

**THE ROLE OF THEOLOGIAN WOMEN
IN CONTEMPORARY IRAN ON REDUCING RELIGIOUS
VIOLENCE AND GENDER DISCRIMINATION**

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Abstract. Religious violence is one of the serious challenges of contemporary world. Although it has a long history. Knowing the causes of it's emerge as well as finding a solution to reduce it is one of today's necessities. Undoubtedly, a part of religious violence has been against women in different forms. This paper examines religious violence among Muslims against women - as a case study of Iran after the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

It is a fact that throughout history, the absolute majority of theologians were men. And women had no role in interpreting theology. Undoubtedly, the male mentality of these commentators has had a gender discrimination interpretation against women.

After the Islamic revolution in Iran, women entered theological studies seriously. The entry of women into Islamic studies became very high which is not at all comparable to before the revolution and even to other countries. This change caused theology to not only be interpreted by men but also women found a serious role in the interpretation of Sharia teachings.

This educational process caused - contrary to the assumption of some that the Iranian revolution is Islamic and will be against women-, by the way, women gain a serious opportunity which statistics prove it.

This study suggests that Iran's experience after the revolution can be a model to reduce religious violence against women. Also, women should enter religious studies and prevent single gender interpretations.

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Why Iran after the Islamic Revolution? As a case study

The importance of choosing this area for a case study is:

First, after the Islamic revolution in 1979, Iran tried to make all its laws based on Islamic teachings (Jahangir, 1389, pp. Introduction, Article 2, Article 4), and implement Islamic sharia in the contemporary world.

Second: It was initially predicted that with the rule of an Islamic ideology, religious violence against women would be increased.

Third: After half a century of the rule of Islamic laws on the Iranian society, the facts and statistics narrate and prove something contrary to the prediction. Women's freedoms in this country have increased - compared to the past non-Islamic era and compared to some other countries- greatly.

Introduction

Statistics (worldbank, n.d.) also show that religious violence against women is serious. Many evidences in this field can be stated: In the case of Iraq, following the rise of Islamic State (IS)/Daesh in 2014, Yazidi women and girls were sold as slaves, and subject to sexual violence. The Yazidis are a religious minority, primarily residing in northern Iraq. In 2021, 2,800 women and children were estimated to still be in IS captivity. (Loft & Robinson, 2022)

Naturally, the phenomenon of violence against women in society cannot be the result of a specific cause to find a single solution to eradicate it. One of the reasons for this violence is religious extremism, which itself is the result of men's reading of theology.

We are looking for an answer to the question of how modern Iran has been able to reduce this problem after half a century since the Iranian Islamic Revolution. In this regard, after examining the concepts, we will first discuss the influence of the interpreter's psyche and gender in understanding anti-woman texts. Then we will examine the impact of women's religious education in changing some anti-women laws and rulings in contemporary Iran.

Research background

With the investigations carried out, no paper or book has been written on the topic. But extensive research in the field of violence, religious violence, equal rights, and Islam on gender justice, etc.

The coherent and theoretical study of "violence" can be traced back to Walter Benjamin's article (2012) entitled "Critique of Violence". Experimental studies in line with theoretical studies have had a wide range as by

Cavanaugh (2009) in the book "The Myth of Religious Violence"; but these studies have very serious weaknesses in terms of methodology.

A dissertation on gender equality with the title of "The Impact of Islam as a Religion and Muslim Women on Gender Equality: A Phenomenological Research Study", by Sonia D. Galloway, 2014, and 'Evolution of the Status of Women in the Islamic History', by Prof. Nadia Mahmoud Mustafa; are some related research to the topic but very far from the case of Iran in contemporary world.

This paper is going to show that the solution to reduce religious violence against women in Islamic Iran is in religious education for women. Therefore it is innovative and inspiring.

Violence

Violence is one of the most elusive and most difficult concepts in the social sciences. Many books, article in this regard has been written, yet the controversial questions remain unresolved, concerning an appropriate definition, substantive differentiation, sociopolitical assessment, and moral evaluation of violence. (Imbusch, 2003, p. 13) 'Violence' is a negative term that has the connotation of illegal or inappropriate use of force: 'the illegal exercise of physical force, an act of intimidation by the show or threat of force' (Kirkpatrick, 1992, p. 1468).

Terence Fretheim writes: "For many people, only physical violence truly qualifies as violence. But, certainly, violence is more than killing people, unless one includes all those words and actions that kill people slowly. The effect of limitation to a "killing fields" perspective is the widespread neglect of many other forms of violence. We must insist that violence also refers to that which is psychologically destructive, that which demeans, damages, or depersonalizes others. In view of these considerations, violence may be defined as follows: any action, verbal or nonverbal, oral or written, physical or psychical, active or passive, public or private, individual or institutional/societal, human or divine, in whatever degree of intensity, that abuses, violates, injures, or kills. Some of the most pervasive and most dangerous forms of violence are those that are often hidden from view (against women and children, especially); just beneath the surface in many of our homes, churches, and communities is abuse enough to freeze the blood. Moreover, many forms of systemic violence often slip past our attention because they are so much a part of the infrastructure of life (e.g., racism, sexism, and ageism)." (Freitheim, 2004)

Fully distinguishing violence from other sorts of behavior, including nonviolent aggression, accidents, horseplay and even sadomasochism, requires four definitional components: nonessential, unwanted, harmful, in-

tentional act. A comprehensive definition of violence includes 4 essential elements: behavior that is (a) intentional, (b) unwanted, (c) nonessential, and (d) harmful. (Hamby, 2017)

Religious Violence

Religious violence covers phenomena in which religion is either the subject or the object of violent behavior (Wellman & Tokuno, 2004, p. 291). All the religions of the world contain narratives, symbols, and metaphors of violence and war (Jones, 2014, pp. 1850–1853). Religious violence is violence that is motivated by, or in reaction to, religious precepts, texts, or the doctrines of a target or an attacker. It includes violence against religious institutions, people, objects, or events. Religious violence does not exclusively include acts which are committed by religious groups, instead, it includes acts which are committed against religious groups.

Religious violence, like all forms of violence, is a cultural process which is context-dependent and very complex (Rowley, 2015). Violence is perpetrated for a wide variety of ideological reasons and religion is generally only one of many contributing social and political factors that can lead to unrest. Studies of supposed cases of religious violence often conclude that violence is strongly driven by ethnic animosities rather than by religious worldviews (Omar & Duffey, 2015, p. 1). Due to the complex nature of religion and violence and the complex relationship which exists between them, it is normally unclear if religion is a significant cause of violence (Clarke, 2019, pp. 421–424).

According to Steve Clarke, "currently available evidence does not allow us to determine whether religion is, or is not, a significant cause of violence." He lists multiple problems that make it impossible to establish a causal relationship such as the inability to see if the presence of religion actually adds or subtracts from general levels of violence since no society without religion has ever existed to compare with (Clarke, 2019, pp. 421–424).

Almost three hundred contributing causes of religious violence have been discussed by some scholars (Rowley, *What Causes Religious Violence?*, 2014)

Religious thinkers generally avoid the conjunction of the two (religion and violence) (Tanner, 2007).

Terrorism expert Martha Crenshaw suggests that religion is just a mask which is used by political movements which seek to draw attention to their causes and gain support (Crenshaw, 1987, pp. 13–31). Crenshaw outlines two approaches when she observes religious violence, the instrumental approach, sees religious violence as acting as a rational calculation to achieve some political end. The other approach is from the organizational

structure of religious communities, with the heads of these communities acting as political figureheads. Crenshaw suggests that threatening the internal stability of these organizations (perhaps by offering them a nonviolent alternative) will dissuade religious organizations from performing political violence. A third approach sees religious violence as the result of community dynamics rather than a religious duty (Ekici & Ekici, 2009).

Violence against woman

This declaration, which was approved by the United Nations General Assembly under the title of "Elimination of violence against women", mentions the following examples of this violence in Article 2 of the declaration as:

a. Physical, sexual and psychological violence in the family including beating, girls' sexual abuse, violence related to dowry issue, rape by husband, female circumcision and other violent traditional practices and sexual exploitation of women by non-husbands.

b. Physical, sexual and psychological violence in the society including raping, abusing, harassment and sexual threats in the workplace and educational institutions, buying and selling of women and forced prostitution.

c. Physical, sexual and psychological violence by government (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1993).

The "Vienna" declaration paid attention to various issues including cultural prejudices and religious extremism concerning violence against women. In addition to the official declarations of the United Nations and the World Women's Conferences, the United Nations has started to educate people all over the world so that based on the declarations approved by the United Nations; everybody around the world learn women's rights and take practical measures to achieve these rights. This education is so called "Local Action, Global Change".

Women theologians in Shia history before the Iranian revolution

Throughout history, due to historical and traditional reasons, Islamic scholars were men and theology has been discussed exclusively by men, the vast majority of theologians are male. Although in the history of the Islamic world, there were women who studied religious sciences and theology; But they were very few in quantity, and did not have a serious effect on Islamic theology in quality.

A simple statistical survey of Shia Islamic studies - only in the field of hadith studies - confirms this fact; In the books: 1. Al-Kafi with 16,199 hadiths, 2. Man La yahdarah al-Faqih with 9,044 hadiths, 3. Tahzeeb al-Ahkam with 13,590 hadiths, 4. Al-Istbasar with 5,511 hadiths, and 5. Wasal al-Shia with 35,850 hadiths (Modirshane Chi, 1388, pp. 96, 98-99,

and 109). which are considered one of the most original and important Shia narrative books, in addition to the book Bihar al-Anwar, which is named by the Shia scholars as the comprehensive Hadithes of Ahl al-Bayt, only 124 female narrators have been identified who were the narrators of 375 hadiths, while there are almost 20,000 male narrators (Mehrizi, 2016).

The following table shows the Shia theologian ladies by category:

Table No.1:

Shia Female Narrators (Template:Shia_Female_Narrators, n.d.)

From the Prophet (s)	Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' (a) • Asma' bt. Yazid al-Ansari • Asma' bt. Umays • Asma' bt. Abi Bakr • Umm Aslam • Rumaysa' bt. Milhan • Umm al-Hasin • Umm Hakim bt. al-Zubayr • Umm Humayd al-Ansari • Umm Kharija • Umm Darda' • Umm Ra'la al-Qushayriyya • Umm Salit • Umm Sanan al-Aslami • Umm Sharik • Umm Atiyya • Umm Atiyya al-Ansari • Umm Atiyya al-Khafida • Umm Ghanim • Mother of Qays b. Muhsan al-Asadi • Umm Kulthum bt. Uqba • Umm Mubashshir al-Ansari • Umm Hisham al-Ansari • Umm Ayman • Hizama bt. Wahab • Khawra bt. Thamir • Khawla bt. Hakim Silmiyya • Rabi' bt. Mu'awwadh • Zaynab • Zaynab bt. Abi Salama • Zaynab al-Attara al-Hawla' • Sabi'a bt. al-Harith al-Aslami • Salma • Safiyya bt. Huyayy • Safiyya bt. Abd al-Muttalib • Duba'a bt. al-Zubayr b. Abd al-Muttalib • Fakhta bt. Abu Talib • Fatima bt. Asad • Lubaba bt. al-Harith • Layla al-Ghifari • Maymunna bt. al-Harith • Nasiba bt. al-Harith al-Ansari • Umm Salama • Hind bt. Athatha • Sawda bt. Zam'a
From Imam 'Ali (a)	Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' (a) • Umm Khidas • The mother Abd Allah b. Ja'far • Umm Musa • Hababa Walibiya • Halaba • Zabra' • 'Umra bt. Tabikh • Umm al-Hasan al-Nakha'iyya • Nadra Azdiya • Umm Salama • Fatima bt. al-Imam 'Ali (a) • Umm Aslam
From Lady Fatima (a)	Al-Sayyida Zaynab (a) • Salma • Fidida • Umm Salama
From Imam Hasan (a)	Hababa Walibiya • Fatima bt. Hababa Walibiya • Fatima bt. al-Imam 'Ali (a) • Nadra 'Adwiya • Umm Aslam
From Imam Husayn (a)	Hababa Walibiya • Fatima bt. Hababa Walibiya • Fatima bt. al-Imam al-Husayn (a) • Umm Aslam
From Imam Sajjad (a)	Umm al-Bara' • Hababa Walibiya • Fatima bt. al-Imam al-Husayn (a) • Umm Aslam
From Imam 'Ali	Umm Hani • Hababa Walibiya • Khadija bt. 'Umar b. 'Ali

Baqir (a)	(a) • Khadija bt. Muhammad b. 'Ali (a)
From Imam Sadiq (a)	Umm Ishaq bt. Sulayman • Umm Aswad Shaybani • Umm Bada' • Umm Bakr • Umm al-Hasan bt. Imam al-Baqir (a) • Umm Sa'id Ahmasiyya • Umm Salama • Umm Salama bt. Imam al-Baqir (a) • Umm 'Isa bt. 'Abd Allah • Umm Farwa bt. al-Qasim • Umm al-Hasan sayqal • Juwayra • Juwayriyya bt. al-Harith • Hamada bt. al-Hasan • Rabab • Salima • Sariya • Sa'ida • Sa'ida • Aunt of al-Hasan b. Muslim • Aunt of Muhammad b. Ziyad • Aunt of Muhammad b. Marid • 'Umra bt. Nufayl • Fatima bt. Imam al-Sadiq (a) • Umm Dawud • Qanwa' • Kulthum bt. Yusuf • Mughayra • Minna • Umm al-Khayr
From Imam Kazim (a)	Umm Ahmad bt. Imam al-Kazim (a) • Sa'ida • Fatima bt. Imam al-Kazim (a)
From Imam Rida (a)	Hakima bt. Imam al-Kazim (a) • Fatima bt. Imam al-Rida (a) • Kulthum bt. Sulaym
From Imam Jawad (a)	Zahra' • Zaynab bt. Muhammad b. Yahya
From Imam Mahdi (a)	Hakima bt. al-Imam al-Jawad (a)

Table No.2:

The Influential Women from the Shiite Viewpoint
(Influential Women from the Shiite Viewpoint, n.d.)

Before Islam	•Eve • Queen of Sheba • Sarah • Hagar • Rebecca • Asiya • Siyana al-Mashita • Rachel • Mary (a) • Amina bt. Wahb
The Prophet's (s) era	Khadija bt. Khuwaylid • Sumayya bt. Khabbat • Sabi'a bt. Harith Aslami • Safiyya bt. 'Abd al-Muttalib • Safiyya bt. Huyayy • Umm 'Umara • Umm Ayman • Hammanah bt. Jahsh • Umm 'Amir • Rumaysa' bt. Milhan • Samira bt. Qays • Kabsha • Umm Salama • Umm Habiba • Umm Waraqa • Zaynab daughter of the Prophet (s) • Umm Sharik • Umm Sanan Aslami • Khansa' • Kabisha (The mother Sa'd b. Maladh) • Umm Kulthum bt. 'Abd Wadd • Shima (The Prophet's (a) sister breastfeeding) • Mariya al-Qibtiyya
The Imams' era	Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' (a) • Fatima bt. Asad (a) • Umm al-Banin • Hobby (The wife of Kumayt) • Suda Hamadani • Zarqa' Hamadani • Darmiya Hajuni • Nasiba • Umm al-Khayr • 'Akrasha bt. al-Atrash • Amina bt. Shurayd • Arwa bt. al-Harith b. 'Abd al-Muttalib • Zaynab bt. Abu Salama •

	Fidda • Asma' bt. 'Umays • Umm Kulthum bt. al-Imam 'Ali (a) • Al-Sayyida Zaynab (a) • Ruqayya bt. al-Imam al-Husayn (a) • Sukayna bt. al-Imam al-Husayn (a) • Fatima bt. al-Imam al-Husayn (a) • Shahrbanu • Umm Kulthum bt. al-Imam 'Ali (a) • Rabab bt. Imri' al-Qays • Ruqayya bt. al-Imam 'Ali (a) • Taw'a • Fatima bt. al-Imam 'Ali (a) • Fatima bt. al-Imam al-Hasan (a) • Dawma bt. 'Amr • Umm Farwa bt. al-Qasim • Hamida Wife of Imam al-Sadiq (a) • Najma Khatun • Fatima al-Ma'suma (a) • Sabika • Hakima bt. al-Imam al-Jawad (a) • Samana al-Maghribiyya • Mother of Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari (a) • Narjis (a)
Occultation's era	Amina Baygum Majlisi • Sayyida Nusrat Amin • Parvin E'tesami • Bint al-Huda al-Sadr • Tahira Saffarzada • Zuhra Sifati • Marziyya Hadidchi (Dabbagh)

Table No.3:

Women with permission to narrate (wikishia, n.d.)

5 th Century	Amina Alavi
7 th Century	Sharaf al-Ashraf bnt. Seyyed B. Taus • Fatimah bnt. Seyyed Bin Taus • Shahdah
8 th Century	Set Al-Mashaikh bnt. Shahid al-Awwal
10 th Century	Umm al-Hassan
12 th Century	Umm Salma
13 th Century	Amina Qazvini • Fizeh Belaqi
14 th Century	Qira'at Shirazi • Diyafat Shirazi • Thurayya Mohseni • Sayeda Nusrat Amin
15 th Century	Umm Jafar al-Khatib • Umm Alaa al-Hassoun • Umm Ali al-Hassoun • Zeinat al-Sadat Homayouni • Zahra Sefati

Table No.4:

The Shia Female Scholars (Shia_Female_Scholars, n.d.)

1st Century	Fidda
2nd Century	Hamida Wife of Imam al-Sadiq (a) • Fatima al-Ma'suma (a) • Al-Sayyida Nafisa
3rd Century	Hakima bt. al-Imam al-Jawad (a)
5th Century	Amina 'Alawi Isfahani
11th Century	Fatima Kashani • Hamida Ruydashti
12th Century	Amina Baygum Majlisi
13th Century	Amina Qazwini
14th Century	Diyafat Shirazi • Qira'at Shirazi • Thurayya Muhsini

• Bint al-Huda al-Sadr

The Contemporary Era Rubaba Ilahi • Sayyida Nusrat Amin • Zuhra Sifati

Table No.5:

Women writers of Shiite works (Women writers of Shiite works, n.d.)

11th Century	Hamida Roydashti • Jahan Ara • Zubeidah • Janan Bharlo
12th Century	Amina Begum Majlisi • Umm Salma Begum Shirazi • Daughter of Azizullah Majlisi • Khan Khanum Neishaburi • Bint Moli Esfahani
13th Century	Sadrudin Ameli's daughter • Zubaydah • Sultan Khanum • Malke Jahan • Bibi Khatun Dezfuli • Sayeda Mustafa Begum • Maryam Rizi Lanjani • Noori Jahan • Umm Kulthum Barghani • Khadija Barghani Qazvini • Rababe Barghani Qazvini
14th Century	Bint Al-Hadi Sadr • Zainab Al-Fawaz Ameli • Seyedah Nusrat Amin • Seyeda Efat Amin • Wife of Seyyed Oladhosein Lakhanoui • Homa Imamzadeh • Bibi Khanum daughter of Baghi Khan • Umm Al-Fazael • Sara • Quds of Iran
The Contemporary Era	Rababa Elahi • Zahra Rahnavard • Zahra Safati • Maryam Fadlallah • Zeenat Al-Sadat Homayouni • Elaha Vakili • Azam Prakham • Azam Parvaneh Turkan • Razia Faizul Islam • Zahra Tashit • Fatima Malik • Farideh Mahdavi Damghani • Tahereh Safarzadeh

The influence of mentality, gender and the characteristics of the interpreter in the understanding and interpretation of religious teachings

From an epistemological point of view, the gender of religious commentators has an effect on his interpretation; The male narrative of Islam can be different from the real Islam, which has a transsexual perspective. And this kind of interpretation theorizes religious violence against women. (Parsa, 1394, p. 66)

This is never a defect of Islam, it is a defect of interpretation that has always been in the hands of men which women could not reach this position.

In Islam, the creator of religious Sharia' is Allah who is neither male nor female (The Holy Quran, 112/3), not Prophet Muhammad. Prophet

Muhammad was only the receiver of this message and the sender of it to the people (The Holy Quran, 3/79; 33/45).

In the Qur'an, there is no difference between men and women; as there is no difference in the reward of the hereafter between men and women; rather, what is the criterion is faith, righteous action and piety (The Holy Quran, 49/13). In the teachings of Islam, friendship and tolerance are prohibited and violence is prohibited. Especially towards women (Majlesi, 1408, pp. Vol. 67:pp. 72, 150, and Vol. 76, p268); (Payandeh, 1382, p. 318); (Sadouq, 1404, pp. Vol.2, P 210).

He has paid attention to the cultural factors underlying violence against women and emphasized the justice between male and female children. (Mottaqi Hindi, 1401, p. Hadith No. 45350 and No. 49399) made special recommendations regarding the special value of girls and women and reminded them of their valuable position as wives and mothers (Deilami, 1373, p. 175); (Majlesi, 1408, pp. Vol.2, 362; Vol.103, 224; Vol. 74, 78); (Koleini, 1363, p. 6); (Sadouq, 1404, p. 385); (Nouri Tabarsi, 1408, p. 250).

Anti-women readings in some texts and behavior of Muslims

By examining and studying the works of some elders of Islam, it seems that these people did not have a positive view of women and women's personality.

Mullah Sadra in his famous book "Asfar", Mullahadi Sabzevari in his margin on this matter, makes women "truly and honestly joined to animals" (Sadra, 1981, p. 136). Of course, the belief that women are animals also exists in Western scientific societies: such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Manisi, p. 176); (Moshirzade, 1390, p. 12)

Imam Muhammad Ghazali, one of the Islamic Sunni theologians, says: "A woman is a slave of a man, and therefore the duty and responsibility of a woman is to obey her husband and respond to his every wish." (Ghazali, p. 64).

The Influence of Women's Studies in some Laws and Rules Changings

As it was mentioned in the introduction, the case study of this article is limited to the laws of Iran after the Islamic Revolution. The laws of this country show that they have been Islamized after the revolution⁵, and Islam

⁵. The Introduction to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran: "The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran defines the cultural, social, political and economic institutions of the Iranian society based on Islamic principles and rules." And the Article No.2 of the constitution: "The Islamic Republic is a system based on faith in God, divine revelation, resurrection, God's justice, imamate, dignity and high value of man and freedom combined with his responsibility before God"...

and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence are included in the approval of all laws, including civil, criminal, commercial, etc.⁶ For this purpose, Islamic institutions are established to monitor the implementation of laws with Islamic principles, and "The Guardian Council" is considered as the supervision of this Islamic system (Shafiei Sarvestani, 1385, pp. 41-45); (Majidi, 1389, pp. 199-201).

Such as the other issues, in the laws of the Islamic Republic, the issue of women's rights and the status of women have been also discussed (Jahangir, 1389, p. Article 3 No. 14; Article 20 and 21). Participation of women is the stance of the Islamic Revolution reflected in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic. In this law, not only is there no discrimination to gender, and the participation of women in all scenes is considered legal, but also in this law, the family and social dignity of women is also supported, which is a sign of the positive attitude of the leaders of the Islamic Revolution towards Women's issues. In addition to the preamble of the constitution, which refers to the position of women, in the writing of the constitution also, women's rights are more fulfilled than in the past. It is considered that women, along with their important responsibilities in the family, can be active alongside with men in all aspects of life. So women can accept a more serious responsibility and will have a higher value and dignity in the Islamic perspective (Jahangir, 1389, pp. 21-22). All these cases have been also considered important in the interpretations of the law (Hashemi, 1387, pp. 93-97).

Before dealing with the effects of women in laws, as the leader of the revolution and the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini's views about women and the legal and social position of women can be considered important. Undoubtedly, his thoughts as the theoretician of the new model of the Islamic government system played a significant role in the developments of the Iranian-Islamic society.

In order to revive the original Islamic values, he tried to clear the dignity of Islam from the baseless beliefs spreading through the society about women under the name of religion. In the monotheistic worldview, he expressed the high dignity of women against women abuse for the vulgarization of societies, and declared the human status of women similar to the

⁶ The Article No.4 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran: "All civil, criminal, financial, economic, military, political and other laws and regulations must be based on Islamic standards. This principle governs the application or generality of all the principles of the Constitution and other laws and regulations. And it is up to the jurists of the Guardian Council to recognize this".

status of God's creation (The holy Quran, 2/ 30) and women's dignity and spirituality (The Holy Quran, 17/ 70).

"Women are free to choose their activities, destiny and clothing by observing standards and dressing codes... The hijab that Islam has placed is to protect your values, whatever God has ordered is considered the real value... We cannot and Islam does not want women to be an object, a puppet in our hands. Islam wants to preserve the woman's value and dignity and make her an efficient person. Islam wants the growth of men and women; Islam wants women to do all the basic things as men do. He wants women to come out of being an object..." (Khomeini, 1378, pp. vol. 4, p. 427-428; vol. 5, p. 294; vol. 19, p. 185)

The role of women in society is mentioned in the shadow of this human dignity: "Women should fulfill their social and religious duties and maintain public chastity based on which, they are allowed to be socially and politically active." (Khomeini, 1378, pp. vol. 13, pp. 192-193).

He believed that the main path of society and human evolution is maintained through the unique role of women in human race education. He states:

"The greatest school a child is raised in is his/her mother's lap ... The separation of children from their mothers is the source of all or most of the corruption in mankind" (Khomeini, 1378, pp. Vol. 9, pp. 294-293).

Imam believed in the highest scientific and cultural positions for women and considered it possible for them to reach the rank of Ijtihad (Khomeini, 1378, pp. vol. 18, p. 454) and he addressed women as:

"You should be as busy as men in the scientific and cultural activities ... try hard in education and try to be equipped with moral and practical virtues... Your lap is a school where great young people should be educated... Women are free in Islamic society and they are allowed to go to universities and offices and The Parliament." (Khomeini, 1378, pp. vol. 5, p. 183, vol. 6, p. 521; vol. 20, p. 9).

Based on this point of view, contrary to the existing predictions in societies, especially non-Islamic and Western societies, not only did the Islamic Revolution of Iran not take a radical view and violence against women, but it seeks to solve the problem of women's rights and status in a fundamental and theoretical way. This means that a proper opportunity was provided for women in this government, and women found this opportunity to grow and flourish in various fields, including education, especially religious studies. As a result, women interested in religious scholars were able to provide a correct interpretation of Islam in some cases from their own point of view in a proper atmosphere.

The leader of Iran warned the authorities and the intellectuals of the society that: "The Holy Quran is a man-maker and women are also man-makers (Khomeini, 1378, pp. , vol. 6, p. 300). The duty of women is human-making, if this quality has been taken from women, the nation will face failure and degeneration." According to this guideline, from the beginning of the formation of the Islamic Republic system, among the first principles of the constitution, among the duties of the government the following rule emerges: "Creating favorable conditions for the development of the women's personality and the restoration of their material and spiritual rights" (Article 21 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran). Therefore, the view of the leader of the revolution not only emphasized the value and culture of women's education at high levels, but also created the basis for the emergence of elite and women's active role in important governmental posts such as policymaking and management.

Educational Field

According to the policy written in the first socio-economic development program of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1372-1368), the result of the government's performance was the reduction of the illiteracy rate of women and the quantitative and qualitative growth of women's knowledge. As an example, the comparison of the number of literate women in the years before and after the Islamic Revolution is mentioned (Statistics Center of Iran, n.d.).

According to the studies in historical books, in 1335, the female literacy rate was only 8%, which reached to 9.17% in 10 years, and in 1354, the female literacy rate was 5.35% which means that in the last years of Pahlavi dynasty, about 65% of Iranian women were still illiterate. The literacy rate of the country's 6-year-old and older population has grown by 93.50% for men and 19.126% for women from 1355 to 1383. In higher educational levels, the share of female students has grown exponentially and the rate of this growth has been more than 5.60% in recent years (Marvati, 1387 Saturday, 19 Bahman).

In addition to the growth of women's literacy, the number of women in higher education levels has made significant progress. The fact that the number of female students admitted to the universities in 1378 and 1379 exceeded 50% of the university's acceptance rate. The number of women admitted to universities has increased so much that sometimes it causes concern that in the future, men in society who are responsible for providing the economic needs of the family will have less expertise than women who usually do not have this responsibility. It seems there is no doubt about the need to improve women's knowledge now. Everybody has accepted that

the scientific development of women, in addition to the development of the knowledge of half of the society, will have a significant effect on raising the awareness of other members of the society, including the obvious effect of women on the informal and formal education of their children. Through informing their children about human relations, social issues, religious beliefs, history, and cultural issues, mothers play an informal role in promoting the society's culture. This is of course apart from their participation in helping children's academic affairs and participation. Women are also involved in providing educational facilities, including finding educational environments, registering children, sending them to educational classes, preparing a suitable environment for studying lessons, etc. (Ayat Ellahi, February 2018)

At the beginning of the revolution, only 6% of female graduates had a bachelor's degree or above, but currently, according to statistics, 44% of graduates of this level are women. At the time of the victory of the revolution, there were 125,000 women working in education, and now we have 600,000 women working in various sections of education. At the beginning of the revolution, the number of female professors in universities was about one to one and a half percent, while currently, about 20 % of university professors are female. That means we have about 7000 female professors in universities and 2,700 seminary professors. The former research deputy of the Ministry of Science declared: "Before the revolution, there were 100 female faculty members, and in 2016, this number has increased to 21,000, which represents a 210 times increase." (Saifi, 24 December 1997).

The statistics of those who passed the university entrance exam this year (1401) also show the same scientific growth of women. The names of 191,215 final candidates were placed in the fields of the national entrance exam. Among these, 104,123 are women and 87,092 are men. Therefore, 54.45% of those accepted are women and 45.55% are men.

The important point is that every year a significant number of people enter theological fields, and women are pioneers in this field, including Imam Sadiq University, Motahari University. And even some universities have been established in these fields for women such as; Farabi Campus University, Al-Zahra University (S), Hazrat Masoumeh University (S), and Hoda College (Acquaintance with the universities that accept specifically girls, n.d.).

Women are widely active not only in academic centers, but also in non-academic centers. Since these scientific centers help women to better understand the religion of Islam, it has had a great impact on the weakening of masculine aspect of Islamic Sharia.

Theological and Religious Studies after the Revolution

One of the first steps towards empowering the legislative process in the republican system was a transformation in seminaries, as the theoretical supports of the determining and judicial institutions of this system. This transformation was because of the formation of educational methods, teaching resources, jurisprudential assumptions and methods of inference and *ijtihad* in seminaries on the needs of individual jurisprudence and there has been no fundamental change in them during many centuries. Responding to the diverse and complex needs of a government system and managing the complex process of turning jurisprudence into law requires a comprehensive attention of seminaries to social jurisprudence and organizing all the aforementioned issues based on this jurisprudence (Shafiei Sarvestani, 1385, pp. 170-171). After the Islamic Revolution, there was a significant change in the seminaries, and the administrative affairs of the seminaries were organized better. This development took place in the seminary department of the Women, and women's fields were also formed (Abbas Razavi, 2010, pp. 54-55).

At the beginning of the revolution, there were just 10-12 female seminary students who were able to learn seminary sciences from the clergies, but today there are 80,000 female seminary students and 40,000 scholars and graduates. This shows that the conditions and the value of understanding of Islamic rules are widely available for everyone (News code: 743204, February 14, 2017).

Now, most of the religious schools in Qom and other cities are ruled according to the plans of the District Management Council, based in Qom, and only the administrations of Mashhad and Isfahan districts are independent (Shir Khani & Zare, 2004, pp. 244-249). The Guardianship Council of Non-Iranian Seminary Students was also renamed to the World Center of Islamic Sciences on 29 September 1979 (Scholars of the World Center for Islamic Sciences, 2016, pp. 29-30). It was later renamed to "Al-Mustafa Al-Alamiya Society" (Jamiat Al-Mustafa Al-Alamiya, 2017, p. 11). The central organization of Al-Mustafa University is located in Qom, in Iran, and more than 170 affiliated educational units are located inside and outside the country. These units are in the cities of Mashhad, Tehran, Isfahan, Gorgan and Qeshm and more than 60 other countries (Information website of Jamia't Al-Mustafa Al-Alamiya, n.d.).

In addition to these two centers, the Al-Zahra community in Qom is running completely independently from other religious schools. It was established by the decree of the leader of Iran in 1363 (Hahanzeri, 2013, p. 91). Al-Zahra University is an educational institution in the city of Qom

for studying religious sciences for women. In this center the students are being trained in four levels. They study through face-to-face and online classes. Non-Iranian students are also accepted in this center. Graduates of this center work as professors and managers of seminaries all over Iran. According to officials, 50,000 Iranian and non-Iranian students have graduated from Al-Zahra University by 2014. Hoda High School and College is one of the affiliated centers of Al-Zahra Community. According to one of the officials of this center, 50,000 people have graduated from this center by 2014, and this year 12,000 Iranian students and 1,500 non-Iranian students are studying there. (The History of Jami'a al-Zahra , 1396)

There are twelve special seminaries for women working in Mashhad seminar (Management Center of Khorasan Seminary, Performance Report of 2006, 2007, pp. 9-11).

Special Seminary schools for women, such as Al-Zahra School, and Amir al-Momenin Theological University (founded in 1364) are working in Shahr-e-Rey and Tehran. Tehran seminary is managed under the management council of Qom seminary (Abbas Razavi, 2010, p. 231).

Isfahan Women Seminary has long been regarded as one of the most important places for scholars from all parts of Iran due to its scientific status, and the presence of virtuous women such as Mojtaheda Afife Isfahani, Amina Begum (Daughter of Majlisi) and Bano Amin (died 1362). This shows the high emphasis of Isfahani women on Islamic sciences. In the past these women studied these Islamic sciences with their in-laws and with other scholars and jurists with great difficulty. However, in recent years, with the efforts of Mujtaheda Bano Amin, the first center for studying and training Islamic sciences for women was established, and some of them teach seminary courses up to higher levels (Movahed Abtahi, 1418 A.H, pp. 322-327); (Mahdavi, 2006, pp. 326-328).

In Isfahan, there are about 40 seminaries for men, and 5 seminaries for women. The List of theological schools for women in Isfahan is:

1. Fatimah School, founded by Mujtaheda Banwamin, 1344.
2. School of Hazrat Zainab, founded by Ayatollah Sheikh Mahmoud Shariat Rizi, 1354.
3. Al-Zahra School, founded by Hojjat-ul-Islam and Muslims Sayyed Morteza Hashemi, 1358.
4. Al-Nafisa School, the establishment of Hojjat al-Islam and Muslims, Haj Seyyed Abulhasan Badri,
5. Amirul Mominin Library School (Movahed Abtahi, 1418 A.H, pp. 285-321); (Mahdavi, 2006, pp. 48- 328).

The education of women, especially the study of theological sciences in Iran has had some impacts on Iran such as the active and fruitful presence of women on changing laws and policies, and managing and implementing laws in order to diminish the gendered view and sexist view of Islam. For example, women had fewer places in important government positions, while now we see the presence of women in the Islamic Council and the legislation.

Some political historians believe that before the revolution, women were allowed to attend both the Senate and the National Council, which were in line with the ruling regime's policies. Many of these women were considered wives and relatives of influential men or army commanders. The first position of women's presence in politics was in the Islamic Council. Although the number of female parliamentarians decreased at the beginning of the revolution, it increased in the following years. The growth rate of the percentage of female candidates for parliament representation during the first to seventh periods was equal to 5.16%, while the share of women candidates for parliament representation in these periods was accompanied by a growth rate of 48.227%. the number of female members of councils during the years 1376 to 1382 was equal to 76.79 %.

The percentage of managers, legislators and high-ranking employees among working men and women during the years 1355 to 1385 has had a significant change, which indicates the drastic reduction of the gender discrimination in the field of management, so that the growth rate of these indicators in the last 30 years was 389% for men and 2172% for women. (Report on the evolution of women's status during the years 1355 to 1385 by the Presidential Center for Women and Family Affairs) (News code: 174722).

Table No.6:

The percentage of managers, legislators and high-ranking employees from the total number of employees during the years

1355-1386 (women-in-iran, n.d.)

Gender/year	1355	1365	1370	1375	1380	1385	1386
men	0.52	0.43	0.59	2.21	2.11	2.9	2.98
women	0.11	0.16	0.16	2.32	1.71	3.36	2.04

Despite all the accusations of Islam against women, women play an active role in the advisory boards of various institutions.

Conclusion

This research shows that

•By entering the theological education, women can strategically reduce religious violence against themselves.

•Islam is not a unisex religion and is transsexual, but male interpretations of Islam have sometimes been against women.

•Iran's experience in teaching Islamic theology to women, both traditionally and classically, has been a successful experience in reducing violence.

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