

**ULAMA'S
KNOWLEDGE,
ATTITUDE
&
PRACTICES
STUDY
ABOUT GIRLS' EDUCATION
IN
KOHAT DISTRICT**

NATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION (NRDF)

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CONTENTS

1.	Acknowledgement	
2.	Background	01
3.	Methodology	02
4.	Setting of the KAP	03
	I. <u>The Environment</u>	
	a) The Target Area	03
	b) The People	03
	c) The Economy	04
	d) The Ulema	04
	II. <u>The Institutions</u>	
	a) The Mosque, Madrassa and Hujra	04
	b) Tablighi Markaz	05
	c) Individual Scholar	05
5.	Religious Institutions Visited	06
6.	Religious Persons Contacted	07
7.	Educational Qualification of Ulama	08
8.	Main Findings of the survey	09
	a) Status of Education in Islam	09
	b) Islamic Injunctions about Female Education	09
	c) How Requirements of Female Education can be met?	10
	d) Does Educated Women make better Mothers?	11

e)	Years of Schooling and Nature of Education: Considered Necessary for Girls	11
f)	Would they recommend to others in sermons?	12
g)	Are educated Women beneficial to the Society?	12
h)	Aspects of School Education in Contradiction to Islamic Injunctions	13
i)	Suggested measures to conform school Education: Islamic Injunction?	13
j)	Does Ulama send own female children to Schools?	14
9.	Conclusions	15
10.	Recommendations	17
11.	Annex A, Questionnaire	18
12.	Annex B, Quotes obtained from KAP Study	21

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Finally acknowledgement is due to Mr. Tariq Mehmood, Programme Coordinator and Mr. Shaharyar Khan Bangash, Social Organizer, Universal Primary Education, Kohat for the exhaustive fieldwork in the target area.

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Tahseen Ullah Khan
Chief Coordinator,
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BACKGROUND

UNICEF is working in collaboration with Directorate of Primary Education, NWFP for Universal Primary Education in Kohat District.

Objectives of the Project

The following are objectives of the project:

- **To increase primary school participation by increasing enrollment for children aged 5 to 9 years.**
- **To reduce the gender gap in primary education**
- **To reduce dropout rate**

National Research and Development Foundation (NRDF) is one of the collaborating partners for the project UPE Kohat. With support from the UNICEF NRDF has carried out the KAP study of *Ulama* in Kohat District regarding girls' education.

Objective of KAP Study

To find out about the knowledge, attitudes and practices of *Ulama* regarding girls' education.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for the KAP study is:

- A group of 50 religious persons were selected to constitute as sample for the KAP study. Criteria for selection were to ensure that the sample group is as truly representative of the target group as possible; as such the group members were picked up from all areas and schools of thought in the target district. The respondents are affiliated with *madrassas*, mosque or in their individual capacity. In all 44 institutions including 36 *madrassas* were visited in connection with this study.
- A questionnaire was developed which is attached as Annex A.
- Personal interviews were held with 50 respondents randomly selected (based on criteria).

SETTING OF THE KAP

Fifty respondents of the sample group are studied in the context of their environment and the institutions with which they are associated.

I. The Environment

It is felt that in order to know the target group well, it is imperative to know their environment. In this context the target area, its people and economy is discussed in brief.

a) The Target Area – Kohat District

Kohat district (including the present Hangu district) lies between North latitudes 32°, 47' and 35° and East longitudes 70°, 34' and 72°, 17'. It is bounded on the North by Peshawar district and tribal areas of *Afridi* and *Orakzai* tribes, on the east by River Indus, on the south by Karak district and to the west is River Kurram and North Waziristan. It is mainly hilly area, however, the hills do not rise to much heights. The top of Samana Mountain that lies just outside the district is 5,570 feet above sea level. Besides Indus and Kurram rivers that flow to the east and west there are a few seasonal streams flowing in the several valleys. Kohat Toi being the most significant one. Administratively the district is divided into two tehsils of Kohat and Hangu.

b) The People

Pashtoon tribes of the *Khattak* in Kohat Tehsil and *Bangash* in Hangu Tehsil occupy major portion of the area. Some small and trading communities are also located in Kohat city and in small pockets elsewhere. The people predominantly speak *Pashto* language, however, in Kohat city *Hindko* is also used. Overwhelming majority of the people profess Islam as their faith. Some Christians and Hindus, however, live in Kohat city. Majority of Muslims practice *Sunni* faith, while *Shias* in significant numbers inhabit the area between Kohat and Hangu towns. Bulk of the *Sunnis* belongs to the *Deobandi* school of thought. Adherents to *Barelvi* and *Ahl-e-Hadith* and other groups are found in small pockets.

c) The Economy

Kohat District is mainly hilly and with scarce prospects for cultivation mainly due to lack of irrigation facilities, however, agriculture and livestock rearing constitute to be the major occupation of the people. People in large number leave their homes to serve in the defence forces or work abroad, mostly in the Gulf to earn their living. The latter practice has brought significant change in standard of living of the people. Small business and some industry are practiced in the urban localities of Kohat, Hangu, Tall and other towns in the area.

d) The Ulama

The *Ulama* (religious persons) owe their importance and influence in the community mainly due to their knowledge of religious sciences, personal moral conduct, and usefulness to the society and political clout. Their status is also enhanced if belonging to an important religious institution, a mosque or *madrassa*. Most of the interviewees are viewed in the environment of these institutions.

II. Institutions

The target group is best understood when the institutions to which its members are generally associated are studied as well. These institutions include:

a) Mosque, *Madrassa* and *Hujra*

The *Masjid* (mosque) that is the hub of a Muslim community for many purposes shared this role with the traditional social institution of *Pashoons*, the *Hujra*. However, of late the status of the *hujra* has greatly diminished and the mosques are gaining there upon as centers of the community. This is partly due to individualism being on the rise in the society compared to the collective attitude in the social spheres. But yet a comparatively new religious institution, the *Madrassa* (religious educational institution) is coming up as a center of greater importance for various reasons, mainly because it is the place where the most learned ones are gathered and new *Ulama* are produced. As such it influences opinion of the society on matters of religious nature. Thus the larger a *madrassa* in terms of number of teachers and students more it is influential.

b) *Tablighi Markaz*

Besides the traditional religious institutions, the mosque and *madrassa*, yet another institution, the *Tablighi Markaz* (center for religious propagation) is being developed, mostly on its own independent premises at each important town all over the country. Devout Muslims in steadily increasing number assemble in these centers, often on Thursday nights to listen to scholars. These centers are also used as launching platforms for sending out groups of religious preachers. Due to the fact that Muslims and *Pashtoons* in particular, in continuously increasing number are getting attracted to the *Tablighi* message, these centers have also acquired a position of importance and influence in the community.

c) **The Individual Scholar**

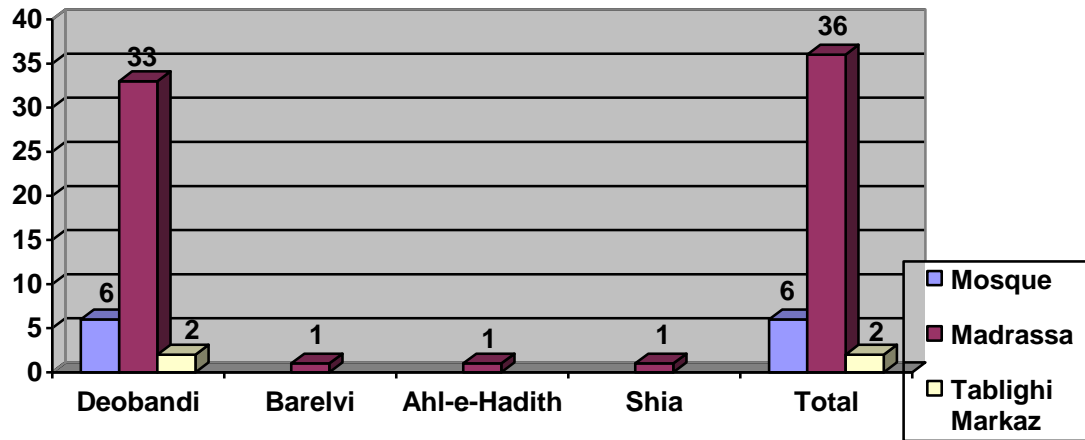
Significance of an individual *Aalim* (singular of *Ulama*) is greatly due to the institution he or she is affiliated with. Yet a few religious scholars by dint of their knowledge and/or good personal character and acumen almost assume the status of an institution in their person and attract and influence people in large number. Such persons are usually scholars of great eminence or are ascribed with spiritual potential. These eminent persons often, soon raise their own institutions of learning or spiritual solace of their own.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS CONTACTED FOR KAP

The following 44 religious institutions were contacted for interviewing the 50 selected respondents:

Table 1: Number of Religious Institutions contacted

Category of Institution	Religious School of Thought/(Numbers Representing)				
	<i>Deobandi</i>	<i>Barelvi</i>	<i>Ahl-e-Hadith</i>	<i>Shia</i>	Total
<i>Mosque</i>	6	-	-	-	6
<i>Madrassa</i>	33	1	1	1	36
<i>Tablighi Markaz</i>	2	-	-	-	2
Total	41	1	1	1	44



RELIGIOUS PERSONS CONTACTED FOR KAP

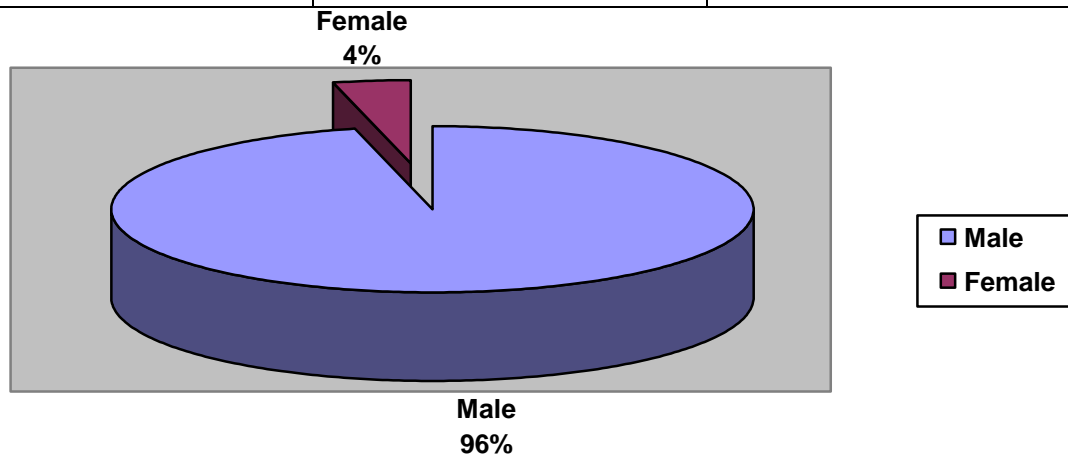
The 50 interviewees that were contacted are categorized as under:

a) Gender Distribution

A very small proportion of female respondents could be contacted for the reason that the number of female religious persons in the field is small.

Table 2: Gender Distribution

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	48	96%
Female	2	4%
Total	50	100%

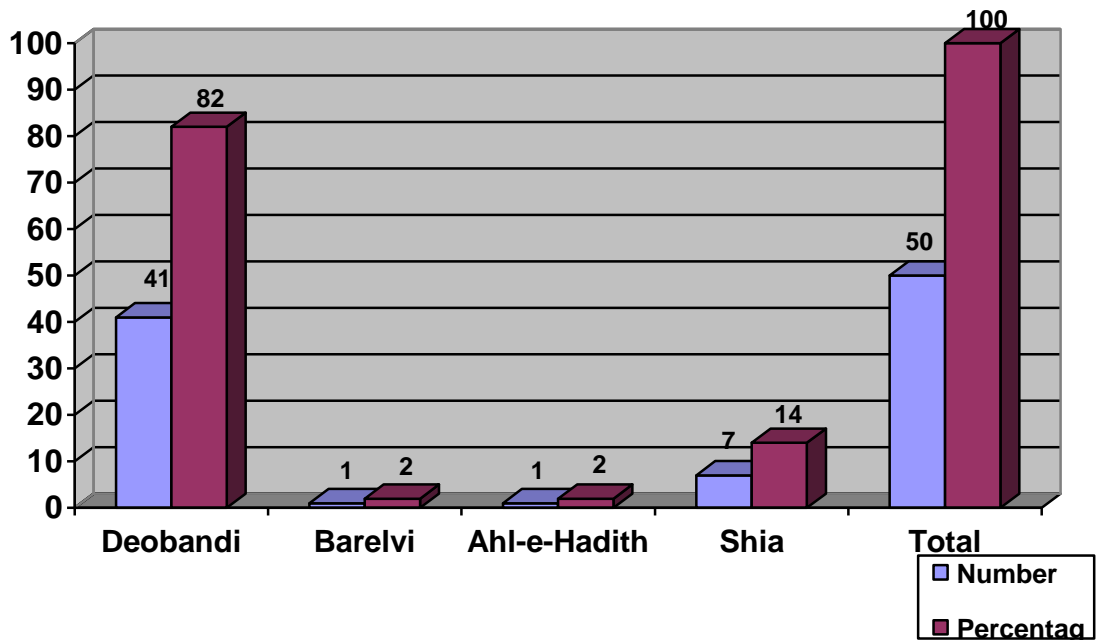


b) Religious Denominations

The sample group interviewed mainly belongs to the *Deobandi* sect, while a few of them are associated with *Barelvi*, *Ahl-e-Hadith* and *Shia* sect as well.

Table 3: Religious Denominations

Religious Denomination	Number	Percentage
<i>Deobandi</i>	41	82%
<i>Barelvi</i>	1	2%
<i>Ahl-e-Hadith</i>	1	2%
<i>Shia</i>	7	14%
Total	50	100%

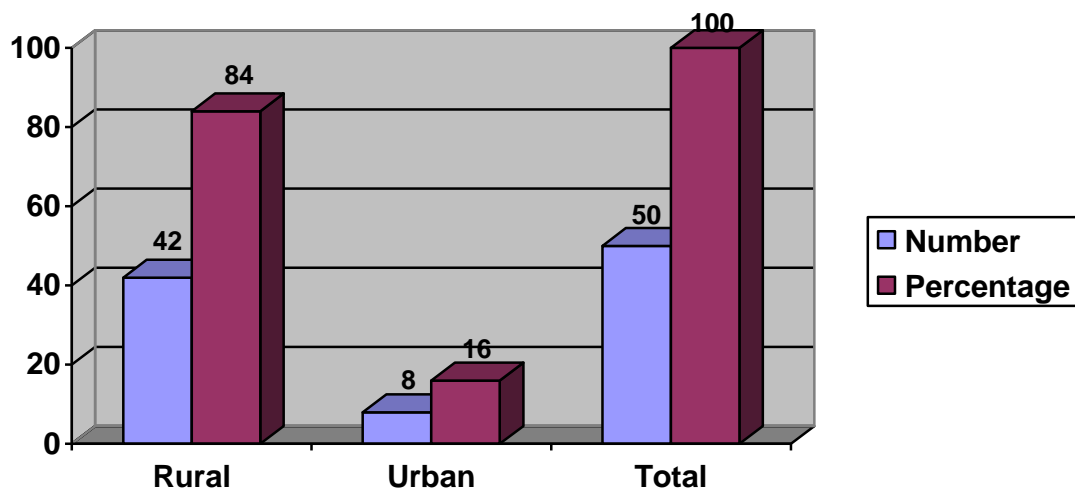


Urban/Rural

The respondents contacted were, except a few (16%) rural based.

Table 4: Rural/Urban Distribution

Response	Number	Percentage
Rural	42	84%
Urban	8	16%
Total	50	100%



c) Educational Qualifications of Ulama

A reasonable number of *Ulama* (36%) among the sample group have formal education basis. Some of the respondents have been identified as strategic allies for future education promotion programmes.

Table 5 A: Religious Educational Qualifications

Religious Education	Number	Percentage
Qualified from a Madrassa (Aalim)	29	58%
<i>Hafiz</i>	5	10%
Nominal Religious Education	16	32%
Total	50	100%

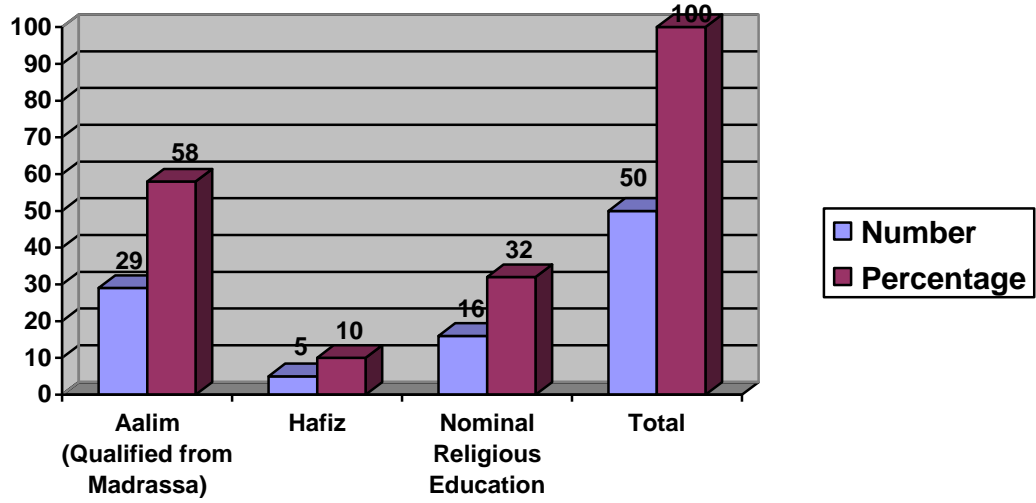
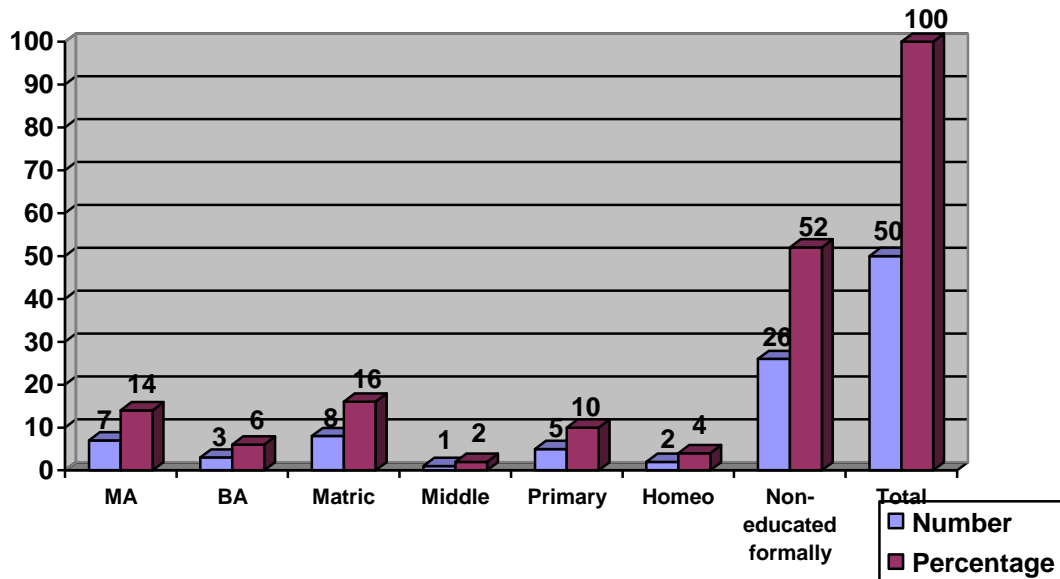


Table 5 B: Formal Education Qualifications

School and Higher Education	Number	Percentage
• MA	7	14%
• BA	3	6%
• Matric	8	16%
• Middle	1	2%
• Primary	5	10%
• Homeo	2	4%
• Non-educated formally	26	52%
Total	50	100%



MAIN FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

The following responses were received:

a) Status of Education in Islam

Most of the *Ulama* (92%) consider education as obligatory for all Muslim men and women. A small ratio (6%) feel only religious education is obligatory.

Table 6: Status of Education in Islam

Response	Number	Percentage
Consider education as an obligation in Islam equally for men and women.	46	92%
Feel only religious education is obligatory	3	6%
Refused to respond	1	2%
Total	50	100%

b) Islamic Injunctions about Female Education

Most (94%) of the sample group considers the education equally obligatory for women as for men in the society. A small portion (4%) considers only the religious education obligatory for female. They ascribe no distinction to the acquisition of knowledge and training in favour of any gender. They invariably consider *purdah* observation as a must for female beyond the age of puberty when outside the house premises. However, these are not reflected in their existing practices.

Table 7: Islamic Injunctions about Female Education

Response	Number	Percentage
Feel education is equally obligatory for women. It is a basic right and can be legally claimed if denied. There is no bar or limit on women for education.	47	94%
Education is must for women but as much as is necessary to differentiate between good and evil.	2	4%
Refused to reply	1	2%
Total	50	100%

c) **How the Requirements of Female Education should be met?**

A predominant number (74%) of the group members were of the opinion that education can be imparted in any institution so that the children become useful and well behaved members of the society and the family. A portion of the same (58%) feels that *purdah* should be observed beyond primary level and **there being no need for *purdah* till that (primary) level**. A small ratio (8%) recommends education to any level, especially medical education for female. However, a few *Ulama* had the apprehension that such education only implies teaching of Quran and *Sunnah* and should only be imparted in Mosque or *Madrassa*. A few (6%) of the *Ulama* did not foresee any need for education beyond the primary level for the female children. **Only a very small portion (2%) feel education inculcates corruption and not needed for female. However, in real life these messages are not followed.**

Table 8: Meeting Requirement of Female Education

Response	Number	Percentage
Girls may be provided education in any educational institution including school or <i>madrassa</i> .	37	74%
Most of the above (29/37) however, consider observing <i>purdah</i> beyond primary level as necessary.	29	58%
Consider education up to college or even university level may be allowed provided separate institutions for female are available. Medical education is especially recommended for female.	4	8%
Complete religious education is must and up to primary level at home through female teachers.	4	8%
Up to primary level only in <i>madrassa</i> or <i>maktab</i> .	3	6%
School education inculcates corruption. It is not needed for female	1	2%
School education to any level breeds obscenity and should not be allowed.	1	2%
Total	50	100%

d) Does Educated Women Make Good Mothers?

One interviewee refused to respond and all the rest except one, who denied responding all the questions, expressed that educated mothers prove more useful mothers for their offspring compared with the non-educated ones. One stated that not only as mothers but also are able to perform all other roles better when educated.

Table 9: Does Educated Women Make Good Mother?

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	48	96%
May be	1	2%
Refused to respond	1	2%
Total	50	100%

e) Years of Schooling and Nature of Education Necessary for Girls

Table 10: Years of Schooling and Nature of Education: Necessary for Girls

Response	Number	Percentage
No limit or bar be laid	20	40%
After getting primary level education female children must be equipped with full religious education and not more.	5	10%
Only religious education is needed	5	10%
Quran and <i>Hadith</i> only	1	2%
Only primary level education	3	6%
Depends on the desires and ability of the female student	4	8%
Up to Matric level education	3	6%
Depends on mental capacity	2	4%
Female students must be educated in Medical profession	2	4%
Only that much knowledge to enable the female to differentiate between good and evil	2	4%
Up to graduation level (BA)	1	2%
Depends on the mental capacity and the economic affordability of the family	2	4%
Total	50	100%

f) Would they recommend it to others in Sermons as well?

Great majority (96%) expressed willingness to recommend sending of girls to school.

Table 11: Would they recommend to others in Sermons?

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	48	96%
Did not respond	1	2%
No	1	2%
Total	50	100%

g) Are educated women beneficial to the society?

Table 12: Are educated women beneficial to the society

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes, with the comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if the women are not doing any job - will teach her children - female teachers more effectively - Ayesha used to teach - Khadija was a great scholar of her time 	48	96%
Yes, but only with religious education	1	2%
Refused to respond	1	2%
Total	50	100%

h) Aspects of School Education that are in Contradiction with Islamic Injunctions

Table 13: Aspects of School Education: Contradictory to Islamic Injunctions

Response	Number	Percentage
Nothing is wrong in particular	18	36%
<i>Purdah</i> must be observed	18	36%
Co-education is harmful	5	10%
Separate schooling system may be introduced	2	4%
Education system must be changed	2	4%
School education is irreligious	1	2%
No harm up to primary level, but beyond <i>purdah</i> should be observed	2	4%
Additional and technical subjects must be introduced in curriculum	1	2%
Refused to comment	1	2%
Total	50	100%

i) What measures are suggested for female education to conform to Islamic injunctions?

Table 14: Suggestions for Conforming Education to Islamic Injunctions

Response	Number	Percentage
<i>Purdah</i> observance must be introduced beyond primary education level	23	46%
Separate schooling beyond primary level must be arranged, introduces guidance of <i>Ulama</i> in the system	12	24%
Nothing is wrong in education	1	2%
Current education system is centers of fashion	1	2%
Female teachers must be introduced in the current schooling system	1	2%
No response	12	24%
Total	50	100%

j) Whether *Ulama* send their female children to school?

An overwhelming large number of the respondents confirmed that their children go to school. Only a few (4%) gave negative reasons for not sending their children to school.

Table 15: Whether *Ulama* send own female children to School

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	34	74%
Yes, but up to primary level	2	4%
No, since no girls' school in the vicinity	2	4%
No female teachers available	2	4%
No, because not married/have no female children	2	4%
Children have ended education or are studying abroad	2	4%
No, but female relatives go to school	2	4%
No, being <i>Afghan</i> educate children at home	1	2%
No, they go to <i>madrassa</i>	1	2%
No, because female education spreads obscenity	1	2%
Education for female is bad	1	2%
Total	50	100%

CONCLUSIONS

1. People of Kohat district are predominantly Muslims; an overwhelming portion thereof is *Sunnis*, bulk of whom belongs to *Deobandi* school of thought. *Shias* in the district mainly inhabit area between Kohat and Hangu towns.
2. *Ulama* are usually associated with religious institutions: mosque, *madrassa* and *tablighi markaz*, which are many in numbers in the area.
3. Youth get educated in the *madrassas* in large numbers. More than half of the *madrassas* have arrangements for students' residence. The resident students generally are from distant places.
4. Students graduating annually from *madrassas* in increasing number end up as *Ulama* adopting similar functions as their predecessors.
5. Religious sciences: Quran, *Hadith* and *Fiqa* are taught in the *madrassas*. Yet a larger number of these institutions enable students to remember Quran by heart in addition to teaching small children of the vicinity to be able to read the Quranic text.
6. About one quarter of the *madrassas* also teach some aspects of formal education subjects such as mathematics, literacy and other primary level subjects.
7. A very small percentage of *Ulama* are female, though their number is steadily increasing, as are new *madrassas* for female continuously being established.
8. A significant section of *Ulama* are also educated in formal subjects and in certain cases to high levels.
9. **Majority of *Ulama* consider education, including school education as a religious obligation, equally for both the sexes. However, it has been observed that in real life they do not advocate the same messages.**
10. **They are also of the view that education is a right of every child and can be legally claimed if denied.**

11. There is no bar or limit to girls getting education to any level. However, medical education by female was generally approved as preferable. However, the practice is that female are not encouraged to go for higher education.
12. *Ulama* do not see any harm in girls getting school education and are willing to recommend in sermons the same to others as well. However, they need support in terms of motivational material in this area.
13. They feel that according to Islam there is no need for *purdah* up to primary level. The existing *purdah* is a requirement of traditions.
14. They are of unanimous view that after puberty *purdah* should be observed female teachers and separate educational institutions for boys and girls are recommended.
15. Majority of *Ulama* feel that educated women make good mothers and are also likely to perform their other responsibilities better. They also believe that society will generally benefit when more women get educated. However, a good home is required to achieve that end.
16. Predominant majority confirmed that their female children do go to schools while a small section of *Ulama* disapproved school education by girls; however, this view was mainly for the reason of *purdah*.

CRUX OF DEDUCTIONS

Education, including school education is a religious obligation and a basic right for all Muslims. There is no limit or bar on girls for attaining education. They instead will be better able to perform their responsibilities in different roles and the society will benefit when more females are educated. A great majority of *Ulama* send their female children to schools and recommend the same to others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A number of religious persons, depending on their ability, attitude and willingness to cooperate have been identified as strategic allies.
2. A number of religious persons have been identified who can act as strategic allies of the project and for other developmental interventions in the future.
3. The religious persons need to be provided exposure outside their world through visits and by bringing in selected persons from outside to interact with them.

Appropriate quotes obtained during interviews of respondents is listed and attached as Annex B.

**SURVEY OF MADRASSAS AND ULAMA
DISTRICT KOHAT**

Project: Gender Gap in Primary Education, Kohat

Name of surveyor:

Date of survey:

Signature of surveyor:

General Information

1. Name of Institution
2. Location/Address
3. Founder(s) of the Institution:
 - a) Name
 - b) Whether alive? Yes/No
 - c) Educational qualification
4. If registered:
 - a) Date of Registration
 - b) Law under which registered
 - c) Registering Authority
5. Affiliated with any Federation. If yes which one?
6. School of thought Professed/practiced:
 - a) *Deobandi*
 - b) *Barelvi*
 - c) *Ahl-e-Hadith*
 - d) *Ahl-e-Tashih*
 - e) Others

7. Name of Muhtamim (administrator)
8. His/her Qualifications
9. Other responsibilities handled
10. Other Instructors/Khadims/Volunteers
11. Type of Institution
 - a) Residential
 - b) Non-residential
12. Number of Students
13. Number of Students graduated in:
 - a) Year 1996
 - b) Year 1997
 - c) Year 1998
14. Curriculum in use:
 - a) *Quran/Hadith/Fiqah*
 - b) *Hifz/Tajweed*
 - c) Others
15. Does the curriculum include any modern disciplines?
16. Which ones?
17. What type of certificate is offered at graduation?
18. Duration of Course in the *madrassas*

KAP STUDY OF *ULAMA* DISTRICT KOHAT

Project: Gender GAP in Primary Education, Kohat

Islam and Education

19. What is the status of education in Islam?
20. What are the injunctions about female education in Islam?
21. How can these requirements be met these days?
22. Do you agree that an educated woman is more likely to make a good mother?
23. What quantum and nature of education is required to achieve the above?
24. Does your female children go to school?
25. If no, what are the main reasons?
26. If yes, do you recommend it for others as well?
27. If more women get educated do you feel the society will benefit?
28. What aspects of school education can be termed in contradiction to Islamic injunctions (particularly in case of female)?
29. What measures do you suggest for female education to conform to Islamic injunctions on female education?

QUOTES OBTAINED FROM THE KAP STUDY

It is my utmost endeavour to get as many girls admitted into school as possible.

(Maulana Sher Bahadur, Kohat)

An educated mother in the family is like a strong rafter in a roof.

(Maulana Muhammad Amin Jan, Madrassa at Shahu, Hangu)

Girls' education will enable the female to be not only better mothers but will also be able to perform their other responsibilities equally well.

(Maulana Abdul Jalil, Madrassa Lil-Banat, Hangu)

Girls' education is a religious obligation and also a basic right. If it is denied to her, she can legally sue for it.

(Maulana Said Janan, Incharge Madrassa Chashmajat, Kohat)

One girl when educated will make a whole family educated.

(A participant at a local meeting)