



A COMPARISON OF WOMEN'S POSITION IN THE TASNIM EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'AN AND THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND THE 2030 EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

From the view point of creation, there are without doubt subtle differences between men and women. Islam has given an exalted and lofty dignity to women with a definite attitude that considers all of her rights and characteristics. However, there is a balance suiting her dignified and innate nature between both her rights and her obligations in Islam. In recent decades, the issue of women as a global issue has been considered by international declarations such as the "Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women" and the "2030 Education Framework", whose main nature is to create a kind of complete similarity between man and woman based on gender; which in this case sets requirements for nations and governments. This research has employed descriptive and text analysis methods as well as library and field research methods to do a comparative study on international documents and the articles of these treaties. To do this, it will use verses of the Qur'an that talk about women's rights and refer to the Tasnim exegesis of the Qur'an written by Ayatollah Javadi Amoli. The Tasnim exegesis of the Qur'an has recognized rights such as the right to development, theological rights, the right to motherhood and wifehood, economic rights, political rights, social rights, family rights and spiritual rights, etc. as women's indisputable rights. However these international agreements only emphasize one aspect of women, which is the sexual and physical, and so these laws are in stark contrast to women's natural needs. This attitude will cause their motherly value as well as the spouse's rights to die out, and at the same time, it is a double cruelty to women and even men. The idea of equality of men and women as recognized in international agreements will pave the way for families and societies to disintegrate in either the near or the distant future.

Keywords: Woman Rights, Tasnim Exegesis, International agreements, 2030 Education Framework, Discrimination

INTRODUCTION

The holy Qur'an has talked about the creation of man and his existential personality as well as his acts and behaviors, and has never assumed men and women as separate from each other and argues that they are from one source and reality. The Qur'an has given each an independent status while having physical and spiritual differences¹. In order for women to rediscover their legal status in human society, the Qur'an talks about two main areas; first: for women's existential evolution, it has taken action to correct the deviations of human perspective. For women to acquire their rights and obligations in many areas as well as granting her a legal personality, the holy Qur'an issues some instructions. In its study of women's issues, fair judging of their rights, obligations and their individual, social and economic responsibilities, it has accepted family as the basic institution in society and emphasized the complementary role of men and women in society as well as their mutual needs and rights².

On the other hand from the view point of the international documents, family is the reason that women are restricted, unable to move, and not being equal to men³. They also emphasize their gender, occupational and social equality⁴. To the extent that women lose their feminine nature and are turned into men, they don't recognize any rights for natural women. Islam has prepared various grounds for women to possess properties and wealth and has granted them things like inheritance, alimony, marriage-portion, lactation fee, house chore's services fee etc. Islam allows women to work to make a profit for themselves according to the conditions laid out in the religion without being bound to run a family or nourish them. On the contrary, in the name of men and women's rights, her character and her natural and physical differences has been ignored in international agreements and only one aspect of her existence - her sexual and occupational aspect - has been given attention. This paper tries to comparatively study the numerous rights of women in the areas of religion and evolution as global documents for women's rights; in particular the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the 2030 Education Framework, are all based on verses of the Qur'an and the methodology of Tasnim exegesis in the Qur'an. Based on this, the articles of this agreement and the 2030 Education Framework will be studied first and the viewpoints of the Qur'an will be later explained through the eyes of the Tasnim exegesis of the Qur'an, and then finally they will be studied comparatively.

¹ Muhammad Hifdil Islam, 'Tolerance in Persepective of Qur'an and Bibel (Comparative Analysis of Religious Tolerance in Diverses Community)', *Humanistika* 3, no. 2 (1 June 2017): 45–58, <https://www.ejournal.inzah.ac.id/index.php/humanistika/article/view/160>.

² Abdulai Abukari, 'Education of Women in Islam: A Critical Islamic Interpretation of the Quran', *Religious Education* 109, no. 1 (1 January 2014): 4–23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2014.868203>; Barbara Henry, 'Islamic Feminism(s) in the Mediterranean Area: A Hermeneutical Approach', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 19, no. 5 (3 September 2017): 464–82, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19448953.2017.1296254>.

³ Agata S. Nalborczyk, 'Polish Tatar Women as Official Leaders of Muslim Religious Communities and the Sources of Their Authority', *Comparative Islamic Studies* 12, no. 1–2 (21 September 2018): 37–54, <https://journals.equinoxpub.com/CIS/article/view/34854>.

⁴ Sumaia A. Al-Kohlani, *Improving Educational Gender Equality in Religious Societies: Human Rights and Modernization Pre-Arab Spring* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-70536-1>.

Disunion Section

Women's status in international documents

International organizations, in recent decades, have paid a lot of attention to Women's issues, and as a result, numerous movements were created in the name of women and for women. These have elites and international institutions to support women and reconstruct their status in social life.

The outcome of this attention is international documents and agreements relating to women, which set requirements for governments and nations. Of the most important international documents is the "Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women" (ratified in 18 December 1979 at the United Nations General Assembly) and the 2030 framework (ratified in 27 September 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly), whose evaluation and re-contemplation is of fundamental and strategic importance and sets a responsibility for individuals and institutions. From the view point of these conventions, the phrase; "discrimination against women" means making any distinctions, exceptions or restrictions based on gender which has been influential to women's human rights and their political freedom, based on having equal rights to men in political, economic, socio-cultural and civic contexts etc. Given this, we will mention some of the agreements and documents regarding attitudes towards women and their legal status.

Women's natural rights

Governing principles in these international agreements such as Paragraphs 4 and 5 of the 2030 Education Framework, and in various paragraphs of Clauses 1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, have paid attention to the gender and occupation dimension and believe in gender equality to the extent that her human character has been ignored. For instance, Article 5 of the convention for eliminating discrimination against women stipulates that; the change in men and women's behavioral and social patterns in order to achieve to get rid of prejudice, habits and other practical ways is based on the idea of inferiority or superiority of one gender over another one or the stereotypical role of women and men. According to the United Nations educational provisions such as Goal 4 in Clauses 1-4, 2-4, 3-4 and Goals 4-5 of the 2030 Education Framework, concepts such as equality of women and men in gender training and official and non-official textbooks of schools and universities etc. are taught to children and teenagers. Based on Paragraph 7-4 of the 2030 Education Framework, countries involved in carrying out this framework are obliged to submit a report on the number of violent incidents and rapes in schools and the extent of teaching skills in regards to aids etc. to the United Nations. This is concerned with their accomplishments based on these criteria.

Women's rights in the family

As an example, according to all provisions of Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the member states are asked to take necessary actions based on the equality of women and men in order to defend women's rights and eliminate discrimination against them in issues related to marriage and family relationships. In these documents, women have been downgraded from a position of motherhood and wifehood to a sexual partner. Likewise, marriage and family have lost their deep meaning and divorce has been turned from an unpleasant phenomenon into a natural and humane solution.

Increasing the age of marriage and condemning marriage under the age of 18 is proposed by these conventions, but yet sexual intercourse is encouraged below this age and is a common practice in western countries, which is normal but irrational. There are clear controversies in these documents too since on the one hand, we see they want to make the spreading of free sexual relations between teenagers and between youths safe and free. On the other hand, they argue for the prohibition of marriage and the inability of individuals below 18 to establish proper family relationships.

In this manner, when the documents and conventions mention the role of parents in taking care of children (for instance, Paragraph 5 of the 2030 Education Framework and Paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women), they mean that those children who are born out of wedlock such as those of same sex parents who have adopted a child or parents who have children from illegitimate marriages etc. should have the same rights and status as parents who have children in legitimate marriages. As for divorce, Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women stipulates that each party can file for a divorce, if they consent, in absolute equal terms. Thus in Paragraph 16 of this convention, it is argued that in order to create sexual equality, there has to be the same rights and accountabilities for both men and women when they marry and when their marriage fails.

Women's socio-economic rights

These documents address women's occupations, which is not only the most important way but also the only way to eliminate poverty as well as reduce their dependence on men and family. Sadly, current social relationships have had such a big impact on the norms of societies that not only women but also men consider working for women as an obligation. In western countries however, women-centric opinions on this issue have been implemented through sacrificing emotions and reducing the level of mother-children relations, which has been dubbed as sharing responsibility⁵.

In spite of the emphasis of international documents and conventions on the equality of man and women, their equal rights, and women's activities outside, they pay no attention to principles and basic regulations of this standardized presence, which has caused women to be equal to men in terms of having cardiovascular problems, smoking, crimes and alcoholism; which has caused the rate of their prevalence to catch up with that of men.⁶

Since the origin of these documents is cultural, they consider dignity and hijab (headscarf worn by Muslim women to cover their hair) discrimination against them on the basis of gender because it bars them from being showy, and they argue that hijab has limited their freedom and prevents them from freely satisfying their human inclinations.

Women's legal status in Tasnim Exegesis

The creation of man, his existential personality, and his acts and behaviors etc. have been explained in the Qur'an. Islam has never separated men and women; however it says that they are from one source, one material and one essence. At the same time, although they are physically and spiritually different, Islam has given each an independent personality and rights

⁵ Hosseini and Seyyed Hadi, *Ketabe Zan*, trans. Ali Ahmad Rasekh (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1387).

⁶ Lenski Gerhard and Jean Lenski, *Human Societies* (Tehran: Islamic Republic Publication and Education, 1369).

as well as an exalted place. To make the viewpoints of Islam clearer and more understandable regarding women's rights, we will shed light upon it using the Tasnim exegesis written by Ayatollah Javadi Amooli, a contemporary exegetist.

Women's developmental rights

The Qur'an has thrown out incorrect images that have been formed regarding women and their creation; therefore it has made them right and fixed them⁷. As an example, the Qur'an explains; "...who created you from a single soul. He created you and his mate from it, and from it, the two of them spread countless men and women (chapter Al- Nisa, v1), and the verse 189 of Chapter Al-A'raf reads; "It is He who created you from a single soul." The Shia and Sunni exegetists have commented concerning the two verses above that: "God created you from a single origin that is Adam and Eve (peace and blessing of God upon them) so they should not be arrogant and proud toward each other and they should be humble to each other⁸. Therefore, there are no differences between them in creation. Disbelieving a woman's perfection in the way they were created will cause their social status to decline⁹. The Qur'an has given women a perfect and absolute existential and genetic personality¹⁰ and explains that men and women were created in a way that means they complete each other, so according to this idea, the Qur'an rejects the idea that men outweigh women in creation. In the Tasnim exegesis in a footnote about Verse one of Al-Nisa, the fact that men and women were created equally is mentioned. Concerning women's genetic creation, it reads; "There is only one reality about all human beings, and that is, no man is superior to women and no women is superior to men unless they earn merits through Taghwa or God- consciousness. Men are no different from one another i.e. they were created from a single soul; the Qur'an puts it. So the doors of arrogance are closed and the doors of emotion are open"¹¹ In this manner, his eminence Ayatollah Javadi Amooli says; "All present human beings have a particular reality from which their spouses were created from the same particular reality¹². He says men and women both share the same genetic personality.

Women's rights in married life

Women have various rights in the viewpoint of the holy Qur'an, such as;

Women's rights on their husbands

From the viewpoint of the Qur'an, as husbands have rights on their wives, it is incumbent upon women to adhere to them; and likewise, women have rights on their husbands as well which must be adhered to. On this subject, the Qur'an proposes: "The wives have rights corresponding to those which the husbands have according to what is recognized to be fair" (chapter Al-Baqarah, verse 228). The Tasnim exegesis regarding this verse says:

⁷ Faroghi Lamiah, *Al Marah Fi Al-Mojtama Al-Qur'ani* (Tehran: Elam Al- Islami, 1404).

⁸ Fakhreddin Al-Razi, *Al Tafsir Al-Kabir (the Great Exegesis)* (Beirut Lebanon: Institution For reviving The Arab Culture, 2001); Jarollah Mahmood bin Omar Al Zomakhshari, *Al- Kashaf* (Beirut Lebanon: Adab Al-Hawzah publication, 1999).

⁹ Muhammad Hussein Al-Tabatabaei, *Al Mizan Fi Tafsir Al-Qur'an* (Qom: Jameah Al-Modarresin, 1390).

¹⁰ Alireza Feiz, *Introduction to Principles of Jurisprudence and Principles* (Tehran: Daneshgah Publication, 1371); Hossein Safaei, *Civil Rights; Individuals and Incapable People* (Tehran: SAMT Publication, 1386).

¹¹ Abdollah Javadi Amooli, *Tasnim Exegesis* (Qom: Isra, 1388).

¹² Javadi Amooli.

”Every right that the Almighty God has given to men against women, He has given the same rights to women against men as well. Women and men’s rights are reciprocal and mutual. It is not that there should be a right on women which men do not have.”

For a family to be in good order and shape, the holy Qur’an employs the expression, “*Mavaddatan wa rahmah*”, and says two factors - one of which is rational companionship and the other is ignoring each other’s mistakes and blunders - are of importance in a family structure. In this manner, it commands men who are responsible for the family to treat women nicely and fairly. This is the expression, “*Asherobonna bil maroof*” or treat them nicely and fairly¹³. According to the verses of the Qur’an, some of the rights of women on their husbands are as follows:

1. Right to be treated nicely: “*O, you who believe.... Live with them in accordance with what is fair and kind*” (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 19). The Tasnim exegesis regarding this verse explains: “As one has to treat men fairly and kindly, one has to treat women fairly and nicely as well. In fact God almighty has divided every household task between them and there is no difference between men and women. Women and men are no different in their right to live and their right to have a social life¹⁴.”
2. Housing rights: “Let the women (who are undergoing a waiting period) live in the same manner as you live yourselves in accordance with your means.” (chapter Al-Talagh, verse 6). The commentary regarding this verse reads: “*Prepare a housing accommodation for the divorced women of yours according to your abilities in the same house you have prepared for yourselves. You have no right to do them any harm so that the living conditions should get difficult for them*”¹⁵
3. The right to receive alimony: The Tasnim exegesis following the verse, “*Men are protectors of women because God has made some of them excel others, because they spend their wealth on them*” regarding this right, explains it like this: “The holy Qur’an gives controlling the affairs of the family to men. Their difference is in the executive affairs and job sharing in which body involves. Men hold responsibilities in executive affairs because he has the money and providing alimony and sustenance is his responsibility as well”¹⁶
4. The right to have a marriage portion; “*And give women their marriage-portion willingly*” (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 4). The word *Nehlab* means honeybee in Arabic, which provides people honey with no expectation, and a gift is also called *Nahlab*. Some exegetists have said *Nahlab* means debt or something owed; i.e. marriage-portion is the definite debt of man to his wife¹⁷. However, the Tasnim exegesis refers to a marriage portion as a sign of the two parties’ truthfulness and therefore goes on to explain¹⁸;

¹³ Javadi Amooli, 13.

¹⁴ Javadi Amooli, 12.

¹⁵ Al-Taba’Tabaei, *Al Mizan Fi Tafsir Al-Qur’an*, 139.

¹⁶ Javadi Amooli, *Tasnim Exegesis*, 139.

¹⁷ Abdol Hossein Tayyeb, *Atyab Al-Bayan Fi Tafsir Al-Qur’an* (Qom: Sebtayn Global Institution, 1431); Naser Makarem Shirazi, *The Nemooneh Exegesis* (Tehran: Darol Kotob Al- Islamiah, 1374); Abdol-Rahman Al-Jaziri, *Four School of Thought Jurisprudence* (Beirut Lebanon: Dar Al- Theghlain, 1419).

¹⁸ Naser Makarem Shirazi, *The Holy Quran* (Tehran: Ali ibn Abitalib school, n.d.).

“Do not take the possession of whatever was laid down as a marriage-portion for women and give it back to them because a marriage-portion is the cause and source of both parties' truthfulness. The husband should pay his wife's marriage-portion which is the source of truthfulness”¹⁹.

Women's rights regarding children

As parents have responsibilities toward their children, likewise children have rights regarding their parents. In the meantime, mothers' rights regarding children have priority over that of fathers'. Some of these rights according to the verses of the Qur'an are as follows:

Right to do good and be kind;

God, in numerous verses, besides inviting people to monotheism and forbidding worshipping others, has mentioned kindness and respect towards parents and commands it: *“And worship God and do not associate partners with Him. Be good to your parents”* (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 36). The final cause of creation and upbringing of the human beings are parents, who are mentioned to be in the higher ranks of goodness and kindness²⁰. If the word *“Ehsan or goodness and kindness”* is mentioned using the Arabic letter “Ba corresponding to letter B in English,” it shows care and continuous goodness and kindness, but if the proposition *“Ela or towards in English”* is used, it would not show continuity.²¹ Imam Ali (peace and blessing on him) says: *“Children have rights on their father and father has rights on his children, children's rights on their father is that, they should always obey their father, unless it is a sin”²²*. Concerning this verse, the Tasnim exegesis states: *“The importance of doing good to one's parents is so high that it has always been tantamount to worshipping of God Almighty. Being polite and being humble towards them, maintaining their respect, and generally having pure goodness and kindness towards them, are some of the examples. Goodness and kindness towards one's parents (whether have or have-nots, whether Muslim or non-Muslim) is obligatory. God says; we enjoined man to do good his parents. Nonetheless if his parents insist on him to give up on his beliefs and to yank back to his pagan habits, he is no longer need to listen to his parents, however God says;*

“You should treat them nicely in this world. Ehsan or Goodness and kindness is an extensive and comprehensive concept meaning unprecedented service, and doing any kind of good to anyone which is physically and spiritually beneficial to them is considered as Ehsan”.

So being charitable to one's parents and taking care of one's parent's subsistence and economic problems is an act of *Ehsan*. God says; *“They will ask you what they should spend or others says whatever you give should be for parents”* (chapter al-Baaghara, verse 215). So paying attention to one's family structure comes first. One should give

¹⁹ Javadi Amooli, *Tasnim Exegesis*, 139.

²⁰ Al-Tabatabaei, *Al-Mizan Fi Tafsir Al-Qur'an*, 139.

²¹ Muhammad bin Ali Fiomi, *Mishab Al-Moonir* (Qom: Dar Al-Hojrah, 1405); Muhammad Bin- Mokram Ibn- Mansour, *Lesan Al-Arab* (Beirut Lebanon: Publication and printing office, 1385); Ismaeil Bin-Hamad Joohari, *Al-Sihab* (Tehran: Amiri, 1368).

²² Ali ibn Abi Talib Amir Al-Mo'menin, *Nahjol-Balaghah*, trans. Muhammad Dashti (Qom: Momenin cultural institution, 1379).

attention to his/her parents because it is both considered as “*Selat al-rahem*” or visiting one’s close relatives and as an act of goodness and kindness to his/her parents²³.

The right of respect

Respecting one’s parents and being kind to them, especially when they age and become weak, is obligatory according to the holy Qur’an and by the same token, children are not allowed to use disrespectful language to verbally abuse them: “Your lord has commanded that you should worship none but Him, and show kindness to thy parents, if either or both of them attain old age with you, you say no word of contempt to them and do not rebuke them, but always speak gently to them” (chapter Al-Isra, V23).

It is the Tasnim exegesis that has it right, speaking of mutual responsibilities of parents towards children. God almighty does not command parents to show kindness to their children due to the fact that it is embedded in the innate nature of the parents. He not only has prohibited children from being unkind to them but also He has directed them in an independent manner to be kind to them:

“*Say no word of contempt to them and do not rebuke them, but always speak gently to them*” or “*and treat them with humility and tenderness*” (chapter Al-Isra, verse 24). God would not allow children to be unkind to their parents and similarly He has commanded them to be affectionate towards them both. God almighty not only commands them not to be unkind towards their parents but also prohibits them from being unkind to them. Although being disobedient towards them is haram or religiously unlawful, being gentle and kind to them and being in their company is binding so that the family structure would not collapse and fall apart. Therefore, its immediate benefit lies in strengthening family structure. Regarding the lofty position of “mothers,” Ayatollah Javadi amooli states:

“Speaking of respecting one’s parents, to honor mothers’ status, the holy Qur’an mentioning the word mother separately and independently goes on declaring that ‘I either of them attain old age with you, say no word of contempt and do not rebuke them and always speak gently to them.’”

Respecting parents depends on children’s upbringing, due to the fact that parents are educators. Honoring parents was the tradition and manner of prophets which is reflected in their supplications, prayers and duas, night prayers and their asking God’s pardon. Parents must always be respected although they are polytheists. One of the prominent phrases of Jesus Christ is: “*I treat my mother gently and kindly, He has made me dutiful towards my mother and He has not made me arrogant or wicked*” (chapter Al-Maryam, verse 32). (Isra citation following a commentary on chapter Al-Isra).

Ayatollah Javadi Amooli proceeds to comment on this verse, explaining that: “God has directed people to treat parents nicely and speaking gently with them, ordering that you should not even think of making them live in a nursing home, ‘endaka’ or with you. If one of them was living with you and grew old and weak, the verse does not say while they live in a nursing home they grow old. Unfortunately when a society imitates the west and as a result children are sent to nursery schools for seven years likewise their children will take them to nursing homes too. Parent are channels for receiving blessings and bounties of the Almighty creator. Family is considered as a foundation in Islamic

²³ Javadi Amooli, *Tasnim Exegesis*, 139.

teachings and is not an individual or a social argument” (Isra citation, following a commentary on chapter Al-Maryam).

The right to pray and ask for forgiveness

Another right of children is to pray for their parents as it is recommended to recite this prayer from the holy Qur’an for them: “*O my lord, have compassion on them as they brought me up when I was little, and reward them abundantly and forgive their sins*” (Abu-Hamzah Thomali’s supplication). Ayatollah Javadi Amooli, regarding a commentary on verse 24 of chapter Al-Isra, says; “the word ‘rabbayani’ means they brought me up not the word ‘voldani’ meaning they raised me. Parents should pay attention to educating and rearing their children. The better they educate and rear their children the more rights children have on the parents.” As to verse 41 of chapter Ibrahim which declares: “*O our lord, grant me protection and my parents and the believers when the reckoning day shall come to pass*”, he says: “Praying for parents is not only limited to this world, one could pray for his/her parents when they are dead as well though, and could ask God for their atonement” (Isra citation, following a commentary on chapter Isra and Ibrahim).

Women’s socio-political rights

Paying allegiance to the government and participating in elections, which are the most outstanding and prominent of political rights, are accepted for women by the holy Qur’an. Various political arenas of history of Islam depict this political action of women. In chapter Al-Mmtaahanah verse 12, God almighty says: “*O prophet, when believing women come to you and pledge themselves...*” Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has been quoted as saying:

“When the prophet of God conquered Mecca, he swore allegiance to the men and then the women came to swear allegiance which was followed by the revelation of the verse ‘whenever believing women come to you to take the oath of loyalty to you, swear allegiance to them’²⁴

Speaking of socio-political rights for women, Ayatollah Javadi Amooli goes on to say: “Executive socio-political tasks are an obligation, not perfection; knowledge, insight and sincerity are considered perfection though. If it is said that women should not hold down executive jobs, the reason is that they are not in harmony with women’s emotions and feelings. These are not considered as perfection for females, rather it is an obligation.

Thus, there is not perfection and an accomplishment in religion of Islam that women cannot procure. Executive jobs are considered as a duty for women not as perfection. Therefore, men and women as to obtaining perfection are equal. Neither being a male is a necessary condition for achieving perfection, nor is being a female considered as an impediment. Although, whatever makes being a male a necessary condition or being a female an obstacle is, socio-political jobs”.²⁵

²⁴ Muhammad bin Yaghoob Koleini, *Osul-e-Kafi* (Tehran: Farokhi, 1361).

²⁵ Javadi Amooli, *Tasnim Exegesis*, 139.

Women's right to economic independence

According to the teachings of Islam, women do have economic independence and sufficiency like men do, and are considered as the owners of their own labor. In economic affairs such as inheritance, they are entitled to inherit from others.

God says: "And do not covet that by which Allah has made some of you excel others; 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. And to every one We have appointed heirs of what parents and near relatives leave; and as to those with whom your rights hands have ratified agreements, give them their portion. (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 32-33). When the verses concerning inheritance and Jihad were revealed to the Prophet, some women went to the messenger of God and said: "As a matter of fact men have excelled us in inheritance and Jihad. We wish we were men and were able to take part in battles to enjoy the advantages of Jihad and inheritance. Upon their request, the aforesaid verse was revealed: "And do not covet that by which God has made some of you excel others..."²⁶

Islam does not force women to meet their own needs and family under any circumstances, but men are responsible for providing alimony and the needs of married life. Ayatollah Javadi Amooli, commenting on this verse regarding women's economic rights, explains: "The woman is the same as man, for everything she earns. Women like men are independent in economic affairs as they are independent in scientific and material matters as well as moral improvement"²⁷.

He says women are entitled to economic rights and ownership, property and asset management just as men are. In this manner, in terms of dividing inheritance, he continues: "Depriving women of the inheritance at the time of pagans was a common belief and accepted by all, therefore Islam has a specific and independent verse both in the economic and inheritance part for women. The verse does not say whatever a Muslim's gain is for him/herself; however it expresses the noun woman and the noun man separately in order to clearly and conclusively cancel out this pagan tradition. Islam divides the inheritance on basis of human dignity and merits, although at the time of paganism, it was not the case and it was done according to one's military and economic abilities and so on and so forth. Whatever property and wealth women have is theirs. They take alimony and marriage-portion from men and all the costs of women are taken on by men. Thus men possess two thirds, although in terms of spending, they both share two-thirds of it, and the one-third provided by women, is theirs. Men not only are responsible for providing their own costs but also are responsible for women's costs as well"

Likewise, regarding the verse "*Allah enjoins you concerning your children, the male shall have the equal of the portion of two females, then if they are more than two females, they shall have two-thirds of the deceased has left and if there is one, she shall have the half...*" (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 11),

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has been quoted in Ibn Abi Al-awja concerning the inheritance received by men and women, to have said: "I asked the messenger of God why

²⁶ Fazl ibn Hassan Tabarsi, *Majma Al-Bayan Fi Tafsir Al-Quran*. (Beirut Lebanon: Al- A'lami, 1409); Mohammad ibn Hassan Tousi, *Al-Tebyan Fi Tafsir Al-Quran* (Najaf: Heidariyah, 1415); Makarem Shirazi, *The Nemooneh Exegesis*, 139.

²⁷ Javadi Amooli, *Tasnim Exegesis*.

the poor woman inherits one-third and man two-thirds? The messenger replied; jihad, alimony, blood money and Agheleh (in legal terms, family and close relatives of an individual who commits an unintentional murder or injures someone, that they should pay the blood money) is not women's responsibility, this is men's duty though. Therefore men inherit two-thirds and women one-third'²⁸ and 'For women to progress, God almighty has expanded the means for them to take possession of things such as, inheritance ... In this verse, the share of women is the basic principle, not the share of the men. Speaking of men the verse goes on saying; a man like a woman takes a share or double share and... by and large, various male shares are measured in relation to the women's share which is to turn a blind eye to the same remnants of the time of ignorance, because women were deprived of inheritance by pagans.' The Qur'an states: 'Give boys two times more than girls when you want to share your properties and your wealth. It means girls do inherit, her share is clear and specified and two times more than that of men. This is the men's share which is unspecified and has to be specified by women's share''²⁹.

CONCLUSION

In recent decades, we have witnessed that women's issues have come under the spotlight and have drawn much attention from international institutions; and a lot of movements are operating in the name of women or for women. The outcomes of these activities are the Document on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the 2030 Education framework. Emphasis on gender similarity and giving into the unrealistic regulations and laws of these institutions has caused women to lose their "Takvivi" or developmental identity as well as their identity as mothers, and has turned them into men who they do not accept as having any legal rights for being women. On the contrary, the holy Qur'an, in order to define the rights of women and men, has defined equal rights for women to be the same as for men in the social and familial domains, but this does not mean complete similarity in rights.

Ayatollah Javadi Amooli in his Tasnim exegesis of the holy Qur'an refers to this verse: "Women have been created to do a different job as opposed to men and they have different emotions from men." According to the divine laws, men and women were created to complete each other with distinctive responsibilities and functions. Since maintaining the foundation of family and managing it, breeding generations as well as raising children has been left to women, that is why more shares of emotion have been granted to her. To put it in a nutshell, the research findings of this paper can be summarized as follows:

- 1) On the basis of its divine teachings, the holy Qur'an has a holistic view of women. For this reason, it has given her responsibilities and legal rights in proportion to her developmental personality. In contrast, international agreements have only focused on one dimension of women -that is her gender and occupation dimension.

²⁸ Muhammad Bin Hasan Horre Ameli, *Vasa'el-Shia; Shia Books for Learning Religious Verdicts* (Mashhad: Mashhad Islamic Research Foundation, 1369).

²⁹ Morteza Motahari, *Rights of Women in Islam* (Tehran: Sadra, 1374); Ibrahim Seyyed Qutub, *Fi Zilal Al-Quran* (Beirut Lebanon: Darol - Jabal, 1415); Javadi Amooli, *Tasnim Exegesis*.

- 2) According to the Qur'an, breeding and upbringing generations is the most outstanding duty of women, whereas international institutions = chanting the slogan of gender equality - have overshadowed their roles as mothers and wives and have downgraded their role to mere sexual partners and have explained divorce as a pleasant phenomenon and a humane solution.
- 3) The Qur'an introduces woman like men as a constructive and active agent in individual, family and social life and grants her legal rights according to circumstances, which has not been written in international documents that defend women but has been mentioned on the basis of absolute equality of men and women, which is a double kind of cruelty and disrespect for women and even men that will cause family and society to disintegrate.
- 4) The Qur'an has accepted hijab or covering for women for their scion-political and economic activities etc. within a regulated framework. However, hijab and modesty don't have any place in international documents and is considered to be part of anti-gender equality which restricts women's individual and social freedom as well as their flamboyance and showiness.
- 5) The Qur'an is of the opinion that women have economic rights saying that she has absolute ownership over her properties and wealth. It goes on to say that working is optional for women as well as economic regulations, alimony, and having a marriage-portion – but all are in line with protecting women's dignity and respect although international documents downgrade women to being mere sexual partners.

It is suggested that other aspects of women's rights and responsibilities from the viewpoint of the Qur'an should be studied in order that the universality of its divine verses related to knowing the rights and qualities of human beings is explained and made clear..

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