

Empowering Women: Navigating Islamic Rights and Cultural Hurdles in Pakistan

Dr. Ahmad Raza ul Habib

Islamic Studies, University of Narowal: ahmad.raza@uon.edu.pk

Dr. Waqas Ali Khan

Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Narowal

waqas.ali@uon.edu.pk

Asma bibi

Department of Education, University of Narowal:

asma.idrees.14@gmail.com

Abstract

Encouragement of Islam through the rearing of Muslim female children in Pakistan is impossible without fabulous exploration of Islamic rights and cultural obstacles. Islam, as a branch of knowledge based on the Qur'an and hadith, encourages the moral, social, security, economic rights of women. These rights, the first of their kind when they were released, the 7th century, the equal right and dignity of all humans before God were the focus of the women's revolution. According to the Quran, women and men are spiritually equal their success in the attainment of piety and righteousness. These rights find substantial space in different Muslim societies because of various cultural norms and traditional interpretations of Sharia. Women in Pakistan suffer from the patriarchal system deeply ingrained in societal norms that restricts their freedom and opportunities. Right from family dynamics and socialization to marriage and reproductive rights, the women face the very discrimination of the system. Violence against women, including honor killings, is still a widespread practice, justified by cultural norms rather than Islamic principles. Women's problems are of course one of the results of socio-economic problems. Even though the laws are in place, there is a lack of enforcement of those laws. A set of actions and operations are necessary to be implemented to find the best solution, which consists of legal changes, policy interference, and culture change. By way of teaching true Islam perspectives, women's rights lecturer, and upbringing to end harmful cultural practices, Pakistan will have enough potential for its female half, which is in its turn the key to the success of the whole country. A relationship between Islamic rights and cultural practices, told in the form of a comparison, can be examined in the areas of acceptability and separation. While Islamic religion and local customs put their stress on family relationships and community development, but they are diverse when it comes to women's rights, their legal and social status, and the gender role of men. The teachings of Islam in turn convey the messages of justice and equality, whereas cultural norms

often create the situation by which women are forced in the position of a "gender hack" and not having freedom.

Keywords: Women's rights, Cultural barriers, Islamic teachings, Gender equality, Economic empowerment

The question of the women's rights in Pakistan is closely linked not only to cultural practices but also to religious traditions. Moreover, the principles of Islam are advocating for women's rights and fighting for justice, but the way of implementing them is such that cultural practices interfere and therefore they are not realized. Islam has been one of the most important religions for women's rights for years including spiritual, social, economic, and political fields. Quran and Hadith are the most authoritative in teaching about women's rights with the idea that the spiritual and moral status of men and women is the same. Nonetheless the early interpretations of these would vary greatly due to the divergent opinions of different sources and to the peculiarities of the regions.

Despite the presence of cultural traditions in Pakistan and the male-dominating culture, religious principles in Islam aimed at equality are often overshadowed. Women are living in poverty, getting inferior quality of education. It appears that the implementation of patriarchal norms can lead to the oppression of the women in their society as gender roles are quite restrictive and thus women are not as free as they want to be. By nature, these social and economic barriers block access to resources, financial services, and employment, which is enough to undermine their economic empowerment. This fact is evidenced by the huge educational gap that many girls and women lack the opportunity to go to school and enhance their social and economic status.

Fundamental Rights Accorded by Islam

The rights of women according to the perspective of Islam are very basic and so unthinkable when one thinks that they were declared for the first time in the 7th century. The range of these rights is indeed huge: spiritual, social, economic, and political are all under the protection of Islam.

Spiritual Rights

The first rule of the Islamic faith outlines that everyone is spiritually equal before God. The Quran reminds us that men and women are equal in the eyes of the creator and each has an equivalent potential to

be pious and follow the right path. According to the Quran, "Verily, the men who submit and the women who submit, the men who believe and the women who believe, the men who are obedient and the women who are obedient, will have their sins forgiven and a great reward bestowed on them by Allah"¹. This verse fundamentally asserts that men and women have the same spiritual status and that each of them admits before God his/her own work and faith².

Social Rights

Islam has always been supportive of women's rights. In the sphere of social activity, it was one of the first religions that provided women with the rights that were the most revolutionary at that time. The right of education is one of the examples of this. The Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) state: " Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim" ³. This demand is directed to both men and women while also pointing to the significance of education in Islam for all people. Additionally, women got the right to select their husbands and the right to allow the marriage to occur by giving their consent. Islam prohibits the customs of a forced marriage indeed. The master of all the Prophets Muhammad, peace be upon him, is accredited with the abolition of the marriage of a woman who was obligated to it, thus giving an example of getting married by consent⁴. Equality in such a social setup does not therefore mean that women must play the same roles as men or that everything has to be absolutely the same or as close to the same as possible. With the development of the present era, the fact of marriage is a partnership, where both people are given equal rights. The society will only advance when both of them feel that they are given the same rights and now everything is as good as it was. The diversity of views and the high level of people's spiritual development create a clear picture of marriage as a partnership that is guided by equality only.

¹ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

² John L. Esposito, *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

³ Muhammad Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Hadith collection), accessed [date], <https://sunnah.com/bukhari>.

⁴ Muhammad Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Hadith collection), accessed [date], <https://sunnah.com/bukhari>.

Economic Rights

Islamic teachings, of course, treat women economically as well, allowing them the right to own and property management separately. The Quran declares, "For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned"⁵. This verse introduces the economic autonomy of women, according to which they can have the power to inherit, own, and manage their properties without involvement of their male people⁶. Moreover, in addition to receiving dowry (mahr) from their husbands during the marriage period, women remain solely owning the property. The mahr is a way of the wife's financial security and is supposed to be a part of different types of Islamic marriage contracts⁷.

Political Rights

Islam allows women to play politics, and this right extends to them to be involved in the public matters and to hold the leadership positions. There has been such exceptional cases in the history of Islam's infancy as those of Aisha bint Abi Bakr who was a known scholar and political figure and Umm Salama who played an active role in advising the Prophet Muhammad⁸.

The Role of Sharia in Defining Women's Rights

Sharia (or Islamic law) is one of the most important components defining and applying the women's rights in Muslim societies. It comes into existence through four primary sources- the Quran, the Hadith, the consensus (ijma), and the analogical reasoning (qiyas). Shari'ah is a framework that encompasses Islam is present in its sources, they offer a comprehensive framework for understanding and applying Islamic principles related to different women's rights.

⁵ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

⁶ Mohammad A. Qadeer, *Pakistan: Social and Cultural Transformations in a Muslim Nation* (London: Routledge, 2006).

⁷ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>

⁸ Farida Shaheed, *Honour and Shame: Gender-Related Abuses in Selected Societies* (United Nations, 2009).

Quran and Hadith

Both the Quran and the Hadith serve as primary source material for Sharia enhanced texts and thus lay down clear principles for the rights of women. The Quran is the word of God and, therefore, it is the definitive authority. On the other hand, Hadith which is a collection of the teachings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad acts as a general guide for the implementation of Quranic principles.

Ijma and Qiyas

Traditional Islamic sources namely ijma, ijma which is a consensus among the Islamic legal scholars, and qiyas, or analogical reasoning, can be considered secondary tools of Islamic law used for interpretation and application of Islamic principles to current issues. Such sources create a playing field for the law to bend and move on when approached from a flexible perspective. This brings to the law of Islam the essential condition of its being lived out in real, contemporary situations ⁹.

Schools of Thought

There are different philosophical positions in Islam like Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali which interpret Sharia in different ways, this leads to differences in the ways the rights of women are implemented in different Muslim societies. These theories offer different standpoints on topics like inheritance, marriage, and divorce, which demonstrate how Islamic jurisprudence is a rich and multi-dimensional structure ¹⁰.

Modern Interpretations

Today, Islamic scholars and activists are increasingly using Sharia as a basis for human rights and gender equality. The main aim of these activities is to come to terms with the unalterable Islamic principles of the

⁹ Ayesha Khan, *Women and Paid Work in Pakistan* (Karachi: Collective for Social Science Research, 2007).

¹⁰ Aysha A. Hidayatullah, *Feminist Edges of the Qur'an* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

past while at the same time the solution of modifying should not be prevented, they (Islam) must face ¹¹.

The Concept of Equality in Islam

The concept of equality in Islam is a broad and multi-layered issue covering spiritual, social, and legal aspects. The Islamic faith is built on the teaching of inherent dignity and worth of each person. It doesn't matter if one is a man or a woman, as through righteousness and justice, everyone should be treated equally and fairly.

Spiritual Equality

Islam has been previously informed of this language and the idea of the spiritual equality of men and women are of utmost importance in it, if the emphasis on accountability to God and capability of achieving righteousness are to be viewed as the fundamental building blocks of such a society. The main points of this study included spiritual equality, and it is the Qur'an's first discussion on gender. The second point is the influential force of the environment in which one operates ¹².

Social and Economic Equality

In the social and economic areas, Islam underscores concepts of justice and equitable access. The teachings of the Quran with respect to inheritance, for example, ensure that females get a proportion of the family's wealth even though it may be either half or less of what males get. This disparity is usually put in the context of Islamic social and economic responsibilities, where men are traditionally required to provide for the family ¹³. Notwithstanding, new scholars and activists would hold that such perspectives would require a re-evaluation in current society. They are

¹¹ Farida Shaheed, *Honour and Shame: Gender-Related Abuses in Selected Societies* (United Nations, 2009).

¹² Jamal A. Badawi, *Gender Equity in Islam: Basic Principles* (Plainfield, IN: American Trust Publications, 1995).

¹³ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

behind fairness due to which they show their support for the utilization of the moral Islamic teachings in the promotion of justice¹⁴.

The Islamic take regarding women's rights is grounded in the basic principles of equality, justice, and fairness as laid down in the Quran and Hadith. Women in Islam are provided with spiritual, social, economic, and political rights which were ground breaking when they were first revealed. Sharia is a prerequisite for ratifying and applying these rights with different schools of thought and contemporary interpretations contributing to the various opinions about women's rights in Islam. The idea behind the equality in Islam covers the spiritual, social, and legal dimensions.

Pakistan, a country with a rich cultural and historical heritage, faces considerable challenges in terms of the empowerment and gender equality of women. Women in Pakistan have to grapple with various cultural norms and this takes away from their growth and active participation in other fields of life. These guilds are sticking to the principles of patriarchy, socio-economic barriers, educational disparities are regional and rural differences. This paper reviews the cultural norms in detail, their effect on women's lives, and the need for broader policies to be introduced to ban these gender disadvantages.

Patriarchy and Gender Roles

Patriarchy is a very broad and deeply rooted social system that is structurally embedded in Pakistan, constructing gender roles and expectations. This system of patriarchy allows men to exercise power and control over women, thereby creating power imbalances and restricting the freedom and opportunities of women. The patriarchal system comes from different parts of life, start from family relations to society's norms and practices.

Family Dynamics and Socialization

In Pakistan, the traditional ideas of gender roles are normally taught to kids relatively early in life. Usually, boys are educated to go to school and to have a career, in contrast, girls are trained for domestics. This kind of upbringing reinforces the idea that men are the ones who are working for

¹⁴ Shahnaz Khan, "Labor Force Participation and Gender Wage Gap in Pakistan," Journal of Economic Policy Researches 7, no. 1 (2020): 21-35.

the family and women are at home ¹⁵. The bias for male children is the main reason for discrimination against girls. This issue not only spoils their education also the healthcare facilities are being deprived of, because of the severity of the case ¹⁶.

Marriage and Reproductive Rights

Marriage has become a major component of the Pakistani society over the last few decades, mainly shaped by men who held dominant positions in the community. The daughters have to behave with utmost gentleness and respect common standards in the community to attract a potential husband. Also, they need to follow their husbands' decisions and accept being a mother. All of this is agreed by the partner without giving the bride-to-be a say in her selection of a spouse ¹⁷. Then complementarily, women's right to choose, in particular, over their reproduction, is limited more so by the father, the husband, or the other close male members of the family ¹⁸.

Violence Against Women

Likewise, patriarchy is shown in the violence against women. Such violence is often justified and perpetuated by societal norms that condone the control and punishment of women by male relatives. In the circle of society, despite the law that shields the victims, the enactment of legislation the issues keep waning and traditional values of the society persist, therefore, women cannot easily have access to justice and enjoy the rights their own male counterparts do ¹⁹.

¹⁵ Ziba Mir-Hosseini, *Islam and Gender: The Religious Debate in Contemporary Iran* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

¹⁶ Uzma Cheema, "Modernity and Traditionalism: The Dilemma of Women in Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies* 17, no. 1 (2010): 27-42.

¹⁷ UNICEF, *Ending Child Marriage: Progress and Prospects* (New York: UNICEF, 2014).

¹⁸ UNESCO, *Education for All 2015 National Review: Pakistan* (Paris: UNESCO, 2015).

¹⁹ Amnesty International, *Human Rights in Pakistan: 2019* (Amnesty International Report, 2020).

Socio-Economic Barriers

Most of the time, social and economic barriers play a key role and have a negative effect on women's participation in the labor force in Pakistan, as well as their general economic empowerment. These obstacles are caused by social norms, limited availability of goods, and the presence of structural disparities.

Labor Force Participation

Women's participation in the labor force in Pakistan is at a lower rate than in most other countries in the world. Due to societal rules, women are not freely given the opportunity to have jobs outside of the workplace; they are seen as the breadwinners. Not only do they deserve low-paid jobs, but employers also take advantage of their conditions being a part of informal sector jobs with very little job security and no benefits²⁰. Through this, the economic marginalization of women is exacerbated, as the way to gain financial freedom is impossible with the constant support of immediate family members.

Access to Resources and Financial Services

Women in Pakistan are facing various hurdles in the gaining of resources and financial services. In most cases, women's ownership of land and property is affected by cultural norms as well as the discriminatory practices. By the PDHS statistic, which refers to the Study of Pakistani Health and Population, only 2% of women own land or a house, compared to 72% of men²¹. In addition to this, women's access to financial service, banking and credit to be specific, is restricted which makes it difficult for them to start their own businesses and achieve economic freedom.

Workplace Discrimination and Harassment

²⁰ Farida Shaheed, Honour and Shame: Gender-Related Abuses in Selected Societies (United Nations, 2009).

²¹ National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) and ICF International, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2012-13 (Islamabad: National Institute of Population Studies and ICF International, 2013).

Female citizens in Pakistan face both discrimination and harassment in their workplace. Due to various reasons, there is a male-oriented approach in hiring, promotions, and even wages, which is the most leading reason for a gender pay gap. In addition, the workplace atmosphere is always filled with sexual harassment, as some of the women prefer to leave the jobs instead of reporting the incidents because of fear of backlash and due to social stigma²². Even though certain laws, like the 2010 Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, have been established, the problem of implementation is still unsolved, and cultural attitudes number among their detractors²³.

The cultural problems that women in Pakistan have to go through are of different kinds and very deep-seated in the patriarchal culture and socio-economic situation of this country. Such hurdles involve traditional gender roles, socio-economic barriers, educational disparities, and regional and rural differences. To solve these problems, we need to have a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that would include legal reforms, policy interventions, and changes in societal attitudes.

Around gender equality and the outshining of lithe activist elements in societies, there is needed to be more technologies to be developed that are more accessible to girls and women. This gives women a sense of empowerment by being inclusive in decision-making processes and sustainable development. They could be interconnected with the empowerment of marginalized communities through technological solutions, transactions, vlogs, eBooks etc. The other includes that across borders, we should not act as the perceived ones who can solve the issue.

The pathway to gender equality in Pakistan necessitates the participation of all community sectors - government, civil society, and private sector in a long-term perspective. By breaking down the cultural barriers that hold women back, Pakistan can entirely uncover the qualifications of its women, which in turn will be beneficial to the wellbeing of the whole country.

²² Rubeena Zakar, Muhammad Z. Zakar, and Arja Kraemer, "Voices of Strength and Struggle: Women's Coping Strategies Against Spousal Violence in Pakistan," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 28, no. 4 (2013): 914-935.

²³ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, *Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey 2015-16* (Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, 2017).

Comparative Analysis: Islamic Rights vs. Cultural Practices

Islamic Rights as Prescribed by Quran and Hadith

Fundamental Principles of Islam

Islam is a religion that dictates and promotes certain aspects of justice, equality, and human dignity. The Quran is an Islamic text that serves as the main source of solutions, talking about the social, political, and religious aspects of Islamic life. The Hadith is the text that Prophet Muhammad followed and practiced with in their everyday life, as well as their interpretations. The Hadith acts as a physical tool that links the Quran to practical application of its teachings. Has as its goal Prophet Muhammad's sunnah, the Quran agreed upon by all and the Hadith.

Women's Rights in Islam

Some think that Sharia law does not even cater for women, although it is obvious how much dignity and protection it gives to them. These rights are ultimately based on the Quranic regulation of gender equality in spiritual and moral fields²⁴. Rights most important are:

Right to Education and Knowledge: Islam has instructed equally both men and women²⁵, also Prophet Muhammad has made it clear that education is a right for all, males or females.

Right to Inheritance: The Islamic law gives women the right to inherit the property from their parents and relatives²⁶, hence the law resolves the problem of inequalities in the wealth and inheritance of women, which has been there in the pre-Islamic Arabia.

Right to Personal Agency: Women have the right to marry and to divorce²⁷, which is true although the divorce process is subject to conditions and queried certification.

Right to Dignity and Protection: Islam teaches in the Quran that the harassment and ill-treatment of women are illegitimate²⁸ and the

²⁴ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

²⁵ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

²⁶ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

²⁷ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

arrival of unfairness, dishonor, and terror in dealing with women contradicts the teachings of Islam

Cultural Practices in Muslim-Majority Societies: The Case of Pakistan

Patriarchal Norms and Gender Roles

Pakistan, as well as other Muslim-majority societies to a certain extent, embodies a mix of Islamic fundamentals and cultural traditions, which are mainly male-dominated narrowness. These regulations stipulate definite functions for men and women and the behaviour to be expressed by them, which is not always commensurate with Islamic fundamental rights of men and women.

Impact on Women's Rights

Family and Marriage Practices: Local customs like bidding of getting married from a small age and unions being planned for by parents, dowries, and women's roaming restrictions remain intact, and despite the teachings of respect and consensus in marriage under Islamic law ²⁹. Generally, dowry, which is against Islamic law, has become an inseparable part of the culture. It is often the root cause of financial exploitation and domestic disputes.

Modesty and Dress Codes: While the Koran promotes modesty for both men and female ³⁰, yet there are social interpretations that require women to dress even if it is only as a moralistic statement. Wearing all these veils and burqas only for them proselyte should not be the only options out for women, but they also can walk or move freely.

Honor Culture and Violence: Honor-based violence, including honor killings, continues to be a fact of life in Pakistan and other Muslim-majority countries, which is a shattering experience for people. According to the study, this practice originates from cultural values of family honor

²⁸ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

²⁹ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

³⁰ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

and shame instead of Islamic principles that call for peace and the just treatment of others³¹.

Educational and Economic Opportunities: Even though the Islamic religion encourages education and the right of women to work, the social norms may be the main reason for the girls being kept out of schools and the ladies being unable to participate in any work. The policy makers and traditional gender roles have a significant effect on occupational and teaching career choices in practices that do not include complete compliance with Islamic doctrine concerning equality and jobs. Socio-economic factors and traditional gender roles are barriers to girls' access to education and women's participation in the workforce in societies where family honor is given precedence over individuals.

Comparative Analysis: Alignments and Divergences

Areas of Alignment

Family Values: Islamic teachings, as well as the cultural tradition, both insist on the unity of a family and the necessity of respecting the elderly.

Community Solidarity: When it comes to the community, Islam and the majority of cultural practices are overly supportive of the community and its members. This source of unity is displayed mostly at times of celebration or hardship. Given the living conditions, ill-treatment of each other, and the poverty plaguing the world, we have to cultivate family values and manifest peace through various forms at family levels, neighborhood, community, and the whole world.

Ethical Conduct: For two examples; in Islam, where the sources teach us nothing but the godly moral standards; and in various human cultures, meaning everybody must act in

Areas of Divergence

³¹ Quran, accessed [date], <http://www.quran.com>.

Women's Rights: Although in Islam the security of women is mentioned the cultural norms can prevent the realization of these rights due to the egoistic and arbitrary interpretations and customs.

Legal and Social Status: Women's rights are very important in Islam, the words of the Prophet are explained, which says 'live a life of justice and equity', but many illegal and social statuses consider females as slaves and property of their husband.

Gender Roles: It is explicitly stated in Islamic teachings that the divine code of justice presents the gender inequality within the society, but at the same time, it affirms the fact that men and women are equal in the moral and spiritual domain. However, cultural norms which often emphasize on unwavering gender roles may impair the freedom and the advantage of personal development for women.

In the end, the comparison of Islamic rights and the cultural practices in Muslim-majority societies, using Pakistan as an example, shows the recognition and differences that have an impact on women's rights and the whole society. Islam is a developing platform offering the same rights to girls and boys, followed by the empowerment of women, but the practices of certain cultures, which are the direct result of the male 'power, perpetuates gender inequalities that women themselves have to face along with their freedom to make decisions. In order to address this issue, a comprehensive strategy that incorporates legal reforms, educational programs, community participation, and women's empowerment programs is necessary. By advocating the fair and balanced recognition of Islamic teachings about the equality of the sexes and challenging the maladaptive practices that contemporary social groups adhere to, Pakistan and other Muslim-majority areas can approach the realization of more equal and inclusive societies where women's rights are observed and upheld.

Conclusion

The examination that is comparative to the rights of Islamic and the life of the culture of Pakistan is not only comprehensive but also led to the realization of the fact that there is multifaceted interrelation between religious teachings and societal norms, pointing to both the areas of similarities and differences. Essential teaching communication of Islam says about justice, equality, and human dignity, wherein the rights of women are encompassed as a sphere such as spiritual, social, economic,

and political. The society's traditions of Pakistan, which are dominated by the male figure with the continuation of the gender norms, hinder these rights more than actualizing them, which leads women to barriers in empowerment and participation in various aspects of life. Islam, as mentioned in the Quran and Hadith, sets out very specific guidelines on women's rights, such as equality in spiritual matters, education and the right to knowledge, the right to inheritance, the right to free choice in marriage and divorce, and protection from ill-treatment and violence. These rights were ground breaking at their inception and continue to provide an effective model for gender equality. Sharia's role in shaping and applying these rights is indispensable, and the interaction of different schools of thought and contemporary scholars brings a more sophisticated approach to the issue. Despite the fact that Islamic teachings are progressive, the cultural practices in Pakistan remain separate from these principles. Gender norms put men in a position of power and women in the role of carers, which invariably leads to women being burdened with child rearing and men carrying the responsibility of financial support. This arrangement is reinforced in family dynamics and socialization processes, creating barriers for women's education and economic activities. The public practice of the marriage rule, which is abolishing, forced marriage and denied abortion rights along with other decision-making ends, removes the women's rights and disempowers them. Violence against women, being patriarchal norms and their justification, spreads across a large space of the earth. Financial and socio-economic obstacles, like the lack of resources, financial services, and the absence of employment opportunities which are at some extent decent, make gender marginalization severe. Workplace discrimination and sexual harassment are not only causes of women's inability to get free from the financial chains but also prevent them from effective participation in societal I mean constructive social development. These social barriers are not the only things that oppress individual women by the way they also hinder the overall development of the country. Among Islamic rituals, cognate ceremonies, and ethical behavior, we can see a parallel between cultural norms and the essence of familial celebration, community cohesion, and righteous behavior. Islamic moral teachings and the norms of culture make clear the importance both of uniting families and of respecting older people and morality rules. But there are also many divergences that cannot be overlooked, especially concerning women's rights, legal and social status, and gender roles. Islam comes out in support of women who are protected and given power as opposed to the prevailing culture, which still maintains gender inequality, not allowing women to be free and limiting their opportunities. Finally, the quest for gender equality in Pakistan is a target that must be achieved through the alignment of

ancestral ones with the progressive virtues of Islam. Through the kindness and respect for the people which are found in the holy scripts of Islam and criticism of the gender-biased cultural norms that are the obstacle for women's empowerment, Pakistan can discover the potential of its women's population. If these conscientious efforts are made, women are not only to be benefited; besides, the overall socio-economic development and stability of the country will also be impacted. The road to gender equality is fraught with many difficulties; however the power of the commitment of the community and the efforts together will make Pakistan a much fairer and inclusive society where women's rights are taken care of and executed.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License