

Liberal Secular Values do not Equalize the Work Opportunities for Muslim Women

The Business Standard reported on the 26th of June 2022 that Muslim women get half the job call-backs Hindus do. The work opportunities study exposed a clear hiring bias that affected even the terms of contact in how recruiters reached out to Hindu women more personally than to a Muslims women. Research conducted by LedBy Foundation has shown that for every two positive responses that the Hindu woman receive, the Muslim receives only one. The Wire online publication explained the findings of Dr. Ruha Shadab and Vanshika Sharan as a “systemic denial of employment opportunities to (Muslim women) is widespread and affects various industries. In a YouTube panel discussion noted by the Wire journalists, Ms. Vanshika elaborated on the impact of these discriminatory practices in that they affected the social access of Muslim women, their economic agency and in turn their ability to have political rights and have their opinions and needs addressed. The negative consequences are clearly wide and far reaching in how they limit and harm the progress of Muslim women.

Another interesting angle of assessment was the fact that many very talented Muslim women were having their gifts unrecognized and disabled by the biased workplace practices. The world's largest Democracy is without doubt failing the Muslim women of India and there is no way to ignore the undeniable facts revealed in this research. It is vital that the global Ummah of Muslim women take note of these examples as importing these liberal secular values cannot be seen to be the “one size fits all” solution to the oppression and economic hardship of females globally.

Islam has its own clear comprehensive strategies in place in the form of the Khilafah (Caliphate) that ensure that the education, talent and contribution of Muslim women are never dismissed. Women can truly live their full potential with their education fully paid, their positions socially valued and their safety from harassment established with clear boundaries. The rules alone do not ensure reality of implementation. Liberal Democracies have many of these rules filling the legislative books of the establishment. But, the ability for them to be flouted, abused and directly dismissed is something that millions of women can attest to.

How women had massive positive impact in the Khilafah can be seen in that the first university in the world was established by the Muslim women Fatima al-Fihri who was born in Morocco 800 CE. She was the daughter of Mohammed Bnou Abdullah al-Fihri during the reign of Idris II. The University of Al-Qarawiyyin was a converted mosque purchased by the very wealthy Fatima herself. This shows the independent economic ability she has as a wife and mother of boys. She was a strong believer and she inherited a huge amount of money at the time of her father's and her husband's death. She then decided to use it to build a mosque which her Muslim community in Fez urgently needed. This shows her social contribution in action without any governmental hindrance.

After buying land from a man of the Hawaara tribe, Fatima started building her project at the beginning of the Ramadan month of year 254 of Hegira, that is to say 859 CE. From the 10th century the famous mosque of al-Qarawiyyin became the first religious institute and the largest Arab university of North Africa. It attracted a lot of students and renowned scientists. Symposiums and debates were regularly organised there. According to the available documents, teaching chairs were established at the university and in other annexes throughout Fez. These same records mention the existence of a great number of libraries and the University was recently renovated and is functioning today.

Allah (swt) rewards the efforts of women in this life just as men; **﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ ۖ فَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾** “Whosoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he(or she) is a true believer, We will give a good life.” [An-Nahl 16:97].

We pray for the return of the Khilafah and urge this Ummah to work extra hard in the glorious month of Hajj to make its realization so women can have their rightful place in this world.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Imrana Mohammed

Member of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir