

Gender Differences and Psycho-Social Status of Woman in Quran

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Abstract- Women are important characters and subjects of discussion in Quran. It stresses the equality of women and men and explains that they are equal in creation and in the afterlife, but not identical. It states that men and women are created from a single soul. The current study investigates the identity, social status and concepts related to the women in Quran, the handbook of life of the Muslims in religious, social, psychological and cultural domains. The chapters and verses that consider the woman, her roles, duties and laws, have been reviewed.

Among the verses, two verses have been explicitly named "Nessa" which means women and "Maryam". Other verses descended about women's adventures or their duties. The wide view of Quran on the basic role of woman in family and society has been explained in the verses referred to family or woman. In several places, the woman is shown as a pattern of identification, examples are: the wife of Aaron and Maryam.

Method: the curriculum analysis approach, **Material:** the holy Quran, and **Subjects:** all the verses and chapters of the holy Quran.

Conclusion: The rule of the holy Quran is that there is no difference between one human being and another, and it says: "We have created all human beings to be equally worthy of respect". It mentions that heaven is for anyone who acts the divan rights.

Keywords- Gender Differences; Equality of Men and Women; Quran; Social Status; Woman

I. INTRODUCTION

Whilst there are cases of women who clearly play roles in modern life, it is wonderful to believe that women 'follow' men and a great deal of the literature has adopted males as essentially powerful [1].

Achievement, its nature, level, and experience, are the significant visible factors of the lives of people. But the development and expression of achievement are crucially influenced by the historical setting and social context in which people live. Because contemporary women live in largely patriarchal society, understanding the broader social psychological and cultural context of their lives is essential in evaluating their achievements outside the home. A number of factors differentially affect the developmental behavior of women and shape their social status as well as identities [2-4]. As a stereotype thinking, many people believe that the religious regard, especially Islamic view on women, is not a developed view. Unfortunately, as a result of dishonest propaganda of some media, the fact of the Islamic view toward women has been covered to a great extent [5].

This study reviews the psycho-social factors effecting from historical and religious literature and unfolds the image of women

in Quran, its broad view on her role as community maker, her individual success as a human being and as a participant in society. In contrast to the dominant beliefs in the world wide about her, that is to say "To born only for marriage and giving birth to babies, incompetent, with low abilities, which results in a lowered expectancy for her success" or a woman is created for the purpose of a man. Rather, they are both created for the mutual benefit of each other (Quran, 30:21) [6]. It states that men and women are created from a single soul (Quran, 4:1) [6]. One person does not come before the other, one is not superior to the other, and one is not the derivative of the other. In Quranic view the man could not be completed without woman, and her achievement is evaluated neither by physical beauty nor by social status but by good behavior and morality perfection (Quran, 49:13) [6].

Every culture mirrors the religious beliefs and life style of its members. In other words, the social etiquettes, religion and norm of life are reflected in cultural books which are considered as one of most important instructional materials. They provide information in all domains such as beliefs, values, attitudes, practices, standards, etc.

II. METHODS

The method is the curriculum analysis with the aim of reviewing learning and instructional objectives or tasks.

Subjects and Material: the subjects are all the chapters and verses of holy Quran.

Research questions:

- 1- How gender has been patterned in Quran?
- 2- What is the role of containing of this holly book as a religious, cultural, psycho-social and learning tool?

Quran is the most known handbook of life of Muslims, in religious, social, psychological and cultural domains. It is a book, a message, and its philosophy is to illuminate, develop and train human beings morally, establish justice and social guidance. The nature of the Quranic instructions consists of the concepts that are not random, have been originated from reality and are called "Ayah" or "Verse". Concepts are objects, events, actions, or situations that share a set of defining characteristics. Any concepts belong to a category that has a rule for defining the relevant features of all members of the category. The curriculum is an ordered set of learning outcomes that typically are called instructional objectives or tasks. Instructional objectives are derived from an analysis of the demand for literacy that society places on its members. Literacy which can be viewed as communication within a cultural context demands the use of effective strategies for sending and receiving messages. Also it is an element to learn the tasks in society, subtasks composed of elements of contents, behavior, conditions, and criteria. Each of these elements must be presented or the task has not been truly defined.

Social status gives generally a state of affairs, a condition, a reasonably well-defined standing in social order of group or a society. How people think about their circumstances and act upon them is influence by social ideology and norms. It is well documented that sex-role socialization influences the personality development of women. Recent writings describe how childhood social contexts can account for the development of many psychological sex differences, particularly those reflecting women's conditions in social contexts.

Islam's view toward differences between men and women is as originating from the nature of their creation and not from discrimination. For example, their work in parenting and family management is regarded more valuable than participation outdoor for social activities. Woman as mother has received great respect in Islam. Quran speaks of the rights of the mother in a number of verses. It enjoins Muslims to show respect to their mothers and serve them well even if they are still unbelievers of Islam. The Prophet states emphatically that the rights of the mother are paramount and said: *"The paradise lies under the feet of mothers"*. So not only the importance of their duties in family is as important as the labor of men in providing for a living, but they can also get wage on their housework.

The process of psycho-social development is established in the shape of sociological religion, culture, and politics, and is based on social interaction^[7]. Through the process, women acquire a set of attitudes, beliefs, choices, and behaviors^[5, 8]. Cultural norms provide the background against which choices are evaluated, and these norms in turn affect situational factors^[9]. Each society provides values and norms regarding the ways of socializationsuch as imitation, reinforcement of favorite behaviors, identification^[10, 11]. Internalization is recognized as the result of tendency of child to imitate positive characteristics of parents^[12] and earn his or her gender identity^[13]. Positive specifics will reinforce the values because they are correlated with the experience of mothering^[10]. So they reproduce the pleasing experiences through assimilation with the parents. The first form of socialization is started by identification, then internalization by following the psychological pattern and preparing man to accommodate with the culture. This process is very complex and includes learning language, beliefs, attitudes and values of society^[13, 14].

In spite of the rise in awareness of women about their rights and duties, there are conflicts in the context of society, between the cultural patterns concerning those rights and duties. In some cultures the gender patterns are presented in negative forms, which results in confusion of identity and depression^[2, 8, 15]. So it is important to present the favorite patterns in guidebook of Islam. Quran stresses the equality of women and men and explains that they are equal in creation and in the afterlife, but not identical.

The modern world stresses on equality of women and men. In fact there is no difference in the potentialities of men and women but certain biological differences which have been retained for the posterity of the human race. As per the distribution of responsibilities, there are certain functions particular to woman (e.g., pregnancy, childbirth and the initial care and training of children). For the same reason, her body is built differently from man; and so is her psyche, which helps her with her duties such as love and affection for her child, and ability to sacrifice.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this article, I have reviewed the outlook of religion and Quran on legal issues related to the women, psycho-social, cultural and learning tools. Quran replies to the principal questions about women's right on ownership, economical independence, their presence in social and economic arena, and their share in

inheritance. In quranic view, a woman is presented as an independent personality, and is entitled to inherit in her position as mother, as wife, as sister and as daughter. She has perfect liberty to choose her husband. The Arabs of pre-Islam had an irrational prejudice against their female children whom they used to bury alive. The Messenger of Moslems was totally opposed to this practice^[16].

Among the chapters, two chapters have been explicitly named *"Nessa"* and *"Maryam"*. Heaven has sent the chapter of *"Nessa"*, that means "woman", in order to express the privilege of women. Woman is the gift of God on the earth and she is the center of beauties, loves, and glories. She is the source of affection, psychic and moral peace, for all human beings and the pattern of purity and truthfulness^[17].

Other verses descended on women's stories or their duties are represented as either the mothers or wives of certain leaders and prophets. In Quran, some of the women are portrayed in a positive light while others are condemned for their actions (Quran speaks of the wives of Noah and Lot: *"God sets forth an example to those who disbelieve; the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot, they were both under two of Our righteous prophets, but they acted treacherously towards them so they availed them naught against God, and it was said: Enter both the fire with those who enter."* (Quran, 66: 10)^[6].

Quran gives another example as Aziz's Wife and the Ladies (Quran, 12:23, 31, 51). Such type of presentation certainly is for identification patterns, for example, Sara wife of Abraham (Quran, 11:71-2); Mother and sister of Moses (Quran, 28:7, 10-11); wife of Moses (Quran, 28:23-27); and Asiyah wife of the Aaron (Quran, 66:11); or the wives of prophet are known to Muslims as the "mother of the Muslims", and they are mentioned in several places (Quran, 33:6)^[6].

About queen of Saba we read: *"I found (there) a woman ruling over them and provided with every requisite; and she has a magnificent throne"* (Quran, 27: 23, 24, 34, 35, 42, 44).

In the verses referred to family or woman, we notice the broad view of Quran on the basic role of woman in family and society. Islam as a constructive ideology honors that its Quran is the most complete heavenly book that has been sent for human guidance, and describes aims and spiritual basis in finest manner. Islam mentions equality of men and women in various verses as: Quran, 4:1; 49:13 and etc.^[6].

Word 'human' includes both men and women. Quran, in addressing the Muslims, often uses the expression, 'believing men and women' to emphasize the equality of men and women in regard to their respective duties, rights, virtues and merits. It says: "For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise, for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward." (Quran, 33:35)^[6]. In another place we read: *"Enter into Paradise, you and your wives, with delight"* (Quran, 43:70). Once more *"Who so does that which is right, and believes, whether male or female, him or her will We quicken to happy life"* (Quran, 16:97)^[6]. Again, in chapter (Quran, 7:189), we see the concept below: *"It is he who created you from a single cell and from it created its mate that you may live as companions"*. In this verse woman is presented as the cause of "peaceful" and like the gift of Heaven. Hence all the injunctions of Quran are equally applicable, whenever *"human or people and etc."* are mentioned to both men and women. Frequency of *"women"* words was compared with the

“men” words. There are various verses addressing women and men in common. So they cannot be considered as the frequency of the verses referring to men. Tables (I & II) represent these findings.

TABLE I “WOMEN” WORDS COMPARED WITH THE “MEN”

The concept	F	Total
Women (nessa)	9	27
emraa	3	
enatha	6	
ontha	9	
Men (almara)	4	22
man	12	
(rejal)	6	

TABLE II THE FREQUENCY OF CONCEPTS RELATED THE WOMEN IN QURAN IN ANOTHER TERMS

The Concept	F	Chapter	Verses
Women	9	Ale Emran	42
		Nessa	1,11,176
		Ahzab	59
		Fath	25
		Hojorat	11
		Joseph	50
Ladies	3	Ale Emran	40
		Maryam	5,8
Wives	6	Nessa	117
		Asra	40
		Säfat	150
		Shoura	49,50
		Zokhrof	19
		Ale Emran	36,95
Female	9	Nessa	117
		Räd,Nahl,	8
		Nahl,	97
		Fater,	11
		Ghafer,	41
		Foselat	47
		hojorat	13
Mother & Mothers	10	Maryam	28
		Taha	35
		Maeeda	40
		Momenon	17
		Qesas	75
		Loqman	50
		Ahghaf	13
		Abasa	14
		Alqarea	15
Maryam	29	Ale Emran	42
		Nessa	1,11,176
		Ahzab	59
		Fath	25
		Hojorat	13
		Joseph	50
		Ale Emran	40
		Maryam	5,8
		Nessa	117
		Asra	40
		Säfat	150
		Shoura	49,50
Kaothar	1	Kaothar	1

Quran describes its own view about women’s personality and position in society and Islamic culture. Quran expresses the issues related to the women better than other books, and in contrast to ignorant belief of sexuality it is based on human accomplishment and virtue: “*O men, we created you from a male and female, and formed you into nations and tribes that you may recognize each other...*” (Quran, 49:13) In this view there is absolutely no difference between men and women as far as their relationship to God is concerned as both are promised the same reward for good behavior and the same punishment for evil acts: “*And for women are rights over men similar to those of men over women*”(Quran 2:228). In Quranic view the gender is not regarded as a preference or value. It believes that Heaven created man (Adam) and woman (Eve) from the same mud, and invited both of them for virtue and superiority just based on their piety (Quran, 49:13).

Also in chapter Nessa (Quran, 4:1), he says “*O men, fear your lord who created you from a single cell, and from it created its mate, and from the two of them dispersed men and women (male and female) in multitudes*”. Once more, in chapter 30 verse 21, says: “*Another of his signs is that He created mates of you own kind of yourselves, so that you may get peace of mind from them*”. Besides these laws, approaches, and values, Islam presents patterns for men and women. There are too many examples of perfections among women, not only as stereotype pattern for women, but also for all of human beings. The nature of all men and women is unique, and Quran assumes a common nature for all human beings in creation.

We read “*So keep yourself exclusively on the true way, the creation of God according to which He created man with the quality of choosing right or wrong. There is no altering of God’s creation. This is superman law. But most of human beings do not understand*”; or: “*This is the book, free of doubt and involution, guidance for those who preserve themselves from evil and follow the straight path*” (Quran, 2:1-2). Regarding the perfection basics and human values, it does not consider the gender. If we want to represent a person as an outstanding pattern, in belief of Mohammed the prophet and the first one who confirmed the Heaven messenger, we can refer to Khadija, his wife. Because she knew Mohammed deeply and knew that he was the most truthful Muslim. So in all difficulties she was supporting the prophet.

Also Quran assimilates the woman and man to a “dress” for each other. In Chapter 2, Verse 187 it believes the woman as a wife, collaborator, and unanimous companion. Quran considers their perfection with each other. “*They are your dress as you are theirs*” (Quran, 2:187) “*And He has put love and compassion between you*” (Quran, 16:97) ^[6]. When there was a discussion in preference of men to women in generation continuing, the chapter Kauthar was sent to prophet, because he has his daughter Fatima and his generation will be distributed by her children: “*We have surely given you pre-eminence (in numbers and following), so serve your lord with full dedication and sacrifice, it is surely your opponents, whose line will come to end*” (Quran, 108:1-3) ^[6].

The ownership right of woman is shown in the chapter of Nessa: “*Men have a share in what the parents and relatives leave behind at death, and women have a share in what the parents and relatives leave behind. Be it large or small, a legal share is fixed*” (Quran, 4:7) ^[18]. In other verse says: “*Men have a share in what the parents and relatives leave behind at death, and women have a share in what the parents and relatives leave behind*”; or in verse 19: “*O believers, you are not allowed to take perforce the woman (of dead relatives) in to your heritage, or tyrannies over them, in order deprive them of what you have given them...*”. We find further in verse 32, the same chapter: “*Men have a share in what they earn, and women have theirs in what they earn*”.

Human being tends to identify himself with the attractive patterns. So Quran has offered in various verses personalities like *Maryam* and *Asiyah* the wife of Aaron. *Maryam* (Mary) is the only woman mentioned in Quran by name as the positive type and has to serve as model for other women. She is as a key female character, the mother of Jesus. The name of *Maryam* frequently appears in Quran alongside that of *Isa* (Jesus) in the format “*Īsā Ibn Maryam*” (meaning Jesus the son of Mary) chapter 19 is named after her. She is the symbol of complete human and modesty manifesting the obtained divan state. “*O Mary, indeed God has favored you and made you immaculate, and chosen you from all the women of the world*”. See also: “*And of Mary, daughter of Imran, who guarded her chastity, so that we breathed into her a new life from us, and she believed the words of her Lord and His books, and was among the obedient*”.

In the chapter “*Ale Imran*” we read: “*the Lord heard their prayer and answered: I suffer not the good deeds of any to go waster, be he a man or woman...*” (Quran, 3:195). According to Quran, Imran and his wife were old and childless, and she invoked God for a child: “*How the wife of Imran said, O my Lord, I have vowed to thee what is in my womb. Now accept [this vow] from me, thou art the hearing, the knowing. And when she had given birth to the child, she said, O my lord, I have given birth to a female child... and I have called her Maryam*” (Quran, 3:31)^[6].

“*Behold!*” a wife of Imran said: “*O my Lord! I do dedicate into Thee what is in my womb for Thy special service. So accept this of me. For Thou hearest and knowest all things*”. When she was delivered, she said: “*O my Lord! Behold! I am delivered of a female child!*” and God knew best what she brought forth, “*And whatever no wise is the male like the female. I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Thy protection from Satan, the rejected*” (Quran, 3:35-36)^[6].

Asiyah is the pattern of perseverance, and truth-seeking among of blasphemy society, like Aaron powerful governor. See Quran, chapter 66, verse 11-12: “*And God present the example of Pharaoh's wife for those who believe, when she said: O Lord, build me a house in Paradise, and save me from a wicked people*”. Again, we find in (Quran, Naml, 22-45)^[6], the adventure of lady the governor of “*Saba*”, discovered by Tair. In various verses it presents the best examples and pathogenic patterns of women. In chapters: 66, verse 10 we read: “*For those who do not believe, they were married to our two pious devotees, but thy were unfaithful to them, and even (the apostles) could not avail them in the least against God; and it was said to them: enter Hell with those (who are condemned)*”; Also in Quran, (12: 25-32)^[6, 19], it talks about Aziz’s wife, or again “*Do not marry idolatrous women unless they joint the faith. A maid servant who is a believer is better than an idolatress, even though you may like her*”. “*And do not marry your daughters to idolaters until they accept the fait, a servant who is a believer is better than an idolater even though you may like him. They invite you to hell, but God calls you to paradise and pardon by his grace*”.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In Holy Quran there is no difference between one human being and another. We revel that, when it was said: “*We have created all human beings to be equally worthy of respect*” (Quran, 17:70)^[6]. Hence one cannot discriminate between one human and another by virtue of its birth or social status, but by his or her cognition and beliefs and rights divan, and all human beings are equally respectable for God.

Giving attention to the women’s social problems should be importantly noticed. The evolution of the women’s social status requires the change of negative patterns and sex stereotypic thinking regarding gender. In this way reinforcement of self-concept of girls is necessary through omitting the sexual discrimination against women, and should encourage girls and young women to choose their profession in harmony with social needs as well as their personal interests. If so, they can attain their entire capacities.

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