

QUESTION

Explain the concept of human rights in Islamic thought in specification of status of women in Islam.

ANSWER

Introduction

Human rights form an important of Islamic thought. More specifically women have been granted inalienable rights in Islam. They have been granted social, economic, political and legal rights. Moreover, Islam has enjoined man to give proper value and respect to woman as daughter, sister, wife, and mother. Furthermore, in various domains, women have same obligations as men, in Islam.

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Understanding Human Rights In Islam

Human rights in Islam refer to inalienable rights granted to all the humans. Islam does not discriminate ^{against} any human on basis of caste, colour, creed, and race. Islam has provided everyone equal rights; however, in certain case man has superiority over woman. These include the responsibility of being the head of family and protection of family. Thus, Islam has provided proper rights to everyone.

Status of Women In Islam

With regard to women, Islam has special rights. men in society are necessitated to ensure the rights of women. They have unviolable

right to inherit, do a business, and have private property. Man is forbidden from depriving women of any of these rights.

a. Social Rights of Women

Women have been granted various social rights. They can have role in society. They can contribute towards its well-being and flourishing. They have the right to make independent decision-making. However, while leveraging their social rights, both men and women, have been commanded to not break the barriers of Haya. Women have been ordered by God to observe 'Pudrah' while having social interaction.

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b. Economic Rights of Women

In Islam, women have several economic rights, almost equal as men.

• Right to Inheritance

Women have right to inheritance in Islam. Women in any role: sister, daughter, wife or mother has property rights. Not giving women their right in inheritance is tantamount to grave sin. Thus, women have right to inheritance.

• Right to Property

Similarly, women have inalienable right to property. She can have private property. She has independence in doing business, selling or buying anything from her private property. In this sense, Islam has precedence over any other religion of the world.

The Church authority deprived women of its economic, legal and social rights. In 1870, the western society witnessed first act, Married Women right to property. Contrarily, Islam granted women right to property nearly 1450 ^{years} centuries ago.

• Right to Employment
Women have been provided with right to employment. They can pursue job of their choice, while abiding to the teachings of Islam. In times of Hazrat Umar (R.A), woman inspector was employed as inspector, who performed the duty of inspector and record-keepers. Thus, women have right to employment.

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c. Political Rights of Women

Women have political rights in Islam. They can become part of politics, as candidate, voter and minister. Their political right fully empowers them to take active part in elections. They can, therefore, enjoy their political rights.

Status of Women as Mother, Wife, Sister, and Daughter

Islam gives full recognition to the status of women as wife, sister, mother, and daughter. It commands men to ensure the provisions of specific rights to them. Not providing women rights, and not respecting them, would amount to grave sin for man.

a. Woman as Mother

Woman as mother holds special significance in Islam. Mother is the woman to whom respect is mandatory. Allah says: 'And We have commanded men to be good to their parents'. A famous saying of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W), 'Paradise lies at the feet of Mothers' also expresses the respected stature of mother in Islam.

b. Woman as Wife

Woman as wife also has special status. She has inalienable rights. It is, therefore, incumbent upon man to ensure them. Islam has put the responsibility on husband in terms of expenses and welfare of family. In Quran Allah says that you

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be focused at any imperfection in your wife; however, possibly ~~late~~ God has put good for you in that. In his final sermon, Prophet (P.B.U.H) gave special significance to the status of wife and women, and urged men to be good to them. Thus, wife has significant status in Islam.

• Women as sisters

Women as sisters also have inalienable rights. They have been granted the right to inheritance with regard to their brothers.

In Islam, sister receives $\frac{1}{2}$ of the property inherited to brother. Thus, women as sisters also have rights.

d. Woman as Daughter

Woman as daughter also enjoys special status. Man, as Father, is ~~is~~ commanded to ensure proper rights of daughter. These include right to proper care and right in inheritances. According to the Prophet (P.B.U.H), "Whoever has a daughter and does not buy her, does not disrespect her, and does not favour his son over his daughter will go to Paradise." (Hadith). Thus, daughter has special status and rights in Islam.

Equality of Men and Women in Certain domains

In Islam, women and men have same obligations. Women, just like men, are forbidden from hoarding, stealing and gambling. Similarly, punishments for being involved in social evils

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is same for women as for men. Thus, women have equal obligation in these domains.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, women have various rights in Islam that are inviolable and inalienable.

In most circumstances, men are commanded not to commit

neglect in their duties, enjoined in Islamic teachings, to women.

Similarly, in certain areas women have some obligations as men.

Thus, women have various rights in Islam and enjoy respected status.

