

AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the socioeconomic empowerment of women in light of Islamic perspectives under the qualitative methodology using the secondary sources such as the Holy Quran of the Almighty Allah and the traditions (Sunnah) of apostle of Almighty Allah. It is found that some of the rights such as the rights of inheritance, the rights of Mahr, and the rights to work and earn, rights in Islam such as the rights to education and the rights in family affairs, and the rights in the sanction of divorce endowed by the revelations of the Holy Quran of the Almighty Allah and the traditions (Sunnah) of the apostle of the Almighty Allah, Muhammad (PBUH) are instrumentally added with the ever valid advantages of empowering the Muslim women in the strengths and opportunities of economic ways of life. In Islamic perspectives, the principles of women empowerment are constitutionally concentrated from the derivation of revelation of the Holy Quran and the traditions of apostle, Muhammad (PBUH) and therefore they are originally persistent at the implementation of these principles among the Muslim community. In Islam, the observances and implementation of the Holy Quranic verses along with the accompaniment of the traditions (Sunnah) of apostle of the Almighty Allah should be perfectly practiced through the appropriate call and guidance in the light of the Islamic perspectives so as to produce an instrumental and positive results in the Muslim community in relation to the empowerment of women.

Keywords: Empowerment, Women, Quran, traditions (Sunnah), Socioeconomic

01. Introduction

The process of empowerment means that it is a kind of process composed of social, economic, cultural, and political legal multidimensional aspects which are assisting the mankind in various ways so as to effectively and positively adjust the lives of the mankind through the increase of their awareness. The term 'empowerment' indicates that it is a course of action of enlarging the wealth, capabilities, and prosperity of groups of people or society to let them gain the choices useful for their lives and also to convert them into preferred achievements and effects (Chakrabarti, 2008).

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The definition and objectives of empowerment are varied on the basis of the occasion according to the needs, desires, and requirements of the mankind. The concept of empowerment is constructed based on the values of liberty, social justice, equity, and freedom derived from the principles of democratic nature in the country or society. Therefore, the thought of empowerment all over the world is being progressed by the effective steps emerged for the care and protection and promoting the humanity. On the basis of the gender, the concept of empowerment should be perceived while conceptualizing and understanding the empowerment.

The empowerment of women has been in progress throughout the history since the inception of 'women's liberation movements' in the world. Year 2001 has been declared by United Nations Organization (UNO) as the year of empowerment of women (Abdul Waheed, 2014). The women empowerment has been taken into consideration as one of the development indicators in 'UN Millennium Development Goals' The concept of women empowerment can pave the various ways in which the possession of different types of economic wealth and intellectual resources can be adopted by the women on their requirements and demand. This empowerment of women immensely ensures the establishment of autonomy of the women. They are able to take part in the household decision making and to independently control the productive resources owned by them. The Oxford English dictionary says that "Empowerment is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights".

The empowerment of women should be ensured and taken into consideration as it is one of the indicators considered in the economic development of the countries in the world. The overall socioeconomic and cultural developments in the economies are likely to be caused by the empowerment of women as well.

The Holy *Qura'n* (Holy Book) and *Sunnah* (traditions) of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are the primary sources of Islamic law of order. In these primary sources, the empowerment of Muslim women are elaborately defined and declared as the ever-fixed disciplines until the end of this world. Nobody can have any of the authoritative power to change or adjust or amend in these fixed provisions of the Almighty Allah in connection with the rights and the empowerment of women in Islam. In addition to the revelation of the Holy Quran and *Sunnah*, the 'Cairo Declaration of Islamic Human Rights - (CDIHR)' which is passed at the 'Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)' assembly in year 1990 is an instrumental proof with reference to the rights and empowerment of Muslim women in the present times (Sairo, 2014).

As declared by the Cairo Declaration of Islamic Human Rights in Article 5, it is explicitly stated as (a) "the family is the foundation of society, and marriage is the basis of its formation. Men and women have the right to marriage, and no restrictions stemming from race, color or nationality shall prevent them from enjoying this right. (b) Society and the State shall remove all obstacles to marriage and shall facilitate marital procedure. They shall ensure family protection and welfare" (Sairo, 2014).

Further, as per Article 6 of CDIHR, it is stated as (a) "woman is equal to man in human dignity, and has rights to enjoy as well as duties to perform; she has her own civil entity and financial independence, and the right to retain her name and lineage. (b) The husband is responsible for the support and welfare of the family". All the provisions declared by this declaration are sourced from the original provisions of the revelations of the Holy Quran of the Almighty Allah and the traditions (*Sunnah*) of apostle of the Almighty Allah, Muhammad (PBUH).

Hence, women in Islam are perceived and viewed as the identical entity in the society in the procreation of all the mankind. Therefore, the Islam deliberately demolishes the partiality of gender inequity in the root course in the society and thereby both of them must be treated identically in the provisions of rights and empowerment. The Holy Quran says as follows:

"The believing men and believing women are friends of one another. They advocate virtue, and forbid evil. They perform regular prayers, and practice regular charity, and obey God and His Messenger. These— God will have mercy on them. God is Noble and Wise." (Sura At-Taubah 9:71).

The above verse of the Holy Quran indicates that in front of the creator of the mankind, the men and the women are sighted as equal entity. One of the tools to measure the mankind is the righteousness but not the discrimination of gender in Islam. Thus, the empowerment of women in Islam is established by ever ensuring their rights preserved as the impartial opportunities to be with the peace and harmony in the society. This study tries to find out the concrete provisions in Islam in relation to the empowerment of women.

02. Objective of the Study

To find out the socioeconomic empowerment of women in the light of Islamic perspectives

03. Methodology of the Study

The qualitative method is used in this study. The qualitative data are collected from the secondary sources such as the Holy Quran and the Sayings of Prophet Muhammad.

Literature Review

Though there are a considerable numbers of previous research articles published by the researchers in the world in relation to the empowerment of women in terms of Islamic perspectives, a less number of such research articles articulate about the economic empowerment of women in Islamic perspectives. Accordingly, some of the selected studies are briefly reviewed by the researchers of this study with respect of the empowerment of women in the Islamic point of view.

Saira (2014) aimed to examine the rights of women in Islam focusing on 'public' and 'private' aspects of life and its effects on the empowerment of women using the secondary sources such as the Holy Quran, the Hadidh of Prophet Muhammed, books, and research articles under the descriptive analysis. He revealed that there were the dialectical nature of rights of women interpreted by Islamic religion elaborately. He found that there were some of the Holy Qur'anic verses which constrain the various rights of women in comparison with men. Further, he found that some of the women scholars around the world such as Azzizah Al Hibri, Riffat Hassan, Laila Ahmed, Asma Barlas were dealing with the issues of mostly women excluded from the interpretation of the Holy Quranic verses in connection with the various rights of women. He concluded that the Holy Quranic verses emphasized human dignity and faithfulness as the pivotal standard ruling the association-ship between women and men. And also, men are given with a slight authority over women in the family but the authority and superiority are not given to all the men over all the women in the society. Finally he concluded that the Muslim society should be made aware of reforming all the rights of women as prescribed in the Holy Quarn and Hadidh so as to empower the women in the society and the family.

Claire and David (2012) aimed to uniquely identify and test a conformist perception of explanation in which the Muslim gender norms underperform the Muslim economic progress using quantitative methodology consisted with the tools of correlation and regression analyses. They have found that the empowerment of women in a society is a *sine qua non* for economic progress; women were not empowered by the norms among Muslims; and therefore, economical underperformance among Muslim communities existed. Further, they found that there was no significant correlation between the religious perspectives and the channels of gender norms linking to economic performance.

Suman and Ananya (2012) attempted to empirically analyze the empowerment of Muslim women within Murshidabad district of West Bengal, India using quantitative methodology consisting of the statistical tools such as correlation and regression and descriptive statistics. They found that the changes in traditional beliefs and life style of Muslim family could accelerate the economic empowerment of women within Muslim community of Murshidabad district.

Abdul Waheed et, al. (2014) aimed to find the empirical reality of women in Islam in relation to the divorce which is one of the burning issues on the empowerment of Muslim women using secondary sources consisted with descriptive analysis. They found that the disempowerment of women in Islam is permanent in the laws and cultural practices found in the religious perspectives. Further, following the codes of *Sharia* is another cause which undermines the overall empowerment of women in Islam.

Rokeya, et al. (2015) aimed to find out how the empowerment of women is encouraged in Islam in economy, political sector, and family education using the secondary sources such as the verses of Holy Quran and the Saying of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). They found out that the social security and the respect of Muslim women in the community could be ensured by following the verses of the Holy Quran and the Sayings of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). Finally they concluded that the various aspects of life of women in the Muslim community could be empowered by the implementation of the verses of the Holy and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) and thereby Bagladesh could attain its development to the desired level.

04. Economic Empowerment of Women in Islam

05.1 The Rights of Inheritance

A code of life is profoundly and perfectly introduced through the revelation of the Holy Quran. Around 1400 years back, the economic empowerment of women is ensured by the Islamic firm provisions such as the verses of the Holy Quran and Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Accordingly, the law of inheritance or the rights of inheritance in relation to the provision of economic empowerment of women in Islam is one of the constitutional provisions alike that must be implemented in Islam as per the guidance of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In Islamic perspective, the law or rights of inheritance implies that how the wealth of parents after their demise or at their presence could be distributed among their children of male or female. The Holy Quran says that

"Allah commands you as regards your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females; if (there are) only daughters, two or more, their share is two thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is half." (Sura Nisa:11).

The above verse of the Holy Quran firmly insists on the economic empowerment of women through the distribution of wealth being derived from their parents and ensures the rights of inheritance of the women in Islam. According to the above verse of the Holy Quran, if there is only one daughter left after the demise of the parents, she can be eligible to possess the half of the wealth distributed from the parents and the share of the wealth distributed varies on the basis of the number of children in the family.

The maintenance of the entire family in Islamic point of view is indebted to only to the husband of woman or the father of the family. As such, all the basic needs of the family such as shelter, clothing, and food must be provided to the member of entire family by him. The entire share received by the women from their parents can be saved as capital and invested independently in any of the economic activities. As a result, further economic empowerment of the women can be strengthened by this provision of law of inheritance in Islam. And also, the Holy Quran says:

“There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest related, whether, the property be small or large - a legal share” (Sura Nisa:7)

As per the above verse of the Holy Quran (Chapter: *Nisa*, Verse no. 7), the Holy Quran repeatedly confirms the share of the wealth allocated and left not only from their parents but also from the relatives to the women under the law of inheritance as a provision of legal share. And also, this type of wealth derived from the parents of women are maintained by the women and fully controlled under all the circumstances.

5.2 The Rights of *Mahr*

The *Mahr* is a compulsory amount of money or property or any types of wealth (gold, silver, land, etc.) that must be given by the bridegroom to the bride at the time matrimonial ceremony. Accordingly, it is a kind of gift from the bride to the bridegroom at the time of wedding. At the inception of the family life of women, she is very happy to collect her share of gift from her husband and she is also economically empowered at the time of inaugurating her life in Islam. There is no rights for the bridegroom in the determination of the amount of *Mahr*, but it is the sole rights of the bride so as to determine the amount of *Mahr* at the time of conjugal ceremony. The Holy Quran says:

“And give to the women (whom you marry) their Mahr (obligatory bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) with a good heart”. (Sura Nisa:4)

The above verse of the Holy Quran ensures the right of the women so as to get the obligatory bridal money that must be given to the women (bridegroom) at the time of marriage. As such, this money or any type of wealth is compulsory at the time of marriage. Without this type of payment at the time of matrimonial ceremony, a bridegroom can't marry a bride at any circumstances without prepaying the *Mahr* (the obligatory payment) to bride. Along with the accompaniment of the happiness at starting the family life of women, the accumulation of wealth to empower the women economically gets collected from this right.

The husband of the women can't intervene or don't have any power over the richness of the women in Islam even if he is needful. But he is only the responsible for the maintenance of the entire family whether he is economically rich or poor. Anyhow, there are no any barriers in Islam to voluntarily support for her husband. The Holy Quran says:

"Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and to their husbands), and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property, etc.)." (Sura Nisa:34)

The above verse of the Holy Quran insists on the maintenance and protection of the women through the means of the husband not through the means of the women in Islam. So that the richness and financial capability of the women are safeguarded further by this verse.

5.3 Rights to work and earn

The women in Islam are not restricted to work and earn according to the guidance of the Holy Quran and also by following the correct cultural practices implemented on the basis of guidance of the Holy Quran. Accordingly, she is religiously entitled to own her wealth and to operate her own business. The Holy Quran says:

"And do not covet what Allah has given some of you more than others: the Men shall have their due share according to what they have earned and the Women shall have their share according to what they have earned. So pray to Allah for his bounty; most surely Allah has perfect knowledge of everything." (Sura Nisa:32)

The above verse of the Holy Quran vividly portrays the share of earnings of women are independently theirs. Anyhow, nobody is entitled so as to interfere in the economic activities of the women. In the Islamic history, the Muslim women have devoted their life for the sake of their family and their own business activities. Kadija (RA) who is the first spouse of the Prophet Muhammad was a business woman, operating her business activities, and rich. She was economically empowered well through the means of her trading operations. The Prophet Muhammad has approved the women to work and earn from various economic operations. During the period of Prophet Muhammad, one of the women was divorced and therefore she was observing her *Iddah* (a particular period of time to be concealed herself). During her *Iddah* period, she wanted to go outside and work at the cultivation of her date palms. As such, she wanted the approval from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) so as to go outside of her home during this period of time. He said:

"No, go and harvest your date palms, for perhaps you will give charity or do an act of kindness."

From the above sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the women even during their *Iddah* period are approved by the Islam to work at their own earning sources and accumulate capital and to be economically empowered. Even in the situation of disapproval in Islam for the women to go freely outside of their shelters, to be economically empowered, the women in Islam are allowed and approved to work and earn for her betterment or the society around.

6. Social Empowerment of Women in Islam

6.1 The Rights to Education

Education is one of the prime tools through which men or women can be empowered in their social life. Islam definitely urges the mankind (men and women) to be educated in the various sectors they need in relation to the success of the present world and the hereafter. Therefore, the first verse in the revelation process of the Holy Quran to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is '*Iqrah*' which implies in Arabic 'read' or 'learn'. In general, the education in the whole life of the mankind (whether they are men or women) is essential. In particular, the emphasis on the empowerment of women in education is essentially stressed in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad says:

"Seeking Knowledge is a duty of every Muslim, man or woman".
(Al- Tirmidhi: 218)

From the above saying of the apostle, gathering knowledge is not only a right but also it is a duty of every woman. Accordingly, all the Islamic perspectives and the daily observances are constructed on the basis of knowledge. No one in Islam can be ignorant in following and understanding the fundamental and conceptual framework of Islam and the Islamic way of life. The apostle of the Almighty Allah says:

"He who has a slave-girl and teaches her good manners and improves her education and then manumits and marries her, will get a double reward; and any slave who observes Allah's right and his master's right will get a double reward." (Sahih Buhari: 723)

From the above sayings of the apostle, the improvement of the education of slave women, whether they are Muslim or not, is encouraged and motivated by the Islam. Under the slavery system in the history of Islam, the women slaves are restricted by the masters. Even in this nature of the slavery, the Islam deliberately expects and stresses the masters so as to

empower the women in education and in social security. Some of the women during the time of apostle of the Prophet Muhammad went to the prophet and complained about only the men are learning from the Prophet. Therefore, they wanted the Prophet Muhammad to allocate his time for them to be educated. Finally, he promised them to reserve once a week for conducting lessons. During such as class, the apostle of the Almighty Allah says:

"A woman whose three children die will be shielded by them from the Hell fire." On that a woman asked, "If only two die?" He replied, "Even two (will shield her from the Hell-fire)." (Sahih Buhari: 101)

6.2 The Rights in Family affairs

The Islam directly urges the mankind so as to get rid of any of the gloomy attitudes about the birth of the female offspring born in a family. Further, it explicitly instructs them to welcome on the arrivals of the female child to a family. The Holy Quran says:

"And whenever any of them is given the glad tiding of (the birth of) a girl, his face darkens, and he is filled with suppressed anger. He is avoiding all people because of (the alleged) evil of the glad tiding that he has received, (and debating with himself): Shall he keep this (child) despite the contempt (which he feels for her), or shall he bury her in the dust? Oh, evil indeed is whatever they decide." (Surah An-Nahl:59)

The above verse says that the moment of birth of female child in a family is perceived as one of the glad happenings to the family. The parents of the newly born child should be filled with happiness rather than blaming others. Along with the insistence of the happiness on the birth of the female child, this verse solidly ensures the initial security in the family and thereafter the security in the society. And also, the appreciation rather than negligence on the birth of the female child is one of the means of empowering women in the family and the society.

Islam says that all the mankind (male and female) in the world has been created from one living entity. From this one living entity, only one male and female couple has been created by the Almighty Allah. Then, the past and present population has been spread everywhere in the world. The Holy Quran says:

"O people Be conscious of your Lord, who has created you out of one living entity, and out of it created its mate, and out of the two spread abroad a multitude of men and women. And remain conscious of God, in whose name you demand (your rights) from one another, and these ties of kinship. Verily, Allah is ever watchful over you." (An-Nisa:1)

The above verse of the Holy Quran deliberately ensures the equity among the male and female children from their birth in the family. It is clear that the women in the family is perceived by the Islam as the same as the men as both of them are exclusively having their rights that can be enjoyed in their family life. Thus, the establishment of empowerment of women in the family life is concretely constructed equal to the men within the family. The parents in the family vitally play major roles in this connection ordered by the Almighty Allah.

The women in Islam have a unique nature of rights in determining her life partner as per her desire. It is strictly restricted by the Islam to interfere over the privacy of the women as no one can have the capacity of gaining an accurate and deep understanding of the women. As such, the Almighty Allah says in his Holy Quran:

“O you who believe! It is not permitted for you to inherit women against their will. And do not coerce them in order to take away some of what you had given them, unless they commit a proven adultery. And live with them in kindness. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something in which God has placed much good.” (An-Nisa: 19)

According to the above verse, the women in Islam are empowered by the provision of rights in determination of her spouse at the time of conjugal ceremony. In this connection, unwillingly they can't be persuaded to choose any of the life partners by using force or threats. Instead, they must be kindly treated by the parents or relatives or anybody who desires to marry her at any decisions taken by them. Thus, this verse of the Holy Quran explicitly ensures the empowerment of independently and voluntarily expressing their determination. And also, this verse vividly insists on the husbands who married the women must be very kind and equitable towards their wives.

The women in Islam are not only having the right of choosing the life partner with any pressurization, but at the same time, they are empowered with the cancellation of the marriage under any of the unavoidable circumstances. The following incidences during the period of apostle of the Almighty Allah are proving those instances of the rights in which the women are empowered to divorce their husbands.

“The wife of Rifa'a Al-Qurazi came to the Prophet and said, “I was Rifa'a's wife, but he divorced me and it was a final irrevocable divorce. Then I married AbdurRahman bin Az-Zubair but he is impotent.” The Prophet asked her ‘Do you want to remarry Rifa'a? You cannot unless you had a complete sexual relation with your present husband.” Abu Bakr was sitting with Allah's Apostle and Khalid bin Said bin Al-'As was at the door waiting to be admitted. He said, “O Abu Bakr! Do you hear what this (woman) is revealing frankly before the Prophet ?” (Sahih Buhari: 807)

"The wife of Thabit bin Qais came to the Prophet and said, "O Allah's Apostle! I do not blame Thabit for defects in his character or his religion, but I, being a Muslim, dislike to behave in un-Islamic manner (if I remain with him)." On that Allah's Apostle said (to her), "Will you give back the garden which your husband has given you (as Mahr)?" She said, "Yes." Then the Prophet said to Thabit, "O Thabit! Accept your garden, and divorce her once." (Sahih Buhari: 197)

"Rifa'a Al-Qurazi married a lady and then divorced her whereupon she married another man. She came to the Prophet and said that her new husband did not approach her, and that he was completely impotent. The Prophet said (to her), "No (you cannot remarry your first husband) till you taste the second husband and he tastes you (i.e. till he consummates his marriage with you)." (Sahih Buhari:238)

All the above incidences in front of the apostle of the Almighty Allah prove the fact of empowering the women at their decision making power while defining their lives under the avoidable circumstances.

The domestic violence free family life is insisted by the Islam and therefore, the husbands and wives in the family should be tranquil at their relationship at all the circumstances. The Holy Quran says:

And of His signs is that He created for you (wives) from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought."(Surah Ar-Rum:21).

The above verse of the Holy Quran vividly portrays that the wife of a man has been created by the Almighty Allah from himself for himself. Thus, the women in the family life must be handled by their husbands very carefully without any sort of annoyance their day to day life. Further, they must be treated with love, affection, mercy, and compassion. As a result, it is thoughtful to carefully take care of the women as the men are ever resting on the women with the peace and harmony whenever they are needed. Accordingly, all these provisions from the Islam directly add the advantages of empowering the women in a certain stage of their life.

7. Empowerment due to Social Security

7.1 The Rights to the Sanction of Divorce

The sanction of divorce is unanimously allowed by the Islam between the husbands and the wives at the unavoidable circumstances while they are living together in the family life. After the women are divorced by the husbands, they must be under the security and the protection of those husbands who must be living together with those divorced women at the

usual dwelling for a period of three months. Immediately after the divorce, the women can't be sent by their husbands to their parents' dwelling, rather they must be kept and protected under the immediate care of those husbands until end of the period. This instance of care and protection of the divorced women are supported by the following verse of the Holy Quran.

"Divorced women shall wait by themselves for three periods. And it is not lawful for them to conceal what God has created in their wombs, if they believe in God and the Last Day. Meanwhile, their husbands have the better right to take them back, if they desire reconciliation. And women have rights similar to their obligations, according to what is fair. But men have a degree over them. God is Mighty and Wise." (Sura Al-Baqarah: 228)

Within the period of these three months or before the end of this period of time, the divorced women can be unanimously reunited with their husbands. On this unanimous and fortunate agreement on the reunion of the divorced couple, both of them can have the rights and obligations of contently inaugurating their family life again. At this time, the divorced women with the accompaniment of their children are together protected and safeguarded immensely throughout the rest of the life time. Further, this moment of reunited nature of the family life is a type of lesson learnt from the past. As a result, both of them can be rectified themselves and the women in the family further have been empowered freshly and willingly through the consolidated and strengthened care and protection.

Another fact of empowering the women at the time of divorce is proved by the following verse of the Holy Quran. After the completion of three months, the women can be sent to their parents' residences. But the Almighty Allah strictly orders the husbands of the divorced women not to take any property or wealth being rewarded by the husbands in connection with the conjugal agreement as obligatory payment (*Mahr*) to the divorced women at the time of their ultimate separation.

Divorce is allowed twice. Then, either honorable retention, or setting free kindly. It is not lawful for you to take back anything you have given them, unless they fear that they cannot maintain God's limits. If you fear that they cannot maintain God's limits, then there is no blame on them if she sacrifices something for her freedom. These are God's limits, so do not transgress them. Those who transgress God's limits are the unjust. (Sura Al-Baqarah:229)

Moreover, the above verse of the Holy Quran adds values to the safety and protection of the wealth and property of the divorced women and even after they are divorced, economically they are empowered through the accumulation of the obligatory payment rewarded by the husbands. Though they are separated in the life, they are economically strengthened to independently proceed in the rest of their lives.

After the completion of obligatory time period (three menstrual time period) which must be observed by the divorced women, the husbands of the women are given with the ultimate option of retaining the divorced wives with them or releasing them free to go to their parents' residences. But at this time of departure and separation of the couples, the Almighty Allah says that the men must be behaving peacefully and harmoniously towards the divorced women and they must be respected free from any type of committed violence against them and from harming them. At this juncture, the Islam ensures the strict care and protection of the divorced women from the family environment of the husbands and urges the men for bidding them farewell amicably.

"When you divorce women, and they have reached their term, either retain them amicably, or release them amicably. But do not retain them to hurt them and commit aggression. Whoever does that has wronged himself. And do not take God's revelations for a joke. And remember God's favor to you, and that He revealed to you the Scripture and Wisdom to teach you. And fear God, and know that God is aware of everything." (Sura Al-Baqarah:231)

In addition, the Almighty Allah seriously warns for those who do not follow these stern instructions of the Almighty Allah on the affairs of the divorced women and paves the way for the establishment of care and protection of those women in their family life.

All of a sudden the men are not having the rights of notifying the decision of divorce to their wives while they are living together, rather there is a specific period of time during which the men can be eligible to notify the decision of divorce to the wives. This fact of securing the women is openly addressed in the following verse of the Holy Quran.

"O Prophet! If any of you divorce women, divorce them during their period of purity, and calculate their term. And be pious before God, your Lord. And do not evict them from their homes, nor shall they leave, unless they have committed a proven adultery. These are the limits of God—whoever oversteps God's limits has wronged his own soul. You never know; God may afterwards bring about a new situation." (Surah At Thalaq: 1)

Accordingly to the above verse, during the menstrual period of women, the men are not able to notify the decision of divorce to the women, but only after the complete pause of the menses, the men can have the opportunity to notify it. And also, while the men accidentally or deliberately consummate with their wives during the period of purity, the notification of divorce becomes invalid among both of them. Further, the divorced women cannot be simply forced to leave from the house of the husband, rather they must be respected and their care and protection must be ensured by the respective caregivers. In addition, this fact is supported by the following sayings of apostle of the Almighty Allah:

"Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar: that he had divorced his wife while she was menstruating during the lifetime of Allah's Apostle. 'Umar bin Al-Khattab asked Allah's Apostle about that. Allah's Apostle said, "Order him (your son) to take her back and keep her till she is clean and then to wait till she gets her next period and becomes clean again, whereupon, if he wishes to keep her, he can do so, and if he wishes to divorce her he can divorce her before having sexual intercourse with her; and that is the prescribed period which Allah has fixed for the women meant to be divorced." (Sahih Bukhari: 178)

"Narrated Anas bin Sirin:Ibn 'Umar said: "I divorced my wife while she was menstruating. 'Umar mentioned that to the Prophet . The Prophet said, (to my father), "Let your son take her back." I asked (Ibn 'Umar), "Is such a divorce counted (i.e. as one legal divorce)?" Ibn 'Umar said, "Of course." Narrated Yunus bin Jubair: Ibn 'Umar said, "The Prophet said to 'Umar, 'Order him (Ibn 'Umar) to take her back.' " I asked, "Is such a divorce counted (as one legal divorce)?" Ibn 'Umar said, "What do you think if someone becomes helpless and foolish?" (Sahih Bukhari: 179)

08. Findings of the Study

In the Islamic perspectives, some of the rights such as the rights of inheritance, the rights of *Mahr*, and the rights to work and earn, endowed by the revelations of the Holy Quran of the Almighty Allah and the traditions (*Sunnah*) of the apostle of the Almighty Allah, Muhammad (PBUH) are instrumentally added with the ever valid advantages of empowering the Muslim women in the strengths and opportunities of economic ways of life. Some of the rights in Islam such as the rights to education and the rights in family affairs are perceived as the social empowerment of women in Islam. And also, the rights in the sanction of divorce are some of the empowering tools of the social security which can be utilized by the women now and then in Islam with the persistent validity.

09. Conclusion of the Study

In Islamic perspectives, the principles of women empowerment are constitutionally concentrated from the derivation of revelation of the Holy Quran and the traditions of apostle, Muhammad (PBUH) and therefore they are originally persistent at the implementation of these principles among the Muslim community. Empowering women in Islam paves the various ways to make them authoritative not only in her conjugal, educational life, and family life but also in her professional and any other aspects of life. In addition, this study confirms the establishment and ensuring of women empowerment in the various aspects in Islam.

10. Recommendation

In Islam, the observances and implementation of the Holy Quranic verses along with the accompaniment of the traditions (*Sunnah*) of apostle of the Almighty Allah should be perfectly practiced through the appropriate call and guidance in the light of the Islamic perspectives so as to produce an instrumental and positive results in the Muslim community in relation to the empowerment of women. The religious leaders and institutions located in the immediate surroundings of the Muslim community should play major roles to make the implementation of empowerment of women effective even through the religious sermons among the Muslim community. And also they must be exemplified themselves among the Muslim community in their day to day life.

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