

Growing New evidence of Women's Equality and its Superficial Nature under Liberal Laws

In November and December 2018 there have been two significant studies that challenge the idea that women have equality and have progressed in their rights under Liberal Democratic Values.

In a study entitled, "Why women have less power than you think" by Laura Jones for the Global Institute for Women's Leadership, the idea of more representation of women in power is questioned in terms of what it actually gives women. The author asserts that although there are increasing examples globally of women sharing platforms usually dominated by men, in real terms their representation is more numerical in nature as apposed to having any real fundamental change for themselves or other women in society. The examples used are the following;

- Rwanda's appointment of a cabinet in which half of the posts went to women.
- A gender-balanced cabinet recently established in Ethiopia.
- In Slovenia, the judge is four times more likely to be a woman than a man.
- In journalism, Namibia stands out: half of its top newsroom posts are held by women.
- Half of IT professionals in Malaysia are female.
- Six out of 10 medical researchers in New Zealand.
- In Oman five out of 10 engineers are women.
- More than six out of 10 judges in France are female.
- Seven out of 10 judges in Latvia and Romania are women.

With all of these apparent achievements the author explains that,

"What may be more unexpected is that things are not always as they seem when women appear to have equality.....(In all of these examples), women's positions come with a loss of pay."

That fact is stated even if they are equally qualified and experienced.

These are the current details that actually only amplify what we have already known from experience of women holding the highest positions of power in the Muslim world. Take these examples of well known women leaders.

1. Benazir Bhutto

Bhutto was the 11th Prime Minister of Pakistan. She was the first and only female Head of State in Pakistan thus far, serving two non-consecutive terms in 1988–90 and then in 1993–96.

2. Megawati Sukarnoputri

Sukarnoputri was the president of Indonesia from 2001 to 2004.

3. Sheikhha Hasina

Sheikha Hasina is the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh. She has been in office since January 2009. She also served as Prime Minister from 1996 to 2001.

4. Khaleda Zia

She was the Prime Minister of Bangladesh from 1991 to 1996 and again from 2001 to 2006. She was the first woman in Bangladesh's history and second in the Muslim world (after Benazir Bhutto) to head a democratic government.

5. Atifete Jahjaga, President of Kosovo. She was the first female President, and the first female head of state in the modern Balkans and the youngest to be elected to the office.

6. Tansu Çiller Turkey's first and only female prime minister to date from 1993 to 1996.

7. Mame Madior Boye

She was the Prime Minister of Senegal from 2001 to 2002.

8. Aminata Touré

Following Boye, Aminata Touré was yet another female to occupy the Prime Minister's seat of Senegal from 2013 to 2014.

9. Cissé Mariam Kaïdama Sidibé

A professor turned politician, Sidibé was the Prime Minister of Mali from 2011 to 2012, the first woman to be appointed to the position in the country's history.

10. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim

The recently appointed president of Mauritius. She is the Head of State and Commander in Chief as well.

In all of these appointments we have seen NO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN WOMEN'S RIGHTS ECONOMIC STATUS OR SOCIAL SECURITY in those respective nations. In fact all evidence shows a dramatic decline in the status and safety of women. One cannot dismiss this fact as mere coincidence or a result of Islamic laws limiting the social movements of females as all of them served under liberal democratic structures that afforded them secular privileges devoid of so called "Sharia limitations". The truth is that these women are all working in a capitalistic ideology that protects and values the economic interests of the elite who are the real leaders of the nation and only use these women as puppet figure heads to execute the agendas of foreign nations. None of these women served the Islamic laws of Allah (swt) that truly looks after the interests of all humans, or they would not have abandoned the Islamic Ruling system to be servants of false man-made laws in the first place.

Another study that also proves the fact that Liberal Secular Laws are the real ideas holding women back is a BBC report conducted in December 2018 entitled "Ethnic minority academics earn less than white colleagues". This study was conducted after women from ethnic minorities expressed that they receive less pay than their white European counterparts. One woman said that this experience left her **"her feeling "depressed and devalued.....I feel like everyone else is running a 100m sprint and I'm running a steeplechase alongside them. It's not an equal race."** This is how millions of women feel in the most advanced Democratic nations of the modern era!!

The report showed average salaries to be the following:

- £52,000 for white academics
- £38,000 for black academics
- £37,000 for academics from an Arab background

This means that black and Arab academics at the UK's top universities earn an average 26% less than white colleagues.

And female academics fare even worse, with an ethnicity pay gap on top of the gender pay gap.

With nationalism being an intrinsic aspect to the Capitalist Ideology racism is normalized and institutionalized as a consequence. Gender and ethnic details are often taken on job application forms under the guise of equal opportunities, but in reality it is used against individuals to maximize profits of companies that can utilities loopholes in the very inadequate status of the law. Women take maternity leave and are a liability for employers and marketing surveys acknowledge the racist and stereotyping of customers that may be manipulated to the advantage of companies.

In the current drama of the #MeToo movement, we have also seen that economic wealth, education and political power has not given women safety in their workplaces or private homes. Women have always suffered harassment, physical and psychological abuse under liberal values as men feel they can exercise their freedoms of personal pleasure and are taught to objectify women.

The real solution to the progress of women is the recognition that these false idols of freedoms under Liberal Values and Democracy have only been used to trick citizens, especially women, into a mistaken sense that they have power and political mobility, when in fact these values are only used to keep women trapped in a never ending cycle of wanting their real rights. Islam is used as a political buffer to give women a sense that 'even if there are problems, at least they are not like the Muslim women who suffer much more'. The time has come for women to wake up to the truth that, despite all of the numerical data women have not gained their true position of dignity and honor as the Creator, Allah (swt) ordered. Under Islam, women do not have to be a leader of the nation to have the highest respect. They are not allowed to be objectified in advertising, left un-married to raise children and work and the same time, forced to suffer the uncontrolled assault of body shaming and physical insults from a media machine that creates fake beauty aspirations based on purchasing products. In the Khilafah the world's oldest University, the University of al-Qarawiyyin, was established by a Muslim woman, Fatima bint Muhammad Al-Fihriya Al-Qurashiya in Morocco. There was never a women's rights movement as women of every nationality and background had their rights. Women had political participation and economic independence hundreds of years before modern women did under Liberal Democratic laws. Allah (swt) protected their noble status in clear unchanging laws that could not be manipulated by fashion or political trends from outside. ﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾
“...Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you...”
﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾ [49:13] “**To whoever, male or female, does good deeds and has faith, We shall give a good life and reward them according to the best of their actions.**” [16:97]

It is only the current deviant illegitimate rulers of Muslim lands today that betray these verses of Quran as they serve foreign countries who use Muslim lands to further the corrupt agenda of Capitalism. And it is only with the return of a sincere Islamic Ruler the Khalifah who practiced as the Prophet Mohammad (saw) did, that we can ever see liberation of all women who suffer oppression and abuse of any kind.

Until then the analysis of Laura Jones will stand true,

“...we know that having more women in top positions.....can be symbolically powerful.....one thing does seem clear: when things are done the way they've always been done, change happens very slowly - if at all.”

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Imrana Mohammad

Member of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir