

Question

Discuss the women rights in islam, in context of current wave of feminism.

Introduction

Feminism has been a hot debate since the beginning of 21st century as it counters the fundamental, religious, social and political rights of women. As islam is a deen of complete guidance, it also enlightens the rights of women and honours her role in all spheres of life.

Now a days, feminism has diverged the rights of women from islamic perspective and needs to be addressed.

Rights of women in islam

1400 years ago, islam became the first religion to address the rights of women in the society.

Earlier than islam, women were living in great misery in all civilization (indian, arab, roman, greek).

Islam as an utmost and complete deen honoured the woman and highlighted her role in all the fields. With the advent of islam, women in society began to acknowledge her following rights:

Religious rights:

Women were independent to choose and perform according to her respective religion. No one can force her to follow a specific religion in islam.

As in quran Allah says,

"There is no compulsion in religion."

Educational rights:

Islam highlighted the educational rights of women in society as it is fundamental irrespective

of gender. Hazrat Ayasha (R.A) was a great scholar of islam and preached islam as well.

Financial rights:

Likewise, islam countered the financial rights of women as well. The significant example is Hazrat Khadija (R.A), who was the wife of Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and the renowned businesswoman in field of trading. This highlights that islam provides a woman her financial rights.

Marital rights:

Islam provides a liberty to choose a spouse for herself to a woman. Her consent to marry someone is the core of the marriage. The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) highlighted this issue multiple times and said,

'No woman should married without her consent , no

virgin should married
without her assent and her
assent is her silence"

~ Muslim & Bukhari

Even after the marriage, if she
did not assent to it, she can
dissolve it.

Issues faced by women in modern world

Despite the advancement of
civilizations, it is the irony of
our society that we are still
fed by old cultural norms. Our
society is still built upon old
stereotype thinking that forbids
women from her fundamental
rights. Even in the 21st century
women are deprived of their
adequate and basic rights of
education, financial, marital
and dignity. Centuries passed but

women are still struggling for their rights. A survey shows that,

The literacy rate in Pak is 62.8% out which female literacy rate is 59.9%.

This shows how even in the 21st century, women are still deprived of their rights.

Feminism and Islam

Understanding feminism

Feminism is a modern world movement that works and protests to protect social, political, educational, financial, domestic and marital rights of woman. The core concern of this movement is to diminish the gender gap and prevails the equality between man and woman in the society.

Divergence from islam

Although, feminism has done a great work for the weak and oppressed women in the society but unfortunately it has toxified its roots by following the western liberalism and has been diverted from islamic core concepts of (islamic) women rights in islam.

The protests against hijabs and some extremist policies during these feminist movements has destroyed the image of feminism that was introduced to provide liberty to woman. Despite addressing the actual issues like educational and financial needs of women in modern world it has created as facade with its extreme movements and protests.

Feminism from critique's lens

The movement that was once initiated to provide and prevails equality between men and women in society has been diverted from its core objectives. It can maximize its outcomes, when merged with the liberty that is provided by islam to woman. Feminism and feminist will achieve their objectives more effectively in islamic republic of Pakistan, when they adhere by the core beliefs of islam about women and not of the western world.

Conclusion

The islamic objectives are more effective and diverse in case of women and their rights. Islam has provided women a complete equality in all fields but now a days, feminism has failed to evaluate those objectives globally and weakened by not adhering to islamic liberty to women.