

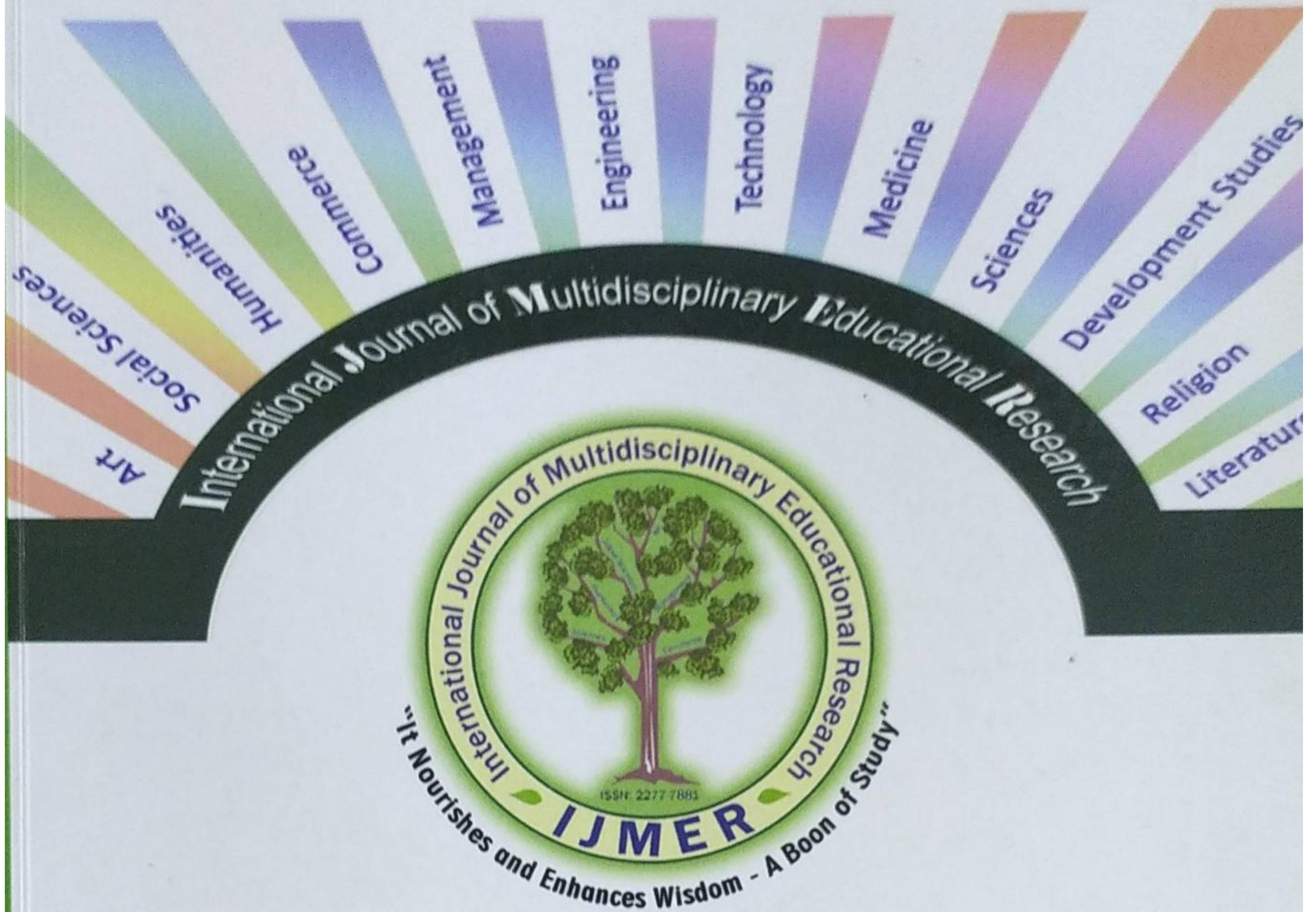
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ALIGARH MOVEMENT: AN INSTRUMENT FOR TRANSFORMATION IN MUSLIMS

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The Muslim society in the 19th century was considered backward and they had developed certain prejudices. They had imbibed the feelings which created a distance between them and the British regime. This state of affairs required a reformation in the society which could address to these ill conceived notions. The Muslim society had produced no such stalwarts which could effectively do away this in the first half of 19th century. As a result, the socio-religious reforms among Muslims emerged rather late.

It was Syed Ahmed of Rai Bareli, the Wahabi leader who stood for ruthless rejection of all accreditations and declensions from the early Islam as preached by the Prophet and his companions. In this sense the Wahabi leader was forerunner of Sir Syed Ahmed. However, contrary to former's view the latter believed that Islam could prosper and flourish only under British regime.¹ Syed Ahmed Khan found in Aligarh movement an instrument to create awareness among Muslims and to give effect to his ideas.

Syed's visit to England in 1969 left him with a depressed vision of Muslim society in particular and India in general. He thought that this state of decadence could be ended if some of the characteristics of English society such as its education science, technology, discipline and order were adopted by the Muslims. He insisted that his co-religionists should concentrate all their energies on acquiring English education.² A section of Muslim community led by Syed Ahmed Khan felt that the Muslim community would forego its rightful share in the