

**Contemporary Thoughts and Their Challenges to the  
Muslim Women and Remedies from *Fiqh Al-Sīrah***

**(Pakistan as case study)**

**Research Proposal for Ph.D. Islamic Studies**

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## Introduction

Contemporary thought in the West has evolved over the ages, moving away from religion to secularism, elevating individualism, and gender equality to the centre, while faith was pushed to the periphery. 'Freedom' gained a central position in thought, as it first appeared in the eighteenth century, when the European intelligentsia raised their voices in defence of individual rights and liberty. The slogan led to securing individual freedom with men and women gaining social rights. The Industrial Revolution enabled women to leave their homes in a quest for economic empowerment. Their initial concerns about discrimination in wages and the working environment, rather than the right to vote or property, were followed by the most popular slogan of 'gender equality'. Western women's desire for liberty has led to feminist ideology, termed feminism, which is perceived as an unrestrained women's liberation movement posing a challenge to the social order. In the last few decades, women's roles, status, and ideas about sensuality have changed dramatically. The feminist caravan has finally hit the traditional family structure in the West and is now making its way around the world, including Pakistan.

Western critics frequently draw attention to the issue of female's rights in Islam to disparage religion or to promote secular and liberal thought and values. These perceptions may be shaped by their ignorance of Islam, as well as their prejudices against Islam. However, it may not be forgotten that the inconsistencies in the application of Islamic teachings in Muslim societies provide compelling evidence for forming this image of Islam instead of Muslims. A materialistic environment dominated by Western supremacy in science, technology, economics, politics, and knowledge is bound to influence the minds of Muslim women, who are denied their rightful position in many households. As 'feminism' has a non-religious connotation and is focused on women's freedom, female Muslim intellectuals, though mostly avoiding the label of feminists, are found raising voices for a reinterpretation of the *Qur'ānic* injunctions on women's status. The emerging thought, without much scrutiny, has led to three discourses: outright rejection of contemporary thought on religious grounds, legitimization of feminism through Islam or finding Islamic support for secular rights, and offering space for response through indigenous solutions, as these are seen penetrating into Muslim women's minds, posing serious challenges.

In the globalized world of today, we see growing interaction between people of different religions, leading to exchange of ideas impacting social life. Pakistani women in particular are vulnerable to the theme of living in an oppressive and abusive society, in spite of the legal and religious provisions about women's rights and status. Unfortunately, the Islamic principles and code of conduct are not followed in many pockets of our society in letter and spirit, being under the influence of Hindu culture and tribal norms, paving the way for alien thought. Therefore, the encounter with contemporary thought on women has initiated a "dialogue within" the minds of our women folk, some of whom have welcomed it without hesitation, while others do realise the nature of the transformation, which is causing sociocultural challenges.

So, it's important to know where contemporary thought about women came from and how their goals have changed over time. An understanding of the manifestations of contemporary thought impacting Muslim women is essential to identify the challenges with a view to exploring an indigenous solution. Moreover, it is also important to carry out a critical analysis of our sociocultural environment in relation to women to identify the gaps that enable the penetration of contemporary thought into Muslim women's minds, which must be closely examined to measure the impact. In response to the sociocultural challenges, most Muslim scholars, instead of addressing the inadequacies in the application of Islamic teachings, which ensure the protection of the rights of women, are generally found on the defensive in underlining the rights of women in Islam. Others, in turn, criticize Western norms and practices without understanding the evolution of those thought and the environment conducive to such a rapid degeneration of social systems. Those Muslim scholars, attempting to address modern-day challenges, respond to the challenges from the point of *Fiqh* instead of identifying their ideological impact and formulating their response.

*Sīrah* books carry limited accounts of women's interaction with Prophet ﷺ, however, some authors have written about the revered ladies of the Prophet's ﷺ era, focusing on their personalities, and extolling them as role models in various contexts. To benefit from the study of the Prophet's ﷺ *Sīrah*, in the context of women, who face a plethora of contemporary challenges, we need to look beyond his social life as a male member of society. *Sīrah* writers have depicted the Prophet's ﷺ life from a variety of perspectives. However, the accounts are dominated by masculinity, with fewer narrations describing how the Prophet ﷺ interacted with women. In the absence of any established precedence, the study of contemporary thought and its challenges to Muslim

women and the search for guidelines in light of *Fiqh al Sīrah* is viewed as a challenging project and merits a deeper study and comprehension of the life of the Prophet ﷺ, the *Ummahāt al Mominīn* رضى الله عنهم and other noble companions رضى الله عنهم. It demands deeper historical research of *Sīrah*, the studies of the theological aspects of *Sīrah*, the comprehension of the literal and social aspects of *Sīrah*, the analysis, and expression of different women-related events or incidents, drawing inference of *Sīrah* guidelines.<sup>1</sup> It includes aspects of women's lives with reference to the *Sīrah* of the Prophet ﷺ in the social, political, economic and psychological context through which we can propose or derive precise guidelines for different contemporary issues and emerging challenges faced by Muslim.

*Fiqh al Sīrah* establishes the contextual relationship between an incident quoted in *Sīrah* or *Hadith* and the contemporary environment to draw lessons. This research extends beyond the historical and theological contexts of *Sīrah* to foster an understanding of the social face of *Sīrah* concerning women, inferring direction from *Sīrah* to address contemporary challenges. It would examine the Prophet's ﷺ interactions in social, cultural, psychosocial, and socioeconomic contexts with contemporary females to propose or derive precise guidelines for contemporary challenges confronting Muslim women. This research aims to identify the challenges posed by contemporary thought, and offers guidelines to meet the challenges, underlining the compatibility of Islam with a changing environment. The research will be beneficial to both Muslims and non-Muslims.

## Literature Review

The research has been undertaken in recent decades by young scholars, especially females, in analysing women's social issues in the contemporary environment, where globalization of ideas tends to encroach into Muslim societies. The most relevant research papers are as follows:

- Al Booti, Muhammad Saeed Ramadhan *Fiqh Us-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, translated “Daroos Sirah” into Urdu by Razi Ul Islam Nadvi (Dar al-Fikr, Damascus, Syria, 2008)
- Siddiqi, Mazhar Yaseen, Nabi Akram S.A.W Aur Khawateen –Aik smaji mutalia, (Metro Printers Lahore, 2011).
- Iqbal, Muhammad, *The reconstruction of Islamic Thought*, (Dodo Press, 1930).
- Ghazali, Muhammad, *Fiqh as Sīrah - Understanding the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ* (International Islamic Federation of Students Organization (IIFSO), 1999).

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Buti, *Jurisprudence of the Prophetic Biography*, 70.

- Noor, Hussein, Islam and the Plight of Modern Man, (ABC International Group, Inc. 2001).
- Abushiqqa, Haleem, Aurat Ehd'e Risaalat main' Translated by Faheem Akhter Nadvi, (Nashriyat Lahore, 2007).
- Ehsan Amira, Ikeesween Saddi aur Muslman Aurat, (Urdu) (Idara'e Iffat Rawalpindi, 2017).
- Umeri, Jalal Uddin Ansar, Khawateen aur Muaashra, (Urdu), (Islamic Publications Lahore 2011).
- Ahmed, Anis, Women and social justice: An Islamic Paradigm, (IPS & Islamic Foundation Islamabad, 1991).
- Kassim, Norma, A walk through life, Issues and challenges through the eyes of a Muslim women, (NK & Associates Kuala Lumpur, 2007).
- Khursheed, Ahmed, , Islami Nizam'e Hayat, (IPS press Islamabad, 2016).
- Jamila, Maryam, Islam Versus the West, (Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, Delhi, 2015).
- Al-Jalali· Huqooq'e Nuswa'an k baaray ashkalaat oar Qura'an o Sunnat ki roshni main unka Jaeza, (Urdu) (Jamia Ullom'e Asaria Jhelum, 2017).
- Bhatti, Muhammad Ishāq, Islam ki betyan' Edition Jadīd izāfah shudah aiḍīshan, (Ma'ū Nāth Bhanjan Maktabah al-Fahīm, 2012).
- Shahbaz, Ihsan-ul-Haq, Islam aurat oar maghrib, (Dar ul Undalas Lahore, 2017).
- Al-Jalali· Huqooq'e Nuswa'an k baaray ashkalaat oar Qura'an o Sunnat ki roshni main unka Jaeza, (Urdu) (Jamia Ullom'e Asaria Jhelum, 2017).
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- Mir-Hosseni, Zeba, Beyond 'Islam' vs. 'Feminism', IDS Bulletin, , 2011.
- Badran, Feminism in Islam: Secular and religious convergences.
- Wadud, Amina, Qur'an and woman: Rereading the sacred text from woman's perspective, (Oxford University Press New York, 1999).
- Qazi, Samia Raheel, Islam ka muasharti Nizam aur asr e Hazir Ke Tehdeedat, (Department of Islamic Studies, University of Punjab, 2009).
- Farid, Arifa, Tahzib ke Us Par: Asre-Hazer kay Masayal Aur Islami Fikr Maghrabi Fikr ke Tanazar Main, (Urdu) (BCC&T Press, University of Karachi, 2000).
- Alvi, Suraya Batool, *Jadeed Tehreek e Niswan aur Islam*, (Urdu) (Manshooraat Lahore, 1998)

The review of recent research works on challenges faced by Pakistani women identified that these are related to social, economic, and psychological contexts and are mostly undertaken by scholars from faculties other than Islamic Studies. It is established from the research on contemporary thought that the female Muslim intellectuals, mostly avoided the label of feminism, but are found raising voices for a reinterpretation of Qur'ānic injunctions on women's status. While some researchers, in general, have attempted comparisons of contemporary and Islamic thought, it leaves much to be desired concerning women, offering adequate space for my research. Some researchers have looked at the problems Pakistani women face in a piecemeal way, with little mention of how modern ideas affect them. This fits with the research goals, which are to look at the problems Muslim women face because of modern ideas.

The survey of the literature regarding women revealed that most books in the West were written by both genders, while the literature on Muslim women was

dominated by male authors, including orientalists, modernists, moderates, and orthodox. Moreover, the orthodox and moderate segment of literature is in *Urdu* (original and translations from Arabic) with very few exceptions. It is identified that contemporary thought on women has been focused on by Western writers for over a century, while the plight of Muslim women came under discussion in the post 9/11 scenario. Muslim women have also joined the group of writers about Muslim women's rights in the last few decades. The titles like the status of women in Islam, women in *Shari'ah*, Islam and Muslim women, women's rights in Islam and *Qur'ān*, the ideals of Muslim women, etc., are so rampant, while women's issues in the psychological, socioeconomic, and social fields have been generally ignored till very recent years. It is established from research on contemporary thought that the concept of 'feminism' has a non-religious connotation and is focused on women's freedom. The emerging thought propagating emancipation of women, without much scrutiny, leads to three discourses by Muslim scholars: rejecting contemporary thought with annoyance, legitimization of feminism through Islam, or finding Islamic support for secular rights. The literature thus provides reasonable space to explore the guidelines to encounter the contemporary challenges from Islamic traditions, through review of lives of Prophet ﷺ and the revered ladies in his social circle.

The books on women's status, rights, and responsibilities as enunciated in Islam are mostly generic, setting dos and don'ts for women, without considering contemporary challenges and the contemporary sociocultural environment. The *Sīrah* books carry very few incidents narrating women's interaction with the Prophet ﷺ and his companions. Modern challenges have generally been viewed from a *Fiqh* perspective, citing textual direction in various situations, providing with an opportunity to explore the guidelines for contemporary challenges from *Fiqh al Sīrah* as an important goal of this research, through contextual appraisal of *Sīrah* and Prophet's ﷺ traditions.

## **Rationale of the Study**

There is need to work on *Sīrah* beyond a source of inspiration and motivation, establishing its applied form in relation to the challenges of contemporary thought that shape the minds of Muslim women and sociocultural environment in Pakistan.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The Pakistani Muslim women are inclined to contemporary thought impacting their minds and the society as a whole, posing sociocultural challenges, thus necessitated identification of these challenges and seeking guidance in the light of *Fiqh al Sīrah* to counter the potential threat to our social system.

## **Significance of the Study**

The contemporary thought that inspired Pakistani Muslim women, being oblivious of the rights provided by Islam, leads to a demand for unchecked freedom from social norms and values. Therefore, it is important to identify the challenges thus posed. The research responds to challenges to Muslim women in the light of *Sīrah* by bridging the gaps left by *Sīrah* writers, whose accounts are dominated by masculinity, with fewer narrations about the Prophet's interaction with women. It provides guidance to Muslim women in all spheres of life, which so far have been classified by Fiqh lens only.

This work will provide the light necessary to illuminate the path of Muslim women's lives and provide them with the spiritual weapon necessary to defend against the negative influence of contemporary thought on Muslim women. This research would benefit Muslims and non-Muslims alike, particularly social scientists.

## **Research Objectives**

- To explore the evolution of contemporary thought on women.
- To study Pakistan's sociocultural environment with respect to women in order to identify gaps and margins for infusion of contemporary thought.
- To determine the influence of contemporary thought on Muslim women in Pakistan and emanating challenges.
- To suggest guidelines in the light of *Fiqh al Sīrah* in response to the contemporary challenges faced by Muslim women in Pakistan.

## **Research Questions**

- How did contemporary thought evolve into current discourses that influences Muslim women?
- How do the sociocultural environment in Pakistan support contemporary thought that affects Muslim women?
- What is the nature and extent of influence of contemporary thought on Pakistani Muslim women?

- How does *Fiqh al Sīrah* help Muslim women to face the challenges of contemporary discourses?

## **Delimitations of the Study**

The study is limited in terms of the breadth of topic (contemporary thought) on two fronts: first, it is confined and related to the women only and second, it identifies challenges of contemporary thought to Muslim women in given Pakistani sociocultural milieu in line with the research objectives. Conducting a countrywide survey was a complex task, therefore, it is limited to sample of twin cities (Islamabad and Rawalpindi) for measuring the impact on Pakistani Muslim women.

## **Research Methodology**

This study uses a hybrid approach involving mixed methodology. The first two chapters examine and analyze current literature on the topic and provide a conceptual foundation for subsequent chapters. This section summarizes the technique used; it describes the research methodology in depth, its aim, and how it was developed and executed. The research paradigm and inquiry traditions are described, followed by a description of the pilot study. Additionally, this section contains a description of the subject and a review of the research questions, as well as a sampling strategy, data collection and analysis methods, a verification process, and a discussion of ethical concerns.

Due to the subject's social sensitivity, both qualitative and quantitative methods are used, a process known as methodological triangulation, also known as mixed methods and syncretism.<sup>1</sup> An initial literature review was conducted and identified the research topic in light of the research problem. It was determined that no prior studies had been conducted on the subject, and the research problem remained unresolved. The research focuses on the research problem by conducting research through multiple methods to answer the research questions. The researcher embarked upon the research by conducting a descriptive investigation in which she collected, evaluated, and integrated pertinent data. Using an exploratory sequential approach, quantitative, qualitative, and interpretive methods were used to do research. This was done to create synergy in the research results that went beyond what was not possible with single-

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<sup>1</sup> Happ, M.B, DeVito Dabbas, Tate, J., Hricik, A, and Earlen, J. Exemplars of mixed methods. Data combination and analysis. *Nurse Researcher*, (2006)



method studies.<sup>1</sup> Selecting an inquiry strategy that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design' is necessary after determining the main approach. Case studies and surveys are two kinds of such strategies. Among the methods and strategies, the case study explores deeply a system that is limited "in terms of time, place, or some physical limitations."<sup>2</sup> The case study research is focused on an object to be understood "as a whole."<sup>3</sup> Since this research is conducted in a conceptual framework, along with the case study of Pakistan, the survey method is utilized for the confirmation of the facts identified during the literature review in a conceptual framework enabling the construction of the foundation of the research. Here, a case study is used to get a deep look at how contemporary thought affect Muslim women in Pakistan. A sample is taken from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, which have typical demographics and more exposure to the flow of contemporary thought.

### Research Process

Designing an appropriate research process can help investigate relevant elements which are essential to the conception and accomplishment of the study. Overviews of steps undertaken during the conduct of the study are illustrated in the table followed by an explanation as follows in table 01:

Table: 1

Phase	Procedure	Protocol
<b>1. Conceptual Framework</b>	Already Existing Data	<i>Literature Review</i>
<b>2. Survey &amp; Tool Development</b>	Devising Questionnaire, Cross-sectional study of Four Parameters, Pilot Study, Sampling, Survey form Distribution	Likert scale (Measuring Impact)
<b>3. Interview</b>	Semi-structured Questionnaire Selection of participants through random sampling	<i>Qualitative data Analysis</i>

<sup>1</sup> Nastasi, B.K. and Hitchcock, J.H. *Mixed methods research and culture-specific interventions: Program design and evaluation, (The New Mixed Methods Research Series)*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> De Vaus, David A, *Research design in Social research*, (SAGE Publications London, 2001)

<b>4. Data Presentation and analysis</b>	Use of descriptive statistics (SPSS), Bar Graphs, Pie charts, Percentage, mean, and frequency.	<i>Quantitative data analysis, Graphical presentation/ Discussion</i>
<b>5. Establishing Guideline from <i>Fiqh al Sīrah</i></b>	Primary and Secondary sources	<i>Discussions</i>
<b>6. Findings and Recommendations</b>	Significant outcomes of the investigation	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative data analysis</i>

## Findings

The research established a discernible impact of contemporary thought on Muslim women in Pakistan. Despite emphasis on religious norms and values, there are gaps in the application of Islamic values. Analysis of empirical data collected through the survey has generally confirmed the conclusions of the qualitative part of the research. Following are the major findings of the survey conducted on a sample of participants comprising of males and females (20:80) from Rawalpindi/Islamabad from a variety of social backgrounds:

- The research has destablished that contemporary thought in the West developed due to denial of women's rights. Therefore, Muslim women, are likely to be attracted if the society does not ensure rights and responsibilities granted by Islam.
- The research has figured out that contemporary thought on women bears a semblance to Islamic thought in terms of human rights, with differing perspectives on religion, liberty, rights, and obligations.
- The survey has proven that Pakistani Muslim women have been visibly impacted by contemporary thought in all spheres of life, without being aware of its implications.
- The empirical analysis established a downward trend in women's faith in their primary role, thus implying a threat to the family system.
- It is found that Pakistani women's strong desire for personal and professional progress, along with social pressures, drives them toward economic empowerment, exposing them to exploitation.

- It is observed that while Pakistani women are not fully aware of Islamic values, their society denies the application of Islamic principles, thus instilling a sense of insecurity and facilitating the penetration of contemporary thought.
- It has been demonstrated that the media, academic institutions, modernists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) promote ideals in the name of freedom and empowerment without regard to the detrimental societal consequences.
- It is discovered that there is a surge in the realization of Muslim identity among Muslim women, thus validating my thesis's claim about the effectiveness of *Fiqh al Sīrah* as a response to the challenges of modern thought.

## Conclusion

It has been discussed in the paper that human societies are transforming with the nature of man's thinking, bringing in improvements in every facet of human life across the globe, while cultural values traveling beyond the boundaries are seen influencing social and ideological areas. The historical encounter of Islam with various cultures has accepted the influence of local customs and practices, if not against the basic principles and ethos. However, contemporary thought emanating from the West is found impacting Muslim societies in general and women, thus, warranting serious soul searching to respond to the challenges identified in the research paper. The role and development of women is critical to the social evolution of society, and women play a considerably bigger part in human growth in society. It is revealed by research those Muslim women are not prohibited from working when required by socioeconomic impulses. The research aimed at ascertaining the impact of contemporary thought on Pakistani Muslim women in social, psychological, ideological, and cultural contexts, to establish a response from *Fiqh al Sīrah* based on the evidence of women's interaction in the Prophet's ﷺ times. The first chapter of the study provides an overview of the subject and discusses the justification for undertaking this research. It offers a concise summary of the issue that must be investigated and solved logically in the light of *Fiqh al Sīrah*. It begins with a review of literature on Western thought on women and its linkage with contemporary women's movements in Pakistan and the local social environment, followed by the Islamic perspective on women's rights, roles, and responsibilities, and the socio-economic challenges faced by women. This chapter provides the foundation of research and an overview of the methodology followed by the study.

The second chapter explores the evolution of contemporary thought, leading to the women's freedom movement in the light of modern trends and the ways and means for the global outreach of these ideas. It has been discovered that contemporary thought has witnessed an increasing emphasis on secularism and individualism in response to the Church's governmental dominance, and industrialization has resulted in significant advances in western thought. The research identified that on encounter with contemporary thought, modern Muslim scholars, especially women, advocate a fresh interpretation of the Qur'an to advance women's rights. Despite the disagreement of majority of these scholars with feminism, the activists are found indirectly supporting Western feminist thought. It is also understood through research that the West appears to be increasingly conscious of the pain caused by the women's liberation movements.

The third chapter identifies the impact of contemporary thought on Pakistani Muslim women in the given sociocultural environment and the psychological challenges thus posed. The research has identified that for Pakistani Muslim people, there is no separation between culture and religion, as the two are intricately interwoven. Therefore, the social environment in Pakistan leaves many gaps between Islamic thought on women status and rights and social practice in ensuring justice and security for women. It is also examined that how Islamic values are losing space with regard to women's rights in Pakistani society. Hence, feminist thought is gaining acceptance in the garb of emancipation through various ways and means, thus impacting the traditional norms and the family structure besides exploitation of females. The Chapter, juxtaposing contemporary feminist thought and Islamic teachings on women's rights, found the former as rebellious in the light of the latter, since it advocates unrestricted liberty, and as the cause of gender imbalance.

The fourth chapter primarily comprises of the analysis based on the survey to measure the impact of contemporary thought on Pakistani Muslim women, sampling Islamabad and Rawalpindi. It identifies the emerging challenges confronted by Pakistani Muslim women due to the exposure of contemporary thought. Besides, interviews with intelligentsia were conducted to corroborate the findings of the survey and seek a response from prominent personalities from various backgrounds. It is discovered that allegations of gender inequality in Islam are mainly founded on derogatory societal biases against women. However, there is enough evidence to the fact that cultural norms do hinder women's inclusion in all fields of life, thereby casting doubt on the concept of patriarchy. It is established that improper interpretation of such

unfounded ideas serves as an inspiration and a platform for alien ideas in the minds of most educated women in Pakistan who rise to challenge male dominance without much understanding. It is underscored by the analysis that such a mental and psychological bent on the part of women is contributing to an increase in family breakdowns among married women and an emerging pattern of unmarried women finding comfort in their single status to avoid household obligations and so-called male dominance. It is concluded that this line of thought is undoubtedly triggering psychological challenges for Muslim women on the identity and is eventually perceived as a threat to our social and family traditions.

The fifth chapter has been included to establish the guiding principles from *Fiqh al Sīrah's* perspective in response to the contemporary challenges facing Muslim women. The chapter initially is focused on examining the development of Islamic thought with a particular emphasis on women's rights and status. This was followed by a brief introduction to *Fiqh al Sīrah* as a concept. According to earlier chapters, the lack of knowledge and application of Islamic rights and desire to freedom in the society enables contemporary thought to creep in and pose challenges to Muslim women. Therefore, in the light of contemporary challenges, acceptable and practicable solutions have been established from *Fiqh al Sīrah* through contextual interpretation of various cases regarding women reported in *Sīrah*, the *Qur'an*, and *Hadith*. It has been identified that in the contemporary sociopsychological environment, *Sīrah* and *Hadith* can be contextually helpful in uncovering solutions. The chapter encompassed analysis of the lives of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ and the interaction of the Prophet ﷺ with other women of the era, drawing lessons for contemporary Muslim women, and responding to all sociocultural, ideological, socioeconomic, and psychological challenges.

It is concluded that *contemporary thought creeps into Pakistani society through GAPS in the understanding of Islam and MARGINS in the application of the principles and teachings of Islam. We must plug the GAPS and reduce the MARGINS to forestall the impact of this trend.*

## **Recommendations**

In keeping with the findings of the study, it is necessary to build a social order at the individual/family/society level in accordance with Islamic values in the contemporary environment, thus integrating Islam into our lives at a deeper level in

accordance with *Fiqh al Sīrah* guidelines. The following recommendations are offered for various segments of society based on the research objectives and findings:

- While society needs to value and respect women's roles as custodians of the familial system, their participation in socioeconomic activities may be guided by social and societal needs, ensuring the safety, security, and dignity of women.
- Academic institutions and the media, besides raising awareness about the negative impact of contemporary thought, need to lay emphasis on character building in accordance with Islamic teachings and values.
- The prevailing laws on the protection of women's rights need to be implemented in letter and spirit to strengthen women's positions in society while formulating new laws to deter violations of their legal rights in accordance with Islamic values.
- Islamic scholars, including females, have got to reclaim space on female issues in the wake of contemporary thought while engaging in intra-faith dialogue and *Ijtihad*. The Islamic Ideology Council may serve as a platform for such activities.
- The government needs to invest adequate resources in producing locally contextualised knowledge on gender issues that is based on Pakistan's national ideology and philosophies.
- The government is recommended to exercise domestic regulatory oversight of electronic media for the promotion of our social and religious norms while reaching out to the global networks for fair reporting on Muslim women.

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