



Investigation of the Right of Women to Work in Islam Based on Quranic Verses and Narrations

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Abstract

One of the areas of the evolution of social life in the new era is changes and developments in women's lives. These changes in themselves include a wide range of changes from social beliefs and ideas about women to changes of individual, family and social roles. Among these evolutions, women's employment is of particular importance. The question we are trying to answer in this study is whether women have the right to work in Islam? What are its Qur'anic evidence and validity?

This is a review study. In order to examine the texts related to the aims of the study, the Persian and English keywords of Women's rights, Women's employment, Islam, Motherhood, Civil Law, and Spiritual Rewards were searched in databases such as Google, pub med, SID and Magiran.

This study attempted to examine the Quranic and narrative documentation of women's employment permits, women's employment and the general attitude of Islam in this regard. The principle of women's employment permits is emphasized in the book and the Sunnah of the Prophet. Jurists generally refer to four other verses regarding women's employment permits: Verse 32 of Surah An-Nisaa, Verse 10 of Surah Aljumu'a, verse 234 of Surah Al-Baqarah and verses 23-26 of Surah Al-Qasas. Most jobs are considered to be appropriate to the mental and physical condition of women.

From the jurisprudential point of view, there is no doubt about in the principle of respect for women's work. There is a lot of evidence in the book of the Qur'an, the Sunnah and the tradition of the Prophet, (peace be upon him) and the Imams (peace be upon them) indicating that women can undertake some occupation by observing the rules of communication with men.

Keywords: *Family; Employment; Women; Women's Rights; Islam, Narrations; Quranic Concepts*

Introduction

In recent decades, women's economic challenges and opportunities and gender imbalances in work markets have been reported even in developed countries. Highly educated women are present in the work market and even provide substantial financial support to help their families through their

employment. However, their views on gender roles remain unknown (1). Today, numerous articles have been published on the importance of employment and its relationship to human health (2-4) and large-scale meta-analysis has shown that long-term unemployed people are at least two times more at risk for mental illness, especially depression and anxiety disorders. The mortality rate for unemployed people is 1.6 times higher than that of employed people (5). In one of the largest published meta-analyses, including 42 longitudinal studies from different countries conducted on over 20 million people, the mortality rate of the unemployed people has been reported to be 1.73 times (1.44-2.06) of that of employed ones for 5 years with an age control (4).

Prior to the advent of Islam, women were usually economically disadvantaged in society and in their families and they were deprived of their right to inherit. In the ignorance era, not only women were deprived of their inheritance; they themselves were inherited like other deceased property too, according to the verse saying: "O you who have believed, it is not lawful for you to inherit women by compulsion" (6).

It should be noted that this old tradition still exists today in the civil law of some developed countries such as France, the constitution of which is among the most complete in European law. It is observed that control of all property of the woman is delegated to the man, whether acquired before or after the marriage contract (7).

There is no verse in the Holy Qur'an that declares judgment on women's work. But this is not to deny the presence of women in the social arena. In particular, as it is inferred from some of the verses, all general issues in Islam are common between men and women. In many verses, God is concerned with both men and women. For example, one can refer to the verse 70 of Surah At-Tawba in which whatever attribute of righteous deed applies to the woman as well (8) or in verse 10 of Surah al-Jumu'a, God says: "And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah" (9). Disperse within the land refers to daily work to obtain the grace of God which is earning money (10).

Also in verse 61 of the Surah Hud, God says: "He has produced you from the earth and settled you in it." It is clear from these verses that not only men but to all human, including women, are addressed in the verses (11). In addition, the verse 65 of the Surah Al-Hajj and verse 20 of the Surah Luqman, saying "God made the earth be made available to mankind so that man can work and extract wealth from it", implies that it is permissible to work a woman for the sake of the places that God has made for the children of Adam (12).

Therefore, clarification and explanation of the Quranic- jurisprudential regulations and norms in this regard is necessary. However, not paying attention to the legal values and norms of women's employment outside the home and their non-implementation can lead Islamic societies to the fate of other societies. Therefore, the present article seeks to examine the Quranic- jurisprudential principles of women's work outside home.

Methodology

This is a review study conducted in 2019. The main purpose of the study is to determine the Qur'anic views and narrations on the issue of women's right to work. Religious texts were used for the study and for the purpose of examining the texts related to the goals of the study, related Persian and English keywords of women's rights, women's employment, Islam, narrations, civil law and Quran were searched in databases such as Google, pub med, SID and Magiran.

Results

In addition to those verses that explicitly state the necessity of earning a living for men and women in general, it can be deduced from the Qur'anic verses that working is permitted for women and it is not Haram (not prohibited). Some Qur'anic verses lead us to imply that it is permissible for women to work. Jurists generally refer to four other verses regarding women's employment permits: Verse 32 of Surah An-Nisaa, Verse 10 of Surah Aljumu'a, verse 234 of Surah Al-Baqarah and verses 23-26 of Surah Al-Qasas(13). One can also see the employment permits of women based narrations, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) states: "It is imperative for every Muslim, man and woman, to work for a Halal property" which also includes the demand for Halal income (13). Therefore, although Almighty God is the provider and supporter of human (it is Allah who is the Provider, the firm possessor of strength (14)) and it is He who himself divides and appreciates the source of income; all are obliged to have a Halal source of income.

Imam Sadeq (PBH) says: "Do not forsake Halal earning, as it is effective in strengthening the religion."

Discussion

Women's financial independence is closely linked to the right to work because if women's right to work is officially recognized but their financial independence is taken away from them, they will not benefit and women will not be owner of their own income. In Islam, from the beginning, alongside the right to work for women, their right to property has also been recognized. In the area when societies did not grant women any economic rights and even women were deprived of basic human rights, Islam instituted financial and economic rights for women, which will be outlined in the following verses.

1-Verse 32 of Surah An-Nisaa:

«...وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۗ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبْنَ ۗ...»

".... And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned (6)"

In this verse, women are also entitled to the earnings from their work as men are entitled to the earnings their work.

Imam Khomeini, one of the great jurists of Islam, said "When Islam emerged on the Arabian Peninsula, women did not have the right status for men, Islam gave them dignity and honor, and made them equal to men. In Islam, the importance and attention to women is more than that of men. And of course, there are laws that are proportionate to the nature of the man, and there are laws that are proportionate to the characteristics and the nature of the woman, but that does not mean that Islam considers superiority between men and women." He also mentions the independence that Islam holds for women in their earnings from 1420 years ago that is explicitly stated by God in the Qur'an in verse 32 in Surah An-Nisaa '(16).

Here, the word "acquisition" encompasses voluntary and non-voluntary action, though philologist considered that both words of "earn" and "earning" specific to the situations where human action is performed voluntarily (17).

This verse refers to women's employment permits because the assumption of Halal earning, that is to say, to obtain money, is considered and then it is said about the earnings in the way that if a man or woman can earn something by working, it will be their own.

It should be noted that the word "earning" is used 67 times in the Qur'an but usually does not mean economic work and only in one case, in verse 32 in Surah An-Nisaa, it means material effort and earning money. In other words, this verse endorses earning money and economic efforts of men and women as social participation and eliminates the misconception that earning money, working and economic efforts are specific to men. The motive that has led Islam to give women financial independence has been nothing but the humanity, justice and divine aspects of Islam unlike other countries where some other considerations such as the need for low-cost factory workers have led them to the recognition of women's financial independence and enact law in this area. The earnings of a married woman, or even a woman who is single and mature and lives in the father's house, is considered to be her own (18).

Another verse that by its title implies the permissibility of women's employment is:

2- Verse 10 of Surah Aljumu'a

«فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ»

"And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah often that you may succeed."

This verse refers to the permission of women to work, as stated in the Qur'anic interpretation, addressed in the general verse, and includes both men and women (19).

3- Verse 234 of Surah Al-Baqarah:

«فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ»

"There is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner. And Allah is [fully] acquainted with what you do."

This verse also applies to the employment of women, that is if women wish to engage in economic or social activities in a part of their lives it is permitted provided that according to Qur'an state to be based on the common rational and humane principles of society, for example a job that does not conflict with family dignity and the duties of marital life (20).

4- Verses 23-26 of Surah Al-Qasas

وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ يَسْفُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِي حَتَّى يُصْدِرَ الرَّعَاءُ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ

"And when he came to the well of Madyan, he found there a crowd of people watering [their flocks], and he found aside from them two women driving back [their flocks]. He said, "What is your circumstance?" They said, "We do not water until the shepherds' dispatch [their flocks]; and our father is an old man."

In the verses of Surah Al-Qasas, God has well described the quality of women's presence in society and dealing with strange men. Where He mentions the daughters of Prophet Shu'aib who used to be shepherds and because of their father's old age, they were replaced by the shepherd and always waited for the other shepherds to water their sheep. and then watered their own (21).

A few points can be deduced from this verse:

First, by referring to the interpretation of "do not water" and the present and continuous verbs, it is understood that watering the sheep was their daily and routine work. The phrase "our father is an old

man “also reflects this fact, because its irony is that we don't have anyone else to do this work so we do the work of watering the sheep ourselves.

Second, although the verse does not mention the shepherding of the daughters of Prophet Shu'aib; it can be concluded that all the work of the shepherding, one of which was watering and the other one grazing, was the responsibility of the girls because when Shabib girls say “r father is an old man” its irony is that they don't have anyone else for watering the sheep. Therefore, the shepherding work of the daughters of Prophet Shu'aib (PBH) and their replacement in the place of the father for the care of the sheep is one of the cases mentioned in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Qasas on the employment of women.

Lastly, the important thing that should be noted is that the aforementioned are about women working outside the home but in some Islamic societies women's work at home has been overlooked and the lack of attention to housework among other jobs has impaired women's rights at home. In Islam, women's work at home is very important, and because women have always done their housework, the role of women in the home is considered to be of little value and is usually regarded as undervalued. But in Islam, women's work at home, in the spiritual dimension, is seen as equal to men's jihad on the battlefields, and in the material dimension women can also ask their husbands for pay and wages.

Conclusion

According to the explicit Qur'anic verses, in which women are given equal earnings as of that of men in their work, the right to work for women is considered a natural right that can be verified without any conditions. As a result, in the Islamic legal system, while recognizing the right to work for women, it also provides for the financial independence of women within the framework of Islamic law and the man's hand has been shortened from the achievement of women's work and effort. In addition, women are not obliged to pay for family expenses, unlike the Western legal system, where women must spend a part of their earning on family expenses. Therefore, Islam has given women a privilege and made alimony obligatory on man. In addition, by protecting the woman's financial independence, Islam has maintained and protected the family's warm foundation in order not to be ruined.

Implementation of the Islamic Financial System's plan for women provides them with a hassle-free wealth like the income they earn from work. This wealth includes alimony with its broad and specific definition, dowry as a strongly recommended amount of money (Mustahab) to be paid promptly and also in the matter of inheritance which in Islamic jurisprudence, wife shares all classes of inheritance.

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