

Search of Truth, Series-22



# *Feminism*

Reality & Islamic Perspective



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# *Feminism*

## **Reality & Islamic Perspective**

### **Introduction**

Feminism is a range of movements and ideologies that present a common goal: to define, establish, and achieve political, economic, personal, and social rights for women. This includes availability of equal opportunities for women in education and employment. It is a radical movement in recent times. It seeks to revolutionize social structure and change the basis of human relationships.

Feminists often assert absolute and unqualified equality of men and women, notwithstanding anatomical differences. They deny that there is any important inherent biological distinction between men and women. Hence there is no basis for the notion that the wife be housewife or mother. Correspondingly, the husband be the breadwinner and head of the family. They demand the abolition of conventional marriage, traditional home and family. They assert complete female sexual freedom, so that upbringing of children should be a public responsibility.

Feminists insist that women be given

complete control over their reproductive lives. Hence all restrictions should be lifted, such as the laws governing abortion. Birth control methods need to be publicly advertised and made available over the counter. Women regardless of age and marital status might purchase them without doctor's prescription. Women ought to have legal right to abortion at any stage of pregnancy. Abortions should indeed be arranged free by the state to any women who may want them, so that the poor can take full advantage of the facility.

Feminism would allow women to choose what they want to wear. They should be free to work like men – so that they become economically independent. Feminism suggests equal rights in marriage. It seeks empowerment of women to such an extent that they are treated like men. Basically, feminism can be summed up in three points:

- Freedom for women to work so that she becomes financially independent,
- Control over her body the way she wants it,
- Equal treatment with man in all aspects of life.

### Promotion of Feminism in India

The feminist lobby has adopted subtle ways to promote feminism in India. They are using television channels to promote their ideas. For example, 'Vogue', an American fashion and lifestyle magazine has come up with an advertisement for Indian audience

titled 'My Choice', its objective is to promote feminism and empower women. It describes feminism as 'wearing what they want to wear', 'not to get married', 'to have sex before marriage or outside marriage', 'to come home late', 'not to have children'. Moreover 'no one in the society should question her, as it is her choice'. This is aggressive depiction of feminism and women empowerment.

### **Nature of Men and Women**

Aside from external and internal anatomical differences, scientists know there are many other subtle differences between men and women. They know that brains of men and women process language and information in different ways. A socio-biology expert, [Edward O. Wilson](#) of Harvard University, said that females tend to be higher than males in verbal skills, empathy and social skills. On the other hand, men tend to be independent. They display spatial and mathematical skills, rank-related initiative, and dominant characteristics. It would be foolish to treat both genders as same and ignore their differences.

### **Women treated in the past**

Before Islam, women were considered inferior. Female children were often buried alive, and prostitution was rampant. Divorce option was only in the hands of the

husband, while inheritance was only for the strong, thus oppression was widespread. Islam presented its message and abolished wrong practices and gave rights to women. Even now, in many of the so-called developed countries, women are not granted respect, dignity and honour. They are not given equal pay for equal work.

### Rights of Women

Over fourteen hundred years ago, Islam gave women all human rights. Islam regards their role as precious and valuable. They are not to be disrespected or disgraced. Islam promises women as well as men, reward from God for noble deeds. Women has the right to gain knowledge, to select her spouse, to inherit property and to demand divorce. On dissolution of marriage, she has right to remarry.

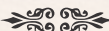
### Islamic Perspective

Islam is the revealed religion on the face of earth. It has given due rights to women. The rights which Islam has conferred were not usually available to them. With respect to economic independence, Islam has given economic responsibility to man and the responsibility of taking care of family to the woman. There is no obligation on her to earn. With respect to feminine body, it is a gift and bounty from God; she should safeguard it and should not make it a public property.

Men and women have similar rights as a general principle. However, the specific rights and responsibilities assigned to them are not identical. Islam teaches that men and women have complementary, yet different roles. Roles correspond to their nature. Islam has given economic responsibility to man and family responsibility to woman. Thus, Islam presents a holistic view of women rights and empowerment.

## Conclusion

The West talks loudly of women rights. But it has just recently begun to give a few rights to women. For example, only in the 20th century, England recognised the right of woman to possess property. Feminism is superficial, unnatural, artificial and abnormal. It is immature response to contemporary social disintegration, which in turn is the inevitable result of the rejection of transcendental, moral and spiritual values. Human beings need to become ethical beings, to develop healthy society.



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