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# Analyzing the Feminist View of Equal Employment between Men and Women; Its Arguments and Criticisms

Zahra Rabbani Tabar<sup>1</sup>; Alireza Alebouyeh<sup>2</sup>; Razieh Zarei<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PhD Student, Department of Islamic Moral Philosophy, Baqir Al-Uloom University, Qom, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Member of the Islamic Sciences and Culture Academy, Baqer Uloom University, Qom, Iran

<sup>3</sup>A Member of the Scientific Department of Gender Studies at the Cognition Institute and a Professor at Hazrat Masoumeh University, Iran

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#### Abstract

Feminists, in their extreme view of women's employment, have considered equality between men and women in this regard, and in this context, they have given arguments such as equality and equality with men, and opposition to women's dependence on men, preventing women from being humiliated by housework. Or doing worthless work, specialized child rearing by child care specialists, women's social need for employment and presence in society and a sense of social responsibility, and reducing motherhood hardships for working women by replacing mothers. In this article, we have decided to criticize and examine these arguments from an extra-religious and an intra-religious (Islamic) perspective.

**Keywords:** Feminist View; Equal Employment; Arguments and Criticisms

#### Introduction

Employment is one of the things that cause the material, social, and cultural growth of a person in society, and as a result, the social vision of a person increases. A society where work and effort are inseparable principles will be an active, progressive and lively society. In this regard, movements were formed to support women, which wanted women's human rights in all fields, including women's employment. Among these movements, there is the feminist movement, which in three main branches tried to fulfill women's rights and bring women to their true position. After the renaissance and the industrial revolution, with the entry of women into the labor market, the discussion of women's employment was formed in the first wave of feminism and evolved in its other waves. With the slogan of equality between men and women, feminists called for equality in the field of employment between men and women, and by presenting evidence to prove this equality, on the one hand, they believed in eliminating gender differences between men and women in employment. and on the other hand, with a different view of the family position, they focused on limiting, replacing or eliminating the role of men and women in the family. In the present research, we first review the feminists' point of view on women's

employment, then discuss their arguments on the equality of men and women in employment, and evaluate each of the arguments from an extra-religious and an intra-religious point of view.

## 1. Feminist View of Women's Employment

All feminists, from the liberal first wave to the Marxist, socialist and radical feminists in the second wave, have emphasized that gender discrimination against women is condemned and they consider its roots to be created by society and the patriarchal ideas of traditional societies. Some have stated in this context that the division of sexual labor is created by the society and has nothing to do with the difference and the natural differences of the two sexes; It means that jobs are marked by men and women. (Abbott Wallace, 1381, p. 173). This difference is the patriarchal view in the fields of Gunakon, which has led women to isolation and deprivation from social development, especially employment. The only way to get out of this isolation and to be present in various fields of work is to try to reduce the gender differences, which have been unfairly spread by the patriarchal culture from generation to generation in the society. Hyde has also stated that gender is formed under the influence of biological, cultural and social factors. (Hyde, 2007, p. 3) Also, some believe that the society and the social and value norms governing it determine that the social, political and economic powers are more connected with masculinity than femininity and traditional structures, gender is often patriarchal. (David and June, 2011, pp. 191-195) In her writings, Margaret Mead describes the American society as a society that values the status of men more. Women felt jealous of this role of men. (mead 1949 pp85-92). Thus, from the point of view of feminists, it is the patriarchal view that has created gender roles. From his point of view, gender equality should prevail in such a way that gender differences are underestimated or even forgotten.

After briefly stating feminism's attitude towards women's employment, we will now examine their arguments for their claim and criticize it.

#### 2. Feminism's Arguments for Women's Employment and Its Criticism

#### 2-1 Equality and Equality with Men and Opposition to Women's Dependence on Men

One of the basic principles of feminists is to try to establish equal rights between men and women. According to Anderson, femininity is formed by social upbringing. From the very beginning, by inducing the role of a wife and mother, girls are subjected to targeted education and are blamed if they violate it. For example, Anderson states that feminist theory argues that gender identities are socially constructed and have led to differences and inequalities throughout history, so the social construction of gender has been the cause of women's oppression. (Anderson 4, 1997 p. 140). Wollstonecraft also believes that the differences between men and women arise from a political and cultural system that is socially constructed and leads to nothing less than oppression and slavery. (Wolstonecraft, 1972; 1985, pp. 145-6)

Feminists called for equality in all fields, including employment, with the slogan of equality between men and women. "Andra Durkin" has stated that women should become like men in order to have what men have. (Dworkin, 1987, 100). One of the similarities between men and women is employment and work outside the home. This ideology and way of thinking means that marriage should not be a focal point in which men and women play different and complementary roles in life, rather their relationship should be like two roommates, each completely and independently They create a committed work environment, which means something similar to homosexual relationships, but between two nonhomosexuals (Carolin Grakilia, 2016, p. 32).

In this way, feminists, in an extreme form, any law that was formed to protect women based on their role in the family and their physical and biological condition and based on gender differences, even if it was in the interest of women, is against the principle of equality and They considered the loss of women. Emphasizing this principle of equality, both sexes should work equally outside the home to earn income for the family. According to them, labor laws should not consider a difference between men and

women, and women should be equal to men not only in rights and benefits, but also in duties and responsibilities.

# 2-1-1 Non-Religious Criticism

## The First Criticism: Ignoring the Biological and Emotional Differences between Men and Women

The existence of biological and emotional differences between men and women is undeniable, and this difference is also effective in women's employment; For example, women should not be expected to work like men during menstruation, or due to women's lower physical strength than men, equality between men and women in work is unfair. Also, based on the difference in emotions and feelings between men and women, which is undeniable, one should avoid entrusting heavy and rough work to women.

As some have admitted that considering the negative effects of unregulated employment of women, they should know that employment is good; But on the condition that there is no overwhelming pressure for them and their job is not harsh and does not conflict with their spirits; In a way that replaces stubbornness, harshness and pragmatism with feminine and maternal tenderness and destroys the boundaries of femininity and masculinity. (Kahrizi Mahosh, Moradi Ali, 2014, 35).

Biological (body structure) and physiological (organ function) differences between men and women cannot be denied in the following cases; Among the differences in chromosomes, the reproductive system of hormones, the nervous system and the structure of the brain due to the difference in brain weight, (Ganji, 1369 p. 128), many psychological differences between men and women have been found in psychological studies, which cannot simply be the result of upbringing, and the environment, including: the difference in gender identity, independence, competition and individuality in boys, and the intimacy of emotional relationships, caring and dependence in girls, in terms of personality, women are more curious, jealous and less self-confident than men, but aggression is more in men. A woman is more emotional than a man and the quality of her emotional expression is also different from that of a man. The difference in mental abilities and learning speed and stages of physical-psychological development is also significant (Ganji, 2009, pp. 211-210). Therefore, a man's breadwinner and a woman's caregiving are to some extent related to their natural and biological characteristics. (Azerbaijani, 1388, 1996).

As a result, based on scientific documentation, men and women have various differences; Although education and environment are influential in the intensity and weakness of these differences: But society's expectations and accepting roles should be done in accordance with and with the recognition of these differences.

#### The Second Criticism: The Crisis of Bisexualization of Men and Women

One of the harms of the feminist perspective and the emphasis on equality is the loss of men's masculinity. What exists in the real world; The existence of two different genders with different functions in the family and society; But the all-round feminist view of equality leads to ignoring the differences and tending to bisexuality of men and women. This means that the woman is in an identity crisis between being a woman and being a man. The same problem applies to men.

Michael Novak believes that this anger originates from the fact that men are not masculine enough, and the submission of many men to feminist beliefs increases women's anger. (p15 1977 Novak) According to Dr. Harold Watt's statements, "men have played a less leadership role in the family with the passing of each generation and have acted with less responsibility and more passivity, and have assumed a passive and even feminine state, while women have been more dominant, and have acted more masculine (1977 p 13 Voth)) The growth of this kind of feminization of social life brings us a country where, according to Christopher Caldwell, we are still alienating men, and effeminate men are of no use.

Which are not women or society (Caldwell, 1996, 18). In his book "The New People", American Life Without Sex, Charles Winnick analyzes the process of feminization of men and masculinization of women. By the end of the 1960s, this process led to the creation of a society in which a significant number of boys and girls, men and women quickly became bisexual (androgynous). (Winick p200 1968)

In fact, by questioning these differences, the evolutionary role of men and women in the family and society has been lost, and each man and woman are placed in an identity contradiction with respect to their real position.

# The Third Criticism: More Inequality with Double Pressure on Women

Considering the reality of women's position in the family and her motherly and wifely roles, although women's employment was proposed with the aim of creating economic and social equality between women and men, in practice, it caused additional pressure on the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of women, to impose on women, which itself led to far more severe injustice and inequality towards women. Explaining that if a woman wants to fulfill her role in the family and participate equally with men in economic and social affairs, she will bear suffering and pressure beyond her ability.

According to the research, working women suffer from heart problems twice as much as housewives. (Patrick Nolan, Beta, p. 465) If until yesterday women's main responsibility and role was to take care of household affairs and children, in modern societies they have practically taken on both the duties of wife and mother and are equal to men. They worked outside the home. This multiplicity of roles, which imposes extra pressure on women's body and mind, is called "double pressure" in sociology. (Saroukhani, 1375, 172) On the other hand, the nervous pressure caused by the number of roles also limits the field of advancement in career fields for women. Katina Horner believes that a woman who is in the workplace, especially if she has a male job, faces very negative consequences, which causes the loss of femininity).

## The Fourth Criticism: The Gendered Division of Labor Is a Natural Choice Throughout History

Throughout history, there has been a continuous gender division of labor based on the differences between men and women. Even now, its effects can be seen in anthropological studies and primitive societies. "Marduk" studies depict the economic activities of women and men in such a way that it was the case in 75% of 224 tribes all over the world. Men did things like herding, fishing, cutting trees, setting traps, working in mines, hunting, fighting, etc.. But women are engaged in such things as grinding seeds, cooking water, collecting fuel and plant products, sewing, weaving clothes, making pottery, and others" (Barg 1346, vol. 1, p. 322). Therefore, the division of labor based on gender, throughout history, it indicates something institutionalized in human nature that such a division of labor has taken place according to the physical and spiritual creation of men and women.

## The Fifth Criticism: The Damage of the Downward Trend of Population Growth

One of the disadvantages of equality between men and women in employment is that due to job problems, the tendency of women to have children decreases and as a result we will see the population decrease in the society.

Andre Michel believes that in industrialized countries, women have to work hard and this issue has made them unable to fulfill their motherly duties. In these societies, the population growth rate has decreased due to the unwillingness of women to have children and under the influence of a culture that despises motherhood (Michel, 1347, p. 33). The prevalence of abortion in these countries also promotes a certain type of life It has been mentioned by Alvin Toffler, a famous contemporary sociologist, as "Culture without children". (Toffler, 1366, p. 295)

Considering that the population is one of the indicators of the country's power, the crisis of the downward trend of the population can be considered as one of the challenges of the modern countries, which on the one hand emphasize the equality of men and women, and by calling women to the labor market and humiliating homemaking. They keep away from the family and on the other hand, with the spread of population reduction, in a clear contradiction, they encourage women to have children.

## Sixth Criticism: Creating Conflict Disease in Full-Time Working Women

The slogan of women's equality in the job and ignoring the differences makes women in the challenge and conflict between the duties of the house and the duties of motherhood and doing the job properly and with quality.

Research shows that women who are engaged in full-time jobs have more job conflicts than men; Because they always think to themselves whether they have fulfilled their family responsibility in an acceptable way or not and they feel anxious and guilty to a great extent. Researchers have pointed out that compared to men, women have less authority in the field of claims control. (Bray 1999 p295-319.

# 2-1-2. Criticism within Religion

## The First Criticism: The Need to Fit the Job with Femininity Characteristics

Considering the biological and psychological differences between men and women and the delicacy and delicacy of women's characteristics, according to Islamic teachings, women's employment should be in terms of quantity and quality in such a way that it does not change or destroy women's nature. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) says: «لا تملك المرأة من أمرها ما جاوز نفسها فإن المرأة ريحانة و ليست (Har Aamili, B-Ta, Vol. 14, p. 120) (Do not force a woman to do something that is not compatible with her, because a woman is like a spring flower, not a warrior) Also, the Qur'anic interpretation of socializing with the famous. «وعاشروهن بالمعروف» (Nasa, 19). According to the application of the verse, one should treat women well in all fields and respect the compatibility with the woman's tenderness, which also includes women's work. Allamah Tabatabaei says in the interpretation of the verse: "Allah Almighty has stated in his book that all people, men and women, are the branches of a single human principle and parts of a single human nature, that all of them are needed for the realization of society, and this does not contradict the fact that each It has assigned two groups with characteristics. such as assigning men's type to intensity and strength and assigning women's nature to softness and emotions; Because human nature in its developmental and social life, just as it needs intensity and strength, it also needs the flow of kindness and mercy. (Tabatabai, Bita, vol. 4, p. 256) Therefore, jobs that are not compatible with women's nature are not acceptable from an Islamic point of view.

#### Second Criticism: Creation of Bans and Job Restrictions to Protect Women

Feminists who claim the absolute equality of men and women in terms of employment have closed their eyes to the physical and mental differences between these two; The Mobin religion of Islam has respected the principle of women's work outside the home and their earning. The Quran has recognized the right of women to own their property: «للرجال نصيب مما اكتسبوا و للنساء نصيب مما اكتسبوا و للنساء نصيب مما اكتسبوا و النساء النس and women, what they have earned is a benefit" (Nasa' 32) This verse requires the permission of women to work and the income obtained from it is halal (Tabatabai, B-Ta Vol. 4, p. 337). However, the differences between men and women from the point of view of Islam, it has not been ignored and in order to protect women, it has banned some heavy and risky jobs such as judicial (judgement) for women and also has created restrictions for women's work; Such as observing the religious hijab and Islamic affairs and not being alone with the unmarried, all these rules are on the one hand for the woman's own immunity and on the other hand to protect the society from moral corruption. In hadiths, it is forbidden to « أما تستحيون ولا تغارون نساءكم يخرجن إلى الأسواق و يزاحمن mix with women and deal with non-mahram men.

Aren't you ashamed, aren't you jealous that your women go to the market and meet strangers" (Har Ameli, B-Ta vol. 14, p. 174), especially women should avoid private places with strange men (ibid., pp. 175, 133).

## 2-2. Avoid Humiliating Women by Doing Housework or Doing Menial Work

From a feminist point of view, women's acceptance of responsibility for housekeeping is a form of humiliation for women. By accepting such a responsibility, a woman is forced to work like a servant at home and do other people's work under the title of mother or wife.

Feminists succeeded in devaluing women's housework through propaganda and convincing new generations of men and women that society looked down on housewives. (Caroline Grakilia, 1386, p. 28)

Another aspect that some feminists have emphasized is that working at home is worthless work. Helena Lopota has described the role of housewife as lacking the basic criteria of a job. He believes that no organized social assembly determines a degree for it, does not test a person's ability or does not consider a person's lack of ability. Also, no specific amount of fees has been determined for housework. In fact, according to the custom of the society, no payment is given for housework, the role of housekeeper never has a high social status, and often a housekeeper is depicted as if he does not need high intelligence, the tasks are uniform and in very small dimensions. With the increase in the importance of education and work in proportion to the level of education of a person, the role of housewife has become more worthless and lacks rank and dignity than in the past. (Lopata, 1980, 196)

## 2-1-1. Extra-Religious Criticism

## **Criticism:** Neglecting the Value of Raising children by Mothers

Feminists actually gave more value to men's work and employment outside the home and devalued the important and creative role of women in housework. According to the theory of experts, theoreticians, psychologists and sociologists, raising a child is one of the most important and valuable tasks, but it is strange that such a valuable task is for someone who is emotionally closer to the child and has the most concern for raising the child. Motherhood itself is a worthless job.

#### 2-1-2. Criticism within Religion

From the point of view of Islam, motherhood has a high place; In such a way that heaven is under the feet of mothers. (Mohammadi Ray Shahri, 1363, vol. 10, p. 712) The role of a mother and mother's work, which is having children and raising children, has great value. Imam Sadiq says: Umm Salma, the wife of the Prophet, offered to the Prophet: O Messenger of God, men have taken all the good things, so what is the share of poor women? Hazrat said that is not the case, a woman during pregnancy is like a person who fasts during the day and worships at night and strives with her wealth and life in the way of God, so when she gives birth, she deserves a reward that no one can because of its greatness. He does not have the ability to understand, and when he breastfeeds his child, for each suckling, he is given a reward equivalent to freeing one of the descendants of Hazrat Ismail, so when he finishes breastfeeding, a magnanimous angel pats him on the side and tells him to stop his actions, take that all your sins are forgiven" (Har Amili, B-Ta, Vol. 15, p. 175) On the one hand, Islam has emphasized the upbringing of parents and on the other hand, it has invited children to appreciate this blessing. "The Lord of the Merciful, the little Rabbiani; O God, have mercy on my parents as they raised me when I was young" (Esra verse 23).

## 2-3 Specialized Education of Children by Childcare Specialists

One of the arguments of feminism in justifying emphasizing the employment of mothers and entrusting children to kindergartens is their education by professionals. Psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers conducted experiments on raising children. In their methods, they proved that it is very unlikely for non-specialist women to successfully play the role of mother. These professional helpers attributed psychological problems to the society in terms of the failure of the family in providing the mental health of the children. According to these people, child rearing should be done by experienced experts in the field of childcare, a theory that seriously affected the self-confidence of mothers in the society in taking care of their children. According to Christopher Lash, this attitude caused psychiatrists from the 1940s to think of themselves as a sick society in which they have to undertake the education of children and thousands of mentally ill patients. Educators and psychologists believed that most parents are responsible in the worst possible way. This attitude based on the absence of parents in the upbringing of children became the intellectual foundation of sociologists who adapted the family according to the model of the relationship between the patient and the doctor. (Caroline Grakilia, 1386, p. 48)

# 2-3-1 Extra-Religious Criticism: Ignoring the Effectiveness of Mothers' Affection and Love in **Raising Children**

It is a fact that the education of the child is done by people who do not have an emotional connection with the child and this issue distorts the role of the mother. Also, the comfort and satisfaction of children and infants does not depend on the special technique and knowledge of the caregivers. What is important for the child is the constant and uniform exchange of love and affection with the person whom the child is very dear to. This is an answer that can neither be learned nor bought. (Carolyn Grakilia, 2016, p. 51) Benjamin Spock, a psychiatrist and child specialist, recounts the extract of his research as follows: "For the natural growth and upbringing of the child, one hour after the birth of the baby, the child should be given to the mother, so that she can touch him for a while." Breastfeeding should be encouraged and the baby should be with the mother when doing things as much as possible." (Spock, 1362, 544) He considers the benefits of these educational initiatives to be healthy and to humanize the relationships of human societies as much as possible and to change the living conditions due to which women do not want to bear even a part of raising their children due to reasons such as employment., does not recognize convincing reasons for the failure of families and mothers to raise children and emphasizes that I hope that while we expect a more humane society, there will be men and women who feel that taking care of children at home, at least It is as important and satisfying as any other activity. (Ibid., 549)

## 2-3-2 Criticism within Religion

According to religious texts, the best option for raising a child is the mother. In religious teachings, the mother's upbringing begins before the birth of the child and even before the conception of the sperm. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says in a hadith: «السعيد من سعد في Happy is he who is happy in his mother's womb, and miserable is he who is في بطّن أمه والشقي من شقي في بطّن أمه miserable in his mother's womb" (Ray Shahri, 1381, p. 176). The hadith refers to this fact that the background of happiness and misery is formed in the period before birth and destiny Man is determined in the mother's womb. In summary, the importance of the fetal period in terms of the influence of the fetus on the mother's thoughts, mental states and behaviors is used in this narrative. (Ehsani, 1401, p. 6) In the period after birth, the relationship between mother and child starts from breastfeeding, and specific religious recommendations in this regard; It exists like breastfeeding with purity and remembrance of God. Due to the importance of mother's care and upbringing, even if the husband and wife separate, the child's custody is with the mother in the early years. As a result, no one can fill the mother's place for the child, and specialists should be used next to the mother if necessary.

# 2-4 Women's Social Need for Employment and Presence in Society and a Sense of Social Responsibility

Another argument of feminism regarding women's employment is that women have turned to employment to satisfy the social need to be present in society.

Economic liberalism, which is also called the capitalist system and is based on the free exchange of capital and the capitalist's freedom of action, was in pursuit of concepts, theories, methods, indicators, relationships and policies that lead to the development of wealth. In the literature of capitalism, the profit of the market and the employer are decisive elements. Therefore, it can be assumed that in this literature, value is a category that is interpreted based on a material definition of a human being without regard to fixed moral principles and by the criterion of the individual's social positions and his position in the production of wealth and in the free exchange of capital. With the institutionalization of this standard, European women gradually got the feeling that women have been in an inferior position throughout history; Because neither social positions have changed hands among them, nor has wealth been directly in their hands, therefore, obtaining income-generating jobs and securing social positions became a demand for western women in the social environment after the French Revolution. (Zaafranchi, 1388, p. 27)

## 2-4-1 Non-Religious Criticism: Employment in Many Cases Due to Financial Need and Relative **Income of Women**

There are two points of view regarding women's employment: the first point of view is that most women have turned to employment due to necessity and need and to earn money, and women's work is not based on feminism ideology. On the other hand, feminists say that the strong tendency to work in women was due to the foundations of feminism, because many working women come from families that have no needs. According to them, it is the social and individual needs of women that lead them to work. to give

#### 2-4-2 Criticism within Religion

In Islam, the financial burden of the family is the responsibility of the man, and the maintenance of the wife is a duty that must be borne by men. In this way, the complete equality of men and women in the matter of employment is meaningless.

## 2-5 Reducing Motherhood Hardships for Working Women with Mother Replacement

Feminists, who insist on equal opportunities for women and men regarding employment, have thought of replacing mothers to raise children and have suggested that children be sent to kindergartens so that the working mother's mind is at ease.

#### 2-5-1 The First Criticism: Imposing the Cost of Kindergarten on the Family or the Government

In fact, the women's movement does not approve any kind of movement that makes women prefer home work to outside work, but it constantly tries to improve public kindergartens by equalizing its costs with other social and health welfare costs. State-run daycare centers, along with the heavy tax burden placed on families, serve feminist goals by tempting women to continue working when they might prefer to stay at home and care for their children. The laws that are being passed support discriminatory methods that are designed to deprive women of their right to choose and force them to live according to feminist ideology (Orwell, 1949. PP 86-87).

## The Second Criticism: The Inability to Create a Sense of Peace in Working Mothers

Feminism has not been successful in changing the attitude of working women, providing new definitions of "good mother" and "creating a sense of peace in working mothers" and "relieving the torment of their conscience in leaving their children". Although reforms in the working environment can provide facilities for working mothers; But in the best case, it gives relative peace only to mothers who strongly want to be with their children, or it provides an alternative for the absence of their mothers. Reforms in the work environment can usually reduce the heavy dual responsibility of mothers to some extent. Of course, the institutionalization of such developments only reduces the guilt of mothers. These changes show that there is an acceptance in the society that additional and imposed costs are accepted because mothers must be present in the work environment and their presence at home has a low value for them and their children. The work that is provided for working mothers will be disproportionately applied to families that have a single income and do not benefit from these facilities. (Caroline Grakilia, 1386, p. 28)

#### 2-5-2 Non-Religious Criticism

As mentioned above, although Islam is not against the presence of women in the society in accordance with Sharia laws; But it attaches special importance to the position of motherhood and the upbringing of children by the mother, that the presence of women in the society should not disturb this fundamental role of the mother.

#### Results

- 1- Feminists' argument based on equality and equality with men and opposition to women's dependence on men for equality in employment with criticisms such as ignoring the biological and emotional differences between men and women, the crisis of women's bisexuality, greater inequality with double pressure on women , the gender division of labor is a natural choice throughout history, the damage of the downward trend of population growth and the creation of conflict disease in full-time working women are faced.
- 2- The argument of feminists based on preventing women from being humiliated by housework or doing worthless work due to the neglect of the value of raising children by mothers has been criticized.

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