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Authors' Name	Article	Page
Dr. Abul Mansur Ahmed	Heritance of British Colonial Press Laws and Regulations: A critical overview	1
Dr. Afroza Begum	Revisiting Domestic Violence as a Gross Violation of Women's Fundamental Rights to Freedom from Torture	9
Dr. Begum Asma Siddiqua	Reviewing the Interpretation of the Inheritance Law with Special Reference to Kalala	25
Dr. M. Abdul Hannan	Right to Reasonable Investigation Process in Criminal Justice in Bangladesh	37
Dr. M. Anisur Rahman	General Election in Bangladesh 2001: An Evaluation	49
Md. Abdul Alim	Land Administration in Ancient Bengal	63
Md. Abdur Rahim Mia	Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Critical Analysis with Reference to Bangladeshi Law	77
Dr. Md. Ahsan Kabir & Md. Hashibul Alam Prodhan	Ombudsman: A means of good governance in Bangladesh	95
Md. Ismail Hossain	Parole: Philosophy and Operation in Bangladesh	109
Md. Khurshid Alam & Mohammad Towhidul Islam	The Legal Regime of Management and Settlement of Khas Land in Bangladesh	119
Dr. Md. Maimul Ahsan Khan	Women's Rights in Islamic Legal System vis-à-vis Conventional System	139
Md. Sahidul Islam	Statutory and Traditional Approach to and Dissolution of Marriage in Hindu Law: A Comparative Study between Bangladesh and India	161
Md. Shahidul Islam	Women in Islam - A Critical Analysis	169
Mostafa Mahmud Naser & Mohammad Sarwar Alam	Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in the Legal System of Bangladesh: Successes and Challenges	181
Dr. Muhammad Faiz-ud-Din & Md. Sahal Uddin	Guardianship in Islam: A legal study	201
মুস্তাক আহমেদ ও মো: সাহাল উদ্দীন	দাপ্তরিক গোপনীয়তা আইন ও তথ্য-অধিকার	211

Women in Islam - A Critical Analysis

Md. Shahidul Islam*

Abstract

The issue of women in Islam is highly controversial. The study of women in Islam and Muslim society is complex, reflecting the diverse and varied realities of Muslim women and Muslim societies throughout the ages. Alongside ideals embodied in the Qur'an and the traditions (hadith) of Muhammad, one must look at the actual condition of Muslim women in diverse time periods and sociohistorical contexts. The status of women in Islam was profoundly affected not only by the fact but also, and of equal importance, that the primary interpreters of Islamic law and tradition were men (religious scholars or ulama) from those cultures. The Muslim woman is accorded full spiritual and intellectual equality with man, and is encouraged to practice her religion and develop her intellectual faculties throughout her life. In her relations with men both are to observe modesty of behavior and dress and a strict code of morality, which discourages unnecessary mixing of the sexes. Her relations with her husband should be based on mutual love and compassion. He is responsible for the maintenance of the wife and children, and she is to give him the respect due to the head of the family. She is responsible for the care of home and the children's early training. She may own her own property, run her own business, and inherit in her own right

1. Introduction

Islamic law is the product of *Quranic* guidelines, as understood by Islamic jurist consults (*fiqh*), as well as of the interpretations derived from the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The *Qur'an* itself is not the sole guideline: "The *Quran* is not a law book as like a contemporary Law book; it does, however, provide principles and guidelines that were incorporated into Islamic law through selection and interpretation."¹ Such rules were historically often eroded and subverted, claims Esposito, by social custom, poverty, and illiteracy. Furthermore, whether or not Muslims tended to follow their rights. *Quranic* Law improving the historical position of women relative to their situation prior to Islam in many regions has often been undermined by the reassertion of tribal customs, or the use of such under the name of Islamic Law. It blames Islam & Islamic law. Male have been leading factors in all fields, for good not for oppression of women. Today, says Esposito, "the tensions

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¹ Yvonne Haddad and John Esposito *Islam, Gender, and Social Change*, Published 1998. Oxford University Press, US. ISBN 0-19-511357-8 p. xii.

between ideal and real world become compounded by conflicts between tradition and modernity."²

The importance of female symbolism in Islamic movements is possible explained by the following:

For Islamists, the primary threat of the west is cultural rather than political or economic. Cultural dependency robs one of faith and identity and thus destroy Islam and the Islamic community (*umma*) far more effectively than political rule. Women and the family have been identified as pivotal in this contest. The *hijab* has become not only a sign of modesty but also the symbol for the defense of Islam, for the preservation of the family, and thus the Islamic identity of Muslim societies.³

2. Women in their Nature

Yvonne Haddad and John Esposito write that in principle, except for a verse or two, the *Qur'an* grants women equality.⁴ It is only in the matter of the rights and responsibilities of males and females that the notion of equal human worth, otherwise equality of believers and the relative economic independence of women (right to inherit and to keep their own property) is so intrinsic to *Qur'an*.⁵ Eve, in the *Quran* is not blamed for Adam's first mistake not even in sound *hadith*. Both were jointly did wrong in their disobedience to God; both repented and were forgiven.⁶ It also states that males and females were both created from the same soul.⁷ These arguments are presented to show that *Eve* was of the same species as Adam and women are not inferior beings.⁸

Similarly, according to a saying attributed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

Whosoever has a daughter and he does not bury her alive, does not insult her, and does not favour his son over her; God will enter him into Paradise.⁹

3. Religious Responsibilities

Men and women are considered spiritually equal as the *Qur'an* places men and women in immediate comparison: As *Al-Quran* says:

² Haddad / Esposito pg.xiii.

³ Haddad / Esposito pg.xvi

⁴ Mai Ghousseub, "Feminism or Eternal Masculin-in the Arab world", *New Left Review* 161, Jan-Feb 1987 pp.3-13.

⁵ Carla Makhlouf Obermeyer. "Islam, Women, and Politics: The Demography of Arab Countries", *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 18, No. 1. (Mar. 1992), pp. 33-60

⁶ *Al-Quran*, Sura *Al Baqarah*; verses 36-37, Sura *Al Araf*, verses 20-24

⁷ *The New Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2000), Alta Mira Press. ISBN 0-7591-0189-2, pp.476

⁸ Islahi Amin Ahsan, *Tadhkiyah-i-Nafs* (purification of oneself), 1st ed., vol.2, (Lahore, Faran Foundation, 1989), p.142

⁹ *Musnad Ahmed Ibn Hanbal*, No. 1957

Behold, men who surrender to Allah, and women who surrender, and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey and women who obey, and men who speak the truth, and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere [in righteousness] and women who persevere, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast, and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty and women who guard [their modesty], and men who remember Allah much and women who remember. Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward.¹⁰

Allah further says,

... Men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn; and ask Allah of His grace; surely Allah knows all things.¹¹ So some extent, women are exempted from praying and fasting during menstruation days and pregnancy while they are required to make up for fasts after the month of Ramadan. But Islam does not ask for isolation of women in this period. As it is attributed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)¹²:

You can do everything with your wives except for having intercourse.¹³

4. Financial Rights

Islam gives women the right to own, which entitles them to have personal possessions. The *Qur'an* also explicitly outline women's inheritance rights. Here are the examples of the above rights:

a) Right of Inheritance

In general circumstances, Islam allots females half the inheritance share available to males who have the same degree of relation to the deceased.

A female can have a share less than that of a male or equal to a male's, according to her degree of relation to the kin. Islamic scholars hold that the original reason for this difference is the difference in responsibility between men and women in the societies of Arabia in the 7th century: men had to provide for their family whereas women could keep all their money themselves. They were usually taken care of by their families or their husbands, whereas men would usually finance a family and relatives. Also, men

¹⁰ *Al-Quran, Surq Al-Ahzab; verse 35*

¹¹ *Al-Quran, Surq Al-Nisa; verse 32*

¹² *Menstruation Restrictions make me Feel Second Class, Renaissance-Monthly Islamic Journal 13(1), January 2003*

¹³ *Al-Muwatta, No.138*

had to pay the dowry to women in marriage while women don't have to pay anything to men.¹⁴ As it mentions in the *Qur'an*:

From what is left by parents and those nearest related, there is a share for men and a share for women whether small or large – a fixed share.¹⁵

It further provides as,

God enjoins about your children that, a boy's share is equal to that of two girls'. And if there are only girls among the children and they are more than two, then they shall receive two-thirds of the inheritance, and, if there is only one girl, then her share is half. And if the deceased has children, then the parents shall inherit a sixth each, and if he has no children and only the parents are his heirs, then his mother shall receive a third, and if he has brothers and sisters, then the mother's share is the same one-sixth after the payment of any legacies he may have bequeathed and after discharging any debts he may have left behind.¹⁶

Allah commands:

If a man dies childless and he has only one sister, she shall inherit half of what he leaves; and if a sister dies childless then her brother shall be her heir; and if there are two sisters, they shall inherit two-thirds of what he or she leaves.¹⁷

And to you belongs a half of what your wives leave, if they die childless. And if they have children, a quarter of what they leave shall be yours after payment of any legacies they may have bequeathed and after discharging any [outstanding] debts. Your wives shall inherit a quarter of what you leave, if you die childless. If you have children, then they shall inherit one-eighth, after payment of any legacies you may have bequeathed, and after discharging any of your outstanding debts.¹⁸

In case of *kalalah* relation, which is an adjective used for a person who leaves behind neither parents nor children; it also means all the relatives of a deceased except his parents and children, and it also denotes the relationships which run not through [the deceased's] parents or children. If *kalalah* relatives are not brothers and sisters, as in the case of childless male or female. The *Qur'an* does not discriminate between men and women.¹⁹

¹⁴ Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Mizan, *The Islamic Law of Economics, Al-Mawrid and Tafsir Nemooneh, Sura Nisa*, verse.12

¹⁵ *Al-Quran, Sura Al-Nisa*, verse 7

¹⁶ *Al-Quran, Sura Al Nisa*, verse 11

¹⁷ Ibid, verse 126

¹⁸ Ibid, verse 12

¹⁹ Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Mizan, *The Islamic Law of Economics, Al-Mawrid and Tafsir Nemooneh, Sura Nisa*, verse 12

b) Right to Work

Woman's primary responsibility is usually wrongly interpreted as having to raise children. Some Muslims believe that if women fulfill this, they may have a career if they wish and if their husbands agree. The *Qur'an* puts the main responsibility of earning over husband and asks wives to be obedient to their husbands. Hence, permission to work is generally considered conditional. As it comes in *Al- Qur'an*:

Men are the maintainers of women because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient.²⁰ According to Syed Qutub's analysis, the *Quran* "gives the man the right of 'guardianship' or 'superiority' over the family structure in order to prevent dissension and friction between the spouses. The equity of this system lies in the fact that God favoured both the man and women with the necessary qualities and skills for the 'guardianship' and also charged him with the duty to provide for the structure's upkeep."²¹ Whether or not the above verse in the *Qur'an* forbids the work of women is thus disputed area this is illustrated by disagreements between Islamic schhols of thought about whether women would be able to enter specific job areas; One major disputed job area is that of the judge in a court; Shafities claim the women may hold no judicial office, while Hanafities allow women to act as judges in civil cases only.²²

c) Obligations

A woman, when compared with her husband, is far less burdened with any claims on her possessions. Her possessions before marriage do not transfer to her husband and she keeps her maiden and family name. She has no obligation to spend on her family out of such properties or out of her income after marriage. Unless she is a slave, she is entitled to the *Mahr* which she takes from her husband at the time of marriage.²³

Although men appear to have more rights than women, women have some rights which men do not have, for example the rights to be supported financially, and to a certain inviolability which is respected even by the most rude and warlike Bedounis.²⁴

5. Rights in Legal Matters

5.1. Testimony

In case of witnesses for financial documents, the *Qur'an* asks for two men or one man and two women. Some argue that this command shows that *Qur'an* does not want to

²⁰ *Al Quran, Sura Al-Nisa, verse. 34*

²¹ Haddad / Esposito p. 37-38

²² *Al Quran, Sura Al- Nisa, verse 34*

²³ Jamal Badawi, *The Status of Women in Islam, A quarterly Journal Al-Ittihad*, vol.8, No. 2 Sha'ban 1391/ Sept.1971

²⁴ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2002), Alta Mira Press, ISBN 0-7591-0189-2, p. 476

make difficulties for women.²⁵ It is disputed whether the testimony of a woman is half or not.

...and call in to witness from among your men two witnesses; but if there are not two men, then one man and two women from among those whom you choose to be witnesses, so that if one of the two errs, the second of the two may remind the other.²⁶

Many Muslims believe that the legal value of the testimony of women is also half that of a man. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes that Islam asks for two women witnesses against one male because this responsibility is not very suited to their temperament and general sphere of interests and the environment they are used to. He argues that Islam makes no claim that woman's testimony is half in any *Diyya*.²⁷ Countries like Saudi Arabia, are still using the same law of *Diyya*, which was in force in Arabia in Prophet's time. According to this particular law, the fine for unintentional murder of a woman is half of that of a man.

5.2. Punishments

While describing punishments for different crimes, the *Qur'an* does not discriminate between genders. In case of sexual crimes like fornication, a woman can be found guilty easily as she may become pregnant, while it becomes difficult for the prosecution of males, as Islam asks for four witnesses to file a case for fornication. Some scholars don't differentiate between rape and adultery while still others do; however, there is a consensus that in the former offence the victim is not prosecuted. This creates more complications as the woman cannot file a case without having four witnesses (even for rape cases). Most scholars, however, agree that rape cannot be treated as adultery if it proven that she was compelled to surrender herself and ask for harsher punishments of *hiraba* or disorder in the land, which do not require four witnesses to register the case.²⁸ The form of punishment and interpretation of Islamic Law in this case is highly dependent on the respective government legislation and judge of an Islamic Court.

8.3. Right to Marriage

No age limits have been fixed by Islam for marriage but the age *bulugiat* (adulthood) Children of the youngest age may be married or promised for marriage, although a girl is not handed across to her husband until she is fit for marital sexual relations.²⁹ It is

²⁵ *Half-of a man, Renaissance-Monthly Islamic Journal*, 14 (7), July 2004

²⁶ *Al-Quran, Sura Baquarah*, verse 282

²⁷ *Diyya* is paid as a fine to the next of kin of somebody who was killed unintentionally.

²⁸ *Al-Quran, Sura Al-Maieda* verses 33-34

²⁹ *Al-Quran, Sura Muhammad*, verse 4 and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, *Mizan, Islamic Law of Jihad, Al-Mawrid*, p.106

related that the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) himself took a nine year old child.³⁰ as one of his wives and commenced sexual relations with her when she was thirteen years of age.³¹

Under Hanafi *fiqh*, the wali (male guardian of an unmarried woman) may give in marriage a girl who is a virgin and also a minor, after informing her.

Her silence is taken as consent, but even if she says that she does not consent, the marriage is still lawful.³² Hanafi *fiqh* also strictly requires in such a case that the wali should be bride's father, or else her son or other relative in the descendant line, if she has one; if not, then some other male relative may act.³³

Till the abandonment of slavery, the owner of a girl slave might give her in marriage to anyone that he is pleased without asking her consent. However, if he wished to marry her himself then he must first emancipate her and then seek her consent.³⁴ The *mahr* of such a child slave bride is alienated from her instead given to her master.³⁵

Islam denies women a certain freedom of choice in their marriage and relationship partners. Women and girls are denied the choice of a marriage or relationships with non-Muslim partners (while boys and men are not so restricted with respect to Jews, Sabians and Christians as partners).³⁶ In other circumstances, marriage is an open declaration of a contract by a man and a woman to live as husband and wife as friendly manner. It is declared in the presence of people through a responsible personality with great solemnity and gravity after he delivers a sermon to counsel and guide them. However, these conditions may vary among different Muslims e.g., Shia Muslims have *Nikah Mutah*, which is quite different in its nature. However, some consider this permission to be conditional as this permission was granted when Islam prevailed over polytheistic Arab society in every manner and there was a great chance that most women would accept Islam as the relevant verse begins with the word this day.³⁷ Pre-requisites of marriage include:

³⁰ *Sahih Bukhari* 5:58:234 and *Sahih Muslim*, No. 3311

³¹ D.A. Spellberg; *Politics, Gender and the Islamic Past: the Legacy of A'isha bint Abu Bakar*, Columbia University Press 1994, p. 40

³² D.A. Spellberg; *Politics, Gender and the Islamic Past: the Legacy of A'isha bint Abu Bakar*, Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 110 and Shaybani, *Jami Al-Saghir*, p.37

³³ *Ibid*, p. 110

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 111

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 114

³⁶ *Al-Quran*, Sura *Al-Ma'ida*, verse 5 and <http://islam.about.com/blinterfaith.htm>

³⁷ *Al-Quran*, Sura *Al-Ma'ida*; verse 5

- Marriage should be conducted through dower.³⁸ It is an amount or gift, that is given by the husband to his wife. Once a dower has been ascertained with the realization that it is an obligation of a Muslim husband, he and his wife can mutually change its amount as well as the time of its payment. According to the Islamic Law, women cannot be forced to marry anyone if they object. Dower should not be considered as a favor rather as an obligation. It should be given according to the social status of the lady. Islamic scholars consider it a way of showing importance of marriage contract and a preparation on behalf of husband to fulfill his marital responsibilities.³⁹
- The second pre-requisite of marriage is chastity. Islam does not give adulterers the right to marry a chaste woman and no adulterers is given the right to marry a chaste man, except if the matter has not gone to court and the two purify themselves of this sin by sincere repentance.⁴⁰
- Ibn Abbaas reported that a girl came to the Messenger of God, Muhammad (pbuh), and she reported that her father had forced her to marry without her consent. The Messenger of God gave her the choice between accepting the marriage and invalidating it.⁴¹ ... the girl said, "actually I accept this marriage but I wanted to let women know that parents have no right to force on them."⁴²

5.5. Divorce

The rules for *Talaq* (divorce) vary among the major Islamic schools. Most importantly Shia and Sunni Muslims have different rules to engage a *Talaq*. In both the Sunni and Shia traditions the right of divorce is primarily for men. In case where the woman wants a divorce, she will ask a court of law for divorce.⁴³ The divorced wife gets her *mahr* and anything which was given by the husband to his wife. As *Al-Qur'an* commands:

And do not treat them (wife) with harshness that you may take away what you have given them.⁴⁴

³⁸ *Al-Quran, Sura Al-Nisa*; verse 24

³⁹ Islahi Amin Ahsan, *Tadabbur-i-Quran*, 2nd ed., vol.2, (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1986), p. 278

⁴⁰ *Al-Quran Sura Noor*, verse 3 and *Sura Al-Baqarah*, verse 221

⁴¹ *Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, 2469

⁴² *Sunan Ibn Maja*, No. 1873

⁴³ Moiz Amjad, Regarding the *Iddah* (waiting period) when the woman has asked for Divorce. Understanding islam.com

⁴⁴ *Al-Quran, Sura Al-Nisa*, verse 19

5.6. Custody of Children

Islamic law does not have any directive for custody of children because this matter can only be decided keeping in view the welfare of the children and the circumstances of the parents. Following are some of the cases decided by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):⁴⁵

- Abd-Allah Ibn Umar narrates that a lady came to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and said: "For this son of mine, it is only my belly which was his abode, and my breasts which were his vessel and my lap which was his dwelling place. Now his father has divorced me and wants to take him away from me." The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) replied, "You are more entitled to keep him until you marry again"⁴⁶
- Abu Huraira narrates that in a woman came to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and said, "My husband wants to take away from me this child even though he has brought over water for me from the well of Abu Anbah and given me a lot of benefit." The Prophet Muhammad replied, "Both of you can cast a lot on this." When the husband heard, he said, "who will quarrel with me regarding this son of mine?" The Prophet Muhammad said, "O son! this is your father and this is your mother; grasp the hand of the one you want to hold." The child grasped the mother's hand and she took him away.⁴⁷

5.7. Rights and Obligations as Wife

Islam advocates a harmonious relationship between husband and wife. It puts the main responsibility of earning over the husband. Both are asked to fulfill the other's sexual needs. Husband are asked to be kind to their wives and wives are asked to be obedient to their husbands. *Qur'an* also emphasizes the importance of taking counsel and mutual agreement in family decisions.⁴⁸ As it comes in the *Qur'an*:

If they [husband and wife] desire to wean the child by mutual consent and after consultation, there is no blame on them.⁴⁹

5.8. Behaviour with Rebellious Wives

In case of rebellious behaviour, the husband is asked to urge his wife to mend her ways, then to refuse to share their beds, and as the last resort, husbands are allowed to

⁴⁵ Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Mizan Chapter: *The Social Law of Islam, Al-Mawrid*.

⁴⁶ *Sunan Abu Dawwood*, Chapter, *Hadith* No. 2276

⁴⁷ Ibid, 2277

⁴⁸ Jamal Badawi, *The Status of Women in Islam, A quarterly Journal Al-Ittihad*, vol.8, No. 2 Sha'ban 1391/ Sept.1971

⁴⁹ *Al-Quran, Sura Al-Baqarah*, verse 233

admonish their wives by beating.⁵⁰ (which is normally described as mild and which does not leave a mark).⁵¹ As *Al-Qur'an* states:

Men are the maintainers of women because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded; and as to those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping – places and beat them; then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them; surely Allah is High, Great.⁵²

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is attributed to say in the Farewell Sermon:

O people! Accept the advice regarding good treatment of women and [accept it] because they are duty bound [to fulfill your marital rights]. You have no other authority on them except this. And if they commit open sexual misconduct you have the right to leave them alone in their beds and [if even then, they do not listen] beat them such that this should not leave any mark on them. Then if they obey you, take no further action against them. Indeed you have no rights over women and they also have rights over you. You have the right that they do not permit into your homes nor sleep with anyone else. Listen! their right upon you is that you feed and clothe them in the best way you are able to.⁵³

Beating wives for any other reason is completely prohibited, as the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is attributed to say: I went to the Apostle of Allah and asked him: what do you say (command) about our wives: He replied: Give them food what you have for yourself, and clothe them by which you clothe yourself, and do not beat them, and do not revile them.⁵⁴

5.9. Directives for Widows

Al-Qur'an prohibits widows to engage themselves for four lunar months and ten days, after the death of their husbands. According to *Qur'an*: And those of you who die and leave widows behind, they should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days. Then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no blame on you about what they do with themselves in accordance with the norms [of society]. And Allah is well acquainted with what you do. And there is also no blame on you if you tacitly send a marriage proposal to these women or hold it in your hearts. Allah knows that you

⁵⁰ Ibn Kathir, "Tasir of Ibn Kathir," Al-Firdous Ltd., London 2000, pp. 50-53

⁵¹ Ahmad Shafaat, *Tafseer of Sura an-Nisa*, Ayah 24, Islamic Perspectives, August 10, 2005 and *Sunan Abu Dawdood*, 1878

⁵² *Al-Quran*, Sura *Al-Nisa*, verse 34

⁵³ *Sunan Ibn Maja*, No. 1841

⁵⁴ *Sunan Abu Dawdood*, No. 2139

would definitely talk to them. [Do so] but you do not make a secret contract. Of course you can say something in accordance with the norms [of the society]. And do not decide to marry until the law reaches its term. And know that Allah has knowledge of what is in your hearts; so be fearful of Him and know that Allah is most forgiving and most forbearing.⁵⁵

Islamic scholars consider this directive a balance between mourning of husband's death and protection of widow from censure that she became interested in re-marrying soon after her husband's death.⁵⁶ This is also ascertain whether a lady is pregnant or not.⁵⁷

5.10. Polygamy

Al-Qur'an addresses guardians of the orphans to marry the mothers of the orphans that are lawful to them if they fear that they would not be able to do justice to the onerous responsibility of protecting the rights of the orphans and taking care of their wealth and property. Men are allowed to engage in polygamy with two conditions:⁵⁸

1. Even for as noble an objective as the welfare of orphans, a person may not marry more than four wives at a time.
2. If a person is not able to deal justly with all four wives he should not marry more than the number he can be just with. Justice is a value that has to be maintained at all costs and cannot be sacrificed even for such a noble cause. What "dealing justly" actually consists of is determined by the man concerned.

In Islamic world, the polygamous marriages constitute only 1-3 % of all marriages.⁵⁹

5.11. Restriction of Movement

Islam restricts the dignity of women to travel independently or with other women as a group. Generally, it is impermissible for a woman to travel the distance of three days (equivalent to 48 miles) without her husband or a Mahram (unmarriageable kin) accompanying her.⁶⁰

6. Women as Islamic Scholars, Imams and Leaders

Women, as well as men, are encouraged to become as educated as they can in Islam, and therefore, there is nothing wrong with women becoming scholars. However, the right to have an official position in a masjid is disputed by many. A fundamental role of an imam in a masjid is to lead the salah, or congregational prayers. Women are

⁵⁵ *Al-Quran, Sura Al-Baqarah*, verses 234-235

⁵⁶ Islahi Amin Ahsan, *Tadabbur-i-Quran*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1986), p. 546

⁵⁷ Shehzad Saleem, *The Social Directives of Islam: Distinctive Aspects of Ghamidi's Interpretation*, Renaissance, and March 2004.

⁵⁸ Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Mizan Chapter: *The Social Law of Islam, Al-Mawrid*

⁵⁹ The New Encyclopaedia of Islam (2002), *Alta Mira Press*, ISBN 0-7591-0189-2, p. 477

⁶⁰ <http://qa.sunnipath.com/issue view.asp?HD=1&ID=1993& CATE=143>

generally not allowed to lead mixed prayers. but some argue that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) gave permission to *Ume Warqa* to lead a mixed prayer at the mosque of *Dar*.⁶¹

Some Muslims argue that the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) wife Aisha, who both took part in politics and served as a major authority on *hadith*, is an example of possible roles for Muslim women. Other Muslims would strongly disagree (Aisha is seen in a darker light by Shia Muslims because she opposed Prophet's cousin and son-in-law Ali bin Abu Talib). Other examples include the appointment of *Ume Warqa* and *Samra Binte Wahaib* as the head of market committees of Medina and Mecca by Umar the second Caliph.⁶²

A report shows that a female Pakistani Minister, Zilla Huma Usman was shot dead by a Muslim man Mohammad Sarwar who stated "I have no regrets. I just obeyed Allah's commandment," adding that Islam did "not allow women to hold positions of leadership".⁶³ This shows the attitudes of Muslim Messages about women's public appearance.

7. Conclusion

Islam is the complete and comprehensive code of life. It covers all aspects of human life from cradle to grave. Islam prescribes solutions to all problems, personal or international, private or public in nature. It is not indifferent to any issue how insignificant it may be. On that account, Islam is regarded, as stated, the complete code of life and therefore, it has the comprehensive laws to govern the legal rights and obligations of women in Islam. The discriminatory attitude against women, rooted in the family and extends to the State level, should be ended. She is entitled for the right what is given by Islam, Family, society and the State in general, of her what she is entitled for. At last it can be said that without the link between the principles of Islam and practices of Sharia law women will continue to suffer in the long run. It requires complete implementation of Islam in state life without which no right can be guaranteed.

⁶¹ 24 April 2005, The Daily Times, Pakistan, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, *Religious Leadership of women in Islam*.

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ 20 February 2007, The Daily Times, Pakistan, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, *Religious Leadership of Women in Islam*.