

CSS-2019 →

Q No: 4) Describe the rights of women in Islam in the context of current wave of feminist movement.

Introduction

Islam is a complete code of life. It provides instructions, duties and responsibilities of every individual in social to create a humane social fabric. It enshrines women rights that were never given to them in the whole history of mankind before ^{edvent} of Islam. on the contrary, it is blamed to be a rigid and patriarchal religion that favours men over women. In the context of current feminist movement, the proponents demand women rights in education, their political participation and legislative inclusion. like wise, the movement also advocates for transforming the role of women in social arena with access to economic opportunities. In the light of these demands, Islam has transformed the women's status long before Europe. In contrast to misconceptions against Islam, it has granted right of inheritance, education, political consultation, social mobility and economic rights that are enshrined in

holy Quran and teachings of Holy Prophet PBUH.

3) Rights Demanded By Current Feminist Movement -

The renowned feminist writers and activists Shulamith Firestone and Judy Brady argued that current feminist movement demanded more than just voting rights and women's jobs. In the Shulamith's book "The Dialect of sex", and Judy's prominent essay "The manifesto of 70's", They have highlight the following rights to increase sustainable empowerment of women.

- Right to Education
- Inheritance rights
- Right of consultation in legislation
- Right of Political participation
- Rethinking women's role in society
- De-sexing language
- Abortion rights

In their views

These rights are also mentioned and demanded by recent gender theories of Post-modern feminism, Radical feminism,

and liberal feminists. According to these ideologies, by granting ~~women~~ these rights to women, their socio-political and economic marginalization can be mitigated.

3) Misconception Associated to Islam Regarding Women Rights-

Some feminists and western thinkers consider Islam as anti-women empowerment. With regard to women marginalization in countries like Afghanistan, Iran and Syria, they hold Islamic teachings responsible for this menace. The contemporary feminist movements has following misconceptions regarding women rights in Islam.

- Islam is against Education of women.
- Islam does not allow economic rights to them.
- Islam limits women's social mobility through 'Pardah'
- Islam allows ~~women~~ ^{violence} against women.
- Islam treats women as servant of their men.
- Islam prohibits women participation in political sphere.

4) Dismantling The Myths About Islam: Rights Granted to women In Islam In Context of Current Feminist Movement.

a) Right to get Education

Contrary to these arguments, Islam grants women ^{the} right to get education to increase their intellectual faculties. Since Holy Prophet PBUH's era, women were allowed to get education. In the current context, Muslim schools of thought ^{also} have consensus on allowing girls to get education to augment their rational capacity. In this regard, Holy Prophet SAWW said: "Getting education is mandatory for each man and woman."

b) Inheritance Rights granted to women

"Islam permits women to hold property and grants her inheritance right to implement truth and justice in human life."

(Muhammad Qutb)

A woman, being mother, daughter, sister and wife, has share in property as per teachings of Islam. This is also highlighted in Surah Al-Nissa of Quran as:

"There is a due share of man and

and women left by a person after the death. Their rights are protected and granted by Allah.

c) Right of Consultation in legislation

Islam promotes consultation of both genders in private and public affairs. Women, being an important part of society, are entitled to be consulted as per concept of Ummah. As

Quran commands muslims:

"Have consultation on public affairs"

"Both in ^{Quran} Islamic history we find examples of women who participated in serious discussions and even they argued with Holy Prophet SAWH."

(Book - Islam: Its Meaning and Message)

At another place the writer cites an event when of a woman was arguing with Hazrat Umar R.A.

The author quotes:

"During the Caliphate era of Hazrat Umar R.A, a woman argued ^{with} him in mosque, proved her point, and caused caliph to declare in presence of people: "A woman is right and Umar is wrong!"

d) Right of Political participation

The orientalist Western author in his book, "The Resurgent of Islamic Voices" has highlighted this aspect that Islam promotes women's political participation and their political leadership.

e) Rethinking Women's role in society

Feminist ideologies like post-modern feminism argues that women's status and role must be reimagined in private and public affairs. In this case, the sunnah of Prophet Muhammad PBUH is exemplary. Before the advent of Islam, the status of women was equal to ^{status} slaves. It was Islam that glorified the status of women and gave her equal status in society by granting her educational, economic and social rights.

"Holy Prophet SAWW completely transformed the social faultlines and He used to respect women at his home and in society".

(Muhammad Qutb)

e) De-sexing Language

This means gendered aspects of language should be transformed in order to change social position of women. In contrast to critical

View against Islam, English not Islam promotes language based women discrimination. Islam orders to men in Quran:

"Treat them (women) fairly"

Quran → (Surah Al Nisa)

f) Abortion Rights

Islam like many western states, ideologies, and thinkers limit abortion rights because it leads to multiple physiological and psychological issues. According to World Health organization (WHO), 40% of abortion acts are unsafe and lethal for mother's life. However, some Islamic schools of thought have opined that if the health of mother is not in danger, this right can be exercised.

5) Conclusion

Although feminist and western thinkers have misconception about Islam regarding women rights, Islam grants all rights ^{women} which are demanded by the current feminist movements. It ensure equality of men and women in terms of their rights and responsibilities. Infact, Islam grants women ^{right to get} education; right to own property; right to participate in public affairs; and right to exercise ^{independent} free social mobility.