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# **Women in Islamic Countries**

## **The Status of Women, Possibilities**

### **Introduction:**

- Woman is half the society .she is the inherent part of our society and cannot be neglected due to their less power and authority. They are created as a companion for men and men have to let them share their life journey with them. Women do play a great role in all Muslim societies and they are held the responsibility of creating a healthy and solid society. However, they are still shackled by our so-called modern world.
- Women are equal to men in the sight of God but they have in some respects different roles in life to men because of their different natures.

### **Abstract:**

- The complex relationship between women and Islam is defined by both Islamic texts and the history and culture of the Muslim world. Sharia (Islamic law) provides for differences between women's and men's roles, rights, and obligations. Muslim-majority countries give women varying degrees of rights with regards to marriage, divorce, civil rights, legal status, dress code, and education.

# Women's Rights

## Islam:

- Islam brought about liberation of women from bondage
- Recognized her individuality as a human being.
- Islam improved the status of women by instituting rights of property ownership, inheritance, education, marriage (as a contract) and divorce.
- Islam highly values women's role in society and grants them equal and numerous rights on all levels – spiritual, social, economic and political.
- In addition, it prohibits oppressing women or mistreating them under any circumstances.
- The right to have their own independent property.
- The right to work to earn money if they need it or want it.
- Equality of reward for equal deeds.
- The right to participate fully in public life and have their voices heard by those in power.
- The right to provisions from the husband for all her needs and more.
- The right to negotiate marriage terms of her choice.
- The right to obtain divorce from her husband, even on the grounds that she simply can't stand him.
- The right to keep all her own money (she is not responsible to maintain any relations).
- The right to get sexual satisfaction from her husband.

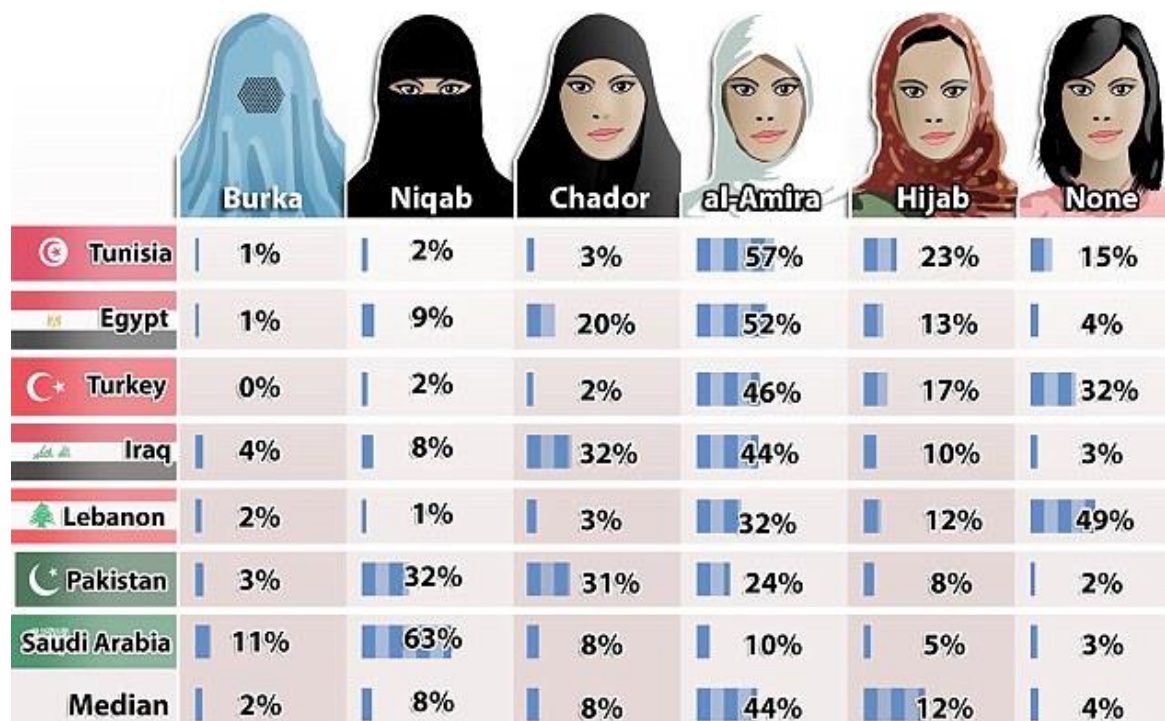
## Islam granted women the rights to:

- Have their own independent property.
- Negotiate marriage terms of her choice.
- Obtain divorce from her husband, even on the grounds that she simply can't stand him.

- Keep all her own money (she is not responsible to maintain any relations).
- Both the Quran and Hadith glorify the role of women in society and call upon respecting and protecting them
- When she is a daughter, her importance is such that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) tells us: 'He who brings up his daughters well, and makes no distinction between them and his sons, will be close to me in Paradise.'

## Women's Role

- Both the Quran and Hadith glorify the role of women in society and call upon respecting and protecting them,
- When she is a daughter, her importance is such that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) tells us: 'He who brings up his daughters well, and makes no distinction between them and his sons, will be close to me in Paradise.'
- The majority prefer women to cover their hair rather than their whole face



- Revealed: How Muslims really think women should dress - and most DON'T want the face covered
- A survey was carried out in Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey which all have a majority Muslim population.
- Findings showed that the majority preferred women to cover their hair rather than their whole face except for Lebanon & Turkey who had a substantial proportion who that felt it's appropriate for women not to cover their head at all in public.

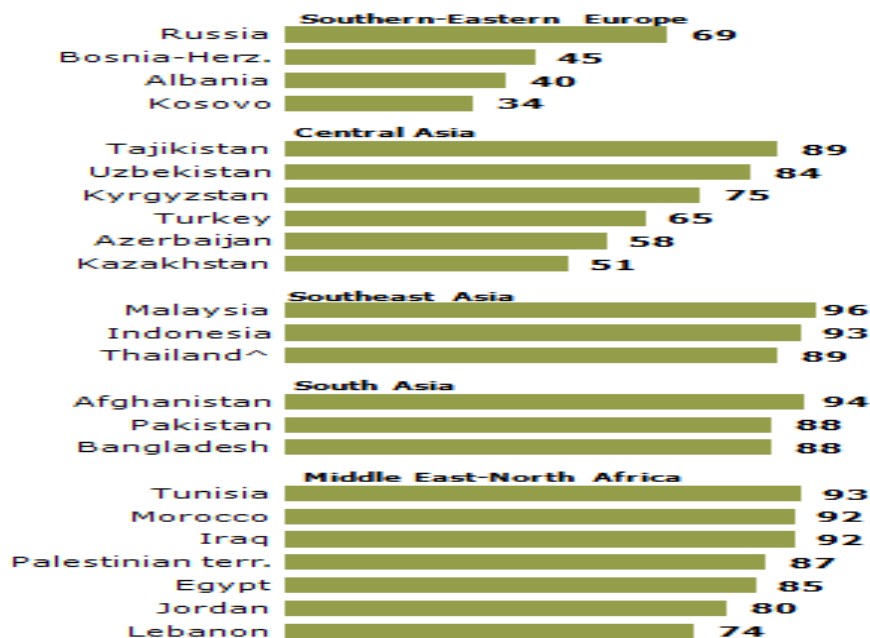
## When she is a wife:

- The character of men in an Islamic society is established in relationship to their treatment of women. 'The best from among you is one who behaves best towards his wife.' (Hadith)

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### Must a Wife Always Obey Her Husband?

*% of Muslims who completely or mostly agree that a wife must always obey her husband*



This question was not asked in sub-Saharan Africa.

<sup>^</sup>Interviews conducted with Muslims in five southern provinces only.

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- When she is a mother, 'Paradise is at the feet of the mother.' The paradise mentioned by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) refers to both the social paradise that can be achieved in Islam and the heavenly paradise. Therefore, mothers have been placed at a position of the highest respect.

## **Are women oppressed in the Muslim Countries?**

### **Misconception:**

- “We are oppressed in the Muslim Countries”
- “We are deprived of education and other basic rights”
- “Islam is uniquely patriarchal & incompatible with women’s equality”

### **Conclusion:**

- One must understand that these oppressive practices do not come from Islam & totally contradict religious teachings
- These are part of local, cultural traditions in various countries
- Judging the whole issue should be based on the interpretation of the original Islamic texts & not by observing wrong actions done by individual Muslims in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries
- One must understand that these oppressive practices do not come from Islam & totally contradict religious teachings
- These may merely be parts of local, cultural traditions in various countries.

## **Political participation of women in the Muslim Countries (Egypt)**

- In Egypt: The women represent 6% of the constitutional Assembly members while the expected quota was 30% or 50% at least cause the woman represents half the society.
- In 2010 the women represented 12.1 % of the candidate to the parliament election.
- The participation of the women in the different sectors at 2003 :
  - Private sector : 14 %
  - Public sector : 25 %
  - Business sector: 12%
- In 2003: it was the first time for Egypt to hire women in critical jobs for example to allow her to work as a Judge as dr. Thani El Gebaly.
- And in 2007 Egypt hired 30 women to work as a Judges.
- Women are active in “informal politics” and civil society.

### **Elevation of Women’s Status:**

**Despite the fact that Muslim Women are becoming stronger, huge changes are still needed. This can be achieved through**

- Facilitate women access to land and credit.
- Adapting inheritance rules.
- Better governance.
- Effective implementation of laws.
- To implement the guidance of the Hadith (Saying) of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
- “Educate a man, you educate a person. Educate a woman and you educate a family. Educate a family and you educate the Ummah (Nation)”.

## **Solution:**

- To implement the guidance of the Hadith (Saying) of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
- “Educate a man, you educate a person. Educate a woman and you educate a family. Educate a family and you educate the Ummah (Nation)”.

## **Conclusion:**

- Hence, if Islamic laws are followed in a society, then it is an Islamic society, in which women’s rights are protected and respected in all aspect, and due to which the whole society will flourish, Otherwise , this society will decline.