

حقوق المرأة في القرآن الكريم : دراسة إجتماعية لغوية

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الباحثة

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Women Rights in the Glorious Qur'an : A Sociolinguistic Study

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المستخلص

يهدف هذا البحث الى دراسة مفهوم حقوق المرأة في القرآن الكريم. وستركز الدراسة على الكيفية التي تجلت فيها مفاهيم اللغة والنوع وخاصة في الآيات التي تتحدث عن حقوق المرأة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تحاول الدراسة الإجابة على السؤال التالي: هل تعكس لغة القرآن الكريم الجنس البدني والبيولوجي للذكور والإناث، أم أنها تؤكد بشكل أساسي على الهوية الاجتماعية والشخصية لهم، أي النوع الاجتماعي؟ وهل تعكس حقوق المرأة في الكتاب الكريم قوامة الرجل عليها؟ إذ تنقسم الدراسة إلى قسمين، الفصل الأول هو لمحة عامة عن ثلاثة موضوعات: الجنس، والاختلافات بين الذكور والإناث في استخدام اللغة وحقوق المرأة. أما الفصل الثاني فهو مكرس لحقوق المرأة في القرآن الكريم. وتم استنتاج نقاط مهمة في النص القرآني بما يتعلق بالبعد الاجتماعي لحقوق المرأة وابعادها اللغوية أهمها ان الكتاب الكريم لم يغفل استعمال الادوات اللغوية التي تشير الى التأنيث اللغوي النحوي والدلالي، وكان النص مرتكزا الى عدم التمييز العنصري الاجتماعي والديني ضد المرأة بل كان يعد البشر متساوين بالحقوق والواجبات. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** حقوق المرأة – النوع – المساواة .

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to examine the notion of women rights in Glorious Qur'an. The study will concentrate on how language and gender has been manifested especially in the verses that apparently illustrate women rights. Additionally, the study tries to answer the following question: Does the language in Glorious Qur'an reflects the physical, biological sex of male and female or it mainly emphasizes the social and personal identity of them, that is, gender? Also, do the rights of women in the Holy book clarify their inferior position to men? Moreover, the paper is divided into two sections, the first one will make an overview about three topics: Gender, Differences between male and female in language use and Women rights, while the second chapter is dedicated to Women rights in Glorious Qur'an. Additionally, there is a claim that Islam in its Glorious book oppressed women and is a source of violence all over the word. Consequently, there is a need either to prove that claim or to deny it with evidence and this paper will try to walk a step in fulfilling that goal .

Key words : Women rights , Gender , Equality . .

1. Introduction

The main content of sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and society, specifically language structure and social context. So, interaction is the best source to analyze miscellaneous social cultural phenomena and survey different discourse behaviors. Additionally, the language in a specific sense tends to reflect the establishment of cultural traditions, evolution of civilization, national spirit creation, improvement of social life. As a result, language and gender are considered as one of the good ways to point out how women rights are clarified in Glorious Qur'an.

Furthermore, Women rights as a part of human rights have been the concern of many people especially women from different classes, races, cultures, religions, nationalities and ethnic origins all of the world. They mainly aim at stopping the denial and violation of women fundamental human rights and they dedicated efforts to prevent the violence, inattention and discrimination that women experience every day. Additionally, there is a claim that Islam in its Glorious book oppressed women and is a source of violence all over the word. Consequently, there is a need either to prove that claim or to deny it with evidence and this paper will try to walk a step in fulfilling that goal.

2. Literature overview

2.1. Gender

Crystal (2008) defines gender as “a grammatical category used for the analysis of word-classes displaying such contrasts as masculine (m, masc, MASC), feminine (f, F, fem, FEM) and neuter (n, neut, NEUT), animate and inanimate, etc”. In general, discussions gender concept in linguistics have focused upon the need to draw a clear distinction between natural gender, where items refer to the sex of real-world entities. Grammatical gender, which bears no relationship to sex, but has an essential role in signaling grammatical relationships between words in a sentence (adjectives agreeing with nouns, etc.). In addition, Trask (2007,23) adds that English doesn't have grammatical gender in spite of some forms that can be distinguished as grammatical gender like: he/she (pronouns), duke/duchess (nouns). Such examples and others are regarded as sex marked but not grammatical gender.

What have previously mentioned are from the linguistics point of view, sociolinguists. In Trask's point of view sociolinguist show that "use the term gender in a very different way, to indicate the socially

performed roles of masculinities and femininities, with only an indirect relationship to biological sex." And this usage has to be distinguished from the grammatical sense of the term. Furthermore, the term sex has largely been replaced by the term gender in sociolinguistics studies and that was for many reasons, the basic reason according to Miriam Meyerhoff (2006,30) is that the term sex is "increasingly restricted in sociolinguistics to refer to a biologically or physiologically based distinction between males and females." While gender on the other hand is not the "grammatical gender (i.e., different classes of noun that may be called 'masculine', 'feminine'). Not sex of speaker which (largely) reflects biological or physiological differences between people. Used increasingly in sociolinguistics to indicate a social identity that emerges or is constructed through social actions".

2.2 Differences between man and woman in language use

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the distinction between man and woman employment of language was recognized, and the interest in these differences directed to claim that they spoke completely different languages in some societies. Nonetheless, this is an overstatement; what is apt to happen in various societies to varying extents is that the "gender" of a speaker will determine or increase the likelihood of choices of certain phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical forms of a language while precluding or diminishing the likelihood of certain other choices (Coates, 1986).

In addition, scrutinizing of a number of studies detailing gender-exclusive differences have been provided by Coates (1986) and Smith (1985). In European languages, "gender-exclusive differences" do not exist. However, European languages have certain forms which tend to be preferred by females and other forms which tend to be preferred by males; the differences which appear because of such tendencies are known as "gender-preferential differences". These differences apparently reflect a distinction between societies in which "gender roles" are more rigidly defined and societies in which they are less rigidly defined. Meyerhoff (2006) clarified that "an exclusive feature is one that is associated solely with a particular user or group of users or solely in a particular context. A preferential feature is one that is distributed across speakers or groups, but is used more frequently by some than by others".

As early dialectologists tended to use elderly rural males as informants. Recently dialect studies provided little or no evidence of

gender-preferentiality, for fear that little was known about in what manner women spoke. However, with the advent of speakers, such as Trudgill's Norwich survey (1974b) and Labov's studies of language in New York (1971b, 1972a, 1972b), it came into sight that male speakers tend to use less prestige forms than females.

Furthermore, Coates summed up the patterns that are acknowledged by Trudgill's Norwich survey (1974b), Labov's New York City study (1972a), Macaulay's (1977, 1978) Glasgow English study, Newbrook's (1982) West Wirral study, and Romaine's (1978) Edinburgh study in the following points (Coates, 1986):

1. Fewer branded forms are more likely to be used by women than men in all styles.
2. It seems that women are more sensitive to prestige patterns than men .
3. Major shifts in style are made by lower-middle-class women; they use a higher proportion of the branded variant in the least formal style. But in more formal styles, they use appropriate forms to improve their speech to cope up with the higher class.
4. Not only "working-class" speakers tend to use non-standard forms, but also male speakers.

These evidence show that it is clear that males are less sensitive to linguistic norms than females are. Also, Trudgill's (1972, 1974b) self-evaluation test revealed that women tend to use standard forms unlike men. Non-standard forms are prestigious for males; standard forms are prestigious for females. In addition, there was an argument that standard English appreciates overt prestige, while non-standard forms like covert prestige. And it has been claimed 'that women are more attracted by the norm of Standard English while men are more likely to react to the covert prestige of the vernacular'.

Also, a survey by Elyan et al.'s (1978) Lancashire showed that women using received pronunciation were considered: intelligent, more fluent, self-reliant, adventurous, independent and feminine than women with a regional accent, as showed by Elyan et al.'s (1978) Lancashire survey. RP-accented women have been rated more masculine, besides. It seems contradictory at first glance at least. But if the two concepts, masculinity and femininity, are seen as two separate dimensions, both characteristics can be obtained by individuals then. (Coates, 1986)

Beside the differences in syntax, morphology, and pronunciation, men and women can be differentiated in terms of communicative

strategies. For example, when they converse, men are apt to interrupt very frequently and are slow to provide supporting responses to women's speech turns (Zimmerman and West, 1975). On the other hand, women tend to employ more facilitative tags (Lakoff, 1975; Holmes, 1984) than men. Such tags can help a conversation to move along flatly. And more yes/no questions (Fishman, 1980) can help keeping a conversation going. Males also talk more than females in general (Bernard, 1972; Swacker, 1975; Eakins and Eakins, 1978). This without any doubt contradicts the widespread belief that women talk more than men. Spender (1980) clarifies that the common belief is females speak more than males, but studies show that it is the other way round. He explains that it is expected by the culture in general that males speak, women, on the other hand, are expected to stay silent.

At the point when women do talk, as a result, it is more detectable and more notable than when men talk. The term gossiping is often used to describe the activity of speaking among women, and it is negatively loaded in popular parlance (gossiping is rarely used to describe a group of men that talk to each other). And when we probe this term in the fields of anthropology and sociolinguistics, there is no negative connotations that attached to the term gossip. Basically, the term used to assign 'informal communication between members of a social group' (Coates, 1986). Gossiping term has the crucial function of keeping up unity, morals, and values of the group (Jones, 1980), as well as holding all the necessary features in conversation that typify women's way of interacting. At any rate, conversation is a form of interaction that increases and reflects solidarity and support, expressions in these conversations are intended to give back or acquisition power for a speaker who has no place.

Finally, children can acquire these "gender-related differences" in speech patterns and others as they learn to speak just as other gender stereotypes (how boys and girls should behave). In general, the values of culture are learnt along with language (Halliday, 1978).

2.3 Woman right

Woman's right can be defined as a group of freedoms to which all individuals are authorized like: social, economic, and cultural freedom. Females must enjoy "equal access" to opportunities as well as fair treatment in economic and social life to realize these rights. Throughout the world, they are not treated on an equal opportunities with men and

their basic freedoms are infringed by race. Additionally, global poverty is associated to women rights, there are three- billion people in the world living on less than \$2.50 a day—women represent 70 percent of them. To varying degrees, “gender inequality” is common worldwide. Discrimination, abuse and race are examples of the challenges faced by millions of women around the world . Moreover, women did not have access to many fields like education, basic health- care, property rights, and fair opportunities because of their gender (Concern Worldwide, 2004).

For a long time women have raised questions about why their rights are ranked second to human rights. So that, a coordinated effort in the early part of the 1990s to change this attitude using a human rights framework gained particular momentum. The exchange of ideas and experiences among women around the world that led to strategizing about how to make women's human rights perspectives more visible has been eased by the end of the Cold War to make room for new ideas. More and more women raised the question of why "women's rights" and women's lives have been deemed secondary to the "human rights" and lives of men, as women's activities developed globally during and following the United Nations' Decade for Women. A movement around women's human rights has emerged to challenge limited notions of human rights, and it has focused particularly on violence against women as a prime example of the bias against women in human rights practice and theory, over the past decade. (Bunch & Frost : 2000).

Women's rights are surrounded by broad and complicated issues. Below, there are a number of different suggested solutions :

1. Encourage women's role to hold positions in government and public service.
- 2.To assure that females and males own the equal rights before law, disregarding of their race or religion or culture.
- 3.To ensure women's right to own land and property rights.
- 4.Ending and elimination all kinds of discrimination against women in the workplace.
- 5.Empowering women through microfinance programs to enhance their business development and entrepreneurship.
- 6.Increase and support more girls' enrolment to primary and secondary schools.

- 7.Hire and operate female teachers to act as role models and encouraging girls to engage in school .
- 8.Promote governmental policy of non-formal education for girls and women, for example vocational skills trainings and literacy programs.
- 9.Raising public awareness campaigns to prevent violence against women.

Concern Worldwide(2004).

3. Women rights in Glorious Qur'an

The presence of Woman in Glorious Qur'an composes an index to her value, esteem, worthiness and the important role that the Almighty has dedicated to her especially in culture and society. Woman has appeared in numerous and various terms and words in this Holy book. In addition, Su'ar (chapters) can be examined and is completely directed to tackle women's' issues, for instance, there is a Su'ra (chapter) which is named 'The Woman ', another named 'Maryam' , and other Su'ar (chapters) that involve many women models. One of the good ways to look at the presence of woman is to count the words that denote women in Glorious Qur'an. The following are nine terms that have been collected by Dr. Fareeda Zumurud (2012):

a. Nisaa (women):

The following word is used in Glorious Qur'an eighty five times with this form and in its singular form (Im'ra'a :woman), dual form (Im'ra'atan :two woman) and plural form (Nis'wa: more than two woman).

The word 'Nisaa' has been used mainly with the social, economical and political relations in society, while 'Im'ra'a' has been used as a model that contribute in building a good behaviour for humankind in general and women in specific.

b. Un'tha (Female):

It existed thirty times usually with versus that refers to the creation of human being, the pre- Islamic behavior and attitude toward females, the heritage and punishments. It is noteworthy to mention that the Al-Mighty used this concept away from its linguistic meaning that is related to sex. Mostly, this use emphasizes the unity and complementarity between male and female.

c. Um, Wal'de (mother)

Motherhood in Glorious Qur'an is represented by these two words: sometimes by 'Um' that presents twenty eight times and other times by 'Wale'de' that is used lesser just five times. These two terms are mainly

situated in context to illustrate the stages of human creation, behaviours toward mothers especially the old ones, the tiredness and difficulties of pregnancy, and other issues that are related to motherhood.

d. Az-zew'g (spouse, mate)

This word occurs eighty one times, more than forty nine times to denote the married woman (wife), and six times in its plural form 'Az-zewa'ag' to refer to both man and woman. It has been dedicated that the word "Az-zew'g" with its different forms (singular, dual, plural) mainly concerned with the meaning of species, and that meaning integrates the human and non human sort.

e. Sahib'a (companion)

It occurs five times to refer particularly to the wife. This term denotes the companionship between man and woman through their lives. In addition, it is used specifically to clarify that the Al- Mighty will not have a wife or a companion ever (that is one of the feature of human nature).

f. Be'nt (daughter)

It is represented nineteen times , one time in its singular form, one time in its dual form and the rest in its plural form. Also, it mainly appears in the Qur'anic stories, pre- Islamic behaviour toward new born girls and woman's situation in family.

g. U'chet (sister)

This word is used in its singular, dual and plural form fourteen times, and it refers to the relations' situated in family, heritage, marriage, and some Qur'anic stories.

h. Halee'la (wife)

It manifests only one time to index the forbidden women in marriage.

i. A'hel (family and particularly wife)

If the researcher traces the following term in Glorious Qur'an, he'll find that it is used one hundred twenty seven times. In addition, it refers to more than one concept one of them is woman.

In Glorious Qur'an, women have been given specific rights for their social and economical life. Also, many details have been presented about general and specific principles that will guide them in life in an appropriate and a good way (similarly like men). The following are the main women rights that occur in the Glorious Qur'an with some versus as examples:

3.1 The right of equality:¹

3.1.1 In rewarding

٧٢

(Repentance: 72)

3.1.2 In punishments

(المائدة: ٣٨)

- b. “(And the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut of their hands as a punishment for what they have earned, an exemplary punishment from Allah and Allah is Mighty, Wise.)” (The Food:38)

(The Light: 2)

3.1.3 In duties

التوبة: ٧١

3.2 The right to work

3.3 Financial Rights

3.3.1 Dowry

(وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً...) النساء: ٤

- a. (And give women their dowries as a free gift....) (The women:4)

3.3.2. Expense

النساء: ٣٤

3.3.3 Heritage

3. 3.4 Residence

(Cow:228)

In making a General and analytical overview of the previous women rights in Glorious Qur'an, it is significant to notice these points:

1. It is important to know that the Arabic language makes a clear and obvious distinction between male and female grammatically and morphologically. Easily, one can recognize that there are specific pronouns that are used with females and others with male, also a particular form for duality and plurality for both genders. So, there are feminine and masculine forms to the nouns, verb and adjectives that are used in the language. For example, one can easily recognize the verbs that are used to a man or a woman through the use of particular inflections, for instance: (dga'at, dga'a). It can be dedicated that there is a direct index to gender, the linguistic feature directly indexes something with social meaning, as it has been suggested by Elinor Ochs.(Meyerhoff, 2006).

2. In the previous verses, it is obvious that the equality between the two gender is represented at first place linguistically. Clearly, one can recognize that the Al- Mighty do not use the word 'believer' or shared concepts and terms or masculine form to refer to both genders (In Arabic language, masculine forms are sometimes used to indicate groups of men and women), but we can notice the use of feminine form distinctly from the masculine one especially through pronouns and inflections like (aat for feminine plural form and uu'n for the masculine plural form).
3. In heritage, it is manifested through many verses in Glorious Qur'an and the ones that have already presented how Islam gives woman the right to inherit. Questions are raised about the reason to give the man portion of two females and some argues that this is a deficiency toward woman. Obviously, this is not true as Qur'an do not consider woman inferior to man totally, there is no believe in the deficiency approach toward woman, but certainly an actual believe in differences.

There are mainly two differences: physical and psychological differences that affect the social role of man and woman in life. Men are usually physically stronger from women, they can endure more tough and hard work, while women cannot. In addition, it seems that women are more sensitive and emotional than men and that affect their choices, decisions, behaviour and attitude in life. For instance, they are in need for more protection. Consequently, it can be said that those differences affect the social roles that are occupied by men and women.

Moreover, in Islamic cultures, men are responsible of the expense of the family, that is, wife and children, and they have to pay dowry in marriage, while women do not. So, for instance, if one dies and leaves 3000 dollars, his son will take 2000 dollars as a heritage and his daughter 1000 dollars. Certainly, the daughter can save her money in a bank or make a work and after her marriage she will have a dowry to add to what she already had while the son will have to work, rent a house, give a dowry and take the responsibility of the wife and children expense. As a result, it was a justice in Glorious Qur'an to give the right for men to take double the portion of women. (Fadelallah, 2005).

4. In work and treatment, in pre Islamic culture and in some social traditions, men had the responsibility to control and judge women's lives as they are the responsible and the source of production, while women

are the consumers and had to stay at home as if they are the burden of life. So, men dominated everything in life and women were considered to be a human of second status. So, Glorious Qur'an describes that women like men in humanity, they have to be treated in a good manners with respect and dignity. In addition, they can work and they have to be rewarded for that as men (Shaheed :2016).

Conclusion:

The paper concludes that the language (Arabic) which is used in Glorious Qur'an reflects the esteem and dignity to woman. In addition, it concentrates mostly on the social and personal identity of woman in society, like their role in family, and in some less situation especially creation on the biological side. Furthermore, woman is regarded as a model for all human being in many verses, For example the following are two versus in which women are presented as model once for the believers (men and women) and the other for unbelievers, and that is in :

Moreover, equality in dealing with both genders is manifested on the linguistic side and the sociological side. Linguistically, the form of verbs, nouns and adjectives (the use of specific inflection for every gender) illustrate that Arabic language take into account the distinct representation of each gender. On the other hand, in society, women as men get the equal rights to work, to participate in social, cultural, educated, and political situation, for instance: in Sur'at An-Namil (The ant), the queen of Saba is presented as a model who rule with wisdom.

In addition, the equality between men and women in Glorious Qur'an takes into consideration the differences between males and females, but surely it is not the result of inferior or deficiency treatment toward women, it mainly pays an attention to the differences in needs and strength that affect their roles in life. So, it is important not to neglect them and to put some principles to follow for instance in marriage, in heritage, etc. All in all, what has been presented is a tentative work that is in need for more elaboration and development that recommended to do in the future.

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The verses are translated by" Muhammed H. Shakir¹