

The Role of Women in Safeguarding Societal Intellectual Frameworks

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Abstracts

This paper attempts to highlight the intellectual role of women in Islamic social history through its various eras and to measure the extent of their awareness of the issues brought about by modernity and urbanization. The paper also shows the constructive and active role of women at the same time, which the values of globalization today try to obscure by assimilating women into the concepts of globalization and modernity.

Keywords: Women's Intellectual Role, Islamic Social History, Modernity and Globalization.

1. Introduction

Can a true intellectual renaissance emerge in the absence of awareness among women?

And can a cultural intellectual renaissance arise in the context of an unregulated and non-rooted free thought that does not feel the values of moral responsibility in society?

First: Thought is the source of the Renaissance

Revival and progress begin with ideas, and the religious idea is the most accurate of ideas. The evidence for this is that the intellect among the Arabs existed but was dormant until the verses of revelation came, calling for reading. This awakened the tools of the mind, leading to deep contemplation, reasoning, and argumentation, which in turn led to the rise of civilizations.

The true renaissance for women is one in which her correct relationship with her Creator, her relationship with the universe, humanity, and life, and her relationship with the afterlife are all defined. These relationships are determined by the guidance of revelation, recognizing her role as God's vicegerent on earth.

Second: Women's upbringing environment

Islamic law (Sharia) has emphasized the environment for raising women, as evidenced by the Hadiths and traditions that show the depth of women's intellectual freedom grounded in the tools of reasoning illuminated by the light of revelation, which both reason and human interest call for.

For example, Uqbah ibn Amir said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say: "Whoever has three daughters, and he is patient with them, feeds them, gives them drink, and clothes them from his wealth, they will be a shield for him from the Fire on the Day of Resurrection." (Narrated by Ibn Majah and Ahmad and authenticated by Al-Albani).

Anas ibn Malik reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever supports two daughters until they reach maturity, he and I will come on the Day of Resurrection (like this)" and he joined his fingers. (Narrated by Muslim).

These two joined fingers indicate their closeness in status.

Moreover, the virtue of raising daughters applies to anyone who does so, even if it's just one daughter. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated: "A woman entered with her two daughters, asking for charity, but I found nothing except a date which I gave to her. She divided it between her two daughters and did not eat any herself. Then, she stood up and left. Later, the Prophet (peace be upon him) came in, and I informed him of what happened. He said: 'Whoever is tested with daughters and treats them generously will have a shield against the Fire.' " (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim).

Ibn al-Iraqi commented in "Tarh al-Tathreeb": "His saying 'with anything' encompasses both little and much, even if it's just one daughter. Being kind to her will shield one from the Fire. If one goes beyond that, they will also attain precedence with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) in Paradise. This is also mentioned in another authentic Hadith: 'Whoever supports two daughters until they reach maturity, he and I will come on the Day of Resurrection (like this),' and he joined his fingers." (End of quote).

Ibn Hajar stated in "Fath al-Bari": The mentioned reward is attained by those who are kind to even just one daughter. As in the earlier Hadith of ibn Abbas, a man from the Bedouins asked, "Or two?" and he replied, "Or two." In the Hadith of Awf ibn Malik reported by al-Tabarani, a woman asked, and in the Hadith of Jabir, it was said, and in the Hadith of Abu Hurairah, we said, and this indicates multiple questioners. Additionally, in the Hadith of Jabir, it was added: "Some people thought that if he had said 'one,' he would have replied, 'one.' " In the Hadith of Abu Hurairah, we asked: "And two?" He replied: "And two." We asked: "And one?" He replied: "And one." (End of quote).

As we have noticed from all the hadiths, the Prophet's encouragement and encouragement of good discipline and upbringing so that women grow up in a good and pure environment far from deviation, and this orientation and encouragement of upbringing imposes on us a set of realistic questions?

Do women today have an educational role in raising their daughters and sons?

It's worth to refer that the educational role, we do not mean that daily preoccupation with her work areas and providing for all the children's needs?

The educational role is the process of implanting values and principles, inculcating belief, and sharpening the mind with correct ideas.

The role of women in building thought in Muslim society

The call of Sharia to educate women is derived from the origin of the general discourse calling for reading and knowledge and fortifying the mind through the means of pilgrimage and reasoning.

When our Lord Almighty said (Read in the name of your Lord who created) Surat Al-Alaq 1

Men and women rose to this speech, finished the cycle of the knowledge of prophecy, looked at his efforts, may God bless him and grant him peace, and their objectives, and grew up on the secrets and implications of legislation.

When we examine the books of biographies, we find that women were keen, motivated, and eager to attend the gatherings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). They would lead by asking questions and seeking clarification, eagerly attending both his public and private gatherings. Indeed, the Prophet (peace be upon him) allocated a specific day for women to teach them and educate them about the religious rulings. Women would also attend the mosques for worship and learning, recognizing the mosques' role in spreading knowledge and wisdom.

The eagerness of women for knowledge is a source of enlightenment and intellectual development. They lived this passion due to their awareness of the importance of knowledge. They did not hesitate to come to the Prophet's Mosque to ask questions and seek guidance. For instance, Zaynab, the wife of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, used to come to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to inquire about financial matters concerning spending and charity for her husband and relatives.

Women were never shown as mere followers or imitators. Instead, their independent personalities emerged, capable of critical thinking, reflection, and objection. For example, Sabya Al-Aslamiya hesitated when Abu As-Sanabil advised her against marriage, saying "you should not beautify yourself," after her husband passed away. She conceived after him by forty nights. She then went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) herself and sought his judgment in her case. The Prophet (peace be upon him) allowed her to remarry because her waiting period had ended with her pregnancy.

This eagerness, desire, and motivation are what women need today because the media has played on the strings of their absence, distracting them with non-essential concerns. Look at women's passion for knowledge; they have not hesitated to seize opportunities for learning and questioning, even stopping the Prophet (peace be upon him) during his pilgrimage rituals to inquire. This is evidenced by the narrations and reports from the woman from the tribe of Khuza'a who asked about her elderly father who was unable to perform Hajj.

The stage of scholarly enthusiasm and engagement evolves within an environment brimming with complete freedom, allowing women to transition to a phase of maturity and intellectual

depth, reaching a stage of dialogue, discussion, and critique. Indeed, the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) used to seek their opinions in times of disagreement.

Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi compiled a book on Aisha's corrections of the companions, and Umm al-Mu'minin Hafsa bint Umar corrected her brother Abdullah ibn Umar when he angered Ibn al-Sa'id, saying to him: "Did you not know that the Messenger of Allah said: 'A man's anger is only from the devil'?"

Fatimah bint Qays also corrected many of the companions who sought her opinion in their disputes regarding matters concerning divorced and widowed women. She eloquently expressed her understanding, affirming the dynamism of her intellect and the breadth of her jurisprudential thought, indicating the open-minded environment conducive to opinions. The concept of these corrections is to scrutinize and refine ideas, subjecting them to both legal and rational principles. Any critique therein is a form of correction, a stage attained only by those who have reached a depth of thought and reflection.

The evolution of women's intellectual movement has qualified them for the role of educators. They have risen to this greater task with a broader objective, establishing educational councils to enlighten women and dispel the veil of ignorance. Shifa bint Abdullah played this role by teaching women reading and writing. Abu Nu'aym described her as a knowledgeable teacher, and Ibn Abd al-Barr mentioned her among the wise and distinguished women. The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed Hafsa and Rukaiya as she instructed them in writing. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) sought her opinion, approved of it, favored it, and even delegated some of the market affairs to her.

We need to stop at these texts and monuments to discover from them the evidence of the upbringing that surrounded women. In such a monument, we explore the wide openness in educating women and devoting freedoms to them in acquiring various skills.

Also, the common awareness in understanding the discourse with which women and men alike were addressed generated a common awareness in sharing the roles and burdens and the illusion of the nation and its role in carrying the message of light to all of humanity.

The intellectual renaissance of Islam did not sprout, and the lights of civilization did not shine on the world except through the depth of awareness among women, which we seek to stimulate in such lectures.

How does a woman regain her intellectual structure?

The restoration of women's intellectual framework today is a crucial necessity for their survival, integrity, and the well-being of their families. Women today face fierce attacks, malicious conspiracies, and sinful schemes aimed at undermining their true roles within their families and communities. These efforts aim to distract them with trivial and unreal issues, cast doubt on their religious convictions, erode their faith, and alienate them from the values of their society. This is perpetrated through the media, which propagates toxic ideas and intellectual fallacies that only those firmly rooted in their faith, possessing analytical and critical thinking skills, can discern.

Reforming women's intellectual and cognitive structure is of utmost importance for building any civilization or advancing it and achieving a comprehensive renaissance for all members of society. Neglecting this will only result in loss and ruin for humanity and society at large.

2. Recovery tools

1. Encouraging women to attend religious gatherings, memorize the Quran, contemplate its verses, and adhere to the values and teachings of Islam, learning its pillars, noble ethics, and raising awareness about their purposes and their role as vicegerents on Earth.
2. Collaboration between various institutions and religious organizations to solidify women's religious culture, enabling them to effectively communicate with all segments of society. This includes fostering female leadership capable of contributing to the intellectual, religious, and cultural awareness and instilling values, principles, morals, and virtues in society.
3. Innovation of new methods and means to aid in the intellectual development of women, facilitating understanding, attracting attention, and attempting to influence and be influenced.
4. Utilizing media to inform women about issues relevant to them and expose the challenges they face.
5. Instilling sincerity to God alone in the hearts of women. Allah says, "And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and to give zakah. And that is the correct religion." (Quran, 98:5)
6. Instilling a sense of responsibility in women. Women must feel responsible for raising their children and not neglect guiding them, being lazy, procrastinating, or showing indifference. Allah says, "O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones" (Quran, 66:6). Let us avoid what may lead us and our families to the Fire.

Controls of women's thinking

We saw how God raised the value of the mind and exalted its status until He made the basis for honoring mankind the mind and thinking. Did God Almighty give the mind power to think or absolute arbitration?

The Prophet distinguished between exercising the mind and thinking about the matters being researched, which is the exact function that characterizes the human being, and thinking is a legal duty indicated by many texts.

As for the mind arbitrating and making it an arbiter of the validity and corruption of things, here we stand with certainty that the mind does not have absolute authority to judge, as the mind has limited capabilities. For example, it realizes with certainty the existence of God due to the presence of His effects and what it indicates, and it cannot comprehend the essence of God because it is beyond its capabilities and capabilities.

As for the aspect of humans judging things as ugly or beautiful, they cannot fully comprehend it because Allah, Almighty, says: "But perhaps you hate a thing, and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing, and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not." (Quran, 2:216)

So, what appears good to humans may differ from what Allah knows to be good. Therefore, the Sharia has set guidelines for this intellect to navigate within, without exceeding its capabilities and possibilities, as doing so may lead to unreliable and unsound conclusions.

In the realm of beliefs and faith, the Sharia regulates the intellect according to its sensory capacities. What originates from sensory perception, the intellect can judge, but what lies beyond sensory perception falls outside its realm within this domain.

Hence, the Quranic approach, when presenting evidence for the existence of Allah Almighty as a perceivable reality, directs us to contemplate the things in the universe in which we live, as creatures are considered evidence of the Creator. To comprehend them, Allah says: "So let man observe from what he was created. He was created from a fluid, ejected, emerging from between the backbone and the ribs." (Quran 86:5-7)

And when the verses call for faith in the unseen realities, they demand it as an established command.

If we turn to the capabilities of reason in legislation as perceived by Islam and determined by reason, human intellect is naturally incapable of understanding the natures of humanity and regulating its instincts and needs because minds differ, and if the matter were left to them, they would not agree.

Hence, we decide that reason is not the ruler over Sharia; rather, its authorized task is to contemplate the religious texts to understand them and deduce legal rulings according to the linguistic and religious knowledge required by scholarly endeavor.

Therefore, Allah directed this by saying: "But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, [O Muhammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission." (Quran, Surah An-Nisa, 4:65)

The important principle that Muslim women must adhere to today to regulate their thought process is the saying of Allah: "And judge, [O Muhammad], between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations and beware of them, lest they tempt you away from some of what Allah has revealed to you." (Quran, Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:49)

The ruler is God, and the limits and capabilities of the mind are looking at the texts of the Law and understanding them correctly about God after the mind possesses the skills of consideration and diligence. As for other false claims, it is a violation of the incapable human mind of absolute, miraculous divine knowledge.

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