing that women were not merely passive recipients but also transmitters and interpreters of religious knowledge. This work sets the stage for understanding the significant exegetical contributions made by female companions of the Prophet (SAW). The popular Feminist Muslim scholar Fatima Mernissi's book "The Veil and the Male Elite"<sup>4</sup> explores the historical and cultural contexts in which contributions of female scholars were made. Mernissi focuses on uncovering the contributions of women like the female companions of the Prophet (SAW).

Haylamaz's well-known book "Aisha: The Wife, The Companion"<sup>5</sup> is a thought-provoking book that highlights Hazrat Aisha(RA)'s significant influence on Islamic law and her authority in interpreting the Holy Quran. This book is a valuable contribution to the literature on one of the most revered figures in Islamic history. The book offers

a comprehensive and accessible account of Hazrat Aisha (RA)'s life, emphasizing her role as a scholar, leader, and companion of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). While it relies heavily on traditional sources and lacks critical engagement with contemporary issues, it succeeds in presenting a balanced and nuanced portrait of Aisha (RA), making it an important read for those interested in the early Islamic period and the role of women in Islam. Karen Bauer's "Gender Hierarchy in the Quran: Medieval Interpretations, Modern Responses"<sup>6</sup> explores how early female exegetes, including the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) wives, offered interpretations that sometimes challenged the prevailing gender norms. Bauer's analysis provides a critical examination of how these women's insights have been either incorporated or marginalized in later Islamic thought. Hadia Mubarak's book titled "The Forgotten Queens of Islam"<sup>7</sup> provides a comprehensive account of how female scholars, including the female companions of the Prophet, were respected authorities in the Islamic intellectual tradition. Mubarak's work is crucial in understanding the broader context in which the female companions operated, highlighting their authority in both teaching and interpreting Islamic texts.

Amina Wadud's "Quran and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective"<sup>8</sup> offers a feminist interpretation of the Quran, drawing on the exegetical traditions of early female scholars. The research work "Women's Role & Responsibilities As a Daughter in the Light of Seerat-E-Taiba(SAW)"<sup>9</sup> explores the roles and responsibilities of women as daughters, drawing guidance from the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). By examining the Prophet's (SAW) relationship with daughters, the article seeks to provide a framework for understanding the ideal behavior and responsibilities of Muslim daughters in various aspects of life. The study aims to bridge historical Islamic teachings with contemporary expectations and challenges faced by daughters in today's society.

The research paper "Commentary Tendencies and Methods of Female Scholars Who Interpret the Qur'anic Details in Contemporary Era."<sup>10</sup> presents a thorough examination of the evolving role of female scholars in Quranic exegesis. This study highlights the unique interpretative methods and tendencies of contemporary female scholars, focusing on how their perspectives contribute to the broader field of Islamic scholarship. The study sheds light on how these scholars navigate traditional Islamic teachings while also addressing modern challenges and concerns.

The article under review "A Socio-Historical Analysis of Women Scholars' Role in Shaping Hadith Discourse" contributes to this ongoing scholarly discourse by emphasizing the aspects of these women's contributions, thereby expanding the understanding of their roles in hadith transmission. In the contemporary era, there has been a growing interest in revisiting the contributions of female intellectuals as part of a broader movement to reclaim women's intellectual heritage in Islam. The paper "A Socio-Historical Analysis of Women Scholars' Role in Shaping Hadith Discourse"

is part of a broader scholarly effort to recognize and incorporate the contributions of women in early Islamic history into the larger narrative of Islamic scholarship. Previous research works have laid the groundwork by documenting the roles of these women in hadith transmission, legal interpretation, and religious teaching. This study builds on this foundation by focusing specifically on the intellectual insights of the woman scholars in the early history of Islam, offering a detailed exploration of their contributions to hadith transmission.

### **Research Methodology**

This research study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the contributions of female scholars in the early centuries of Islam. Analytical techniques were employed to uncover the significant roles and insights of these women, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of their impact on women scholars of the Muslim community. The research is conducted with a commitment to scholarly integrity, ensuring that the sources are accurately represented and that the analysis is grounded in a respectful understanding of women scholars' active participation in the transmission of hadiths. The research journals, articles, books, and theses were reviewed thoroughly.

### **Women's Role in Hadith Discourse**

Women played a significant role in the preservation, transmission, and scholarship of Hadith in early Islamic history. Their contributions were instrumental in ensuring the authenticity and accuracy of the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Women played a prominent role in the teaching, research, dissemination, and propagation of the Quran and Hadith. The narrations of female Companions and scholars of Hadith are present in all the major books of Hadith. Female scholars of the early centuries of Islam are role models for Muslim daughters of Ummah. Early centuries of Islamic history are termed 'Qurūn-Ula'. The word 'Qurūn' is the plural of 'Qarn'. According to one opinion, a 'Qarn' is 10 years, another says 20 years, and yet another says 30 years; there are also opinions that it could be 60, 70, or 80 years, depending on the average lifespan of people. It has also been said that a 'Qarn' could be 100 years old.<sup>11</sup>

If we look at the early centuries (Qurūn Ūlā) of Islamic history, it becomes clear that women have always contributed to the development and progress of society, particularly in the fields of knowledge and arts. Their role has been significant from the early centuries until today. Their contribution has been crucial in the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next. The educational and historical role of the women of the early centuries in the spread of Islam is the result of the Prophet's (SAW) encouragement of women's educational activities. The scholarly, religious, and intellectual role of female scholars of the early centuries (Qurūn Ūlā) serves as a role model for the Muslim women of today.

The contributions of women in Hadith preservation were vital and respected within the Islamic scholarly tradition. They not only transmitted Hadith but also taught, debated, and ensured that future generations had access to the authentic sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Esteemed male scholars like Imam Zuhri, Ibn Hajar Asqalani, and Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti acknowledged their female teachers, signifying the respect and authority of women held in the Islamic tradition.<sup>12</sup> Their legacy continues to influence Islamic thought and jurisprudence in modern times.

The women scholars played a pivotal role in the transmission of authentic Prophetic traditions. Women in the early Islamic period were not passive recipients of religious knowledge but active participants in teaching, debating, and safeguarding the sayings and practices of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Their involvement ensured that future generations of Muslims could access authentic religious teachings, influencing Islamic thought and civilization. This demonstrates that women of early Islamic history demonstrated their intellectual capacities and were valued as integral contributors to the Hadith sciences.

#### **Hazrat Aisha bint Abi Bakr (RA):**

Umm al-Mu'minin Hazrat Aisha (RA) is one of the most prominent female figures in Islamic history, particularly in the preservation of Hadith. She (RA) transmitted 2210 Hadiths, many of which cover personal matters, family life, pilgrimage, eschatology, and intimate aspects of the Prophet (SAW)'s life that only she had access to. Scholars have acknowledged her as an authority in Islamic jurisprudence and theology. She (RA) taught numerous students, both men and women, and answered legal and religious questions. Many of her students became senior scholars. She (RA) emerged as one of the most learned figures, especially in Islamic law, Hadith, and Qur'anic interpretation. Her knowledge of complex legal matters such as inheritance reflects her deep understanding of the legal system of Islam.

A well-known Muslim scholar Masruq says:

“لقد رأيت الأكابر من --- أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يسألون عائشة عن الفرائض”<sup>13</sup>  
“I have seen the senior companions of Prophet (SAW) asking Aisha about the laws of inheritance.”

The above statement highlights the profound respect and authority that Aisha, the wife of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), held among the senior companions of the Prophet (SAW). The reference to senior companions seeking Hazrat Aisha (RA)'s counsel on matters of inheritance law underscores her significant role as an expert in Islamic jurisprudence. This quote serves as evidence of the early Islamic tradition's openness to female scholars, where even the most respected male companions of the Prophet consulted women for legal and religious matters. It challenges modern misconceptions that limit women's involvement in Islamic scholarship, showing that

women like Aisha played a central role in shaping early Islamic thought. Hazrat Aisha (RA)'s scholarly contributions have had a lasting impact on Islamic thought and civilization. Her role as a teacher and expert in hadith sciences influenced many of the later generations of scholars, making her one of the most cited female authorities in Islamic scholarship. Here is a hadith reported by Hazrat Aisha (RA) that reflects not only her close observation of the Prophet (SAW)'s daily life but also her role in conveying practical Islamic solutions for current issues of the environment.

Hazrat Aisha (RA) states:

"عن عائشة، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كان يغتسل بالصاع، ويتوضأ بالمد." <sup>14</sup>

"Hazrat Aisha (RA), that the Prophet (SAW) used to perform ghusl (ritual bath) with a sa'(a specific measure of water) and perform wudu (ablution) with a 'mudd' (a smaller measure of water)."

The above Hadith illustrates the Prophet's modesty and moderation in the use of resources, especially water. The precise measures mentioned (a sa' for ghusl and a mudd for wudu) have been discussed by Islamic jurists over the centuries, demonstrating how even seemingly simple observations made by Hazrat Aisha (RA) have profound implications for Islamic jurisprudence. Her narration guides environmental consciousness, which is an essential element of Islamic practice.

Hazrat Aisha's (RA) role as a teacher, legal expert, and intellectual authority helped shape the development of Islamic jurisprudence, ensuring that future generations had access to the authentic sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Her (RA) legacy remains a powerful testament to women's vital role in preserving the Prophetic tradition. This Hadith reflects her (RA) role in conveying the practical aspects of Seerah. By transmitting such Hadiths, she helped solidify the legal and ethical framework of Islam. Her influence on subsequent generations of scholars, both male and female, is significant, particularly in the field of Hadith. Her intellectual legacy established her (RA) as a major source of Hadith, making her one of the muhaddithat (Female scholars of Hadith).

### **Hazrat Umm Salmah (RA):**

Umm al-Mu'minin Hazrat Umm Salama (RA) was known for her deep knowledge of Islamic law and Hadith. She (RA) narrated around 378 Hadiths. Her (RA) reports on legal rulings, particularly related to women's issues, and family issues were influential in shaping Islamic law. Many of her (RA) narrations related to matters that affected women, such as the rules of inheritance, purification, and marriage.

Hazrat Umm Salamah (RA) narrates:

"عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ، قَالَتْ: اسْتَيْقَظَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ فَقَالَ: «سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّيْلَةَ مِنَ الْفَتَنِ، وَمَاذَا فُتِحَ مِنَ الْخَزَائِنِ، أَيْقِظُوا صَوَاحِبَاتِ الْحُجْرِ، فَرُبَّ كَاسِيَةٍ فِي الدُّنْيَا غَارِيَةٍ فِي

الْآخِرَةِ -" <sup>15</sup>

“Umm Salamah One night Allah's Messenger (SAW) got up and said, "Subhan Allah! How many afflictions have been descended tonight and how many treasures have been disclosed? Go and wake the sleeping lady occupants of these dwellings (his wives) up (for prayers). A well-dressed (soul) in this world may be naked in the Hereafter.”

The above narration from Hazrat Umm Salamah (RA) provides a profound insight into the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) awareness of spiritual and worldly matters and concern for the moral and spiritual well-being of the household. It underscores the importance of night prayers and spiritual reflection, which are key practices in Islamic spirituality. It encourages Muslims to be aware of the spiritual significance of their actions and to strive for sincerity and devotion in their worship. It also reflects the broader Islamic teaching that spiritual purity and righteousness are not always visible but are crucial for success in the Hereafter. It serves as a profound reminder of the need to prioritize spiritual purity and sincerity over material concerns, offering timeless guidance for Muslims in their religious practice. The narration effectively highlights Hazrat Umm Salamah (RA)'s influential contributions to Hadith and Islamic thought.

Umm Salamah (RA) was a key figure in Hadith scholarship. Her (RA) narrations reflected her deep understanding of spiritual and legal matters. The Hadiths reported by her (RA) highlight her role in preserving and transmitting the Prophet's (SAW) teachings. Her (SAW) participation in the transmission of Hadith ensured that women's perspectives and issues were well-represented in the scholarly discourse. Her (RA) contributions to Islamic scholarship are regarded as significant.

### **Hazrat Hafsa (RA)**

Umm al-Mu'minin Hazrat Hafsa was a pious and righteous woman. She (RA) was strict in practicing her faith herself. She played a significant role in early Islamic history, including her contributions to the preservation of the Qur'an and Hadith. She (RA) narrated around 60 Hadiths, covering various aspects of the Prophet (SAW)'s life and Islamic practice. Her (SAW) narrations often focused on issues related to worship, family life, and the Prophet (SAW)'s habits. Her Hadiths (RA) helped to clarify matters of religious practice for future generations. While her primary contribution was in preserving the Holy Qur'an, this role indirectly influenced the preservation of the Hadith tradition. Her role (RA) in guarding the Qur'an underscores her importance as a trusted figure in the preservation of Islamic knowledge, and her proximity to the Prophet (SAW) made her a significant figure in Hadith-related discourse. As one of the Prophet's wives, she (RA) had intimate knowledge of the Prophet (SAW)'s personal and spiritual life, which enabled her to narrate Hadiths that were essential to understanding his practices, especially related to worship and familial conduct. The unique perspective she provided added to the richness of the Hadith corpus, particularly concerning the Prophet's (SAW) household practices.

Hazrat Hafsa (RA) was a reliable source of Hadith for scholars. Her (RA) close relationship with both the Prophet (SAW) and her father, Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA), further added to her credibility in the transmission of religious knowledge. Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim included some of her (RA) narrations in their collections, which attests to the authenticity and reliability of her contributions. Hazrat Hafsa's (RA)'s narrations contributed to the development of Islamic jurisprudence, especially on issues related to personal conduct, worship, prayers, and family matters. Her (RA) insights into the Prophet's (SAW) actions were valuable for scholars and jurists who sought to understand and implement Islamic law. Here is one of the well-known Hadiths narrated by Hafsa that relates to the Prophet's (SAW) prayer practices.

Hazrat Hafsa (RA) narrates:

"عَنْ حَفْصَةَ، قَالَتْ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِذَا طَلَعَ الْفَجْرُ، لَا يُصَلِّي إِلَّا رَكْعَتَيْنِ خَفِيفَتَيْنِ."<sup>16</sup>

"Hafsa reported that when it was dawn, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) did not observe (any other prayers) but two short rak'ahs."

The above Hadith narrated by Hazrat Hafsa (RA) provides an important insight into the prayer practices of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Hazrat Hafsa (RA) narrates:

"قَالَتْ حَفْصَةُ زَوْجُ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: خَمْسٌ مِنَ الدَّوَابِّ كُلُّهَا

فَاسِقٌ لَا حَرَجَ عَلَى مَنْ قَتَلَهُنَّ: الْعُقْرَبُ، وَالْغُرَابُ، وَالْجِدَادُ، وَالْفَأْرَةُ، وَالْكَلْبُ الْعَقُورُ."<sup>17</sup>

"Hafsa, the wife of Allah's Messenger (SAW), reported Allah's Messenger (SAW) having said this: There are five beasts, all of them are vicious and harmful and there is no sin for one who kills them (and these are): scorpion, crow, kite, rat and voracious dog."

The above-mentioned Hadith narrated by Hazrat Hafsa (RA) discusses the permissibility of killing certain harmful animals, according to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The Hadith lists five creatures that are considered harmful; scorpion, crow, kite (a bird of prey), rat, and a voracious dog. The Prophet (SAW) refers to these animals as Fasiq (transgressors) in the sense that they pose harm to humans and, therefore, killing them is not considered sinful. This saying is important for Islamic jurisprudence as it provides specific guidance on how to handle harmful animals, especially in the context of safeguarding human life. It underscores the permissibility of killing harmful animals if they pose a threat. This principle extends to ensuring personal and communal safety. The Hadith is often cited in discussions about what is considered permissible or impermissible in terms of harming animals, helping to clarify that exceptions exist when animals threaten life.

Hazrat Hafsa's (RA) role in the Hadith discourse, while not as extensive as some other companions, was nevertheless significant. Her narrations contributed to the understanding of the Prophet's personal and spiritual practices, and her role in



safeguarding the Qur'an made her a key figure in the transmission of Islamic knowledge.

### **Hazrat Umm 'Atiyyah (RA):**

Hazrat Umm 'Atiyyah (RA), a prominent female companion of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), played a significant role in the preservation and transmission of Hadiths. As a Hadith narrator, her (RA) contributions are invaluable, particularly regarding matters related to women, purification, and Islamic social practices. She (RA) is particularly well-known for narrating Hadiths that deal with issues specific to women, such as menstruation, childbirth, and the participation of women in communal events like Eid prayer. She (RA) narrated Hadiths on topics such as female purification after menstruation, how women should handle matters of personal hygiene, and their role in the community. Her famous narration about women attending Eid prayers, even menstruating women, is a key source for understanding women's participation in social and religious gatherings.

Umm 'Atiyyah (RA) was closely involved in Islamic funeral practices, especially washing and preparing the deceased for burial. She (RA) also narrated the Hadith about preparing the deceased's body with water and sidr (lotus leaves), contributing to the understanding of funeral rites in Islam. Her Hadith narrations are found in the Sahih collections of Bukhari and Muslim, as well as other major Hadith compilations. This demonstrates her significant role as a reliable transmitter of Hadith knowledge. The subjects of her narrations are diverse, ranging from worship practices to social and communal guidelines. Her narrations were pivotal in forming practical rules and regulations. Her narrations provided essential guidance for women regarding religious obligations, hygiene, and social involvement, making her an important figure in shaping Islamic jurisprudence on women's roles.

Hazrat Umm 'Atiyyah's (RA) role as a Hadith narrator was crucial in transmitting knowledge related to both the private and public lives of women in the early Muslim community. Her narrations are still widely referenced in discussions on women's religious practices, funeral rites, and community participation, making her a significant figure in Islamic history.

Hazrat Umm 'Atiyyah (RA) is among the few women who participated in numerous battles alongside the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). She was the one who cooked food for the men, took care of their belongings, tended to the wounded, and looked after the sick during battles.

Umm 'Atiyyah states:

"عَنْ أُمِّ عَطِيَّةَ الْأَنْصَارِيَّةِ، قَالَتْ: غَزَوْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - سَبْعَ غَزَوَاتٍ، أَخْلَفُهُمْ فِي رِحَالِهِمْ، وَأَصْنَعُ لَهُمُ الطَّعَامَ، وَأُدَاوِي الْجُرْحَى، وَأُقِيمُ عَلَى الْمَرْضَى"<sup>18</sup>

“Umm 'Atiyyah reports that I participated in seven battles with the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). I used to cook food for them, treat the wounded, and care for the sick.”

The narration of Umm 'Atiyyah (RA) offers valuable insights into her role and contributions during the military campaigns of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Umm 'Atiyyah (RA) reports her involvement in seven battles alongside the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Her active participation in these campaigns highlights the important roles women played in supporting the Muslim community during times of conflict. She mentions three main responsibilities: preparing food, treating the wounded, and caring for the sick.

Umm 'Atiyyah narrates:

"حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَيْبَعٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا هُشَيْمٌ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا مَنْصُورٌ وَهُوَ ابْنُ زَادَانَ، عَنِ ابْنِ سِيرِينَ، عَنْ أُمِّ عَطِيَّةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يُخْرِجُ الْأَبْكَارَ، وَالْعَوَاتِقَ، وَذَوَاتِ الْخُدُورِ، وَالْحَيْضَ فِي الْعِيدَيْنِ، فَأَمَّا الْحَيْضُ فَيَعْتَزِلْنَ الْمُصَلَّى، وَيَشْهَدْنَ دَعْوَةَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا جَلْبَابٌ، قَالَ: فَلْتَعْرِضْهَا أُخْتَهَا مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهَا."<sup>19</sup>

“Umm 'Atiyyah reported that Allah’s Messenger (SAW) would instruct unmarried girls, young women, those observing the veil, and menstruating women to come out to the Eid prayer. As for the menstruating women, they stood away from the place of prayer and joined the supplication of the Muslims. One of them asked, “O Messenger of Allah (SAW) if one does not have a veil?” He said, “Her sister may lend her, her own veil.”

The mentioned Hadith narrated by Umm 'Atiyyah provides a valuable insight into the inclusivity of the Islamic community, particularly during the Eid celebration. It highlights how the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) encouraged the participation of various groups of women, including unmarried girls, young women, those observing the veil (possibly referring to women who stayed at home or were secluded), and even menstruating women. The Prophet (SAW) instructed that all women, including those menstruating, should attend the Eid gathering. However, menstruating women were to refrain from the prayer itself, but they could still participate in the general celebration and join in the communal supplication. The Hadith also addresses practical matters related to women’s dress. When one woman mentioned that she did not have a veil, the Prophet (SAW) suggested that another sister lend her one, demonstrating the importance of community support and ensuring everyone could attend, regardless of their circumstances. This narration clarifies that while menstruating women are exempt from performing the actual prayer, they are still encouraged to attend and participate in the communal aspects of the Eid celebration. This underscores the significance of communal worship and unity, even when certain individuals are not able to perform specific religious duties. The Hadith highlights the value of modesty

and cooperation among Muslim women, as the Prophet (SAW) instructed one woman to lend her veil to another who did not have one. This illustrates the spirit of mutual support and cooperation in Islam. The narration articulates the role of women scholars in early Islamic society and their active participation in religious and social practices.

### **Socio-Historical Influence**

During the early Islamic period, women had access to educational opportunities that allowed them to engage in scholarly activities. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) himself encouraged both men and women to seek knowledge, creating an environment where female scholars could thrive and perform. Women were educated in the same intellectual circles as men, often participating in discussions and debates that shaped Islamic thought. Despite the patriarchal norms of the time, the early Islamic community recognized and respected the intellectual contributions of women. Female scholars were actively involved in teaching and transmitting Hadith, and their contributions were acknowledged by their male contemporaries. This recognition highlights a period when women's scholarly roles were not limited by gender but were valued for their intellectual and academic contributions.

The influence of female scholars extended beyond their lifetimes. Their narrations and legal interpretations shaped Islamic jurisprudence and contributed to the development of Islamic legal and theological thought. The meticulous documentation and transmission of Hadith by female scholars ensured that diverse perspectives were included in the Islamic tradition. The legacy of female scholars in Hadith discourse is a testament to their significant role in Islamic intellectual history. Their contributions provided a foundation for Islamic jurisprudence and continued to influence contemporary Islamic thought. The scholarly achievements of figures like Hazrat Aisha bint Abu Bakr (RA), Hazrat Umm Salamah (RA), Hazrat Hafsa (RA), Umm 'Atiyyah (RA), and other women scholars of early Islamic history serve as a reminder of the vital role women have played in shaping Hadith discourse.

In recent times, there has been a renewed interest in exploring and acknowledging the contributions of female scholars. This scholarly reassessment not only highlights the rich legacy of female intellectuals but also challenges contemporary perceptions of women's positive role in religious scholarship.

### **Conclusion**

The female factor in Hadith discourse is a crucial aspect of Islamic scholarly history. Female scholars played indispensable roles in preserving, transmitting, and interpreting Hadith, shaping the trajectory of Islamic law and theology. Their intellectual insights have left a lasting impact on Islamic thought. These women scholars not only preserved and transmitted sayings of the Prophet (SAW) but also provided critical interpretations. Moreover, the legacy of these female companions serves as a reminder of the vital role that female scholars have played in the understating of Islamic knowledge. Their contributions to hadith narrations and

Islamic scholarship, though often overlooked, are essential to understanding the holistic development of Islamic civilization and thought. As we continue to explore the rich history of Islamic scholarship, it is essential to acknowledge and honor the wisdom of these women scholars, whose insights remain relevant and inspiring in modern discussions of Islam. A comprehensive understanding of Islamic intellectual history must include the significant role of these pioneering women.

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