

International Conference

On

**“Women’s Agency and Knowledge Production: Reclaiming Socio-Religious
Frameworks in Contemporary Discourse”**

Organized by

Department of Women Education

Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad.

&

Centre for Study and Research (CSR) New Delhi

Date :29th,30th January 2026

Concept Note

Women's Agency and Knowledge Production: Reclaiming Socio-Religious Frameworks in Contemporary Discourse

Background and Rationale

Women have historically been central to the intellectual and moral life of societies, shaping scholarship, pedagogy, and community structures. Yet, modern discourse often frames them in binaries—either as passive subjects constrained by tradition, or as liberated figures within secularized frameworks. Both perspectives fail to capture the depth of women's roles as active agents in sustaining and transforming socio-religious and intellectual traditions.

In early spiritual and scholarly communities, women played pivotal roles—as patrons of learning, transmitters of knowledge, jurists, and founders of educational institutions. These contributions were not marginal but deeply embedded within the epistemological and cultural fabric of their societies. In recent past its evident from Islamic golden age wherein considerable activism was carried out by women of impeccable character. Over time, however, layers of interpretation, socio-political contexts, and external critiques obscured these legacies, leading to the underrepresentation of women's voices in contemporary discourse.

Today, in an age marked by globalization, shifting identities, and competing intellectual frameworks, the question of women's agency in knowledge production becomes critical. There is a need to revisit socio-religious paradigms not as relics of the past but as dynamic resources for rethinking authority, representation, and justice in contemporary contexts. This conference seeks to create an intellectual space for rearticulating women's voices, reclaiming interpretive authority, and re-situating them as producers of transformative knowledge.

Objectives

Addressing Epistemic Injustice: To explore how orientalist and patriarchal readings have marginalized women's contributions and how counter-narratives can be constructed.

Recovering Historical Memory: To bring forward historical exemplars of female scholars and scholarship in general and Muslim women scholars and scholarship in particular.

Engaging Contemporary Issues: To deliberate on education, digital spaces, activism, and family life as spheres where women can reassert intellectual and moral agency.

Knowledge for Transformation: To envision how women's scholarship and participation can shape civilizational futures in a pluralistic world with Islam inspired frameworks

Key Themes and Sub-Themes

1. Epistemology and Authority

- Knowledge production within spiritual and ethical traditions.
- Women as interpreters, teachers, and narrators of meaning.
- Addressing epistemic silencing and reclaiming the right to define.

2. Historical Legacies of Knowledge Production

- Exemplary women as transmitters of religious, scientific, and literary knowledge.
- Muslim women's contributions to jurisprudence, education, and community building.
- Intellectual genealogies that transcend the margins of official history.

3. Contemporary Challenges

- Negotiating between secular feminist paradigms and indigenous frameworks and Islam inspired role and agency of women
- Women's representation in academia, authority, and public life.
- Critically assess the limitations of Western feminist and secular academic paradigms in representing Muslim women's subjectivities.

4.Socio-Religious Frameworks for Empowerment

- Reimagining family, spirituality, and moral responsibility beyond contemporary paradigms.
- Reclaiming community institutions as sites of women's participation.

5.Future Pathways

- Towards a holistic and value-based gender discourse.
- The role of women in shaping ethical and civilizational futures.
- Constructing spaces for intercultural and interfaith dialogue.

Expected Outcomes

- An academic counterbalance to reductive narratives of victimhood or secular emancipation.
- Publication of conference proceedings to enrich global debates on gender and knowledge.
- Development of academic networks dedicated to women's scholarship and thought leadership.

Travel support

No TA/DA will be provided to the participants. Please manage your own TA/DA expenses.

Local hospitality

Lodging will be provided by the conference organizers. Delegates are expected to cover any additional expenses they may incur, including food.

Accommodation

Limited accommodation is available on the university campus for out- of-station delegates, based on a first -come, first -served basis.

Registration fee

There will be no registration fee.

Call for paper

- Participants are advised to contribute original, unpublished, and well -researched papers for the international conference.
- Participants can submit their papers in either English or Urdu.
- Full paper shall be submitted by the participants with a word count 4000 to 6000 words typed in double space A4 size paper using 12 pt Times New Roman font. Heading and referencing pattern would be accepted in APA (7th Edition) format with in-text citations.

Important Dates:

Abstract Submission Deadline: 15th Nov 2025

Notification of Acceptance: 20th Nov 2025

Full length paper submission: 20th January 2026

Conference Dates: 29th, 30th January 2026

For inquiries and abstract submissions, please contact.

Abstract submission

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For queries

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The tentative schedule of the two-day international conference would be as follows:

- Inaugural session
- Panel Discussion
- Technical session
- Valedictory session

Conference Convenors:

1. Dr. Shabana Kesar

Head, Department of Women Education MANUU,
Hyderabad.

2. Dr Mohammed Rizwan

Director,
Centre for Study and Research (CSR)
New Delhi.

Conference co-Conveners:

1. Prof Ameena Tahseen, DWE, MANUU.

2. Dr. Ayesha Alvi

Group Head, Islamic Perspectives in Bioethics,
Centre for Study and Research (CSR),
New Delhi.