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MUSLIM FEMALE PHYSICIANS IN MILITARY (FROM EARLY ISLAMIC ERA TO CURRENT STATUS)

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ABSTRACT

Females received equal social status as males with the arrival of Islam, and they played the same role in all parts of life, including social, political, and even military aspects. Females were mostly present on the battlefields to providing logistical and medical support such as wound care was traditionally handled by female physicians, who halted the bleeding of wounded persons, change dressings, and use homemade lotions to aid wound healing. According to the findings, one of the responsibilities of females on the battlefield was to assist in medical activities to treat the sick and injured. As a result, these females can be considered the first military females in the medical field. The role of females in the medical realm of the early Islamic Era is described in this study endeavor by revisiting and exploring narrations and early Islamic writings. As well the current status of females also is explained that today's females are offering their services in the very field of life, as medical physicians, teachers, engineers, ladies' police, politicians, bank workers, lawyers, judges, company workers, and pilots, etc. It is a tremendous blessing of Islam for today's females because they can live their lives independently and, as cultured ladies, they can contribute to the wellbeing of humanity and the development of society alongside males. That honor and importance Islam has granted to females; its precedent is not found anywhere else in history. This research project could be extremely beneficial and instructive in its field of study.

INTRODUCTION

Because Islam is a religion of peace and harmony, it despises immoral characteristics such as corruption, oppression, disdain, hostility, exaggeration,

and inferiority. Females were treated as the lowest citizens before Islam, and they were neither respected nor valued (Akhter & Munir, 2014). Islam is the only religion that values females as mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters, and grants men and women equal rights in all parts of life. In the same way that men fought in the field of war, Muslim females also served as medical personnel. They applied bandages to the wounded soldiers and attempted to halt the bleeding from the military's wounds. This demonstrates that females played an essential part on the battlefield alongside males. Man becomes aware of the significance and value of mankind through knowledge. As a result, in addition to performing all other Islamic obligations, Islam has placed a strong emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge, because it is only through knowledge that society may understand the ups and downs of life and therefore serve humanity. Therefore, the Holy Quran and many traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasize the value of education and knowledge as a means for resolving all of humanity's issues. Islam has granted females the same rights as males in terms of medical study and practice. By looking at historical documents, we may see examples of Muslim female physicians participating equally in Islamic culture and military actions during the early Islamic era. Today's women are working to the best of their ability in all fields. Islam gave women a high status and gave them their identity. Today's woman is an independent and courageous woman who is living her life with confidence. Women are serving in the Army, Navy, and Air Force as soldiers and physicians. Thus, dedicated to the services of both the country and the nation. This research work aims to highlight the services and role of Muslim female physicians in the Military concerning the early Islamic Era and current status. This research work can be useful and informative about its specific field for researchers and readers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is based on qualitative research. The material was collected from many sources such as books, articles, magazines, websites, and newspapers. For collecting data few libraries were visited as Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Library, University of Peshawar library, and Archive library Peshawar, etc.

Muslim Female Physicians in Military and The Early Islamic Era

The study and analysis of women's scientific, political, and economic status are crucial to understanding their historical identity in Islamic culture and civilization. With the introduction of Islam, women's social status was recognized, and they joined like males in all aspects of life, including political, social, and military activities. Women's presence on battlefields was a requirement in that historical age, such as after the battle of the Trench and the extermination of the Jews when the prophet (PBUH) resided in Medina. In Medina's main metropolis, women performed the most prominent roles in all social spheres, including medical services. According to historical accounts, women in the early Islamic era participated in battles by providing logistical support such as water delivery, food distribution, and medical activities to treat the sick and injured (Hajianpour, 2016). Females were only allowed to part in battlefields with Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) permission. In several

instances, the Prophet (PBUH) refused to allow females to participate in battles (Hajianpour, 2016). Some historical accounts state unequivocally why the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) forbade some females from joining in the war. Umm Kabsheh of the Quda'a tribe is said to have petitioned the Prophet (PBUH) to let her join the army to cure wounded soldiers, but her plea was turned down. It has been said that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) wished to avert his opponents' cynical views (Ibn Sa'd, 1968). Women were not, however, completely barred from fighting. Rather the reason forbidding was that the nature of a female cannot able to bear the difficult hurdles battlefields and female's spirits is incompatible with combat and bloodshed. According to certain scholars, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not want females to be involved in wars and bloodshed (Ameli, 1991). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did, however, grant many females permission to accompany him and the army in the field of war. Females treated the sick based on their experience and comparative healing practice in social life, in addition to the females who attended the battlefields for the treatment of the wounded. According to certain historians, during the ignorant period, Shifa, Harith's daughter, and Abdullah ibn Abdul Shams' daughter used Amulet to heal Numlh a type of skin ailment (Istanbuli & Nasr, 2003). This type of therapy of the Dark Ages (Ignorance) was unscientific and experimental to some extent. The Chaldean priestess practiced this procedure, which was passed down to Muslim females. As a result, these female priests can be regarded as Arab Muslim female physicians and midwifery teachers (Zaydan, 2007). As well, according to Al-Tabbari's women assisted in the treatment of infected wounds by preparing the appropriate antiseptic lotions. Zainab of Bani Oud was well noted for her expertise in treating eye ailments and creating topical treatments (Bakr & Al-Sa'di, 1999). Arabians utilized traditional herbal therapy during the period of the dark age because there was no official medical education available. This suggests that early Islamic females were not only aware of the medicinal properties of herbs and herbal treatments but also knew how to provide primary medical care. We found several names of females in historical documents who worked as female physicians in the medical field throughout the early Islamic period. They were, in a true sense, medical pioneers at that time. They were physicians, healers, nurses, and other healthcare workers who took part with the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in many battles. These females may be regarded as the foremothers of military medicine during the early Islamic period (Golshani, Foroozani, Jahan Kohan, & Zohalinezhad, 1912). The following is an explanation of some Muslim female military physicians' services:

Hazrat Fatima Zahra (RAA)

Fatimah Bint Muhammad (RAA) was born in the year 605 or 615 and died in the year 633. She was the youngest of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) and Khadijah's (RAA) daughter. She participated in the Battle of Uhud, delivering water and food to the soldiers as well as treating the wounded, including her father (Hughes, 1885). According to Muslim history, she was there at the Battle of Uhud and healed her father's wounds. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was injured, she burned a piece of mat and applied the ashes to his wounds to halt the bleeding (Ibn Sa'd, 1968). She was well-versed in every element of medical care.

Hammanah Bint Jahsh ibn Riyab Asadi (RAA)

Hammanah Bint Jahsh ibn Riyab Asadi (RAA) was the Prophet's (PBUH) aunt. She not only brought water to the army during the Battle of Uhud, but she also treated injured soldiers (al-Maliki, 1992).

Umm-e- Ziyad Ashjaeyh (RAA)

Hadrat Umm-e- Ziyad Ashjaeyh (RAA) was one of the females who left Medina with the Prophet's (PBUH) permission to provide medicines to save the lives of injured soldiers and cure the wounded combatants in the Battle of Khyber (Ibn al-Athir al-Jazari, 1989).

Rufaydah Al Aslamiyyah (RAA)

Rufaydah (RAA) reportedly accepted Islam in the prophet's mosque in Madina after Hijrah and participated alongside the Prophet (PBUH) in a few battles. She joined the army in the Battle of Badr, assisting the fighters and tending to their injuries. Rufayda (RAA) got most of her remedial skills from her physician father, Saad Al-Aslami. She also had a medical tent (quite similar to the military mobile hospital used in the current age) with all the equipment needed to treat the injuries of soldiers she sustained while traveling with the army during the fight of Al-Khandaq. She was the first Muslim female to command a military mobile field medical center. She cared for injured companions, such as Saad ibn Muaaz (RA), who she cured in her tent at the order of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and removed an arrow from his arm (Kasule). She was also allowed to set up her tent near the Prophet's (PBUH) mosque in Madina, where a few volunteer nurses helped her look after Saad ibn Muaaz in different shifts. Before the battle of Khaibar, she also taught some of the female companions about first aid and nursing. These female nurses used to assist her in running her mobile medical military tent and caring for wounded patients throughout the day and night shifts. That also demonstrates how the mosque was used as a medical center throughout the Prophet's (PBUH) time (Muslim scholars). Rufayda (RAA) was given by Hadrat Muhammad (PBUH) a share of the spoils of war (Ghana'em), similar to any fighter in the war, recognizing her role in the battles. She also helped in treating many of the companions during peacetime as well as during wars. Hadrat Rufaydah is portrayed as a caring, compassionate nurse who is also an excellent organizer. She used her clinical abilities to train more females to be helpers as nurses in the healthcare field. She also worked as a social worker, assisting in the resolution of social issues related to the sickness. She also assisted looked after orphans, children in need, the crippled, and the deprived people (poor) (Jan, 1996).

Umm-e-Sinan Al-Islamiyyah (RAA)

Hadrat Om Sinan (RAA) was one of the companions who begged the Prophet (PBUH) for permission to go out onto the battlefield and help the injured and offer water to the thirsty. She offered her services on the permission of the

Prophet (PBUH) in the battle of Khaybar, where she assisted in the treatment of the Prophet's (PBUH) wounded companions (www.sahaba).

Umm-e- Attieh Ansari (RAA)

Hadrat Umm Attieh (RAA) was a dedicated physician and nurse who accompanied Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in practically every war he fought (Ibn al-Athir al-Jazari, 1989). According to Ibn Sad, she accompanied the Prophet (PBUH) in seven battles and was responsible for not only cooking and caring for the merchandise but also nursing and treating the wounded (Ibn Sa'd, 1968).

Kaebah Bent-e- Sa'd Ibn Uqba Aslamiya (RAA)

Hadrat Kaebah Bent-e- Sa'd Ibn Uqba Aslamiya took part in the Battle of Banu Qurayza and ministered to the sick and injured in a tent set up in Al-Masjid Nabawi. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) encouraged her by giving her the same share of the spoils as a soldier. When Sad ibn Muadh (RA) was injured in the battle of Trench, Kaebah successfully removed the arrow from his body (Al-Waqidi, 1988). She was Rufeidah's sister, and her clinic was located in the same tent as Rufeidah's clinic (Ibn Sa'd, 1968).

Umm-e- Sulaym Gromeisa (Sahleh) (RAA)

Hadrat Umm-e- Sulaym Gromeisa (RAA) was the daughter of Milhan Ansari from the clan of Banu Najjar. She participated in the fight of Uhud, delivering water and caring for the injured. Despite being pregnant, she assisted soldiers and provided health care to them in the battle of Hunayn (Ibn Sa'd, 1968).

Nasibeh Bent-e- Kaab Mazeneyh (RAA)

Her name was Umm-e- Amarah, and she was the daughter of Kaab Mazeneyh. Nasibeh belonged to the Banu Najjar tribe and which was a famous clan of Medina. She participated in two pledges, the Aqaba pledge (Durant, 1954), and the Tree pledge (Hajianpour, 2016). She fought like a lion in the battle, using a sword or an axe as a superb warrior, in addition to providing water and tending the wounded. In the battles of Uhud and Yamama and Ridda conflicts with Musaylimh Liar, she was wounded twelve times and lost one of her hands (Mahalati & Sh, 1989).

Barakah Bent-e- Tha'alaba bin Amr (RAA)

She was known as Umme Aymen and was the daughter of Tha'alaba bin Amr. Barakah was a freed bondwoman and the Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) nurse. She participated in the Battle of Uhud and was in charge of providing water, bandaging injured soldiers, and caring for the ill (Ibn Sa'd, 1968).

Umayya Bent-e-Qais ibn Abi-Salt Ghaffari (RAA)

Ghaffari was her tribe. She healed the wounded soldiers and relocated the martyrs to Medina with the help of several ladies from the Ghaffar tribe (Ameli, 1991).

Ash-Shifa Bint-e-Abdullah al-Quraishiyah al-Aladviyah (RAA)

Her given name was Layla, but she was better known as Ash-Shifa. It was a title bestowed upon her as a result of her profession (female physician). She began her education at a young age and went on to become a medical expert and a government official (Kahala, 1982).

Salma, Om Rafe'e (RAA)

Salma (RAA) used to serve and look after the Prophet PBUH, his family, and his wife. She helped Hadrat Khadijah (the Prophet's PBUH wife) deliver her baby at Makkah (Muslim Female Physicians). Only male physicians practiced medicine during the Greek era and after Hippocrates, therefore there isn't much documentation of female physicians. Unfortunately, the Muslim female health workers who worked in various sectors of medicine during the early stages of Islam are under-reported. Only one female physician is listed in Ibn Abi Usaibi'aa's book (marefa.org). Om Al-Hasan bint Al-Qadi Al-Tanjaly, a well-known female Muslim surgeon from Al-Andalus, was adamant about avoiding writing about her experiences in books, although she did quote poetry in Arabic that said: "writers write, and doers do". As a result, she could not have time to write because she was so busy working. It's worth noting that Elizabeth Blackwell became England's first registered female physician in 1858, after graduating from medical school in the United States in 1849. As a result, Islam has a long history of female Muslim physicians, which, unlike the West, dates back centuries (marefa.org).

Muslim Female Physicians in Military and Current Status

In today's world, women are excelling in fields such as physician, engineering, banking, law enforcement, the army, navy, and air force, as well as teaching and nursing, etc. Women nowadays can live independent and dignified lives; this is a great favor of Islam that it has bestowed upon them. This is one of Islam's greatest gifts to women, as it provides them with equal rights to men and a strong sense of self-identity. They can now live a decent and respectable life as a result of this. Women doctors who are serving as physicians in the Army, Navy, and Air Force are serving both the country and the nation. These women will play an important role in the treatment of patients on the battlefield and the defense of the country when needed. As in the past, women joined the Holy Prophet in various battles and used to bandage the wounded and give them water. It is a matter of pride for Pakistan that women are rendering their services in every field especially the duties they are performing as doctors are commendable.

Findings

From 622 to 632 AD, the Prophet (PBUH) of Islam lived in Medina, where he fought numerous battles in ten years. He provided many examples for female engagement as physicians, nurses, and health care professionals in both battlefields and social life over this minimum period of settled life of around ten years. Female warriors were discouraged from fighting until it was necessary, although the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) allowed females to work as health care providers. The presence of female physicians in the military during the early Islamic era is one of the many unexpected incidents in medical history. This demonstrates Islamic tolerance, which allowed females to participate in crucial social activities that shaped their lives and fates. Females were given a respected role as physicians, surgeons, nurses, and medical health care providers in the early Islamic era, centuries ago. The other nations, on the other hand, got honorable acknowledgment regarding females in the nineteenth century. Similarly, in the modern-day, women have proved their ability and knowledge in virtually every sector. Today's women are living dignified lives, which is a huge favor of Islam. Today, women continue to serve in the medical field, the army, the air force, and the highway police, among other professions. Islam has bestowed this distinction and position exclusively on women. Because women have the same rights as males in Islam. Islam has given women a stature that no other civilization or religion can match.

CONCLUSION

Women's engagement in military medicine during the early Islamic era is one of many startling incidents in the history of medicine. This demonstrates the broad-mindedness of Islam, which allowed women to participate in major social activities that shaped their lives and destinies. Women in the early Islamic era were recognized as physicians, surgeons, nurses, and medical health care workers centuries before women in Europe and other parts of the world. Women in Europe and other parts of the world were recognized in the 19th century. If we consider today's culture, women are employed in virtually every area. They are doctors, nurses, soldiers, bank workers, engineers, teachers, etc. They are performing their duties with responsibility and intelligence in every field independently. It is a tremendous honor of Islam to provide a dignified status for women in society, something no other faith or civilization has provided. They are regarded as a respectable member of society in Islam. As a result, it accords women the same status as men. As a result, women are fulfilling their roles as physicians, warriors, and armed officers in the field of combat and society.

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