

Qawāmīyat: Superiority or Responsibility? **An Examination of Orientalists' Studies of *Al-Nisā*'** **4:34 in the Light of Latest Scientific Researches**

SALEHA FATIMA

Lecturer Islamic Studies, Humanities Department
COMSATS Institute of Information Technology
Lahore, Pakistan

Dr. FILZA WASEEM

Assistant Professor, In Charge Humanities Department
COMSATS Institute of Information Technology
Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract:

The concept of qawāmīyat of the Holy Qur'an which defines man's responsibility towards woman has removed all the ancient burdens of humiliation and degradation from womanhood by making her responsible for only those tasks which she can perform conveniently according to her creative design and nature. This research is based on a discussion of 'qawāmīyat' to encompass those theories by which the Qur'anic concept of qawāmīyat has always been confused by non-Muslim researchers with ancient notions of superiority of man over woman. In contrast to the Holy Qur'an, the holy texts of the other two most prominent Semitic and non-Semitic religions faiths, Christianity and Hinduism, regard females as inferior to man in all realms of human affairs; the notion also parallels the myths and taboos of ancient civilizations. The perception of female inferiority is so deeply rooted that the concept of qawāmīyat of the holy Qur'an is mostly confused with these misogynistic ideas which are actually based upon gender differences and social perceptions about assignment of responsibilities.

Key words: *qawāmīyat, qawām, superiority, inferior, breadwinner, financial responsibility.*

Introduction

The holy word '*qawām*' used in *sūrah Al-Nisā'* 4:34 is so comprehensive in its meaning, usage, and communication that it cannot be translated and represented in a single word which could encompass the breadth and depth of its context. In this verse of the *sūrah*, men are given the financial responsibility of women. It is remarkable that the latest gender studies and scientific researches prove that men are endowed with natural physical and mental abilities by which they can perform better as breadwinners, whereas women are suited for the other indispensable field of action of human race which is to develop a useful and constructive generation for the bright future of humanity. So neither man nor woman are superior to one another but are given different responsibilities which are of equal importance. However the general perception, aided by Orientalism, (the movement which was properly initiated after crusades when a majority of prejudiced learned men started portraying Islam and Islamic culture in an inaccurate way to meet their imperialistic purposes. They were named as orientalist and their work was called orientalism.¹) is that Islam is a religion in which men are given more importance than women who are relegated to an inferior position. The texts from which the oriental perspectives about *Al-Nisā'* 4:34 have emerged, are based on previous texts which were parallel to the general social thought regarding man's superiority over woman. These perspectives ignored her crucial role in building a society for which she was actually designed and created, and which have now been established by latest scientific studies.

Superiority of Man over Woman and Sacred Texts of World Religions:

¹ Dr. Mustafa As-Sabai', *As-Sunnah Wa Makanatiha Fi Tashri Al-Islami* (Cordova: Maktab Dar-ul-Arba, 1961), 365

All Muslims believe in the Divine books and their association with *Allāh* Almighty and the pious messengers. Indeed once these holy texts were the sources of guidance and the map to the straight path but because of human interference, and *tehrīf* now there are many verses in the New Testament which strengthen the '*woman is inferior to man*' notion, as in the following verses in which the husband is interpreted as a God for the wife whom she has to obey and fear:

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.²

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is appropriate for those who belong to the Lord.³

To be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands⁴

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must fear her husband.⁵

Women are regarded as inferior in the religious realm as well, as they are dependent upon men even to get answers about religious teachings and rituals, because it is not considered appropriate that the feminine voice to be heard in the religious gathering:

If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.⁶

In certain verses man is described plainly as the master of his wife:

² *New Testament*, Ephesians, 5:22-24

³ *New Testament*, Colossians, 3:18

⁴ *New Testament*, Titus, 2:5

⁵ *New Testament*, Ephesians, 5:33

⁶ *New Testament*, 1 Corinthians, 14:35

But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.⁷

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands... For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands. Like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord.⁸

According to the Testaments, it was woman who was deceived by *Iblīs* so naturally she lost her right to command her husband, and consequently it is her punishment to remain silent and obedient to her husband:

A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.⁹

The husband is held as the sole reason for feminine creation:

For man did not come from woman, but woman from man. And man was not made for woman, but woman was made for man.¹⁰

This notion is also found in the sacred text of the world's most ancient unrevealed religion, Hinduism. Man is endowed with absolute supremacy in both religious and conjugal departments, for example it is stated in the law-giving book of Hinduism *Dharam Shāstrā* or 'The Laws of Manu' that women should be excluded from the sacred religious ceremony of *Agnīhūtrā* (purification by fire):

⁷ Ibid, 11:3

⁸ *New Testament*, 1 Peter, 3:1,5-6

⁹ *New Testament*, 1 Timothy, 2:11-14

¹⁰ *New Testament*, 1 Corinthians, 11:8-9

Neither a girl, nor a (married) young woman, nor a man of little learning, nor a fool, nor a man in great suffering, nor one uninitiated, shall offer an Agnīhūtrā.¹¹

Women are ordained to remain under the supervision of their husbands:

Day and night woman must be kept in dependence by the males (of) their (families), and, if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control. Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age; a woman is never fit for independence.¹²

Even if the wife earns from her own means it is the husband who is considered as the master of all her earnings and possessions:

A wife, a son, and a slave, these three are declared to have no property; the wealth which they earn is (acquired) for him to whom they belong.¹³

Furthermore it is declared clearly that wife has to obey her husband even she finds any physical or moral defect in him as he is her *Patī Dīv*:

Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure (elsewhere), or devoid of good qualities, (yet) a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife.¹⁴

So by a number of ways, whether it is the obligation for women to be submissive and subject to their husbands, or the injunction to fear them, religious dependence and inferiority, the notion of creation of woman for the pleasure of man, deprivation of productive resources etc. the inferiority of

¹¹ Manū, *The Laws of Manū*, 11:36

¹² Ibid, 9:2,3

¹³ Ibid, 8:416

¹⁴ Ibid, 5:154

womanhood and superiority of masculinity is mentioned frequently in the New Testament and *Dharam Shāstrā* .

Qawāmīyat: A Critical Analysis of Oriental Perspectives

What is established in the sacred texts of world's most prominent religions, Christianity and Hinduism, is actually what should be called as '*superiority of man over woman*' but according to the Holy Qur'an man is neither the lord nor the master of woman but simply responsible for her maintenance. Because of their typical mind set and conservatism, Orientalists are however unable to perceive the loveliness and significance of this feminine favoring holy verse. Their shortsightedness depicts their anti-*Qur'ānic* argument which is a crystal clear proof of their confusion about the word قَوَامُونَ As

Nigosian misinterpret it by saying:

Unquestionably, the Quran and the Hadith markedly improved the role and status of women relative to the pre-Islamic period, but on social and economic issue the Quran seemingly favored men [Q4:34].¹⁵

Ibn Waraq also misconstrues it by understanding it as absolute authority of man over woman:

*And since it is the man who assumes financial responsibilities for the family, it is argued, it is natural that he should have total power over the woman. These same jurists, of course, totally neglect changing social conditions where a woman may contribute her salary to the up keep of her family—power over women remains a divine command and “natural” or “in the nature of things”.*¹⁶

¹⁵ S. A. Nigosian, *Islam: Its History, Teachings, and Practices*, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 90

¹⁶ Ibn Warraq, *Why I Am Not A Muslim*, (New York: Prometheus Books, 1995), 312

According to Ruth M. Roded, the holy verse 4:34 is actually an injunction to establish the superiority of man over woman in Islam, although she admits the utility of *Qur'ānic* laws in favouring women:

Gender relations are most succinctly expressed in a phrase that has been widely quoted throughout the centuries to support the superiority of man over woman.

Misapprehension can also be seen in Gibb's conception:

The most striking example is to be found in his[¶] legislation on divorce and family life. That his reforms enhanced the status of women in general by contrast with the anarchy of pre-Islamic Arabia is universally admitted. Yet the Koran explicitly maintains the superior right of the father and of the husband.¹⁷

Such misunderstandings arise because critics misinterpret the basic word as in the given example, and relate it with some anti-women behavior like assertion of men's authority over women, exclusion of women from authoritative positions, misogyny etc. As mentioned earlier, this dogma actually reflects the mindset which developed through centuries because of intense anti-women traditions which have been endorsed in the world's most ancient and prominent civilizations and institutions, i.e. Chinese, Indian, and the Christian church. As Earnst says: "*disentangling the roles of the ethics of gender and patriarchal history is a task that now is being undertaken in every culture, even when it does not bear the name of feminism*"¹⁸. With respect to women, the partisan manner of *Qur'ānic* injunctions is so prominent that even critics who misunderstand the verse confess, from the context and common

[¶] The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.)

¹⁷ Hamilton A.R.Gibb, *Mohammedanism*, 2nd ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), 33, 34

¹⁸Carl W. Earnst, *Following Muhammad*,(London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 143

mode of the Quran, that its commandments are overall in favor of women. After criticizing the verse Q2:228 in a usual oriental style, Gaudefroy finally admits:

Law and custom give the husband absolute authority over his wife and children. But Qur'anic law, very favorable to the wife, has given her a status which is, in some ways, more advantageous than that bestowed by modern European law. Financially she retains her own separate estate; she remains mistress of her dowry and of any goods she may acquire by inheritance, by gift, or as ornament the fruit of her own labor.¹⁹

Sourdel admits that Islamic laws favour women, and blames traditions and trends of particular regions, rather than women related commandments of the Quran:

...in the force of absolute authority exercised by the head of the family, the wife can scarcely profit from the advantages the Law confers upon her, unless she is able to succeed by virtue of her own personal qualities in making herself appreciated and listen to.²⁰

By analyzing the oriental concepts in this respect, it can be concluded easily that the conception of *superiority of man* has been so entrenched in the unconscious of non-Muslims that they always confuse it with the *Qur'anic* concept of *Qawāmīyat*. In fact it was Al-Qur'an which first challenged the deep rooted fable of *superiority of man over woman* and introduced the concept of *Qawāmīyat* which converted man's superiority into responsibility for maintenance of women. This distinction between superiority and maintenance is inconceivable for Orientalists, because of the following two reasons:

¹⁸ Maurice Gaudefroy Demombynes, *Muslim Institutions*, trans. John P. Macgregor, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1961), 132

¹⁹ Dominique Sourdel, *Islam*, (New York: Walker and Company, 1949), 68, 69

- i. Lack of awareness of Arabic language leading to miscomprehension of the word قَوَّامُونَ
- ii. The typical mind set of the West which is well cooked up by the 'sacred texts' according to which woman is inferior in many respects as compare to man. But all these allegations are neutralized automatically when we compare the actual meanings of (قَوَّامُونَ) *Qawāmūn* which is the clear evidence that the seminal word itself is misunderstood by critics.

Meaning & Significance of (قَوَّامُونَ) *Qawāmūn*

Qawāmūn is the plural form of *Qawām* derived from the root word *Qāma* meaning 'he stood up', but when used with (ب) *bi* or (على) *'alā*, carries the significance of maintaining, managing etc. For example *Qāma bil yatīm* (قام باليتيم) means 'he maintained the orphan' and *Qāma 'alihā* (قام عليها) means 'he maintained the woman and managed her affairs'²¹ (الرجال مُتَكَفِّلُونَ بِأُمُورِ النِّسَاءِ), *alrijālu mutakallifūna bi 'umūri nisā* also means as her caretaker, custodian, guardian, keeper²², the word *Qawām* stands for a person who is responsible for the right conduct, safeguard and maintenance of the affairs of an individual, an institution or an organization²³, thus, man is mentioned as protector and manager of the affairs of women.

²¹ *Lis ā n-ul- 'Arab, s.v.* "قوم"

²² *Al-Maūrid Al-Wasīt, 7th ed., s.v.* "قوم"

²³ *Pīr Muhammad Karam Shāh, Z īyā' -ul-Qur' ān, Vol.1, (Lahore:Zīyā' -ul-Qur' ān Publications 9 Al-Kar ī m Market Urdū Bāzār, 1402Hj.), 341; Abū'l-'Alā Maudūdī, TafhīmulQur'an, (Lahore:Islamic publications, 2000) vol. 1, p. 349.*

In the verse 4:34, the merit of the *Qawām* is based upon the following two standards:

1. (*bimā' faḍalallāhū baḍuhum ba'din*)... because *Allāh* has given the one more (strength) than the other;
2. (*wabimā 'anfaqū min 'amwālihim*)...and because they spend on them out of their property.

The holy words *'(wabimā 'anfaqū min 'amwālihim)*²⁴ and 'because they support them from their means'²⁵. indicate that *Qawāmīyat* (guardianship) should be given to that gender which is more capable to earn and spend money for the maintenance of the other gender. As a matter of fact, the physical and mental design of man and woman point to the actuality that man is better equipped physically and mentally to bear the burden of the family as the financial *Qawām*, because he is capable of greater effort in seeking the livelihood by undertaking difficult and labor consuming efforts in agriculture, industry and other professions.

The Qur'ānic Concept of Maintainer & Responsible & Latest Scientific Studies

Physical strength and stamina are given much importance while giving preference and assigning responsibilities in the *Holy Qur'ān*. When the daughter of *Shu'īb* (A.S.) recommended *Hadrat Mūsā* (A.S.), she referred to his physical might ²⁶. Because of his physical strength, *Tālūt* was preferred over rich men and was selected as the leader over them ²⁷. Once the Holy Prophet also mentioned that a strong believer is better and is

²⁴ *Al-Nisā'*, 4:34

²⁵ Translation by Yūsuf 'Alī, accessed at <http://www.multimediaquran.com/quran/019/019-004.html>

²⁶ *Al-Qasas*, 28:26

²⁷ *Al-Baqarah*, 2:247

more lovable to *Allāh* than a weak believer²⁸. The responsibility to maintain women has given to men because of this reason as it is the man not woman who meets the criteria and possesses the abilities which are essential to become a breadwinner.

In both physical aspects, internal and external, man is granted more physical strength and stamina than woman. According to average human height in particular region men usually measure to be 6 inches taller than women²⁹, men and women also differ in weight issue, as men are taller than women so naturally they attain more weight due to more muscle mass attached to comparatively longer bones, so they weigh about 15% more than women with respect to social, cultural, and regional affects³⁰. Consequently, women possess lesser physical strength than men because:

- i. Female body converts food into fat more than energy whereas male body converts food reserves into consumable body energy.
- ii. Because of higher level of testosterone men have more muscle fiber on their bones than women so they enjoy more physical strength.³¹

Not only physical strength but men are also endowed by more physical stamina because the design of their circulatory and

²⁸ *Imām Muslim, Al-Jami' 'Al- Şaḥīḥ* Book on Destiny, Chapter: Affairs Pertaining to Strength, and Shedding off Weakness, and Seeking Help from *Allāh* and Trust in the Measures set by *Allāh*, Hadith No.6945

²⁹ Gustafsson A. and Lindenfors P., "Human Size Evolution", *Journal of Human Evolution* 47, no. 4(2004), <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0047248404001046>

³⁰ Cynthia L. Ogden, Cheryl D. Fryar, Margaret D. Carroll and Katherine M. Flegal, "Mean Body Weight, Height, and Body Mass Index", *Advance Data Vital & Health Statistics*, no. 347(2004), <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/ad/ad347.pdf>

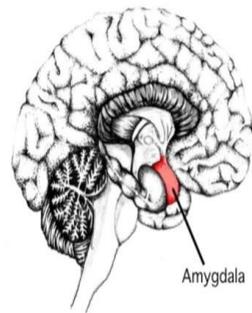
³¹ R. J. Maughan, J. S. Watson, and J. Weir, "Strength and Cross Sectional Area of Human Skeleton Muscle", *The Journal of Physiology* 338, no. 5(1983), <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1197179/>

respiratory system helps them to earn more livelihood in external environment than women, the important distinctive features in this respect are:

- i. At birth, the heart size of men and women is equal but after adolescence heart mass increases more in men than women, the difference is noted to about 15-30%.³²
- ii. Female heart also differ in structure than that of men, it is smaller but has bigger blood vessels than men's heart, so because of small size heart expels smaller amount of blood with every contraction, to compensate such deficiency sympathetic nervous system activates itself to increase heart beat but it results in increase of blood pressure than parasympathetic nervous system slow down heart beat; due to such mechanism women are more prone to orthostatic hypotension than men.³³

Women cannot be permitted to perform heavy physical or mental tasks also because of the following noticeable gender differences, as unlike men:

- i. Women have 56% lesser lung volume than men;
- ii. Comparatively have smaller hearts than men;
- iii. They have less oxygen carrying capacity because of less hemoglobin level and red blood cells (about 10% less than men);

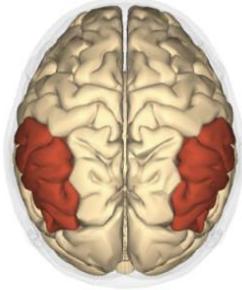


³² Andrew R. Marks and Ushman S. Neill, eds., *Science in Medicine*, (Burlington: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2008), 563

³³ Catherine Ingram Fogel and Nancy Fugate Woods, eds., *Women's Health Care in Advance Practice Nursing*, (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2008), 241

- iv. Speed of wound healing is also slower in women because of having lesser circulatory clotting agents i.e. platelets and vitamin K etc.³⁴

To attach oneself with some profession is indispensable to earn livelihood. As known that every profession has some specific demands so some jobs demand for vigilance in potential dangerous situations, an important characteristic found in men because of specific brain area called Amygdala which is an almond-shaped group of nuclei located deep into the brain. This part is considered as emotional brain area connected to different brain sections. It becomes active by external negative stimuli. In women amygdala is connected to hypothalamus (a brain part connect nervous system to endocrine system) which controls inter-body stability i.e. breathing, heart beating. In men this part is strongly joined with impulse controlling nerves so it reacts differently with respect to different linkage combinations, that is men are more aggressive and responsive in showing of negative emotions³⁵. It is the impact of such design that women have more inter-resistance power but lack of vigilance in potentially dangerous situations in outside encounters than that of men.



To achieve the given task and accomplish the huge responsibility of financial maintenance some additional qualities are required, for example attention, perception, visual processing, memory tasks, sensing relationship between body parts, recognition of any affect, judgment of speed and position, time estimation and verbal processing. According to latest

³⁴ Muriel Lederman and Ingrid Bartsch, eds., *The Gender and Science Reader*, (New York: Routledge, 2001), 315

³⁵ Ibid; Joan C. Chrisler and Donald R. McCreary, eds., Vol. 1, *Hand Book of Gender Research in Psychology*, (New York: Springer, 2010), 240

scientific research, volume of the specific area (Inferior-Parietal Lobule [IPL]) which serves these functions is greater in men than women. Exact location of Inferior-Parietal Lobule (IPL) is at either side of upper part in backward direction of human head. Because of larger left IPL volume, total IPL volume is greater in men than women. As visuospatial processing and cognition is also particularly sub-served by left IPL so because of left IPL volume difference, men also outperform women in above two aspects.³⁶

Even the internal hormones support manhood to meet the criteria of financial maintainer and breadwinner, the responsibility which is laid upon him by the Holy Qur'an; for example estrogen which is a group (Estrogens AmE + Oestrogen BE) of female sex hormones secretes estrus which arouses sexual desire (libido) and helps to develop secondary sexual development. In women, these hormones (which are higher in females than males) help to lower aggression, competitiveness, self-assertion and self-reliance. But because of higher level of estrogen women lack in some intellectual departments in which men supersede them. These are:

- i. Attention in Physical Environment:** Because those areas (Basal Ganglia) engage themselves more quickly in men which control bodily movements (like walking)
- ii. Physical Response:** The brain stem controls impulses like "fight or flight" and is greater in males so they react more quickly in the state of fear and when emotionally charged.
- iii. Limited Period of Stress:** Cortisol functions as 'stress hormone' because it responds to depression, stress and anxiety. The cortisol level increases in

³⁶ Melissa E. Frederikse, Angela Lu, Elizabeth Aylward, Patrick Barta and Godfrey Pearlson, "Sex Differences in the Inferior Parietal Lobule", *Cerebral Cortex* 9, no. 8(1999), <http://cercor.oxfordjournals.org/content/9/8/896>

men and women equally in stress conditions but it decreases more quickly in males so they come out of such condition earlier than women, perhaps because men have 52% more level of serotonin, commonly known as 'feel good chemical' which helps an individual to cool down during the time of conflict, so women get depressed for longer periods than men.

- iv. **Aggression:** As a result of Vasopressin hormone secreted by pituitary gland and testosterone hormone secreted by male's testicles, men get more aggressive towards other males and have higher level of competitiveness, self-assertion and self-reliance than women.³⁷

Qawāmīyat: The Determination of Responsibilities According to Gender Differences

Two departments of human life are of vital importance (i) Financial Resources: to survive by having basic needs of life (ii) Reproduction and good brought up of constructive group of people for the survival of humankind and progress of a civilized state. The existence of civilized human race is impossible without the proper handling of these two institutions. These two departments are divided equally between man and woman where man is selected as financial maintainer of his wife so that she can only focus on development and training of new generation to make them a useful individual of the state. Thus she is given the responsibility of second fundamental sector. The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) said:

³⁷ Michael Gurian, *Boys and Girls Learn Differently*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 20-25

وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ وَالْمَرْأَةُ

رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَوَلَدِهِ وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْهُمْ³⁸

...a man is guardian of his family and is responsible for his subjects; a woman is the guardian of her husband's home and of his children and is responsible for them.

Allāh Almighty designed every creation in accordance with its necessities, responsibilities and purpose of creation; for example as carnivore, the lion is given big canines and claws which facilitate him in consuming muscle mass whereas the bull is bestowed with chewing-cud system to easily digest cellulose of plant matter. Can someone charge allegation that by endowment of such mechanism the bull is superior to the lion? Actually if this allegation is charged it would reflect the ignorance of its critic towards the association of laws of creation and legislation about such creation.

The reproductive system of woman and its influence in her body is the most decisive feature to declare the specific sphere of her responsibility. The womb and reproductive system of woman indicate her responsibility of giving birth, bring up and train the new generation for which she has to remain at home more often than man, so she cannot go out to maintain herself. As household tasks cannot generate any income, so it on man on whom the entire financial burden falls of maintaining her and the household expenditure.

Reproductive system of human male and female are entirely different in their functions, organs and systems because male body lacks those parts and mechanisms which are distinctive icons of women reproductive system i.e. formation of

³⁸*Imām Bukhārī Bukhari, Al-Jami' Al-Sahih, The Book of Judgements, Chapter: Obey Allāh and Obey the Messenger and those of you who are in Authority, Hadith No. 6719*

ovum (egg), menstrual cycle, pregnancy, childbirth etc³⁹. Her whole body is designed to facilitate her in performing those responsibilities given to her by nature, for example, her hip and waist ratio, which is quite different from men because unlike men. Women's waists are more slender than their hip section as their pelvis size is larger and broader. Actually women's pelvis region is designed for fetus hosting, pregnancy and birth delivery so they attain more room and flexibility in this area than men⁴⁰. Even their skin tone supports them during maternity because of having low level of melanin and they have a lighter skin color than men (with respect to region) which is an essential requisite of pregnancy and lactation as vitamin D is necessary in both of these conditions and blend itself more easily with lighter skin color.⁴¹

To keep equilibrium with her role in creation, women's internal and external physical characteristics are perfectly designed for child bearing and its development, and it seems that she is not designed to earn livelihood or to perform heavy, difficult and dangerous tasks in external environment. For example take her limbic system as an instance, limbic system, which is a complex nervous system including several areas near the edge of cortex⁴², is related with instincts (hunger, thirst, dominance, sex, care for children etc), moods (anger, fear, pleasure etc.) and motivation⁴³ and women have larger and

³⁹ Daniel D. Chiras, *Human Biology*, 5th ed., (U.S.A.: Jones and Bartlett Learning, 2007), 381

⁴⁰ Michael J. Alter, *Science of Flexibility*, 3rd ed., (U.S.A.: Human Kinetics, 1952), 120

⁴¹ Nina G. Jablonski and George Chapline, "The Evolution of Human Skin Coloration", *Journal of Human Evolution* 39, no. 1(2000), <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0047248400904032>

⁴² oxforddictionaries.com, s.v. "limbic," <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/English/limbic> (accessed Feb.23, 2013)

⁴³ Ibid; Mary V. Solanto, Amy F.T. Arnsten and F. Xavier Castellanos, eds., *Stimulant Drugs and ADHD Basic and Clinical Neuroscience*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 134

deeper limbic system than men. Because of such dissimilarities women not only differ from men in many intellectual aspects but also enjoy many advantages as a caretaker. They also face the following disadvantages:

Advantages

- i. Women can express their feelings and emotions better than men.
- ii. Women can make strong bonds and connect themselves with others more easily which is a primary requisite of a good baby caretaker.
- iii. Women have more accurate sense of smell, an important requirement for baby nursing.

Disadvantages

- i. Women get frustrate quickly so attempt suicide three times more often than men.
- ii. Women depress more than men at the time of hormonal change.⁴⁴

Following are also those behavior aspects found in women, which are extremely non professional and unsuitable for them to conduct financial responsibilities, these are:

Passiveness to Encounter Part/Opposite Sex

It is declared by recent assessments, analysis and researches that women are intimidated by the opposite sex because unlike men, women can influence other women but are unable to influence men. They simply avoid feminine advices, orders and prohibitions but on the other hand women can hardly resist masculine influence.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Albert J. LaChance, *The Architecture of the Soul: A Unitive Model of the Human Person*, (California: North Atlantic Books, 2006), 159

⁴⁵ Thomas Eckes and Hanns M. Trautner, eds., *The Developmental Psychology of Gender*, (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., 2012), 56

Rapid Mood Fluctuations

Because of natural internal changes, mood fluctuation is noted to be far more in women than in men. There is a strong relation between estrogen level and mood variations so whenever estrogen level fluctuates mood inconstancy occurs in women. When estrogen influences the central nervous system, it manipulates those brain areas which are connected with emotional behavior and arousal, cognition, mood sentimental experiences and intensity of emotional expression, i.e. the neurotransmitters in amygdale, hippocampus and prefrontal lobes and H.P.A. axis (Hypothalamus-Pituitary Adernal Axis). Scientists have discovered periodical flux which can be easily visible in following feminine conditions:

- i. Puberty [Because of intense fluctuation in estrogen level, depression and emotional disturbance can be easily observed in the initial stage of adolescence]
- ii. Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) [Due to premenstrual pains, discomfort and physical unrest]
- iii. During Menstrual Period [Because of pain, uncleanliness and anxiety]
- iv. During Pregnancy
- v. Premenopausal Stage
- vi. Menopause

So according to recent studies, 95% women have regular psychosis (visible increase in negative emotions) due to estrogen impacts, as a result women get depressed twice more than men because from puberty to age 55, women are faced by different internal changes which occur because of the influence of estrogen on different emotion-related glands and brain parts.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Chen ChunPing, Cheng DaZhi, and Luo YueJia, "Estrogen Impacts on Emotion: Psychological, Neuroscience and Endocrine Studies", *Science Sinica Vitae* 41, no. 11(2011), <http://life.scichina.com:8082/sciC/EN/abstract/abstract505514.shtml>

Grudge & Animosity

Women avoid being criticized by others as they want a feeling of self-worth from external rather than internal sources so they react intensely to other's negative opinion and take it personally, in this way a non-scientific belief exists that women hold grudge for, comparatively, longer course of time than men.⁴⁷

Garrulous & Talkative

As mentioned before, more parts of woman brain function in communication so consequently they are chattier and more gossip-lovers than men in routine social life. They seek to sort out problems through discussion, whereas men decide first and then arrange discussion about problems.

The human brain consists of two major parts:

1. Right Hemisphere
2. Left Hemisphere

The whole region is called Cerebral Hemisphere

Unlike men, women have more blood flow to the right hemisphere and hence it is also called "female brain". Different directions of blood flow play a vital role to determine such feminine attitudes which make it different from men and difficult for her to focus on issues for longer course of time. It is the result of such blood flow that unlike men women are:

- i. Holistic: as they avoid details and follow the whole picture
- ii. Capricious: because they flit from one task to another swiftly so are less task-oriented thinkers
- iii. Realistic: prefer to see real objects, words in context and formula in working

⁴⁷ Jan Riordan and Karen Wambach, *Breastfeeding and Human Lactation*, 3rd ed., (Canada: Jones & Bartlett Publishers, 2010), 20

- iv. Intuitive: they can solve mathematical equations but can't explain how they have⁴⁸
- v. Communicative: women can communicate their emotions well because they seek out problems through conversation on different issues so they can accumulate conveniently
- vi. Caretaker: going through stressful situations women usually opt for “tend or befriend” policy, an essential natural instinct to care for children and hang on with them for long time.⁴⁹

Quality/Criteria/Requirement	Men	Women
Physical Strength	+	-
Respiratory Stamina	+	-
Cardiac Tendency for Heavy Tasks	+	-
Mathematical Skills	+	-
Task Oriented/Low Rate of Mode Fluctuation	+	-
Strong Visual Processing	+	-
Low Stress Rate	+	-
Competitiveness	+	-
Dominance to Encounter Part	+	-
Rapid Wound Healing	+	-
Low Rate of Personal Animosity	+	-
Vigilance in Dangerous Situations	+	-
Ability to Read Minute Details	+	-

Quality/Criteria/Requirement	Men	Women
Ability to Reproduce	-	+
Low Aggressive Rate	-	+
Ability to Make Strong & Long Lasting Bonds	-	+
Physical Flexibility & Delicacy (to reproduce and handle small babies)	-	+
Good Sense of Smell	-	+
Communication & Talkativeness	-	+
Intuition	-	+
Capricious Temperament (to deal at a time both with adult [husband] and small baby)	-	+
Holistic	-	+

⁴⁸ Stephen Bavolek, “Male and Female Brain Functioning”, Birth & Beyond Program Sacramento, California, www.nurturingparenting.com.

⁴⁹Michael Rucker, “9 Differences Between the Male and Female Brain”, www.brainfitnessforlife.com/.

From the above discussion it becomes clear that man is endowed with abilities to perform financial matters in external physical environment whereas woman possesses all the qualities of a good caretaker. From the following tables it can be concluded that men have all those qualities which are required to meet the criteria of financial maintainer [table 1] and women outperform men in their own particular field [table 2]:

These two tables show the gender differences by which the two departments of fundamental importance are divided between man and woman and also show how both genders are endowed by natural abilities to meet the particular criteria of their specified responsibilities. The allegation charged, is actually the ignorance of these fundamental facts which has led the promoters of feminism to believe that both sexes should have the same powers, and the same responsibilities. In reality, woman differs profoundly from man, as Carrel argues in his noble prize winning book that each cell of her body bears the mark of her sex. The same is true of her organs and, above all, of her nervous system. Physiological laws are as inexorable as those of the corporeal world. They cannot be replaced by human wishes. We are obliged to accept them just as they are. Women should develop their aptitudes in accordance with their own nature, without trying to imitate the males. Their part in the progress of civilization is higher than that of men. They should not abandon their specific functions⁵⁰. That is why the status of the Muslim mother is far higher than that of the father because responsibilities like caretaking, development and training of the new generation is considered as important as the financial provision for which man is obligated. So Muslim womanhood is given the package by which she can live according to her feminine nature yet be granted a highly revered status. She is not required to adopt any employment to get social esteem

⁵⁰ Alexis Carrel, *Man the Unknown*, 7th ed., (U.S.A.: Harper & Brothers, 1935), 90

because *contrary to Western socialization, Islam highly values motherhood and the nurturing qualities of women. Motherhood is not merely valued in Islam, but acknowledged as an important performance equal to labor and is also supported by men.*⁵¹

Conclusion

Unlike other religions, rather than superiority, Muslim man is given by the financial responsibility of the women which includes everything she needs⁵². This huge responsibility bestows an elevated status to man. Moreover, according to Islamic teachings man is as responsible to sustain the marital bond as woman is. For the total application of *the concept of Qur'ānic Qawāmīyat*, all practices of misogyny are condemned⁵³ because men are advised to act appropriately as a *Qawām* and financial maintainer. In addition to exclusion from financial responsibilities, it is womanhood in Islam which also enjoys certain concessions from religious, conjugal and social duties which are however, unavoidable for Muslim men, because there are many luxuries and comforts which are limited only to Muslim women. Man is given such status not because he is man but for many responsibilities which he is obliged to perform and which are not laid upon women and this is the *Qur'ānic* law of nature: 'More the Responsibility More the Status'.

⁵¹ Karin van Nieuwkerk, ed., *Women Embracing Islam: Gender and Conversion in the West*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 9

⁵² Al-Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh Al-Sunnat*, Vol.2 (Beirut: Dār-ul-Fikar, 1997), 148

⁵³ (قال رسول الله: تطعمها إذا أكلت ونكسوها إذا اكتسبت ولا تضرب الوجه ولا تقبح ولا تحجر إلا في البيت) Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Masnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*, Vol. 4, (Beirut: Dār Ahyā Al-Turās Al-'Arabī, 1991), 446, Hadith No. 20025