

Mahjubah  
Magazine

# Women's Status in the Family and Society as Viewed by Imam Khomeini (ra)

By: Abbas Cheraghcheshm

20

Vol. 124  
2020



The remarkable powerful presence of the Muslim Iranian women in the various scenes of the struggle for the cause of Islam and the rule of Qur'anic decrees should certainly be regarded as the most glorious manifestation of their honourable characters among the many achievements of the Islamic Revolution. Shoulder to shoulder with men, the Iranian women, both young and old defended Islam and worked for their Islamic country. Imam Khomeini (ra) as the leader of the Islamic Revolution has repeatedly mentioned the praiseworthy role played by the Muslim Iranian women in various fields. Here, we invite the esteemed attention of the readers to certain opinions expressed by Imam Khomeini (ra) about the status of women in the family and in the society:

Imam Khomeini (ra) in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an firmly believed that: In respect of human rights, there is no difference between man and woman; since both are human beings and so women have the right to have a voice in deciding their fate like men. Any difference which exists between men and women (in Islamic decrees) has nothing to do with

As inferred from his numerous speeches on this subject, Imam Khomeini (ra) believed that women's role in education and the promotion of Islamic teachings is of the utmost significance and repeatedly emphasized

their humane credibility...."

As inferred from his numerous speeches on this subject, Imam Khomeini (ra) believed that women's role in education and the promotion of Islamic teachings is of the utmost significance and repeatedly emphasized: "In this movement (the Islamic Revolution of Iran), our women have a greater role than that of men..... Their role in educating and training has been most outstanding ....."

Likewise, Imam Khomeini (ra) attached great significance to the family unit, to the women's role as wives and mothers and stated: "The mother's lap is the first school for the child." , "Woman is the origin of the realization of human ideals." , "The manifestation of affection and compassion in a mother's luminous eyes is a ray of the mercy and affection of God – the Lord

of the worlds. The Almighty God has mingled mother's hearts and souls with His Divine Mercy's light in a way none can describe."

And in the words of Imam Khomeini (ra), his belief in the vital role of training by mothers is quite obvious, as in his addressing them: "Proper Islamic education should start from your lap, since children are impressed and taught by their mothers first and best. They will not be impressed by their father or teacher as much as they are impressed by you - mothers."

Undoubtedly, children are first influenced by their mothers' character and behavior, so mothers need to educate themselves as per God's teachings in order to be able to successfully fulfill their duty as responsible mothers, raising righteous children.

Also Imam Khomeini (ra), through his exalted knowledge of Islam, regarded man and woman to be complementary to each other in the creation system, each being duty-bound to fulfill his/her role in accordance with his/her God-given particular capabilities. To Imam Khomeini (ra) the differences in their physical abilities and in their related roles, and responsibilities could not be taken as the superiority of one over the other in their creation and rather the differences should be regarded as owing to Divine Wisdom and quite natural and needed for human survival and happiness.

And as per the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Infalible (AS), Imam Khomeini (ra) viewed the criteria for humans'

honour to be their adherence to Divine values and their endeavor towards acquiring humane virtues be them men or women. And Imam Khomeini (ra) well knew that for human happiness, corruption should be removed and kept away from both men and women, as he remarked in a speech (he made a few days before the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran): "We will give the women all sorts of freedom and of course we will prevent corruption both in the case of men and women." Obviously such thoughts, and viewpoints presented by Imam Khomeini (ra) are quite the opposite of the deviated views of those who say that a man, even a sinful one should not be blamed, while a woman even after having repented is blameworthy.

Women's political participation and the right to have a say in

“Proper Islamic education should start from your lap, since children are impressed and taught by their mothers first and best. They will not be impressed by their father or teacher as much as they are impressed by you - mothers”

their country's life has been one of the issues considered of great significance by Imam Khomeini (ra) who declared that in the Islamic Republic of Iran women



should vote just like men and should be given the right to take part in the political and social affairs of their country. In fact, Imam Khomeini (ra) held that without women's active presence the Islamic society will not be able to fulfill the goal of all-sided progress. He has stated: "The whole Iranian nation, in particular the women should try to rebuild the ruins left us (by the ex-regime) the brave, committed Iranian women, should shoulder to shoulder with the honourable Iranian men make the effort to build our dear country – Iran, just as they have endeavored to build their cultural, scholarly abilities. As you can see, every city, town and village in Iran, owes its cultural, scholarly progress to the Islamic, dedicated women. "....



To endeavor in the field of the culture in the broad sense of the word is part of the duties of the Muslim women as per the teachings of Islam. As you know, during those years (the years of the rule by oppressive regimes) the culture of Islam was the target of attacks and distortions. Now, this culture should be revived and for that revival, you respected ladies should strive and be active in scientific, cultural fields just as men are... Active, committed monitoring the Islamic society and what is going on there is a religious obligation of all members of the society, in particular the women. All people, in particular women should be attentive to social and political issues and should monitor and express their views on the functions of

the parliament and also on what the government does."

Also regarding Islamic Hijab (Islamic covering) Imam Khomeini (ra) has made enlightening remarks and repeatedly advised the women to guard themselves in the face of the plots hatched by those who aim at exploiting women in the world through pushing them towards indecent wearing and immoral conducts and emphasized: "Women should perform their social activities while acting upon the religious decrees and guarding their own chastity and the chastity of the society as a whole ....

"Chastity and Hijab are signs of honourable character and honourable women are those who are chaste and moral. Having an honorable character leads to

many virtues and praiseworthy qualities in one, such as modesty, self-control and piety. The Iranian ladies proved that they have not been and will not be deceived by the plotters and guard themselves in the fort of chastity and faith, and that they will raise righteous men and chaste, dedicated women who will never step into the evil ways presented by the world domineering powers for ruining their country....."

No doubt, exalted minds present the ways and methods of removing obstacles in the way of human progress and happiness. And this is also what Imam Khomeini (ra) did for the true progress and happiness of the Muslim women. His illuminating messages and guidelines led the Muslim women towards finding



their real, God-given identity, educating themselves and elevating their souls and of course contributing to the progress and wellbeing of their society. Let's now read part of a speech delivered by Imam Khomeini (ra) a few years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran: "Today all classes of nation are engaged in learning and teaching, ladies included. Today, large numbers of Iranian ladies are studying in theological centres in Qom and other places, learning religious knowledge, and also teaching. This has been one of the achievements of the Islamic Revolution. Before, women had been restricted to such an extent that they could express no scientific or ideological idea in even a gathering of ten people. Now the Iranian women can while observing Islamic rules, teach and propagate Divine decrees and values not only all

over the country, but also abroad and we need to work more to make up for the failures imposed upon our nation by the past oppressive regime. They wanted to keep our nation backward in every respect. Now, the situation has changed so that Muslim ladies are active alongside their Muslim brothers in every field of knowledge and science and God-willing in the field of industries too."

“All people, in particular women should be attentive to social and political issues and should monitor and express their views on the functions of the parliament and also on what the government does”

Most importantly, Imam Khomeini (ra) emphasized the women's role as wives and mothers: "....women educate human beings which task is the same as the task of Divine Prophets (AS). A mother's lap is the best and most valuable school for raising children. Women are in fact entrusted with the greatest work in the world, namely with raising and training children and delivering them to the society. The Holy Qur'an, though enjoining respect and care for both parents, when talking about the pains they take for their children, mentions mothers' pains and this shows how honourable mothers are to God and how significant their role should be regarded. As a matter of fact, women's educational and training role is above that of men in the society, since women besides being an active part of the society themselves, raise children who in turn will become active men and women in human communities. So, as educators, women have two basic duties: one educating themselves and the other educating their children and pupils. Certainly, due to close contact with the child, both during pregnancy and also in the first years after the birth of the child in which a child's character is essentially formed, a mother impresses the children's bodies, minds, souls, thoughts, values as the first role-model and so she should herself be virtuous, pious, purified, well-mannered and benevolent so her lap becomes the origin of all good."Source: Sahifeyeh Noor