Nawāb Siddīque Ḥasan Khān (1832-1890) is one of those eminent scholars of Indian subcontinent who has left indelible impact on the Muslim world through his very significant contribution to the religious sciences and sincere services to the society at large. Being a prolific cum gifted author, his imposing life especially when it comes to the art of writing was characteristically distinguished from the others. His life devoted to religious and academic endeavours inspired many who stood to serve Islam in the best possible way. The circumstances in which Nawāb Siddīque Ḥasan Khān lived on the one hand and the large number of valuable works—of high literary taste covering broad range of subjects—on the other hand surprises one and all.

He has almost covered the whole range of Islamic studies in his writings wherein he has tried to explore the true picture of Islam and its fundamental sciences. Although the dimensions of his works are broadly and extensively spread over the various spheres which are, inter alia, theology, Qurʾān, Ḥadīth, Fiqh, Islamic history, culture, ethics, politics, and economics but Qurʾān, Ḥadīth, Fiqh and Sirāh were the subjects he favoured the most. His contributions to these subjects had not only been remarkable but also were universally recognized in academic circles as far as the richness of material and high standard of research is concerned. His son lists 222 titles (74 Arabic, 45 Persian and 103 Urdu) to his credit. These works were freely distributed during his life time among the people and hardly could there be any Muslim seminary in India and abroad not to have housed Nawāb’s collection. These works were written in Arabic, Persian and Urdu and were published from Egypt, Pakistan besides India.

The Nawāb was a strict Sunnite and a non-conformist traditionalist, and belonged to the group of believers popularly known as Ahl-i-Ḥadīth, who refuse to accept the authority of any of the four orthodox Imāms as binding and final, and claim instead to exercise their own judgment in legal matters on the basis of the text of the Qurʾān and sayings of the Prophet.

Nawāb being an eminent traditionalist reflected the image of a traditionalist (Muhaddith) who opposed to narrate the weak and fabricated Ahādīth. He always defended the legislative position of the Ḥadīth and demolished academically the writer who did not accept the Ḥadīth as one of the prime sources of Islamic sharī’ah, he enthusiastically defended the great Muhaddithūn and the principles of criticism of Ḥadīth they formulated in the history. He emphasized the importance of Ḥadīth as a rich and
authentic source of jurisprudence. He accepted the entire corpus of the Prophet’s sayings collected in the six canonical books called al-Šiĥâh al-Sittah. He argued that the classical specialists in Ḥadîth, such as Bukhârî and Muslim, were fully equipped with the resources and methodology for discriminating between genuine and fabricated traditions.

The Nawâb was totally against all kinds of innovations in religious matters. He regarded bid’ah (innovation) as the antithesis of Sunnah and therefore he maintained that it must be rejected. He did not approve of even bid’ah hasanah (commendable innovation), as it has no precedent in the life and thought of the Prophet. He was of firm belief that innovation creates darkness, while Sunnah creates light.

Nawâb Siddîque Hasan Khân’s most valuable contribution as religious reformer lies in the fact that he contributed a great deal to the restoration and preservation of the dynamic straightforward religion of Islam as practised by the rightly guided early Muslims (Salaf-i-Sâlihîn). With his persistent efforts he succeeded to a great extent in denouncing liberal thought, and revived the teaching of Islam as supported by the Qur’ân, Hadîth and the practice of the early school of Muslim theologians. The pivotal point of his religious thought was that he laid much emphasis on the study of the original sources of Islam, i.e. Qur’ân and the traditions which had till now neglected in India where the doctrine of taqlîd has been in force since the advent of Islam in this country.

Nawâb Siddîque Hasan Khân was a moderate religious thinker. He was totally against all sorts of fitnâh (aggression) and chaos in religious matters. He was in favour of closing forever the chapter of politically motivated controversial issues in the house of Islam. He boldly criticised all those who indulged in ostentatious discussion on such issues which, instead of making them pious and religious, misled them and caused bitterness and enmity among the followers of different Muslim sects. He tried his best to remove the disagreement among the mazhabs and conciliate among them according to the sound Hadîth and called the nation to leave the conventional rigidity and became nearer to each other.

As for tasawwuf Nawâb Siddîque Hasan Khân was a reformist sufî, and had a full faith in Sufism. While approving of it, he enjoined the strictest obedience to the sacred law. He was the opinion that a Sufistic order becomes blameworthy only if it contradicts to the Qur’ân, Hadîth or the consensus of Muslim Ummah. Nawâb Siddîque Hasan Khân
also refutes the theories of *Wahdat al-Wujūd* (pantheism/unity of being) and incarnation (*hulūl*), because it cannot be explained to and propagated among the people. He was the opinion that, instead of wasting time in resolving the complicated theories about the being of God, which is beyond the grasp of human reason, we should stick to the teachings of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*.

He also contributed a great deal to the preservation of the chastity of the Arabic language by facilitating and popularizing philological studies at a time when the standard of Arabic studies had lowered to a deplorable extent not only in South Asia, but in the whole Muslim world. Another main contribution of the Nawāb as Arabic author is that his books were written in a simple, smooth and straightforward style, which is easily understood by average Arabic readers. This has made his style clearly distinguishable from that of his contemporary Arabic writers of India, who wrote books mostly on theological subjects by imitating the ornamental style of al-Ḥarīrī which was popular among the writer of his age.

He called for Muslims to abide strictly by the Islamic law (*sharī'ah*) and to abandon imitation (*taqlīd*) of the traditional schools of Islamic jurisprudence, attempting to refashion the worldwide Muslim community in the mould of the Companions of the Prophet. He refuted blind faith (*taqlīd*), most works of the Nawāb contain at least some polemics against *taqlīd*. According to him Muslim society gave birth to famous scholars when the process of *ijtihād* was still full swing. Many useful works were produced in all branches of knowledge. *Taqlīd* is the hindered for the intellectual growth of the Muslims.

In this background, the present research seeks to investigate and study the contribution of Nawāb Ṣiddīque Ḥasan Khān to *Qur'anic* and *Hadith* studies. Working on this topic seems an easy venture but the case is not so. The fact is that even though the entire works of Nawāb Ṣiddīque Ḥasan Khān had been published long back but now it was very difficult rather a challenge, seeing the present condition and low paper quality of those works, to benefit from them. Moreover, owing to the grand personality of Nawāb Ṣiddīque Ḥasan Khān that had become universally acknowledged, there was an urgent rather indispensable need to develop insights from and highlight his life and contribution to the various fields of Islamic learning.
The present work comprises of six chapters excluding Introduction and Conclusion

The first chapter titled "Socio-Cultural Background of Muslims in the 19th Century India" highlights the political, social, religious, educational and economic conditions of the Muslims in India. It also discusses that how the Muslims lost their Empire to the foreign power and how difficult it proved for them to adjust to the new ambiance.

The whole of the 19th century, especially the event of 1857 and the later developments proved very critical for the Muslim leaders and the intellectuals. Every political or religious leader came forth with its own formulated solution and suggestion. In the same vein, the religious groups emphasized on, if Muslim decadence is to be ceased, establishing the different Madrasas. The establishment of Dār al-Uloom Deoband and Nadwat al-'Ulamā' Lucknow, therefore, were the result of the post 1857 thinking. On the other hand, those who were considered as liberals like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan were of the opinion that the current situation demands to adopt the language of the ruler as well as their formulated educational system. The religious leaders and thinkers after much deliberation had concluded that the unpleasant condition is only because the Muslims have stopped to follow and practice the Islamic teachings in the real spirit.

The second chapter titled "Nawāb Siddiqe Hasan Khān: Life and Times", discusses in detail the life of Nawāb Siddiqe Hasan Khān from birth to death. While mentioning his genealogical background which reaches to al-Husain ibn 'Ali, hence to Fatima and finally to Prophet, the chapter opens up by tracing, albeit briefly, the ancestral particulars and background of Nawāb Siddiqe Hasan Khān. It also touches the birth, early life, and education of Nawāb Siddiqe Hasan Khān. Moreover, amid mentioning some of his famous teachers from different mazhabs in India, the chapter unravels his later life such as his visits to Bhopal, pilgrimage to Makkah and Madinah, marriage with Shāh Jahān Begum (the Nawab of Bhopal), the deposition of the Nawab and the happenings afterwards.

Chapter third of the thesis under the title "Religious Ideas of Nawāb Siddiqe Hasan Khān" is devoted to the study of Nawāb Siddiqe Hasan Khān's different
religious ideas i.e., Tawḥīd, Attributes of Allah, The Institution of Imāmah, Sources of Islamic Law, Ījmāʾ, Qiyās Ijtihād, Taqlīd, and Tasaquivv. The chapter presents that Nawāb Šiddīque Ḥasan Khān’s religious ideas were very much influenced by Shah Waliullah’s reformist thought. Coupled with the reformist ideas of Imām Shawkānī and Ibn Taymiyyah, Nawāb Šiddīque Ḥasan Khān and his Ahl-i-Hadīth movement established similar iconoclastic ideas to the mainstream at that time. Not surprisingly given the fate of his ideological predecessors, much of his philosophy was based as a reaction against the prevailing religious climate. Therefore, Deobandī and Barelvī movements and the Shīʿites were all targets of his reformist criticism. In this chapter, it has also been pointed out that his religious ideas were centring on a desire to return to the dynamic straightforward religion of Islam as practiced by the rightly guided early Muslims.

**Chapter four** “Nawāb Šiddīque Ḥasan Khān’s Contribution to Islamic Learning, presents his overall contribution to Islamic sciences covering the subjects like Jurisprudence, Sufism, Faith, Arabic literature, Poetry, and books on different Islamic sciences, except those works which are related to Qūr‘ān and Ḥadīth.

Some of these works, evaluated in this chapter, are: 1) *Husūl al-Maʿmūl min ʿIlm al-Usūl:* This is one of the most important works written in the Arabic language on the principles of jurisprudence. 2) *Al-Rauḍah al-Nadiyyah fi Sharh al-Dīrār al-Bahiyyah:* This is a very fine commentary in Arabic on the book *al-Dīrār al-Bahiyyah* of Muḥammad bin ʿAlī al-Shawkānī, which is a compilation of such juridical decisions as are authenticated by the Qūr‘ān and the Prophetic Traditions. 3) *Al-Iqlīd li-ʿAdillat al-Ijtihād w-al-Taqlīd:* This is a resume of Imām Shawkānī’s book *al-Tashkīk ʿalā al-Tafkīk.* It revolves around the punishment that awaits the *mugālīd* (conformists) on the Day of Judgment. 4) *Al-Dīn al-Khālis:* This is the most important and comprehensive Arabic book written in India on Tawḥīd: (Unity of Allah). Moreover, the chapter contains a detailed account of his other major works in addition to the aforementioned ones.

Amid mentioning those early Tafāsīr which are frequently referred by Nawāb Šiddīque Ḥasan Khān in his Qūr‘ānic exegesis, the fifth chapter titled “Contribution of Nawāb Šiddīque Hasan Khān to the Qūr‘ānic Sciences” discusses the development of Qūr‘ānic literature in Indian sub-continent. Presenting a brief introduction of Nawāb
Şiddîque Hasan Khān’s *tafsîr* works, the chapter also discusses rather focuses on his methodology of writing the *Tafsîr*.

*Fath al-Bayân fi Maqâsid al-Qur’ân* written by Nawāb is a masterpiece in the field of rationalistic interpretation and a leading authority in the field of traditional interpretation of the *Qur’ân*. The chapter also throws light on his other works as well which, among others, include: *Nayl al-Marām min Tafsîr Ayat al-Aḥkām*, *Tarjumān al-Qur’ān bi-Latâ’if al-Bayān*, *Al-Iksîr fi Usūl al-Tafsîr*, *Ifādat al-Shuyūkh bi-Miqdār al-Nāsikh wa ‘l-Munsūkh*.

The sixth chapter titled "Contribution of Nawāb Şiddîque Hasan Khān to Hadîth Literature" is related to the development of Hadîth literature in the Indian subcontinent from the beginning of the spread of message of Islam to this territory till the period of Nawāb Şiddîque Hasan Khān. Besides presenting a brief introduction of Nawāb Şiddîque Hasan Khān’s contribution (books/booklets) on Hadîth literature and learning, it mainly discusses his view and standpoint on the position of Hadîth in Islamic law.

This chapter also evaluates the content, style and methodology the Nawāb has used in his writings. Being a moderate scholar of Islam, and a true defender of the Hadîth and of the great *muḥaddithūn*, Nawāb has contributed approximately 40 books on Hadîth literature. It also examines some of his statements, and assesses the referencing method he has adopted.


What emerges from when one thoroughly looks into his intellectual capacity is that an outward eye to the works and contribution of Nawāb Şiddîque Hasan Khān to different field of Islamic sciences will reveal that he created no new idea of his own but his works mainly reflect the abridged, explained and translated works of Ibn Tâmîyyah, Shâh Wâlîullah and Shawkânî; nonetheless, his importance should not be underestimated. Muslim society was in need of a reformation and the argument for this
reformation laid in the works that Nawāb Siddīque Ḥasan Khān set out to publicize. It also have revealed that he dealt mainly with the subjects of the unity of Allah, the evil consequences of ṭaqlīd, the necessity of ijtihaḍ, the damaging effect of some un-Islamic customs and traditions which, with the passage of time, replaced the genuine ones, and the wrong beliefs of the people that pirs and saints, dead or alive, can render succour in the hour of difficulty.

In view of the above, it may fairly be claimed for the Nawāb that he played more or less almost the same role as was done by Ibn Taimīyyah (1236-1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (1292-1350) of Syria, Jalālāddīn al-Suyūṭī (1445-1505) of Egypt, and Muhammad bin ‘Alī al-Shawkānī (d. 1834) of Yemen etc, in contributing to the development of different Islamic sciences especially in the field of Qurʾān and Hadith in their respective land and times.