

Women in Classical Islamic Education

Rahmawarni Harahap

UIN Sumatera Utara; rahmawarni97@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Woman;
Islamic Education;
Classical

Article history:

Received 2023-09-29
Revised 2023-09-29
Accepted 2023-09-30

ABSTRACT

Women in the days of jahiliyah were always under the tyranny of men, they did not have legal rights and did not have the position in society that they deserved. This study aims to find out how women's chances of getting an education in classical Islamic times. This research is a form of qualitative research called library research (literature study). By using descriptive research methods and data collection techniques that use documentary sources. So that this study does not require hypotheses but rather proof of variable conditions, namely women in classical Islamic education. The results showed that the arrival of Islam changed the social status of women among society. Islam provides equal opportunities for women. Prophet Muhammad gave equal education and teaching between men and women. They can pray in the mosque, they can work to help their husbands. Islamic education for women is not limited as seen from female intellectual figures who are famous for their expertise in certain fields. Women contributed a lot of ideas that eventually greatly influenced the teachings of Islam. Many of the Prophet's famous wives and female companions narrated a hadith from the Prophet which is considered very authentic. Almost one-third of the Hadith texts appear through Aisha, the youngest wife of the Prophet. Another important woman in early Islamic history was Sukaina bint al-Hussein, the granddaughter of the Prophet whose level of education was so high, renowned for her knowledge, reading and writing skills, beauty, and resourcefulness.

This is an open access article under [the CC BY-NC-SA license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).



Corresponding authors:

Rahmawarni Harahap

UIN Sumatera Utara; rahmawarni97@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The existence of women in the days of jahiliyah was always under the tyranny of men, they did not have the rights according to the law and did not have the position in society that they deserved. Women have absolutely no right to education, women must stay at home and have no share in the life of society

forced to marry and oppressed, inherited and not inherited, controlled and never dominated.

A very sad time for women, they are not given freedom in all affairs, not given the opportunity to enjoy life including education. Historical facts show that in pre-Islamic times, women were always placed in the position of objects and occupied second only to men. Women are considered less valuable, so they are often exploited beyond human limits. The placement of women in low positions includes not only the area of thought, but also in the area of attitudes and behaviors in the reality of life. (Emna Laisa 2020)

The tradition that adorned the history of the Arabs before Islam came, which is commonly called the era of jahiliyyah. The Arabs murdered girls. The news of the birth of a daughter gives an impression of the husband's attitude that is reluctant to accept it. There were two choices that arose in his mind facing the girl, either to be left to live in humiliation or to be buried alive. There are three reasons why the girl was killed: First, it is worried about the fall of the parents in the valley of poverty by bearing the living expenses of the daughter born. Second, parents worry about falling into poverty if they grow up. Third, fear of suffering the disgrace of being held captive in war so that they are raped or because of adultery.

After Islam came, Islamic teachings sought to improve the status of women. Islam does not discriminate and discriminate against sex in education. As a servant of God, what is seen is the deeds of humans without distinction of gender, be it male or female. Long before feminism, reformers and thought who defended gender equality demanded equal women's human rights, the Prophet had already implemented an attitude of glorification of women and fair behavior to his wives and daughters. Given that the basic duties of men and women on this earth are the same, namely as the caliph of Allah, both are provided with the same knowledge, and in carrying out their duties are given complementary rights and obligations and cannot live separately. There is nothing more glorified than one another, except his faith and piety. (Emna Laisa 2020)

Women in classical Islamic education in particular contributed greatly. They have had the right to education since the advent of Islam. An educated woman is not only beneficial for herself but also beneficial for her children and others, it is highly recommended in Islam to give birth and produce generations of intellectuals. Therefore, Islam exists to bring glory and awaken the dignity of women on earth.

Of course, reviewing the history related to women in classical Islamic education will arouse the enthusiasm of women throughout to achieve higher education in order to become highly intellectual women like women who lived in classical Islamic times.

Based on this, on this occasion researchers will review how women in classical Islam received education in order to become a picture and motivation for women in the current millennial era to be more enthusiastic about undergoing education by making a study entitled "*Women in Classical Islamic Education*".

2. METHOD

The type of research used in this study is qualitative research the so-called *Library Research* (literature study). That is by reviewing and drawing conclusions from various scientific literature such as books, articles, and journals related to women in classical Islamic education. By using descriptive research methods and data collection techniques that use documentary sources. So in this study there is no need for a hypothesis. The descriptive method of analysis is to describe the data that has been collected, perform analysis to find answers to questions, then perform analysis again and combine them into an idea to obtain conclusions. (Sugiyono 2014)

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Women's Education in Classical Islamic Civilization

Mahmoud Syaltut as quoted by Ramayulis, stated that the human character between men and women can almost be said to be the same. Allah has bestowed upon women as well as bestowed upon men, namely the potential to assume responsibility, and made these sexes able to carry out their activities of a general and specific nature, therefore the laws of the Shari'a also put them in one framework. Men can sell, buy, offend and be punished, prosecuted and witnessed, just as women can sell and buy, violate and be punished, and prosecute and witness. (Ramayulis 2011)

Education is a very important thing for women because women are the most responsible for educating children. How can women be able to educate their children optimally if their own conditions are very backward. Education for women is very useful because it can present a relationship of mutual respect

and understanding between men and women. With education, women will be able to make home life better and make families happier.

In the early days of the Prophet Muhammad *Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*. In Mecca, there were already some people who had been good at reading and writing. They consisted of 17 men and 5 women. They are Umar ibn Khattab, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Uthman ibn Affan, Abu Ubaidah ibn al Jarrah, Talhah, Yasid ibn Abu Sufyan, Abu Huzaifah ibn 'Utbah, Hathib ibn 'Amar, Abu Salamah ibn Abdul Asad al Maklizumy, Aban ibn Said ibn al Ash ibn Umaiyah, Khalid ibn Sa'id and his brother, Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abu Sarh al Amiry, Huathib ibn Abdul 'Uzza, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, Juhaim ibn as-Shalt. From the women: Hafsa the Prophet's wife, um Kalsum ibn 'uqbalt, Aisha bint Sa'd, as-Shifak bint Abdullah al 'Adawiyah, Karimah bint al Miqdad. While Siti 'Aisyah and Ummi Salamah, both wives of the Prophet, were good at reading, but not good at writing. (Jalaluddin and Usman Said 1996)

The Prophet before moving to Medina had prepared female cadres to become teachers in Medina. This is evident in the twelfth year of prophethood, the people of Medina came to Mecca, they made the first agreement with the Prophet in Aqabah so it was called Bai'ah al Aqabah al Ula or Bai'ah al-Nisa' because in their entourage there was a woman namely 'Afra bint 'Abid ibn Sa'labah. These people would later spread the knowledge gained from the Prophet to the people in Medina. (Jalaluddin and Usman Said 1996)

Ahmad Syalabi as quoted by Ramayulis suggests that girls only receive lessons at home from one family member, or from a teacher personally it has succeeded in giving birth to Muslim women, whose intelligence is not much different from that of men. (Jalaluddin and Usman Said 1996)

The Islamic education taught by the prophet in this era has yielded results in launching female intellectuals who are recognized for their greatness. Their intelligence is not much different from that of men. These intellectual figures include:

- a. Khadija bint Khuwailid, an educated ummul believer and merchant who always accompanied the Prophet and strived to spread Islam.

- b. Aisha bint Abu Bakr, an intelligent woman who has knowledge and has narrated more than 1000 Hadiths with direct narration, she is also an expert in the fields of fiqh, tafsir, medicine and poetry.
- c. Asma' bint Abu Bakr, a brave woman who always delivered food to the Prophet when the Prophet was on his way to hijra.
- d. Hafsa bint Umar, Fatimah al-Zahra, Sakinah bint Hussein were women lovers of science.
- e. Nasibah bint Ka'ab, Aminah bint Qays al Ghifariyah, um Athiyyah al-Anshariyyah, Rabi'ah bint Mas'ud were women who fought with the Prophet, they were in charge of caring for the sick and treating the wounded.
- f. Al Khansa, Hindun bint 'Atabah, Laila bint Salma, Siti Sakinah bint al Hussein are women who are proficient in poetry and literature. (Asma Hasan Fahmi 1979)

The first two caliphates (Abu Bakr Ra and Umar Ra) gave birth to intelligent women like Aisha and Hafsa because they took them during the process of developing and maintaining religious texts. Umar's daughter was more trusted in many ways than his son, and in matters of property administration and public assistance (sadaqah) was entrusted to Aisha. Even Hafsa was ordered to receive Quranic mushaf material, transferred from Abu Bakr. (Leila Ahmad 1992)

In the middle ages there was no historical data on the educational process at this time that supported it as in the first period. Therefore, women's names at this time were less detectable in coverage. This does not mean that at this time there are no women who are involved in education and mastering science in various fields. By the end of medieval times, Kuttab was accessible to women. Kuttab was previously only allowed to be visited by men located next to the mosque who taught Quran reading and writing and memorization. One chronicle relates that middle-class girls were sometimes taught in public schools. The daughter usually leaves with her elder brother.

They are restricted with hijab (cloth to cover between men's and women's spaces) and are not allowed to associate or play with men. Even the arrival of girls or young women to Kuttab in subsequent developments is common. Furthermore, there are special Kuttabs for women. Teachers in Kuttab who

were previously played by male educators, in the Andalusian period have been played by many female teachers for Kuttab exclusively for Women .ini. (Imam Fuadi 2002)

In higher education, several Muslim female figures in the field of education are also known. Among other things, it is stated by al Sakhawi that Bayram was educated in the Qur'an"An by his father. Seeing his son's intellectual talents, his father sent him to Jerusalem as an educator for women. Besides Bayram there was also Khadija bint Ali, a scholar of Qur'anic science"an, hadith, and calligraphy (Imam Fuadi 2002).

This passion for learning among classical Muslim women continues to grow, so that the intellectual dynamics of Muslim women cross geographical boundaries. As did Khadija bint Abu Muhammad Abdullah al Sanzali who rihlah ilmiah with her father to Makkah. In addition, there was also the educated woman Fatimah bint Sa'ad al-Khair ibn Muhammad dan Radiyah (budak Abd Rahman an-Nasir)(Imam Fuadi 2002).

From all that, we can conclude that throughout Islamic history, the existence of women in the same council as men in studying was natural. However, it is regrettable that there is a lack of attention from Muslim writers to raise the dynamics of education in Muslim women. This fact places the history of women scholars as a dark history. However, there is little data that shows the existence of female scholars, among others, from biographical dictionaries; (Ruth Roded 1995).

B. Women's Opportunities to Get An Education

After Islam came women got the same share of rights as men in obtaining education. The right to receive instruction or teach knowledge, the right to go to school, the right to receive basic education to higher education as well as men. Similarly, the right to work helps ease the burden on the husband, the right to take part in the midst of society and others. Since the time of the Prophet also, he respected the rights of women, loved his wives, loved his daughters. The Prophet allowed women to exercise the rule of law, to have positions and positions.

The Prophet gave the opportunity and took his time to teach the women. As told in a hadith:

Meaning: Some women have come to the Messenger of Allah' so they said: O Messenger of Allah' we did not bring the opportunity to study in your assembly filled with men' so give us that opportunity. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: Your share is in so-and-so's house. So he came to them (the women) on the promised day and place and he taught them. (H.R Bukhari).

From the above Hadith it is implied that the Prophet gave education and instruction to women, but the place and time were different from men. The Prophet provided, provided opportunities, and determined a special place for women to gain religious knowledge.

Prophet Muhammad gave equal education and teaching between men and women. They can pray in the mosque, can work to help their husbands, just like Asma' bint Abu Bakr who helped her husband Zubayr who only had a riding horse without having any other valuable possessions. Asma' helped her husband herd horses: by finding grass, and giving him water.

Asma' said: "I went to work helping my husband feed the horses, take them to pasture, and give them water. I also pounded wheat as bread, but I had no bread-making skills, so I asked my neighbors from the ansars to help me."

From Asma's words above, it can be seen that a woman is allowed to carry out activities like men do, work outside, find grass for livestock, feed livestock, cook bread, and even help ease the burden of the man who became her husband, Zubair.

The work of women during the time of the Prophet Muhammad in addition to working as shepherds, there were also those who participated in the war such as the prophet's wife, Aisha, in the Jamal War. Working to help husbands

earn a living like Asma' bint Abu Bakr, some became teachers, and so on. Aisha the wife of the Prophet was one of the women who became a teacher from among the Companions.

The early history of Islam was filled with Muslim women who showed great abilities who could compete with men and try to be superior to them at every opportunity. Among them: Aisha, wife of Prophet Muhammad Sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam. He was a scientist reformer of his time. His counsel was considered as important as the advice of the leaders of the time. He is considered the greatest source of Islamic jurisprudence due to his mastery of thousands of hadiths which he themes directly from the Prophet. Another famous name is Nafisa, a descendant of Ali who became a famous judge and theologian. Alkhansa, *the greatest poet of the time, whose poetry received direct praise from the Prophet.*

Zainab of Bani Awd who is famous as an ophthalmologist (A Hiyafaa 1989). And there are many other women who are high achievers and no less competitive with men. It is not surprising that women who understand and understand the importance of science, they will be competent among their people and strive to get the right knowledge. The Prophet always motivated them to attend every assembly of his knowledge.

C. Field of Study Trends

The curriculum used by the prophet is the Qur'an, therefore in its application it is not only logical and rational but also in line with nature as a human being. The Qur'an was revealed gradually according to the needs needed at that time Islamic education taught by the Prophet in this era has yielded results in launching female intellectuals who are recognized for their greatness. Their intelligence is not much different from that of men. Those intellectual figures

include. Women's education during the time of the Prophet Muhammad included several educational materials, namely:

1. Home education. Home education consists of how to have a family, how to educate and raise children.
2. Social education. The way that the prophet did or the method used by the prophet in providing education was through the lecture method, with this method the prophet delivered the revelation he received, gave explanations and explanations. In addition, the Prophet also used the method of discussion and question and answer regarding matters related to aqidah and worship.

However, Islamic education for women is not limited as seen from female intellectual figures who are famous for their expertise in certain fields such as:

- a. Aisha bint Abu Bakr. Expert in *Fiqh, Tafsir, Sha'ir, Hadith* and Medicine
- b. Al Khansa, expert on sha'ir and literature
- c. Hindun Binti Atabah, ahli syair, dan ahli kesusastaan
- d. Laila Binti Salma, ahli syair dan kesusastaan.
- e. Siti Sakinah binti Al-Husain, ahli Syair, dan ahli kesusastaan
- f. Nafisah attacks judges and theologians
- g. Zainab Bint Awd, an ophthalmologist(Permana Octofrezi 2020).

Therefore, it can be analyzed that the intellectual work of women in the era of the Prophet had potential in their respective fields. Their expertise contributes greatly to the advancement of science in society. One of them, Aisha (r), the youngest wife of the Prophet Muhammad, became an important reference because her mastery recorded thousands of hadiths received.

4. CONCLUSION

The advent of Islam changed the social status of women among society. Islam provides equal opportunities for women. Good in terms of education, because the Prophet Muhammad provided equal educational and teaching opportunities

between men and women. Islamic education for women is not restricted as seen from female intellectual figures who are famous for their expertise in certain fields, common for women in early Islamic history, contributing ideas that ultimately greatly influenced Islamic teachings. Women's opportunities in getting education are evidenced by several female figures in classical times who contributed to various fields of education, including: Aisyah bint Abi Bakr who is an expert in fiqh, tafsir, medicine, sha'ir, and hadith experts; Al Khansa who is an expert in the field of sha'ir, and literature and Hindun bint Atabah Laila bint Salma, Siti Sakinah bint Al-Husain who is an expert in the same field; and Nafisa expert in judge and theology; Zainab bint Awd ophthalmologist.

Based on the existence of female figures who were competent in certain fields, it can be understood that in classical Islamic times, women had had the same opportunities as men to acquire knowledge through education. Islam has elevated women and even encouraged women to learn the same knowledge as men.

Suggestion: for future researchers are expected to expand research with more relevant and maximum references from this research. For readers, hopefully they can take a view and motivate female figures who have the opportunity to get an education and become figures who are experts in their fields, which are not inferior to the progress of men's education. And hopefully the enthusiasm of readers in undergoing and achieving higher education is more persistent by reading this research.

REFERENCE

- A Hiyafaa. 1989. *Jawwad, The Right Of Women in Islam*. New York: Saint Martin's Press inc,.
- Asma Hasan Fahmi. 1979. *History and Philosophy of Islamic Education*,. Jakarta: Star Moon.

- Emna Laisa. 2020. "Kuttab as a Center for Islamic Education." *Rabbani: Journal of Islamic Education* Volume 1 N.
- Imam Fuadi. 2002. *Islamic Education in Andalusia: A Historical Study of the Spanish Era* Ilam. Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah.
- Jalaluddin and Usman Said. 1996. *Philosophy of Islamic Education: The Concept and Development of Its Thought*. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Leila Ahmad. 1992. *Women And Gender In Islam, Historical Roots Of A Modern Debate*. London: Yale University Press.
- Permana Octofrezi. 2020. History of Women's Islamic Education from the Classical Period, Before and After Indonesian Independence." *Islamic Communication and Education* Volume 9 .
- Ramayulis. 2011. *History of Islamic Education Napaktilas Changes in the Concept, Philosophy and Methodology of Islamic Education from the Era of the Prophet SAW to Ulama Nusantara*. Jakarta: Kalam Mulia.
- Ruth Roded. 1995. *Flower of Civilization, Ilyas Hasan Translation*. Bandung: Mizan Publishing.
- Sugiyono. 2014. *Quantitative, Qualitative and R&D Research Methods*. Bandung: Alfabeta.