

The Role of Women in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) In Islam: An Analysis of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in the Modern World

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ABSTRACT

This study will investigate the role of women in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Islam, especially gender equality and women empowerment in the modern world. The source and method of data collection and analysis will be based on the qualitative approach, which involves textual analysis, and data will be collected from books and journal articles. To reach the goals of this research, we will examine how women contribute to achieving sustainable development goals in line with Islamic principles. The Islamic approach is crucial for reaching these goals as it emphasizes a balanced realization of human rights, consumer welfare, social justice, ecological balance, and economic progress. Achieving these aims is not possible without the active involvement of women. The study will also investigate gender equality issues related to sustainable development goals, exploring the scientific approach Islam provides to women's rights and roles in various sectors like social, economic, political, religious, and educational domains. Islam grants them an independent identity and provides their inheritance rights, marriage, and participation in developing sectors. Overall, this research will evaluate the role of women in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs), which are focused on gender equality and women empowerment based on Islam.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Islam, Gender equality, Women empowerment

Introduction:

In the modern world, women still face many problems after contributing to all sectors with personal capacity and talent. After the Ottoman Empire, the Muslims lost political unity and their powerful cultural identity because most Muslim countries were under Western nations.¹ Politically, Muslims have faced several challenges by local and global non-Islamic ideologies. For these reasons, Muslim women adapted to some Western culture.² At the same time, a woman performs the role of wife, partner, organizer, administrator, director, re-creator, disbursing,

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¹ Uddin, Akram, and Danial Mohd Yusof. "The empirical approach of revitalizing society in the twenty-first century: a short analysis of Sayyed Jamal al-din Afghani's political thought." *Journal of Asian and African Social Science and Humanities* 8, no. 3 (2022): 29-41.

² Osmani, Noor Mohammad, Mohammad Omar Farooq, and Abu Umar Faruq Ahmad. "Women empowerment and leadership in Islam between myth and reality." In *Economic empowerment of women in the Islamic World: theory and practice*, 2020. pp. 39-70.

economist, mother, disciplinarian, teacher, health officer, artist, and queen in the family.³ At present, the main barriers to women's empowerment are gender-based violence, lack of finances, and technology without gender equality. Women empowerment is impossible. In this way, achieving SDG's goal is unattainable. So, this priority is gender equality, and women's empowerment is the key to achieving SDG goals. Islam is the best solution for women's empowerment and gender equality, ensuring sustainable goals.

Women are an integral part of society and are just as important to culture as men. In Allah's eyes, the person with more piety is respected. So, there is no gender discrimination or violence in Islam. This primary focus is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls through education. In Islam's eyes, women's role in achieving SDG goals is much more critical because it is related to women's empowerment, so if women's empowerment is incorrect, it will be empty even if the development works. The civilization of that development will only last for a while. According to the holy Quran, *"Everyone turns to their direction of prayer". So compete with one another in doing whatever you are, and Allah will bring you all together for judgment. Surely Allah is Most Capable of everything.*"⁴ This focuses on men and women not being a big dispute issue in Islam. The problem is responsibility and worship, which are both equal in Islamic civilization.

Allah SWT created both men and women as partners and gave different responsibilities to them. Islam has given proper respect and rights to women. The role of women in building modern civilization is undeniable, but women are still discriminated against in various fields. Half of the world's population becomes women. Sustainable Development Goals SDGs cannot be achieved without male and female collaborative positions in the modern world.⁵ The Goal of Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 CE for Sustainable Development includes 17 goals that support current development without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations.⁶ For Muslims, the idea of sustainable development is nothing new. The Qur'an and the Hadith provide the framework for humanity's spiritual and material welfare. Additionally, several instances from the Prophet Mohammed's life and teachings (PBUH) serve as examples of justice and equity. Islam is more than just a religion; it represents a whole society and way of life.

1. THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) ACCORDING TO ISLAM.

Sustainable development is the blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all people worldwide. There are five pillars: people, prosperity, planet, peace, and partnership. Moreover, there are 17 goals with 169 targets and three principles: the economy, society, and the environment.⁷ It has four dimensions: society, environment, culture, and economic activities. Number five SDG's goal is Gender equality and women empowerment. All of these vast and broader senses are in the field of development. Its central part is gender, and only Islam can provide a natural solution for it. Moreover, Islam and Sustainable Development are closely related.

³ Osmani, N., and Belayet Hossen. "Empowering women in Bangladesh: A study on the problems of working women in garments industries." *European Journal of Social Sciences* 57, no. 3 (2018): 277-289.

⁴ Al Quran, Surah al-Baqarah (The Cow) 2:148.

⁵ Ahmed, Leila. "Women and the Advent of Islam." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 11, no. 4 (1986): 665-691.

⁶ Baraz, James. *Awakening joy: 10 steps that will put you on the road to real happiness*. Bantam, 2010

⁷ Esquivel, Valeria. "Power and the Sustainable Development Goals: a feminist analysis." *Gender & Development* 24, no. 1 (2016): 9-23.

A. Sustainable development goals (SDGs):

The main objective is to protect the planet by taking various steps in the present and to act accordingly by multiple countries taking initiatives to leave a prosperous planet for future generations. That is the goal of SDG. The role of women in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is multidimensional, and their voices are highly included at the forefront because women are the backbone of a family and often bring about change on many levels. The Islamic approach has a more significant role for women in achieving SDG goals because it's the balanced and simultaneous realization of human rights. The Islamic perspective on sustainable development (SD) is founded on the notion that humans are responsible for caring for nature. It relies primarily on preserving the advantages of all spheres, including the animal world and the environment. Moreover, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 target the realization of human rights, the achievement of gender equality, and the empowerment of all women and girls worldwide. They balance the three facets of sustainable development: the economic, the social, and the environmental, and are inseparable and interwoven. Beyond the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that emphasized only equality of opportunity, the 2030 (SDGs) Agenda acknowledges that equality must be based on opportunity and outcome.⁸ Numerous other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets are related to empowering women, including those focusing on the gender dimensions of poverty, health, education, employment, and security. These goals showcase how women are affected by 17 proposed SDGs and how women and girls can and will be vital to achieving each of these goals.⁹ The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are:

- 1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- 2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
- 3) Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- 4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- 5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- 6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- 7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
- 8) Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
- 9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation
- 10) Reduce inequality within and among countries
- 11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable
- 12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- 13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- 14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development

⁸ Esquivel, Valeria, and Caroline Sweetman. "Gender and the sustainable development goals." *Gender & Development* 24, no. 1 (2016): 1-8.

⁹ Hák, Tomáš, Svatava Janoušková, and Bedřich Moldan. "Sustainable Development Goals: A need for relevant indicators." *Ecological indicators* 60 (2016): 565-573.

- 15) Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- 16) Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels
- 17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development of women and girls.

Sustainable Development Goal-5:

Achieve gender equality and empower all the following target has been included to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls:

- 1) End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 2) Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation;
- 3) eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation;
- 4) Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate;
- 5) Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life;
- 6) Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed by the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.¹⁰

B. The role of women according to Islam.

The first goal of sustainable development is poverty alleviation. Women play a significant role in poverty alleviation. Women work equally but are paid less than men. Lack of safety in the workplace, hard work, and low income make women poor. The economic crisis increases their helplessness. Therefore, the government should introduce various policy programs and measures. On the other hand, poverty alleviation is not possible without the economic empowerment of women. Women can be financially self-sufficient if given equal rights, facilities, and job protection. Gender inequality is the main reason for keeping women in poverty. According to the Quran and Sunnah, Islam plays a unique role in women's economic empowerment.

Secondly, end hunger and food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. In rural areas of developing countries, most women are involved in agricultural work, but they work traditionally. They have no idea about proper production methods, complete maintenance, overproduction, or food quality. If women are trained by technology, then they can contribute to promoting sustainable agriculture. Muhammad (PBUH)

¹⁰ UN Millennium Project. UN Millennium Development Library: Who's Got the Power: Transforming Health Systems for Women and Children. Routledge, 2013.

said, *"There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as a charitable gift."*¹¹ (Bukhari and Muslim)

Thirdly, Education should be a must for all sectors. All developing countries have an equal enrolment of boys and girls in primary school. The education system must be inclusive, creative, and high-quality to prevent educational violence against women and girls. From the perspective of the Quran and *sunnah*, Education is mandatory for it is *obligatory ibadah*. Islam did not accept any discrimination in the field of Education.

Fourthly, most women are involved in domestic work, fuel management, and natural resource management. They need to gain technical knowledge and treatment traditionally. However, women can contribute to this field quickly, ensuring the development of the resource management category. Allah SWT said in the Holy Quran, *"O believers! When you rise for prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of 'full' impurity, then take a full bath. But if you are ill, on a journey, or have relieved yourselves, or have been intimate with your wives and cannot find water, then purify yourselves with clean earth by wiping your faces and hands. It is not Allah's Will to burden you, but to purify and complete His favor upon you, so perhaps you will be grateful."*¹²

Fifthly, forests have been gradually decreasing daily, so the amount of carbon dioxide is increasing due to reduced afforestation. The level of oxygen is decreasing. Then the climate changes. Women and women play an essential role in maintaining the balance of the environment. This is due to the lack of ethical concepts. Women can play a vital role in maintaining the balance of the atmosphere by providing proper training about misuse. Mohammad (PBUH) said, *"The world is sweet and green, and verily Allah is going to install you as vicegerents in it to see how you act"*¹³. He also said, *"While a man was walking along a path, he found a thorny branch of a tree on the way and removed it. Allah s.w.t. thanked him for that deed and forgave him"*¹⁴.

2. GENDER EQUALITY FOR ACHIEVING SDGS IN ISLAMIC APPROACH

Gender equality refers to women and girls being free from discrimination, violence, etc.¹⁵ It ensures their equal rights, peace, and security like a man. If women get a suitable environment, proper safety, respect, and fairness, they can be essential in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs).¹⁶ But all of the advantages are available only in Islam. In sum, SDG has specific goals that align with the Islamic perspective, particularly in honoring women's rights. However, it did not mention any relation with any particular religion because SDG aims generally for all, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or skin color. However, these goals will be pursued differently

¹¹ *Sahih al-Bukhari*: 2320, 1/226; *Sahih Muslim*: 1522, 3/1188.

¹² Al Quran, Surah AL-Maidah, 5: 6.

¹³ *Sahih Muslim*: 2742, 4/2098; see Badarudin, Noor Ezailina. "The compilation of Quranic verses (juz 16-30) and hadiths of sahih Muslim related to visual function." *International Journal of Allied Health Sciences* 2, no. 3 (2018): 417-425.

¹⁴ *Sahih al-Bukhari*: 652, 1/132; *Sahih Muslim*: 1914, 3/1521.

¹⁵ Srinivasan, Varadharajan. "kit (royal tropical institute)." (2013).

¹⁶ Power, Kate. "The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the care burden of women and families." *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy* 16, no. 1 (2020): 67-73.

by each country, and that a critical benefit of the SDG approach is a degree of local flexibility.¹⁷ Due to the complexity of relationship between religion and gender equality, UN Women have highlighted their collaboration with the UN system and stakeholder to expand opportunities for feminist faith-based organizations, institutions and actors to become an integral voice in the social justice movement to achieve gender equality.¹⁸ However, if there is any of their voice which did not bring any harm to Islam and their efforts of highlighting women's issues which are not contradicted to the Islamic teaching, that will be acceptable.

A. General idea of Gender equality

The social distinctions and relationships between men and women are called gender. Gender refers to the positions men and women are assigned in society and culture. Behaviors based on gender roles are learned. The term sex, which refers to the biological distinctions between men and women, is not replaced by the phrase gender.¹⁹ Age, class, race, ethnicity, and religion, as well as the environment's geography, economy, and politics, all have an impact on gender roles.²⁰ To achieve gender equality by 2030, addressing the numerous core causes of discrimination that continue to restrict women's rights in both the public and private realms is necessary.²¹ For instance, discriminatory laws must be changed and new legislation created to foster equality actively. However, legislation protecting women from domestic abuse is still lacking in 49 nations, and equal inheritance rights for daughters and sons are prohibited in 39. Since gender-based violence is one of the world's most common human rights violations today, eliminating it should be a top priority. One in five women and girls under the age of 50 will have been the victim of physical or sexual abuse by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, according to data from 87 countries.

B. Gender equality in Islam and SDG

SDG has specific goals that align with the Islamic perspective, particularly in honouring women's rights. It did not mention any relation with any particular religion because SDG aims generally for all regardless of religion, ethnicity, and skin colour. However, each country will pursue these goals differently, and a vital benefit of the SDG approach is a degree of local flexibility.²² Due to the complexity of the relationship between religion and gender equality, UN Women have highlighted their collaboration with the UN system and stakeholders to expand opportunities for feminist faith-based organizations, institutions and actors to become an integral voice in the

¹⁷ Morton, Stephen, David Pencheon, and Neil Squires. "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and their implementation: A national global framework for health, development and equity needs a systems approach at every level." *British medical bulletin* 124, no. 1 (2017): 81-90.

¹⁸ Women, U. N. "Safe cities and safe public spaces: *Global results report*." (2017).

¹⁹ Osmani, N., and Belayet Hossen. "Empowering women in Bangladesh: A study on the problems of working women in garments industries." *European Journal of Social Sciences* 57, no. 3 (2018): 277-289.

²⁰ Ask, Karin, and Marit Tjomsland, eds. *Women and Islamization: Contemporary dimensions of discourse on gender relations*. Rutledge, 2021.

²¹ Squires, Judith. *The new politics of gender equality*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2007.

²² Morton, Stephen, David Pencheon, and Neil Squires. "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and their implementation: A national global framework for health, development and equity needs a systems approach at every level." *British medical bulletin* 124, no. 1 (2017): 81-90.

social justice movement to achieve gender equality.²³ However, if there is any of their voice which did not bring any harm to Islam and their efforts of highlighting women's issues which are not contradicted Islamic teaching that will be acceptable.

C. Gender equality roles in society

Women's participation is essential for social reform and the family and society will still be beautiful, prosperous, and peaceful due to women's social reform work. In judging such an argument, he mentions in a verse of the Qur'an, *O Prophet! When the believing women come to you, pledging to you that they will neither associate anything with Allah 'in worship', nor steal, nor fornicate, nor kill their children, nor falsely attribute 'illegitimate' children to their husbands, nor disobey you in what is right, then accept their pledge, and ask Allah to forgive them. Surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*²⁴

In this verse, Allah (SWT) teaches the believing women about social customs, responsibility, and Islamic principles. The position of women in an Islamic context, and the principles of their duty, are explained in this verse. The woman was oppressed and persecuted for a long time. In almost all the sectors of the modern world,²⁵ women are revolutionized. Women's dignity has been established. Women's position has changed by their revolution, changed their status, and changed their minds, and the normal condition of women has been pushed to the abnormality. All the scientists and philosophers of the world have found the potential for human life in the development and prosperity of the world. They have discovered the vast combination of wealth and the benefits of the greatness of the world, and they have discovered the real glory of life. They are highly seeking temporary enjoyment where worldly life and enjoyment are kept in the core centre. People are unaware of the thought of one's happiness and success that can be possible by thinking about the resurrection and hereafters and belief in Allah. Allah SWT also said to the angels: *"I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said "Will you place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? Whilst we do celebrate Your praises and glorify Your holy (name)?" He said: "I know what you do not."*²⁶

D. Gender equality in family

Women have family rights and they have a significant opinion right for marriage and family bounding. Legal and practical implications for women even statements about the right of access to the woman's sexual and reproductive faculties in family life. It is this legal logic that defines the rights and duties of each spouse in marriage in the Islamic approach.²⁷ Al-Ghazali was the twelfth-century philosopher and jurist in Islamic history.

²³ Holmefur, Marie, Annika Kits, Jakob Bergström, Lena Krumlinde-Sundholm, Olof Flodmark, Hans Forssberg, and Ann-Christin Eliasson. "Neuroradiology can predict the development of hand function in children with unilateral cerebral palsy." *Neurorehabilitation and neural repair* 27, no. 1 (2013): 72-78.

²⁴ Al -Qur'an, *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* - 12

²⁵ Uddin, Akram, Rownok Jahan, and Md Maruf Hasan. "The Contribution of Sir Maulana Abdur Rahim to Islamic Thought (On Women's and Workers Rights)." *Journal of Comparative Study of Religions (JCSR)* 2, no. 2 (2022): 31-46.

²⁶ Al -Qur'an, 2:30.

²⁷ Badran, Margot. "Political Islam and gender." (2013).

He drew the role of the Muslim family both wife and husband. He wrote a book to define the proper code of conduct in marriage which is known as *Adab al-Nikah* (Etiquette of Marriage). According to Al- Ghazali “*It is enough to say that marriage is a kind of slavery, for a wife is a slave to her husband. She owes her husband absolute obedience in whatever he may demand of her, where she is concerned, as long as no sin is involved. We find many traditions emphasizing the husband’s rights over his wife. The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said: A woman who dies, leaving her husband content with her, will enter Paradise.*”²⁸

Family rights in Islam and Western cultures are conflicting in modern times, and modernity coincided with a humiliating encounter with Western colonial powers. Women's rights are more significant for sustainable development goals, but Muslim family laws are denied in modern society.²⁹ However, in the new century, equality and justice in the Muslim Family are essential for SDGs. The Muslims should be clearly distinguished from the various non-Islamic cultural practices, which are not in line with them. It is essential to distinguish between Islam's primary sources (*the Qur'an and the Sunnah*) and the legal judgments of scholars on particular matters, which may differ and be influenced by their times, environments, and cultures. Such opinions and decisions do not share the infallibility of the principal and revelatory sources. According to the Qur'an, Action on these priorities will enable countries worldwide to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. Allah said in the Quran ‘*O mankind: Reverence your Guardian-Lord Who created you from a single person created of like nature his mate and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; reverence Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights) and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you.*”³⁰

(He is) the Creator of the heavens and the earth: He has made for you pairs from among yourselves and pairs among cattle: by this means does He multiply you: there is nothing whatever like unto Him and He is the One that hears and sees (all things).³¹ Both genders are recipients of the "divine breath" since they are created with the same human and spiritual nature (nafs-in-waahidah), But He fashioned him in due proportion and breathed into him something of His spirit. And He gave you (the faculties of) hearing and sight and feeling (and understanding): little thanks to you.³² Both genders are dignified and are trustees of Allah on earth. We have honored the children of Adam, provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors above a great part of Our Creation.³³

3. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IS BASED ON ISLAM

Gaining authority and control over their lives is important to women's empowerment. It can also be viewed as a crucial step toward achieving gender equality, which means that "individuals' rights, obligations, and opportunities will not rely on whether they are born male or female. According to the UN Population Fund, an empowered woman has control over her life, both within and outside the home, and she has the power to shape

²⁸ Anwar, Zainah, ed. Wanted: equality and justice in the Muslim family. Musawah, 2009.

²⁹ Ahmed, Leila. "Women and the Advent of Islam." Signs: *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 11, no. 4 (1986): 665-691.

³⁰ Al-Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa, 1:32

³¹ AL-Qur'an, Surah Ash-Shura 42:11

³² Al-Qur'an, Surah Hijr. 15:29.

³³ Al -Qur'an, Surah Al Isra. 17:70

social change. Before gender equality can be achieved and upheld, women must be "empowered" to close the "gender gap" and establish an even playing field with males. Women's empowerment, which encourages women's freedom and self-reliance, is a term used to describe the advancement of women. For them to be able to manage their own life, make their own decisions, and recognize their worth. The capacity to make wise judgments, lifetime access to opportunities and resources, participation in daily decision-making processes, and a significant contribution to society. An essential factor in protecting the home is both inside and outside, and they should be able to understand and exercise their rights.

They must be instructed, and informed on these. They must be confident, but not arrogantly so. Women empowerment Sustainable development also depends on an equitable distribution of resources. Achieving sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability depends on empowering women. It is founded on the fundamentals and promotes harmony within and between generations. In practically every country, women are responsible for nutrition, child care, and household management. Women are primarily responsible for caring for animals, farming, and collecting water and fuel in most developing nations.

A. Personal Identity

The identity and dignity of women in Islam It is not too much to say that Islam is the first religion in the world to provide a system for the protection and welfare of women and their rights. This system is perfect. It gives her dignity, respect, and equal dignity to men. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah has instructed both men and women individually and collectively about their role, duties, and responsibilities as Almighty men and women and as practicing Muslims. These guidelines shed light on the purpose of the creation of both sexes. They also provide guidelines that will ensure the protection of both the chastity and decency of creation as it is important for the sustenance of society. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah says, "*Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing and He made for you hearing and vision delectable that perhaps you would be grateful*"³⁴ Allah SWT also said that "*He created you from one soul. Then He made from it its mate*"³⁵ Islam is the only religion that has given women full dignity and rights for full protection and well-being. Islam has given those certificates of mother, daughter, sister, wife, etc.

B. Economic Empowerment

One report was published by the Women's Environment and Development Organization. "*The imperatives of the global economy seem to be outrunning the post-Rio agenda five years later. How to bring them into closer step is the current challenge.*" Women are calling for gender-sensitive research in this area. They are also calling for increased access to resources - land, credit, education, technology, and information so that they can participate equally with men in key decisions that affect their lives and all life on planet Earth." Women are fighting for economic empowerment in various ways so that they can participate equally with men.³⁶ On the other hand, Islam has given women unique economic empowerment as It has given women not only economic empowerment but

³⁴ Al -Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl - 78,

³⁵ Al -Qur'an, Surah Az Zumar:6.

³⁶ Haque, Muhammad Faizul, and Md Faruk Abdullah. "Obstacles to Lawful Earnings and Their Solutions from Quran and Sunnah Perspective." *Malaysian Journal Of Islamic Studies (MJIS)* 6, no. 2 (2022): 49-62.

also property management rights and income-expenditure rights. The women mentioned in the Qur'an do not become the property of the husband by earning.

There is an instruction to pay Zakat without any discrimination between men and women. If women have property, they have to pay zakat. Women can pursue any halal occupation or job to earn a living, such as Umm Salma and Zaynab bint Jahash. The full responsibility of the wife rests on the husband, the full responsibility rests on the father, and in old age, the responsibility falls on the children. Women's economic power is further established through the property rights of their parents and close relatives "And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask Allah of his bounty. Indeed Allah is ever, of all things, knowing."³⁷

C. Family Empowerment and Women in Islam

Women empowerment means family empowerment. The woman performs the role of wife, partner, organizer, administrator, director, re-creator, disbursing officer, economist, mother, disciplinarian, teacher, health officer, artist, and queen in the family at the same time. As a wife, women maintain peace and order in a family. A mother is the central personality of the family. She nurses the future generations. She is the teacher of children who teaches their children manners, moral values, and other primary necessities. Allah SWT said in the Holy Quran "And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and your parents; to Me is the [final] destination."³⁸ Islam has raised the status of mothers to the highest level and serving your mother is not only an act of kindness but is also rewarded in *Jannah*. A mother goes through infinite struggles to give birth to a child. As an administrator: She is the chief executive of the family. As a manager of a family income: She always prefers to prepare a surplus budget and secure maximum spent.

Family is the root of civilization and culture. Without proper knowledge of men and women, protecting yourself or family members from Fire is impossible. From here, the issue of women's education becomes increasingly important, and the next generation is taught, raised and created by the hands of women; that is why women's education is efficient and vital. Allah says in the Quran: "O ye who believe! Save yourself and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones"³⁹ The Quran unequivocally calls upon the believers to save themselves and their families from the Fire. How are some family members deprived of the right to girls' education through which they can escape from the Fire?

D. Political context and Women empowerment

Islam does not directly prohibit female leadership in the real sense, but it mentions women's representation in some sectors, such as service and education, women's departments and safe businesses. Women are half of men and make essential decisions for institutions with men. Moreover, Women are a necessary half of society and make up the next generation. Hence, representative participation of women is critical to the overall development of any system. Political empowerment means power, a conscious approach to change the political system, a critical attitude, the ability to take action, etc. However, men and women are not equal but complement each

³⁷ Al-Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa - 32,

³⁸ Al-Qur'an, Surah Luqman-31:14

³⁹ Al-Qur'an, Surah At-Tahrim – 66:6

other, so they have different obligations. Women are naturally emotional and affectionate; hence, the challenging political field.

Moreover, there was a debate as well about female leadership, particularly about the hadith, Abu Bakra (Ra). Narrated that *"During the battle of Al-Jamal, Allah benefited me with a Word (I heard from the Prophet). When the Prophet heard the news that the people of the Persia had made the daughter of Khosrau their Queen (ruler), he said, "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler."*⁴⁰ The message is that women cannot be heads of state, parties, or the *Ummah*, but they can manage women's issues and ensure women's safety. They can also run women's educational institutions for the next generation in a safe environment.

E. Educational sector and women identity

Islam is the only religion in which the Holy Scriptures were first revealed with the guidance of teachings. Allah says in the Quran, *"Read! In the name of your Lord who created (everything that exists). He created man from clots of clotted blood. Read on! And your Lord is the Greatest. He who taught (writing) by the pen, He taught man what he did not know."*⁴¹ Education is the starting point of every human activity. It is also the main distinguishing feature of man throughout creation. Allah has honoured man above all his creatures for knowledge and wisdom. It is mentioned explicitly that Allah kept Messenger Muhammad with knowledge and understanding; He taught it to Muhammad (PBUH) so that he could teach it to humanity. *The Holy Qur'an states, "Allah bestowed great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them the revelations of Allah, purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although before that, they were in clear error"*⁴².

Most of the Prophets prayed to Allah to increase their knowledge, Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S.) said – *"O my Lord! Grant me wisdom and associate me with the righteous."*⁴³ Allah also gave education to increase knowledge. It is said in Al-Quran, *"O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge."*⁴⁴ Islam has prescribed special rights for women, which enhance their dignity and empower them in all aspects. From marriage or education to choosing a profession, women in Islam are free to make their choices without any restrictions. In addition to helping women gain the ability to live a decent life, Islam empowers girls. It also emphasizes the importance of education. Its purpose is to make women fit to live like the Prophet. It makes humanity happy in this world and leads to a life of eternal happiness. In the light of Quran and Hadith, men and women have been strongly urged to educate, practice, and promote knowledge. The Holy Prophet gave particular importance to the education of women. He arranged a separate day for the education of women. The Qur'an does not discriminate between men and women in the field of education, and scholars create this discrimination. Not only to know Allah but also to be responsible for one's success and failure on the Day of Judgment.

⁴⁰ Sahih al-Bukhari, Number: 7099

⁴¹ Al-Qur'an, Surah At-Alaq – 96:1-4.

⁴² Al-Qur'an, Surah AL-e-Imran – 03:164

⁴³ Al-Qur'an, Surah Ash-Shuara – 26:83

⁴⁴ Al-Qur'an, Surah Ta-Ha – 20:114.

Religious books like the Quran say that education is an essential task for Muslims. The Quran says, *"For We (Allah) had certainly sent unto them a Book, based on knowledge, which we explained detail-a-a guide and a mercy for those who"*⁴⁵ This indicates that the Quran views the acquisition of knowledge as essential for Muslims. Therefore, the Quran demands the education of women like men. During the era of Jahiliyyah, girls were looked down upon, considered cursed, and buried alive, but the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gradually established the rights of girls. He established the same respect and dignity as men, and even love, dignity, and money without any distinction between boys and girls. Emphasizes the establishment of rights, education is a priority for Muslim women in order to raise them morally, to grow up to be respected partners of men in the society. When a man dies, his deeds come to an end, except for three: A continuous charity, knowledge by which people derive benefit, righteous son who prays for him. Girl has right to possess good, sufficient, appropriate, reasonable and satisfactory religious, good and ethical guidance to sustain for whole lives. She should possess real values, the concept of right and wrong, true and false, correct and incorrect, appropriate and inappropriate and so forth. Therefore, girls' education is similar important matter without view of discrimination among children. The Prophet also creates a new dynamic method for how to be educated. For instance, at the battle of Badr the prophet Muhammad (s.m) gained victory over his foes and seventy enemies were taken to prison whose are literate people. In order to benefit from their education the Prophet declared that if one prisoner teaches ten Muslim child how to read and write, this will serve as his ransom and he will be set free. Zayd b. Thabit learned to read and write this way. But the Qur'an emphasizes modesty by both men and women.⁴⁶ Therefore, it is very clear that the Qur'an demands the acquisition of knowledge through education for all people (male and female) without any discrimination, or favouring one gender over the other.

Allah says, *"Only those from amongst His servants who possess knowledge are the ones who fear Allah; surely Allah is Mighty Most Forgiving."*⁴⁷ Islam is the simply ethical religion which generates moral values, pious feelings and correct thinking in any one's heart. The aim of Islamic education is to retain Muslims on accurate path. Acquiring the love of Allah is the ultimate goal of human life. Allah's Messenger said: "If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth, and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man, fulfilling the purpose of creating humans. Allah says in the Quran: *"I have created jinns and men, that they may serve Me. No sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed me. For Allah is He who gives (all) sustenance."*⁴⁸ He also says: *"And make not another object of worship with Allah."*⁴⁹ Good Vicegerent of Allah on the Earth, Allah creates human beings as vicegerent on the Earth to establish His rules and give specific guidelines for being good Vicegerent as per the direction of Allah, which purely possible through acquiring knowledge. Al-Attas constantly highlights that the purpose of education in Islam is not simply to produce a noble citizen or a good worker, but more than that, a good vicegerent of Allah.⁵⁰, Al-Attas further says that a good citizen in a secular state may not

⁴⁵ Al-Qur'an, Surah Araf- 7:52

⁴⁶ Al -Qur'an, Surah An-Nur – 30-31.

⁴⁷ Al -Qur'an, Surah Fatir – 35:28

⁴⁸ Al -Qur'an, Surah, Zariyat – 51:56-58.

⁴⁹ Al -Qur'an, Surah, Zariyat 51:51.

⁵⁰ Islam, Mohammad Saiful. "Importance of Girls' Education as Right: A Legal Study from Islamic Approach." Beijing L. Rev. 7 (2016): 1.

essentially be a good man; a good man, however, will be a good citizen. As a result, a man who is good in the common society must be virtuous and just to himself first.⁵¹

Conclusions and Recommendations

Sustainable development responds to human needs that balance environmental protection with socio-economic development. The concept of sustainable development took root in the Islamic ideology in the seventh century. It has been realized in the new ideology in the modern context. From the very beginning of Islam, there has been a strong urge to build a balanced world through the coexistence of men and women. The modern world is moving in the direction of technology but is a victim of gender inequality and violence against women. At present, the participation of women in different sectors has increased, and women are competing with men with their qualifications, skills, talents, etc. Still, gender inequality in society has not ended yet. In a word, women have not yet established their just rights. It is historically accurate that Islam is the only religion that has given women the rights they deserve, the true identity, dignity, and respect in society. Men and women are working to build the world as a beautiful habitat through mutual coexistence. Islam has allowed women to work to eliminate gender inequality in various social, economic, and political spheres with equal rights and Shariah. There is no place for gender inequality in Islam. The Qur'an does not mention gender inequality and, in a very fluent and clear language, gives women dignity with different identities so that a woman can be known in society as a mother, daughter, sister, and wife.

The director has been given a distinct sense of responsibility and respect properly and has been given the good news of paradise for fulfilling their duties. A woman builds the foundation of society because family is the basis of civilization. The stronger the division of culture, the greater its ability to survive. For this reason, Islam skillfully maintains the family management of women, child-rearing, the next generation, the necessary training, educational ethics, etc. In a society where the family and the state are strong, women are strengthening the path to respect and sustainable development by fulfilling their responsibilities in this vital sector. Sustainable development goals are 17. Achieving these goals must ensure women's empowerment and gender inequality; otherwise, the plans will fail. Joining in the social and development field and the participation of men and women will ensure the achievement of SGD's Goals. At this time, women should be given equal opportunities in all aspects of socioeconomic status. History has shown that Islam can only fully guaranteed social security, women empowerment, and gender equality, so the empowerment of women and the elimination of gender inequality are not possible without establishing an Islamic approach. Sustainable development is when women work with their own identity in the light of Islam and play their due role while maintaining the boundaries and rights given by Islam. So, it is clear that playing the proper position for women in the light of Islam and Islam is the path to women's liberation.

⁵¹ Ibid

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