



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**The Role of Print Media and Muslim Education in Sub-Continent  
(1857-1897)**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objective of the study is to explore the educational thoughts among Muslims through print media in the sub-continent. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had a great influence on Muslim education. In following his footsteps, a lot of other journalists and educationists, such as Maulana Shibli came to the mainstream to investigate and remove the European misconception among Muslims. During the reign of the Mauryan Empire, the Slave Dynasty, and the Mughal Empire saw printing press practices. However, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, different kinds of printing press worked under the East India Company and play a vital role in Muslim education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sir Syed and Shibli's works used as primary and secondary sources with outstanding writing and knowledge provide the facts. That finds Shibli's educational thoughts for the whole community with both combinations. The Aligarh movement of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan paved the way for Muslims to get a Western and traditional education, that eliminated all kinds of misunderstandings which popped out after the War of 1857.

**Keywords:** Aligarh Movement, Influence on Muslim Press, Maulana Shibli Noumani, Muslims Education, Print Media, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan

**Introduction**

News collection in the subcontinent is as old as the civilization of the Indus Valley the major cities of Indus Valley civilization like Mohenjo Daro and Harappa were very expert in the collection of news in their region. It is not confirmed but Dr. Abdul Salam Khurshid stated that *it can be safely presumed that the highly evolved bureaucratic machine of the Indus valley administration included a department for the collection of information*. In Moryans empire we can also witness this kind of collection of information which was done under the proper administration of Ashoka the great. This practice was continued by the Ghaznavid dynasty and later by the Great Mughals as well. During the period of Aurangzeb Waqiya e Naweese was one of the best administrations which were used to gather information. (Singh, 2018)

During the rule of East India Company in Indian territory William Bolts was the first person who introduced the concept of print media in 1768. Although he couldn't get permission from EIC to run his private press. Soon after him, James Augustus Hickey was the first person who established the first press in Kolkata which was named Kolkata journal advertiser or Bengal gazette. He published his first paper on January 29, 1780. Indian gazette has become the second oldest paper which was published on November 18, 1780. Soon after that there was a list of different journals and newspaper which was published in colonial India. Bengal Orientals my dad is Gazette, and so on were published in different cities and

provinces of company Raj such as Punjab Sindh Madras Bombay and Karachi. (Shahzad, 2019)

Jam-I- Jahan Numa is the first Urdu newspaper which was published in Punjab, and it was converted to the Persian language because of low client's ratio, in 1824 it was once again translated into Urdu and started its publication. In Punjab, Syed Mohammad Azim become the first ever Muslim journalist who published a newspaper in Punjab entitled Lahore chronicle it was published in 1849 for the first time. Its publication was continued till 1890 he also published some newspapers in English after the mutiny of 1857. After the best act of 1857 Lahore chronicle was become the first newspaper which got a license from company Raj.

In this regard we can observe the role of different Muslim scholars as well. Muslim scholars had a great influence on the print media during colonial India. The services of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Shibli Nomani, Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar, and Chaudhry Rehmat Ali play the very vital role in Muslim education through print media. In this article, we will discuss the role of different scholars during the time of 1857-1897.

Moulana Shibli Noumani is considered a very eminent personality who did play a very central role in Muslim Education and motivated the Muslims to get back the glorious past and dignity. The significance of the study is to define the role of Shibli in Muslim education, identify the golden aspects of our heritage and spread this message through print writing to Muslims. Since 1857 the history of the subcontinent observes the Muslim educational system in modern India was weak and the war of independence snatched all social, political, economical and educational rights of Muslims. Moreover, the condition of Muslims going down in all spheres, in other words, we can say they are losing their own identity. In this difficult time, a prominent and subjugated personality was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan as a scholar and reformist in Aligarh. Still, some are others doing work for the revival of education such as the Jamaat-i-Islami, Darul-Uloom-Deoband, Ahmadiya, and Manzar-e-Islam (Gupta, 2019).

### **Literature Review**

If we say that *Print Media* is the main medium of mass communication, it won't be wrong. It includes newspapers, weeklies, magazines etc. With the advancement of electronic media print media still has its charm and relevance. Print Media always left a strong impact on the reader's mind with in-depth analysis.

Print media has always played a vital role in promoting education in India. In colonial India, all newspapers were published in the English language. William Bolts is considered the first person who introduced newspapers in the subcontinent. He set up a printing press in Kolkata in 1768. His intention to publish a newspaper in English, his intention was not approved by East India Company. Later James Augustus Hickey at Kolkata first published his regular newspaper in India full stop it was named as Kolkata General Advertiser or Bengal gazette which was published on January 29, 1780. But this paper was generally known as Hickey's Gazette. (Firoze, 2017)

This Second oldest paper that was published in India was the Indian gazette and which was published in November 1780 in Kolkata. After that Bengal journal Oriental magazine and Madras gazette were published in different periods in the 19th century. The two provinces of colonial India which were Sindh and Punjab they also published their own newspapers. The title of the newspaper was Lahore Chronicle published by a Muslim writer named Syed Muhammad Azam and it was published in 1849. (Hassan, 1986)

During the time of colonial India mostly Muslim scholars did not appreciate Muslims joining politics before getting proper education. Syed Amir Ali in this regard give a

proper statement in the Newspaper, known as Rafiq I Hind, which was published in Lahore. This practice was activated until the year 1888. With the formation of Indian National Congress Indians started their political role in British India. Indian National Congress was supposed to work for all communities of India including Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. In the early period of the Indian National Congress, it seemed that they were working for the whole community but with the passage of time, its role was bound with the Hindu community only. (Waseem, 2013)

At that time Muslim journalists started playing their role in journalism and tried to wipe out misunderstandings between Muslims and British Raj. Sir Syed Khan in this regard played a vital role and came as an educationist for the Muslim community under British Raj. He wrote a book because of Indian revolts or Riasala Asbab e Baghawat e Hind to analyze the factors which were involved in the revolt. He also stated that Muslims were not the only ones who work behind this mutiny. (Firoze, 2017)

The role of Shibli was revitalizing the community when he became part of the educationist Scholars and noble Muslim community there he expand the educational links (Gupta, 2019) His personality was inclined by Shah Waliullah, he was an alim involved with the reform of the ulema and good leader for the Muslim community. His published work motivates the youngest author and an instructor linked to Aligarh College and the reformist madrasa of the Nadwatul-Ulema in Lucknow. Shibli was linked to Aligarh for almost sixteen years and during being attached to Nadwatul ulema. So, the background of the Shibli life expresses and gives the detail of two-sided bonding with Aligarh and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan even when he started a job as an Arabic & Persian Mentor (Usmani, 2007). Moreover, the link with the educationalist leader and extensive tour keeps engaged the foreigner or Muslim scholar alerting him to worldly educational knowledge. This tendency of the Shibli was to develop educational awareness for the misguided Muslims of the Subcontinent, which that possible to improve through his printing material (Gupta, 2019).

## **Material and Methods**

This article is qualitative research. Primary and secondary data will be used.

## **Data Collection**

In this article, primary and secondary data will be used. It will include journals, newspapers, autobiographies, documentaries, and books. These books especially newspapers will help to explore the role of Muslim journalist in print media and it's character in promotional Muslim education.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Sir Syed Ahmed Khan As a Journalist**

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan started his journalist career from the newspaper of his brother newspaper which was named Syed-Al-Akhbar. His brother's name was Syed Muhammad Khan. His experienced as journalist worked for him during the Aligarh movement and Muslim education. (Muhammad, 2002)

After the mutiny of 1857 Sir Syed Ahmed Khan wrote an essay about causes of revolt in the subcontinent against British Raj. It was later published and studied in the parliament of Great Britain. In this book, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan wrote about the causes of revolts. before this by British India it was considered that Muslims were the only reason of these revolts or mutiny. with this book Sir Syed conveyed a message to the crown that Muslims were not only responsible for this action. In this booklet he stated that Hindus were also equally

responsible for this mutiny and he also gave different causes for it. This was published in 1857 which became a bridge between the rulers and the people who ruled. (Waseem, 2013)

This was for the first time Sir Syed Ahmed Khan gained prominent position in sight of Britain.

The Aligarh movement is known as a strong and powerful educational movement which was activated by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his colleagues in the subcontinent. This movement was started soon after the mutiny of 1857 and gained it so momentum during the period of Indian national congress stopping Muslims to become a part of political scenario and still lead to the establishment of All India Muslim league in 1906. During this moment sir Syed Ahmed Khan, played his role as a bridge between rulers and the Muslims assuring the loyalty of Muslims towards them. (Ali, 2019)

For this purpose, he started promoting European education science and technology and established a scientific society in 1863. This scientific society later played a very vital role in translation of chemistry physics and other scientific subjects into Urdu and elementary and advanced mathematics studies. This society also published its own magazine known as scientific society magazine or Akhbar scientific society. This magazine was afterward known as Aligarh institute Gazette. (Khan, 2019)

Maulana Haali appreciated about the role of scientific society magazine in awareness for the Muslim education especially in regards of English education. He pens down about it in his book Hayat-I-Javed. (Hassan, 1986)

Scientific society magazine or Akhbar scientific society was giving an opportunity of free flow of information between the British Raj and Muslims. This also gives good informative coverage to Muslim education culture socials and activities of them in sub-continent.

This was consisting of 16 pages and its motto was "*liberty of the press should be the policy of a wise government and oaths maintenance is the duty of the subject.*" This newspaper was considered as the most authentic spokesman for the Muslims of British India which was stating public opinion without any hesitation or pressure. (Hassan, 1986)

During his visit to England Sir Syed explored the role of Richard Steels and Joseph Addison in writing applied essays with humor and contemporary literature. It somehow gave him two patterns of journalism which became because of the writing of Risala Tahzib ul Ikhlaq.

In 1870 another journal was published for the Muslim social reforms named as Tahzib ul Ikhlaq. Its main purpose was to promote Muslim education and reminding them about the glorious past of them. In this journal he advises Muslim to stop wasting their money in useless channels and non-Islamic customs and ask them to show their interest in business and Commerce. It also gives them a chance of freedom of expression and it also promoted a rational approach to religion. Its first phase continued for seven years. In this journal Sir Syed wrote 112 articles with an open discussion on religion, social matters, great controversies and exchange of views. (Muhammad, 2002)

Anglo muhammadan college was established in Aligarh which was converted to university after the death of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. The main purpose of it was predicted Muslims so they can learn western education and played their role in civil services and share their duties in administration under British Raj. (Ali, 2019)

With the establishment of Indian national Congress it was considered that it will represent the whole community but Sir Syed aloof Muslims from joining it. This is not

because he was against Muslims role in politics but according to him Muslim should join politics after proper education which sure would be a western education system, so that Muslims do not consider themselves as lowest class. He also said that INC would only work for Hindus, it delayed Urdu Hindi controversy somehow showed their actual intentions towards Muslims. And this was the time when two nation theory came into existence. (Islam, 2000)

Aligarh movement is now considered as literary renaissance era for Muslims education of colonial India.

### **Sir Syed and Muslim Print Media**

The main medium of Sir Syed Urdu and his journals were also published in Urdu hence he had a great influence on Urdu press and his journals were followed by a large number of community in subcontinent. This style of journalism was appreciated by both supporters and opponents of him. *Paisa Akhbar* and *Vakil* newspapers of Lahore and Amritsar were his great supporters. these newspapers were sponsored by Moulvi mehboob Alam. They were influenced by the style of Sir Syed's balanced and sober journalism. (Hassan, 1986)

The opponent newspaper of Sir Syed *Rafiq I Hind* and *Muhazzib* also continued to convey the message of Aligarh movement till 1884, late, Moulvi Muharram Ali Chishti and Abdul Halim Sharar become his opponent because of his religious thought.

Bengali Muslims were very backward in this field and it can be judged by the statement of William hunter who said that among 1338 Gazetted Muslims were only 92 in numbers. Still, they feel the necessity of English education much earlier than the Aligarh movement. Nawab Abdul Latif Was the first Bengali Muslim to start Bengali and English modern education. They started their Bengali journals among them "*Shudhakar*" Was appeared in 1889 in Kolkata and its editor was Sheikh Abdul Rahim. He was sponsoring another journal it was named as *Mihir*. (Hassan, 1986)

As Sir Syed introduced a loyal and low toned newspapers towards the British government now the journalism of Muslims print media starting using political and non-political tones. Following this tone a lot of journalists and newspapers starting writing about Muslims and their relation with British Raj. These newspapers such as "*Islam Pracharak*" "*Julwa I Toor*" "*Khair Khawah I Punjab*" "*Akhbar I Alam*" "*Rohail Khand*" "*Sholatoor*" "*Naya Rajhistan*" "*Punjabee Akhbar*" "*Koh-I-Noor*" "*Rampoore Akhbar*" "*Nasseem-I-Jaunpore*" "*Najm-ul-Akhbar*" "*Adeeb-I-Hind*" "*Akmal-ul-Akhbar*" "*Oudh Akhbar*" "*Shola-I-toor*" "*Benares Gazette*" "*LucknowTimes*" started discussing the different issues which were existing in society about Muslims. (Hassan, 1986)

These newspapers such as *Julwa-I-Toor* discuss about the issue of Muslim mosque. The other newspapers try to figure out the actual issues between britishers and Muslims. "*Akhbar-I-Alam*" headed as Fouj Kashi in which the editor suggested government to issue a proclamation before any army March so that public minds could be quite suspicions. Other newspapers also found their way to convey their message to ruler party. In short aligarh movement and Scientific society magazine paved a new way for the Muslims print media. They find their way to become a bridge between new rulers and ex rulers. (Hassan, 1986)

### **Maulana Shibli Noumani**

The nature of explanation through content and human creation as technology in the form of print media play a significant role in Muslim life by Muslim scholars after 1857. Because the big mutiny of 1857, increase the need to rebuild the social organization for Muslim education. For that, another procedure of education started among the Muslims. This

step was fitting in the community for setting the social and political and educational setup. In this substance, the role of the activist and scholar Sir Syed Ahmad Khan introduced modern education for modernizing Islamic society. (Gupta, 2019) This effort was attached to the Aligarh Movement and the M.A.O college. In the case of the M.A.O college role of Maulana, Shibli Noumani was very important in the history of the Muslim civic in Modern India. He had a very energetic and stimulating character and play a strong role in the life of Indian Muslims. Shibli as a scholar and researcher, as a writer and by intellectual achievement, revitalized the memories of past scholars. He was a great scholar of Islamic science historical writer, researcher, philosopher and poet in Persian and Urdu language. His historical writing provides the right direction for maltreated and misguided Muslims. In 1881, the main part of Maulana Shibli's life when they go Aligarh with his father and meet with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

Where Shibli read the Ode in a traditional style in honour and praised Sir Syed which completely turnaround his life and gave him a new landmark for the future. The style of the Ode was in classical Arabic poetry that left a deep effect on Sir Syed's mind considering the Shibli was an original intellectual writer who published the Ode in Aligarh Gazette. The connection of the Shibli with Aligarh opened novel prospects and give the right direction for life because the purpose of Aligarh was promoting Muslim Education that's why always connected with European Scholars. Among the scholar, Shibli meets and establish friendly relationships, especially with Professor Thomas Walker Arnold, Shibli learned the modern way of research, French & English language to Arnold and teaches the Arabic language to him. Both became good friends and teachers and this strong bonding make the bridge for reaching & read the oriental and occidental writing that make him able to stop the assault on the Islam and Muslim generation by European misconception (Zilli, 2007).

### **Moulana Shibli Educational Thoughts**

After 1857 the concept of education became difficult for Muslims and not at an equal level in the subcontinent. After the entrance of the Shibli in Aligarh he did observe the educational level as a teacher. Shibli always keeps in touch with the various genius scholar, researchers and connected educational centres. In these centres, through discussion transformation of the views and ideas he comes to know about the modern system and avail the opportunity to improve Muslim educational society. Shibli's thoughts on Muslim education were based on assessment stuff and required problem-solving because when he did read the old print material from the libraries, he realized due to the lack of modern education and language command Muslim community was fighting with colonial rule. No doubt, when Maulana enters Aligarh had respect for Sir Syed, and both had the same purpose freedom of Indian Muslim Ummah, on the other aspects Sir Syed varied from Shibli in Approaches and method of education (Gupta, 2019). Asrar state: Moulana Shibli Noumani was recognized by the western educational system, and don't want to lose their inheritance and culture that's why he adopted the way of Muslim modern educational Progress through heritage (Ahmad, 2011). According to Ritesh, Shibli supports the Traditional way of learning for Muslim Education that will lead to both modern and Islamic understanding. (Gupta, 2019)

### **Role of Maulana Shibli Noumani to Educate the Muslims by his Writing**

In making a strong career as a Muslim and protecting Islam, the role of Moulana Shibli Noumani was very active. His prominent writing was the "Hero of Islam". Shibli embarked in 1887 upon its series with Al-Ma'mun, a brief history of the Abbasids. Al-Ma'mun is the first biographical work which brought Shibli to public attention. That writing highlighted the impact of Islamic civilization and its role in inspiring human legacy (Islam, 2019). In the notable work of Moulana Shibli Noumani Tarikh-i- Bada' al-Islam in Arabi. The first inspiration for the writing of Sirat al-Nabi may be traced to Shibli's writing of Badi al-Islam in Arabic which was written in 1891. The second session held in Lucknow on 27 Dec

1887 of the Mohammadan Educational Congress present a paper 'Musalmanon ki guzashtah Talim'(Past Educational System of Muslims) Moulana Shibli also write the Kutubkhana-i-Iskandriyya in 1892. Moulana Shibli Nomani describes Urdu literature, including large and small alterations and some parts, in a very modest style without Islamic concession (Islam z. , 2000).

Kutubkhana-e-Iskandriya was written for those misunderstanding that was created in the mind of European about Muslim culture, nationalism, social system, and Islamic History. Over time spread among the people. (Noumani, 1902) It was written against the accusing thoughts of Europe, that they imposed on Muslims. They said Muslims are illiterate and uncivilized people (Bhat, 2018).

### **In Hayat-e-Shibli "Musalamano ki Guzashita Taleem"**

In 1883, when was Moulana Shibli enter Aligarh, started to find a suitable way for Muslims. Shibli saw the supremacy and suppression of Europe to defeat Muslims. Their past and present were seen in darkness. In this situation, another side was the European writer and scholars' achievements, which the Muslims were proud of in History. European writers spread the evil writing of Islam, Sultan Islam, and Islamic education. So, when the upcoming Muslim generation reads European writing they will hate to inherit. Hence their strategy had become effective and the Muslims were disgusted with their antiquity, heroes and scholars, and the development of Europe seemed to be outstanding. For solving this matter in 1887, to remove the misunderstanding and misapprehension in the mind of Muslims Moulana Shibli Nomani write Essay the "Musalamano ki Guzashita Taleem" (Past Educational System of Muslims).

Moulana Shibli presented it in the session of the Educational Conference Qaiser Bagh Lucknow. When the Muslims first listen to the words about the achievement of Elders, this sermon was spread throughout the country. It is known that the fame of Allama Shibli rose from the sun for the first time in this region. In this Speech, Moulana Shibli presented the previous name of Islamic Institutions and Modes of Muslim Education, and describe their attributes and conditions. This sermon was printed on the printing press as a magazine. About this lecture, Abdul Kaleem Shra'r writes, from the Muslim's point of view it was a new thing. When it had to go review, nobody was, who doesn't want to read it? The magazine of "Musalamano ki Guzashita Taleem" also creates the idea of correction in Muslim Arabic Institutions. (Nadvi, 1970) Through this paper, Shibli gets very familiar with the Muslim educational system. This paper was published by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in a magazine and sent copies to colleges (Islam z. , 2000).

### **In "Moulana Shibli ka Ek Muta'ala" The Educational reforms**

Moulana did work in Aligarh for 16 years (1882-1898). In Aligarh, he was an Arabic teacher, but during this time he also support the English educational system for Muslims. In Feb 1883 he started teaching in Aligarh and after four months in June 1883, he established the "National school" for English learning in Azamgarh. Through the foundation of the National School, we can understand the tendency of Shibli toward English learning and in this regard began to appear lots of Speeches and writing in Aligarh. In Aligarh Institute Gazette, 14th April 1883 Maulana Shibli Noumani writes an essay on the name of Ulmah-e-Islam: he stated

*"You will find an open abhorrence toward English among the people, but for the worldly enjoyment and honour and the desired has buried in the hearts for that". In this reference, he stated to Scholars: The method of education you are supporting is completely useless. There are donkeys that you should take on your hands and heads. The thought that the current style of education is religious education was wrong. Do justify, in the Curriculum, the books of Greek Philosophy have been kept, is the number of Theological books equal to them?*

The first annual meeting of the Muhammadan Educational Conference was held on 27 December 1886 in Aligarh, Maulana Shibli Noumani suggests Muslim Education. "In the opinion of this meeting, Muslims are in intense need of a very high level of education in Western studies and the English language. Both the nation and the government should pay attention to it. It is enough to have English as a second language in Eastern education. We don't need the government's attention regarding Oriental Education. In the same way, it is done by the scholars of the nation in our ancient way Should stay".

Maulana said in his speech on this occasion: "That the nation is in intense need of higher education in English is a claim that needs little argument in its proof. It is noticeable that our national, cultural, and moral development depends on high-level education in English" (Ahmad M. , 1986).

## **Conclusion**

In this article, we have discussed the role of print media in the education of Muslims during colonial India. It also discussed the importance of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his journalism and how it paved the way for Muslims to become a part of the politics of British India. The balanced and sober journalism of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had a great influence on Muslim print media, and they started to opt his tone in politics and non-political discussions. His behaviour as an educationist left a great influence on the other Muslim educationist and journalists. The role of Maulana Shibli as an educationist and architecture of modern Muslim education also pushed Muslims towards getting Western education along with their traditional education. It is very clear that Sir Syed became a bridge between Great Britain and Muslims to eliminate their misunderstanding. The booklet causes of revolt is the main example of it. Similarly, Shibli also played his vital part in the education of Muslims during the 19th century. Maulana Shibli Noumani expresses thoughts on Muslim education through essays, magazines, and book writings, that express the different aspects of Islam, history, cultural, and social condition. He endeavours to give the proper understanding to Muslims during the hardship of life. When they had been detracting from their originality and heritage due to European misinterpretation by printing stuff in different collections. Shibli wants to clarify the wrong concept taken to support the printing material and spread it among the Muslims through writing. He thought education is not for the single human being, it's for all Muslims who want to be closely connected for the betterment and development of their communal life. He argued a wide range of traditional and modern combinations in education may be helpful.



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