



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**EDUCATIONAL DIMENSION OF WOMAN'S CHARACTER  
IN THE NARRATION'S OF PROPHETS AS STATED IN  
THE HOLY QUR' AN**

**ASMA' A. M. AL-OMARI**

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**By**

**ASMA' A. M. AL-OMARI**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra  
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Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**June 2003**



## DEDICATION

*For the Soul of My Father, .....  
May ALLAH (SWT) Mercy Him  
& Award Him the Upper Paradise*

And for the loyalty of every mother, who has been the foundation stone for the building of every family. She is the blessed hope of the future, for the generations to come... I pledge my soul to your service and gratitude.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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**Faculty : Educational Studies**

The Holy Qur'an has addressed the needs of women and their status in a way never done before in any other religious text. Woman's exalted position in Islam is due, primarily, to her role as a child rearer. It is she who is considered the "first madrasah" (first school) by Islam, and it is from her that children will learn about their responsibility as future 'standard bearers' of Islam and society.

The research examines stories and biographies of women in the Qur'an, narrated by various prophets (peace be upon them) through the ages. These stories have been drawn from sound Islamic sources, not the doubtful narrations of Israelite scriptures, showing, through their life stories, women's attitude nature, some positive and others negative. This provides an authentic and comprehensive view of Muslim women from the Qur'anic perspective. It puts forward an educational model for women to realize their true role in the challenging times in which we live. By studying the attitudes and dispositions of women in the Holy Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) the research illustrates the merits, morals and role of women as educators in the



family, as well as society. It also shows the extent to which a Muslim women can harm or benefit each member of her family. The study also shows the scope of educational techniques in the Holy Qur'an and their impact on the attitudes and character of women. It delineates the educational role of women and the features of women's character through investigation of previous religions and comparison with those in Islam. In this way, we can become more acquainted with the characteristics of women, her tasks, rights, duties and the type of work suited to her outside the family.

The research aimed to discover the truth about women's acumen in modern times, endeavoring to elevate her position through education about her true role, according to the foundations and principles outlined in the Holy Qur'an and the narrations about virtuous women by previous prophets.

Finally, the research, in its findings and recommendations, seeks to advance women's status in all fields, though education, according to the noble mission of Islam.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**ASPEK PENDIDIKAN DI DALAM KEPERIBADIAN WANITA  
MENURUT KISAH-KISAH PARA NABI  
YANG TERDAPAT DI DALAM AL-QUR'AN**

Oleh

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Al Quran memandang tinggi terhadap kedudukan wanita. Tidak ada di dalam agama lain yang mempunyai pandangan sedemikian. Wanita mempunyai kedudukan yang tinggi dalam Islam kerana mempunyai peranan utama dalam menjaga dan mendidik anak-anak dengan sempurna. dengan pendidikan menyebabkan wanita mampu mncapai matlamat yang sebenar, dan mampu membawa umat Islam dan masyarakat ke arah kemajuan.

Di dalam kajian ini, penumpuan di buat terhadap cerita nabi-nabi A.S di sepanjang zaman. penelitian penuh dijalankan terhadap prinsip dan pendirian wanita dalam cerita-cerita berkenaan samada positif atau negatif. Penjelasan mengenai kaedah dan cara pendidikan yang boleh diambil daripada prinsip dan pendirian mereka dibuat berdasarkan Al-Quran dan bersih daripada cerita-cerita Israeliyat dan riwayat-riwayat yang salah. Ini membolehkan kita mendapat gambaran yang sebenar tentang cara pendidikan dan pandangan Al-Quran terhadap wanita Islam. Kajian ini dilakukan adalah bertujuan untuk memberi cadangan terhadap cara pendidikan yang mampu membantu wanita Islam



menilai persekitaran mereka dan meletakkan mereka diatas landasan yang sebenar walaupun terpaksa menghadapi pelbagai cabaran. Kajian ini dibuat berpandukan prinsip dan pendirian wanita yang terdapat di dalam Al-Quran dan As-Sunnah supaya peranan mereka yang sebenar dalam mendidik keluarga dan masyarakat dapat ditonjolkan, sifat dan akhlak terpuji yang perlu dimiliki dalam kehidupan seharian, sifat dan akhlak buruk dan kesannya terhadap kehidupan wanita dan keluarga serta masyarakat dapat dijelaskan. Kajian ini juga menjelaskan tentang kaedah dan cara pendidikan wanita yang terdapat didalam cerita-cerita Al-Quran dan kesannya dalam membentuk keperibadian wanita, disamping menerangkan peranan mereka dalam pendidikan. Kajian seterusnya menumpukan kepada perbandingan kedudukan wanita dalam agama-agama terdahulu dengan Islam bagi mengetahui pelbagai kedudukan mereka mengikut pandangan yang berbeza. Di samping itu kajian ini juga membincangkan tentang tugas-tugas, keistimewaan, hak dan tanggungjawab serta kegiatan wanita di luar rumah.

Perbincangan di dalam kajian ini ditumpukan kepada realiti wanita masa kini dan pendidikan mereka melalui sifat dan asas-asas pendidikan yang ditemui di dalam cerita-cerita Al-Quran supaya mereka dapat dicontohi oleh wanita-wanita yang lain.

Melalui kajian ini juga, segala cadangan dan kesimpulan yang diperolehi, penyelidik berusaha untuk mengangkat taraf wanita dalam segenap aspek kehidupan melalui dakwah yang berterusan dan pendidikan Islam yang tulen.



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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### **Educational Dimension:**

The elements of education that form the character of dedication woman, developing her, refining her and building her up in order to protect her from bad habits and blameworthy qualities. These elements also improve her ability to cooperate with others, thus making her more effective. All this is necessary to guide her emotions to be balanced and to develop her passions in accordance with Islam and the tuned culture of her society.

### **Muslim Woman's Character**

Character is a complete system, which relies upon the foundation of faith, extracted from Islam, and which comprises consistency in physical and intellectual drives, relative to the characteristics which make-up the individual personality. It forms the individual's lifestyle, relative to the material and social environment, and is the basis by which an individual can be judged or recognized. Islamic education stamps its mark upon the character of woman in all aspects of her life: intellectual, physical, psychological, spiritual and social etc.

### **'Qasas al Anbiyya' (Narrations of the Prophets)**

The Qur'an has mentioned the Prophets and their positions and explains their rights and duties pointing towards their major role in life and their responsibilities to guide mankind to Tawhid (oneness) and Iman (faith). This study has come to throw light upon the stories in which women play a role. The researcher has recorded the stories of the prophets beginning with time of Adam until the time of the prophet Muhammad using a scientific approach listing the most important events which emphasise the characteristics of women in each prophet's life. Clarifying the woman's ideas and moods and her role which has been assigned by Qur'an. On the other hand, the researcher did not mention other prophetic stories which did not mention women, and other stories where

there was no clear involvement of women. So the research concerns women's role in the lives of the prophets from all aspects of her life extracting the rules and laws and ethics, morals and educational dimensions.

### **The Positive Character of Women**

The balanced Islamic character which controls a clear measure and is consistent for her behaviour supposed to be accepted or rejected. If it is in line with the principles of religion, then it is acceptable. But if it conflicts with religion then it is rejected, though the this character is linked with Allah and is keen to satisfy the commands of Allah and His reward in this life and the next. Therefore woman should not isolate herself from the activities of daily life or distance herself from the difficulties of life, because Islam in its teachings builds the soul to qualify woman to be generous /giving and develops in her the ability to be productive and creative to be able to live her life according to what Islam has prescribed. So life in her eyes is work, building, giving and competing in good actions.

### **The Negative Character of Women**

The women who is not committed behaves randomly and in an unbalanced random way and does not think of making her words and deeds according to the rules and laws of Shari'ah before she intends to do it. But instead she gives herself the right to do whatever she wants, even though its unnatural or conflicting with the nature system and far from the pleasure of Allah and not in agreement with Islam.

### **Islamic Aqeedah (Creed)**

A Permanent connected contracted between the servant (Man and Jinn) and His Lord Allah (SWT) and the fundamental rule for the Muslim personality for relationships, because the essence of every act and word springs from this faith. The Muslim establishes all of his deeds, practices and his positions and relations

based on faith in Allah and obeying His orders and love to be closer to Him through obedience, loyalty in his worship and duties (ibadaat).

### **Islamic Ahklaq (Morals)**

The collection of ethics and qualities and those meanings well resting in the soul of mankind in harmony with the rules of Shari'ah which Allah has ordained and which is meant to suit the nature and existence of the servants of Allah. These qualities which must be nurtured committed in a moderate way without extremes, to order and disciplined struggle in their lives or Allah will forbid it, when it is immoral. Internal motor deeply planted in the self which is reflected in deeds and sayings without need of for vision or thinking (habit) without restrictions and according to these qualities we can incite the deeds to be good or bad.

### **Praiseworthy Islamic Akhlaq**

Morals that Allah (SWT) appreciates and encourages, such as: sincerity, honesty, chastity, shyness etc. which are the fruit of faith in Allah and show the commitment of religion and is established in the self because it is a part of Islamic faith.

### **Blameworthy Akhlaq**

Morals that which has been forbidden and warned against like lying, deceit, betrayal etc. which leads the self to the consequences of following the desires and whims and sinking in the marshes evil and panting behind the ways of curse filth of Satan (Shaitan).



**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL**

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background**

Islam has a great level of concern for Muslim women and has taken great care to utilize her potential, guide her talents and her time, and protect her from going astray. This is because women are the beating heart of the family. They articulate its pain and aspirations and lead it towards exalted aims and goals. Her energy, her strength of faith and her understanding of her role in life lead to the progress and advancement of society in a way that enables Muslims to excel among other nations.

Woman is a fundamental part of society. She is an interconnected part of its culture and beliefs, through her mind-set and her behaviour. She has to withstand numerous obstacles, including the immoral tendencies of the self with all its whims and inclinations, disturbing and creating doubts in her, as well as the problems of the environment, which in turn, are reflected in the drives and instincts of the self. Through the deception and evil of Satan and his temptation, woman can deviate from the right path. When this happens, life becomes problematic. The results can be catastrophic for the family, the society and the nation as a whole.



The issue of woman and her role in society, and the extent to which she can affect scientific advancement, has received much interest in the form of seminars and studies. The diverse views and methodologies present in educational theory to date, require an attempt to combine these various educational visions into one, original Islamic reality, for the betterment of all societies. This would have the effect of creating rational females, whose characters can re-instate the lofty principles, divine instructions and honourable behaviour of the first Muslim women mentioned in the Holy Qur'an.

The call to achieve the aims and goals of Muslim society relates both to men and women. It is therefore not surprising that Islam directs both of them towards an exalted, ideal pattern of behaviour. Qur'anic education builds the character of Muslim women, moving them towards morality and refined behaviour, thus producing the best of people. Islamic education in accordance with the methodology of the Holy Qur'an, and the Sunna of the Prophet (peace be upon him), transports woman towards wisdom, yet this cannot be realized without the correct understanding of religion and woman's role within it. Woman's deep conviction about her role will reflect itself in her behaviour; which will result in an increased ability to bring-up the future generation of Muslims with faith and righteous behaviour.

The researcher's interest was in studying the narrations of the Prophets (Peace be upon them) focussing upon women. The aim was to display the role and the function of women in the Holy Qur'anic narrations; the females mentioned in these narrations being role models in order for believing women to arm themselves with faith and education. It is hoped that through this effort, the thinking and behaviour of women

will turn towards righteousness. If this is achieved, then women can grow to become like mighty pillars, unaffected by the storms of temptation or the winds of change

This research, 'Educational Dimensions of Woman's Character, in the Narrations of the Prophets, as Stated in the Holy Qur'an,' explores the role of women during the time of the previous prophets (Peace be upon them) and their divine missions. It also indicates the necessity for serious, purposeful study into the part played by women, and the exalted position enjoyed by them under the banner of Islam. Moreover, it seeks to study the character of Muslim women and their nature, according to the attributes and roles of the women presented in the Qur'anic narrations.

Although this study focused mainly upon women in the Prophetic narrations, it is also an attempt to identify key features of Islamic education. In other words, through women's retrieval of their position assigned to them by Shar'ia, and through their performing of their roles as educators and instructors, according to the Book of Allah, they can never be misled by evil. It is hoped that this research will be a beacon of hope, illuminating the lives of Muslim women, guiding them towards excellence in values, following in the footsteps of those faithful, righteous woman who came before us and who have been mentioned in the Prophetic narrations; praised for their noble qualities, eternalized by their being mentioned in the greatest books of religion. All this is but a sign and a token of the honour and respect due to women.

## Statement of Problem

This research seeks to shed light upon the issue of women's education by citing earlier examples of women who have succeeded in discharging their duties and the trust of disseminating their message. The main problem of the research lies in how to refine the women of *this* time, acquainting them with the role of the Qur'an as an educator and refiner of souls. The key question is:

“What are the main functions and features of Woman's characters in the narrations of the Prophets (Qasas-ul-Anbia'), and what Educational implications can be drawn from them?”

Within this question are other, secondary issues, which have been examined as follows:

1. The most important Qur'anic verses referring to the attributes of females in the Prophetic narrations.
2. The behaviour and attitudes of women, both praiseworthy and blameworthy, in the Prophetic narrations, and the educational implications of these.
3. Methods and techniques of education, gained as a result of studying the aforementioned women, their behaviour and attitudes, and their role in directing woman's behaviour to instil praiseworthy qualities and reject blameworthy ones.

4. The morality and merits of women, according to their roles in the Prophets' narrations.
5. The dimensions and characteristics of Muslim women at the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and in the previous revealed books, according to the Prophets' narrations.
6. The present reality of Muslim women today, and the scope of their role in education and 'Da'wa' (inviting to the religion of Allah).

### **Importance and Aims of the Research**

The educational status of woman is of great importance and it enjoys the concern of many Islamic writers, educators and 'Du'aa' (Callers to the religion), not least because the building and advancing of society depends, to a large extent, on woman. For this reason, the researcher chose to study the Qur'anic narrations in order to explore their value in educating and directing woman according to Qur'anic Methods. They have in them all the educational and instructional features for women's problems, needs and moral dilemmas.

There is no doubt that Muslim civilization has produced unique characters, both men and woman, who have set great examples of ideal Islamic morals and etiquette. Emulating characters such as these will create Muslim 'Da'iyat' (women who call to Allah) who are capable of performing great achievements and deeds and who will call

the future generations to strong inner conviction. The most important aims of this research are:

1. To identify the role of the Qur'anic narrations in developing the character of Muslim woman and to enhance this through:
  - Connecting woman to Almighty Allah and the life hereafter; and establishing the correct, monotheistic faith in her heart.
  - Developing woman's knowledge of the Book of Allah her understanding of its objectives and rules through the Qur'anic narrations, which illustrate the true faith and morals of the Holy Qur'an.
2. To analyze the characteristics of females mentioned in the Qur'anic narrations, both positive and negative, as these are a source of instruction for a Muslim woman in the present day and contain principles that help her to regulate the different aspects her life. This, it is hoped, will lend a helping hand to direct women and correct their behaviour.
3. To explain the sources and characteristics of Islamic education and reveal the most important methods used by the Holy Qur'an and the Qur'anic narrations to impart morals to the souls of men and women. This will enable them to identify the correct way, as illustrated by the female characters mentioned in the Holy Qur'an; bearing in the mind that those characters played a vital role in the lives of the Prophets (Peace be upon them), including the last prophet, Mohammed (Peace be upon him)

4. To identify the most important values that a Muslim must possess, and those which should be renounced or changed.
5. To build women's awareness of the amount of suffering and sacrifice undergone by the mothers, wives and sisters of the Prophets and Muslim women in general, in the field of 'Da'wa'. Also, to show that the main aim of the Qur'anic narrations is, in fact, to develop a sound monotheistic faith in the characters of Muslims. This is because Islam needs those who can invite others to Allah and bring the Muslims back to proper adherence of religion, equipped with 'Taqwa' (Fear of God) and 'Amal' (good actions).
6. To focus on the role of woman in the Prophet's narrations and to note the characteristics of the women's biographies mentioned therein in order to create a more complete picture of what a virtuous life means for a woman. Additionally, to clarify the guidelines to which modern women should adhere, in order to be in accordance with this ideal model, so that they can follow it and counter the many difficulties they face in terms of social, intellectual and cultural challenges.
7. To explore the Qur'anic method of awakening thoughts and emotions as an educational tool, arrived at by enquiry into narrations and their events. In addition, to exhibit the educational techniques of analyzing the characters of women mentioned in the Qur'an. This will show the importance of varying educational techniques to mould the personalities of woman using the examples of women in Prophetic narrations.