

Chapter 4: Women's Cooperation in Social Life

The arena of social life being the third area of search and strival of son of Adam for attaining to perfection, in which a great portion of aptitudes and abilities are put in practice and flourishing, as they be effective also in realising individual maturities and success in family life. Further the social life is becoming nowadays much more miscellaneous and extensive than it was in the past. The examples for this can be seen in employment, art, sports, minute and enormous management in the society, parties and associations, legal procedure, and arbitration, education and training.

In other words, it can be said that the social life covers 3 fields:

1. Employment and economical activities;
2. Social activities, like education and training, physical exercise and art;
3. Political participation.

These being the three main domains of participation of women in social life.

Now the following question is raised: Is this area, with all its dimensions, restricted to men, with no role left for women? Or no confinement being there and this field endures no sexuality? Or is it that with accepting the participation and cooperation we should ignore any difference between women and men?

Some are of the opinion that women being created for the house and housekeeping only. Abul'Ala Al--Mawdudi, an Indian Muslim scholar, says:

“Politics, government administration, military and high services and alike are undertaken by men restrictively. When Islam charges the women with aiding the wounded during wars, this should never be taken to mean that Muslims charge them during peace time with running libraries, schools, workshops, associations and parliaments, since they were never created for performing such jobs. Besides, charging the woman with works for which she was not created by nature, would bring her failure and disappointment.

Stating names of great women having outstanding background in these fields as recorded in history books, never changes the truth, as the criterion for judging the women being to view them the same eye as a group and with regard to the constitution on which they were created.¹

Some of Shi'i writers are reported to have said also:

Therefore the women should be either connected or pregnant, or nursing so as to be counted among the humanity caravan that proceeding toward the Worshipped and Beloved and Centrepoint for the eagers and Ka'bah for lovers, and searchers for reaching His Sanctuary of safety and security, altogether with men.²

If every woman tries, instead of engaging herself in various social tasks, arts and handicrafts, give birth to a child, grow it up and deliver it to the society with existentialist capabilities, she will elevate herself to the highest status proportionate to the number of her children.³

Such extremist views led some other thinkers to base their viewpoints on the Qur'an and say that: No trade or social profession is prohibited for women except whoredom!⁴

Consulting and examining the holy Qur'an and biography of the Prophet (S) and infallible Imams will definitely show us a rational and bright path toward truth. Herewith I shall first demonstrate the pivots of social activities from the Qur'an and Prophet's Sunnah and conduct "Seerah", and then I will give finish to manifesting the motives of social joint cooperation of women with conditions of this presence.

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Permission for Social Cooperation

Allegiance to Government

The holy Qur'an admits swearing allegiance to government, which being the most salient manifestation of the political activity in every society, to be practised by women.

"O "Our" Prophet "Muhammad" when come unto thee believing women pledging that they will not aught with God, and will neither steal, nor commit adultery, nor kill their children, and they will utter not slander, nor utter any falsehood which they had forged themselves between their hands and their feet, and will not disobey them in what is fair, then accept thou their pledge, and ask forgiveness for them from God; Verily God is Oft Forgiving, the Most Merciful." (Qur'an, 60: 12).

Further, the history of early Islamic era is indicative of accomplishment of this political process on the

part of women; As it is reported that during the 2nd Aqabah Allegiance “bay'at alaqabah aththaniyah”, in which a great multitude of Medina men, after performing rites of hajj pilgrimage, took an oath of allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (S), two women under the names of UmmImarah and Asma' were present too.⁵

Also allegiance was sworn to the Prophet by other women at Mecca besides these two⁶ “at Medina”.

In his Tabaqaat, Ibn Sa'd has dedicated several pages for explaining how the women took an oath of allegiance to the Prophet, and showing contents of these oaths of allegiance.⁷ And in another chapter of this book he stated names of seventy women who took part in these acknowledgements “bay'ahs”.⁸

In the event that Qur'anic verse was to be used in these oaths of allegiance “bay'ahs”, the women have taken an oath on two pledges: One being religiosity and adoption of Islam, and the other being acknowledging the Prophet as head of government “leader”.

Muhammad Ali Qutub has also dedicated a full book for elaboration on subject of women's taking an oath of allegiance to the Prophet (S).⁹

Participation in Immigration

Immigration was one of socio-political movements that occurred twice during the early Islamic era, in both of which Muslim women participated. These immigrations had so many political dimensions, one of which being banishment and rejection of the regime ruling over the people. The second dimension being communication of the message of new religion, and thirdly it represented a political precautionary tactic for safeguarding and eternalising the new-fashioned school “Islam”, to this meaning that when the polytheists would annihilate the Muslims in Mecca, other followers of the new religion would appear in another place for protecting and defending them.

The holy Qur'an has in many verses, told about migration of Muslim women.

First: It makes migration obligatory on the women and men to the same level:

“Verily those whom the angels take away “at death” while they are unjust to their “own” selves “in sin”, they “the angels” shall ask “the sinner souls”: “In what state were ye?” They shall reply: “Weakened “and oppressed” were we in the land;” They “the angels” will say: “Was not the land of God vast “enough” for you to migrate there in?” So these “are those” whose refuge shall be Hell: and what a bad resort it is. Except the “really” weakened ones from among the men and the women and the children, who have not in their power the means “to escape from the unbelievers” and nor they find the “right” way.” “(Qur'an, 4:97, 98).

What is gleaned of these verses is that all those disdaining from migration their abode will be in Hell, whether be men or women or children. So all the Muslims, men and women, should migrate so as to

keep God's religion safe and intact.

Second: The Qur'an makes a special reference to migration of women together with the Prophet toward Medina.

“O “Our” Prophet! Verily we have made lawful unto thee thy wives whom thou hast given their dowries, and those whom thy right hand possessed out of those whom God returned unto thee “without war”, and the daughters of thy paternal uncle, and the daughters of thy paternal aunts, and daughters of thy maternal uncle and the daughters of thy maternal aunts who fled with you...” (Qur’an, 33:50).

One of the women participated in this migration was Asma¹, wife of AzZubayr. She says: In this migration process I was conceived to a child and period of pregnancy was over at that time. On reaching Medina I gave birth to my son Abdallah at Quba.¹⁰

Third: In another verse examining the immigrant women:

“O ye who believe! when come unto you believing womenrefugees, then ye examine them; God knoweth best their faith; and if ye find them to be believing women, return ye not them unto the disbelievers; neither these women are lawful for them, nor are those men lawful for them...” (Qur’an, 60: 10).

In Hudaibiyyah peace Treaty it was determined that in case of coming of Muslims to Medina they should be repatriated. However, Allah the Exalted revealed this verse in which He exempted the women from that Treaty. Ibn Abbas is reported to have said: The exam or interrogation of immigrant women was thus, that the women should confess and admit that: “I pledge and assure here that I have not migrated out of grudge against my husband, or out of desire and inclination toward the new land or for gaining worldly coveted objects or profits, but the only purpose and goal for which I migrated being love to God and the Prophet.”¹¹

Among the women who migrated and were subjected to examination I can refer to Damimah daughter of Bishr, Subay'ah daughter of Harith, Borough daughter of Aqabah and Abdah daughter of Abd Al-Aziz.

Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil

The third social activity that the Qur'an attributed to women being to enjoin good and forbid evil "alamr bil ma'ruf wannahy anilmunkar".

It is known that bidding to decent deeds and forbidding from indecent acts being one of social duties with which Islam charged every mature man and woman. Eleven verses are revealed in the Qur'an talking about this religious duty and rule, as a kind of social guardianship that the believers have over each other. In the following verse this duty is introduced as a common obligation on women and men:

"And the believer men and the believer women they are guardians to one another; they enjoin good and forbid evil and they establish "the regular" prayer and pay the poorrate and obey God and His Apostle "Muhammad". These, God will bestow on them His mercy; verily God is All-Mighty, AllWise." (Qur'an, 9:71).

This verse indicates that the Islamic society enjoys one and the same identity, which cannot be disintegrated by masculinity and femininity. Within this group, having one identity, every individual has guardianship over the other. Hence, they should all undertake and commit themselves to perform this duty and Divine charge.

Ownership

The holy Qur'an confirms doing business and exerting efforts on part of women and men for earning living, arranging and establishing their right of ownership over what they have earned.

"Unto men a fortune from that which they have earned, and unto women a fortune from that which they have earned." (Qur'an, 4:32).

In this verse, both earning the living and ownership for woman and man have been spoken out. And it separated between women and men for the only reason to dismiss the wrong notion and view which confines and distinguishes ownership, earning and economical labour for men alone.

It is to be noted that no evidence is there in the verse indicating that what is intended by earning and business being only intellectual and moral practices. On this basis, the exegetes gave three probabilities for this verse: wages and labour remuneration, economical earning and activity, and inheritance.¹² Some others gave only two interpretations: wages and remuneration for work, and inheritance.¹³

Performing Economic-Social Activities

The holy Qur'an refers to daughters of Shu'ayb in state of performing economic social activities, reiterating their modesty during work. In the following verses, the connection between women and men can be clearly seen:

"And when he arrived at the water of Madyan, he found on it a group of men "watering their flocks" and found he besides them two women keeping back "their flocks"; Said "Moses": "What aileth you?" Said the two "women": "We cannot water until the shepherds take away "their sheep from the water", and our father is very old. So he watered "their flocks" for them, then retired he unto the shade, "and" then said he:

"O my Lord! Verily of what Thou hast sent down unto me of the good, I stand in need." Then came unto him one of the two women walking bashfully; Said she: "Verily my father calleth thee so that he may recompense thee for what thou hath watered for us. So when came he unto him and

narrated unto him his story, said he "the old man": "Fear thou not, thou art "now" secure from the unjust people." Said one of the two women: "O my father! Employ him, verily the best of those who thou canst employ is the strong "man" the trusted "one".(Qur'an, 28:232).

In these verses, the shepherd Shu'ayb's daughters, relation and speaking with men, social insight and recognising the individuals, and bashfulness and modesty have been well manifested, and confirmed by God.

Sovereignty

The story of Queen of Saba' and her sovereignty is cited in the Qur'an without any criticism or censure. On the other hand the Qur'anic verses introduce her as a person of opinion and consultation and truth-seeking, since when receiving the letter of Prophet Sulayman, she tried to find a solution for the problem, having an inclination toward Sulayman:

"Verily I found a woman ruling over them, and she hath been given plenty of every thing, and she hath a throne magnificent." (Qur'an, 27:23).

"Said "the Queen of Shebah": "O ye chiefs! Verily, has been delivered unto me a letter honourable!" (Qur'an, 27:29).

"Said she: "O ye chiefs! advise me in "this" my affair; "ye know" that I decide not any affair but in your view." (Qur'an, 27:32).

"... Said "the Queen": "My Lord! verily I have been unjust to myself, and I submit "along" with Solomon unto God, the Lord of the worlds." (Qur'an, 27:44).

Ibn Khaldoon considers Balqees "the Queen" to be the designer and builder of Dam of Ma'rab, with having "ruling over" a populous country full of different fruits with no match ever found in the world.¹⁴

Some of the writers viewed this issue in this way:

I had no doubt in regard of what was quoted by Al-Bayhaqi, had I not seen with my own eyes women like Indira Gandhi, daughter of Nehru, who managed and administered seven hundred million people, with a handful of needy people starving to death on the sidewalks, reaching them, through a green revolution, to a position of a wheatexporting nation.¹⁵

Many of clear-sighted men have taken hold of this story, regarding the woman's occupying the highest political posts to be something admissible.¹⁶

Religious and Social Conduct

In the event of mubahalah "cursing each other", which being a religiosocial conduct.

"And unto him who disputeth with thee therein after the knowledge hath come unto thee, say "O Our Apostle Muhammad!" "unto them": "come ye, let us summon our sons, and "ye summon" your sons, and "we summon" our women and "ye" your women, and "we summon" ourselves and "ye" yourselves and then let us invoke and lay the curse of God on the liars!" (Qur'an, 3:60).

Sister for Deliverance

The holy Qur'an reiterates the attempts of the sister of Prophet Moses (A) for his deliverance, as in this verse:

"When thy sister went "unto Pharaoh's wife" and said: "Shall I show you one who will take care of him?" (Qur'an, 20:40).

Participation in Jihad

Participation of women in jihad "Islamic struggle" during the early Islamic era and after it, is known for all. As the women made haste to aid the warriors in the battlefields, preparing the food and looking after the patients, and other things.

1. Anas "Ibn Malik" is reported to have said: During Battle of Uhud, 'A'ishah and Umm Salamah were shifting and handling the leathern bottles of water and pouring them out into mouths of people "giving to thirsty people".¹⁷
2. UmmAtiyyah is reported to have said: "I have accompanied the Messenger of Allah (S) in seven battles "campaigns" altogether, remaining behind their men "in tents", cooking and preparing food for them."¹⁸
3. Hafsa, daughter of Sirin, reported from a Christian woman that she said: My brotherinlaw took part in twelve campaigns with the Prophet (S), and my sister was accompanying him in six battles, saying: We were taking care and looking after the patients "wounded".¹⁹
4. Rabi daughter of Miwaz is reported to have said: "We used to participate in the campaigns with the Prophet (S), replacing and returning the wounded and the killed to Medina."²⁰
5. Anas is reported to have said: "The Messenger of Allah (S) used to take with him in his battles "against disbelievers" UmmSalim and some Christian women, for looking after and curing the wounded."²¹

During Battle of Uhud, when the Muslims left the battlefield UmmImarah remained behind holding the weapon for protecting the Prophet.

Omar Ibn Al-Khattaab used to say: I heard the Messenger of Allah (S) saying during Battle of Uhud: To every side I was turning my face I would see only UmmImarah fighting in defence of me." 22128

During Battle of Hunayn Umm Salim was seen holding a dagger. When the Messenger of Allah (S) asked her for what she was holding a dagger, she said:

I have held it for the reason that if one of the polytheists comes near me "to attack the Muslims", I will rip open his belly. Then the Messenger of Allah (S) broke into a laugh.²³

This issue was so explicit and manifest that many chapters were dedicated for it throughout books of hadith and Sirah. In Saheeh Al-Bukhari & Saheeh Muslim, we can see a chapter under the heading: "The Women's Fighting with the Men."

Employment

Women's engagement in business and employment during the Prophet's lifetime was so extensively common, and women were seen in every and all kinds of professions and trades prevalent and current at that time.

The trade of selling women's adornment outfit was practised by Zaynab Attarah,²⁴ and Mulaykah daughter of Aqra' Thaqafiyya,²⁵ and Asma' daughter of Makhrabah.²⁶ Besides, Zaynab bint Jahash occupied herself with handicrafts.²⁷

An old woman used to occupy herself with business of selling off milk, when Omar "Ibn AlKhattaab" came in contact with her giving her a good advice.²⁸ Also Khawwat bint Jubayr engaged herself with sale of cooking oil.²⁹ Moreover some other women used to do pastoral occupation and tending flocks, like Sallamah, UmmHani and others.³⁰

A woman called Zaynab was a doctor of Tribe of Bano Awd, and occupied herself with curing the patients.³¹ Further other women, like Qaylah mother of Bano Namar, used to exercise commerce business.³²

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Motives of Cooperation

Development of Woman's Character

The social activity paves the way for participation and presence in various arenas, the factor causing development of dimensions of existence and blossoming of talents and aptitudes.

"Whoever gives up merchandise, two thirds of his mind "brain" will be lost."³³

From all this, it becomes clear for us that staying at home or seclusion and separation from society and people results in nothing but abatement and torpidity.

And if the sought slogan or best rule "religion" of the Prophet of Islam (S) being abandoning Rahbaniyyah "monasticism, single life",³⁴ but this fact can never be distinguished to men only, and it includes all followers of this religion, whether being women or men. Further, Rahbaniyyah never means forsaking the society and seeking refuge in caves or dens, but confining the women inside the house and driving them out of arena of life and society being in fact some kind of monasticism.

Also education and learning can only be attained through presence and activity within the society and among people. Besides, through this social presence the ground can be prepared for doing service to other human beings, which in itself being a step toward perfection and maturity. More than this, through social participation man can attain to political cognisance and full knowledge of the age, which being among prerequisite for every and each man.

"That who has full awareness of his time, will not be attacked by vicissitudes of time "mischiefs".³⁵

And thanks to the social activity, the duty of enjoining to good and forbidding from evil can be put to practice, and through this participation guiding the ignorant, which being a human duty, can be fulfilled, beside jihad and immigration.

Therefore, one of incentives and motives for inviting to social life for women, being to sublimate the scientific, theoretical and social character of them, without which they can never attain to such a position or can with exerting much toil.

Easy living

To live a joyful and pure life, needs easiness and comfort, without which life would be stagnant and lose its brightness and joy. Taking easy and be lenient being one of principles of the Islamic Law. Many evidences supporting this fact can be found in the holy Qur'an and Prophetic Sunnah. Allah, in many verses on position of legislating some rule or precept, point out ease and leniency, as in the following verse:

"Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you." (Qur'an, 2: 18).

The holy Prophet too has described his Shari'ah as plain and tolerant law. It is reported from him to have said:

"The Messenger of Allah (S) was not given the option between two alternatives, but he chose the easier one, unless he being sinful as in that case he would be the farthest man from it."³⁶

On this basis, preventing the women from social presence and cooperation is certainly contrary to principle of easiness. If the women are bound to inquire about the questions and ambiguities facing them from Mahram "consanguine" men "with whom marriage is prohibited" and fulfil their duties through a medium, then their lives will not be free from hardship and difficulty. During the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (S) the women used to inquire from the Prophet about the questions and problems they face, the act from which the Prophet never prohibited them. Association and supervision on part of the Prophet and Imams with the women in presence of men, used to be an ordinary matter. I draw the attention of readers to the following old quotations:

1. Ali Ibn Hamzah and Abu Baseer are reported to have said: We have had an appointment with Allmam Al-Baaqir "peace be upon him". So we betook ourselves to his house. On entering it he loudly called: O Sukaynah, bring me the lantern. When she brought the lantern, he said to her: Bring me now the skin that is kept in so and so place. She brought it, when he opened it and extracted from it some yellowlike writing.³⁷

2. Ash-Shaykh At-Tusi, in his book Tahdheeb, reports from Safwan Ibn Mehran "who was a courier" that he said: I have offered Allmam AsSaadiq for view the following: A Muslim woman, who has full knowledge of my profession and whom I know to be a Muslim, calls on me to take her with the caravan, but with no Mahram "man" accompanying her, what should I do? He (S) replied: The believing man is Mahram with the believing woman, citing then the verse: "And the believers, men and women, are protecting friends one of another..."³⁸

These two quotations explicitly indicate that the human relations between Muslim men & women is something natural & normal. These two quotations explicitly indicate that the human relations between Muslim men & women is something natural & normal.

Manners of Social Cooperation

Women's social cooperation has, in view of Islam, certain etiquette, the observation of which leads to permission and persuasion to social presence. Some of these manners being common between men and women, which both groups should observe and abide by. Some of them belong to women distinctively.

Common Manners

Lowering the Gaze

The holy Qur'an commands the believing men and women to lower their eyes and be modest:

"Say thou "O Our Apostle Muhammad!" unto the believing men that they cast down their gaze and guard their private parts; that is pure for them; Verily God is AllAware of what "all" ye do. And say unto the believing women that they lower their gaze and guard their private parts..." (Qur'an, 24:30, 31) .

Lowering the gaze never means closing the eyes totally, but means abstaining from seductive and alluring look. Restraining dazzling looks is called in Arabic language "Ghazz". In other words, in these two verses no prevention on sense of sighting is ordered, as God didn't say: Do not look "la tanzura", but He gave His orders to do something positive, i.e. lowering the eyes.

AbuSa'id AlKhudri, reporting a hadith in this context from the Prophet (S), said: "The Messenger of Allah (S) said: Abstain from sitting on the "sidewalk of" roads. People said to him: We have no other alternative but to sit and talk to each other. The Prophet said: Now if it be so, you should fulfil the rights of roads. They questioned: What are rights of roads? He replied: lowering the eyes, abstaining from harming the others, responding to greeting, and enjoining to good and forbidding from evil."³⁹

Examples of impudence can be found in some of the traditions, like the following:

Ibn Abbas is reported to have said: The Prophet made Al-Fadl Ibn Abbas ride the mount behind him on Id Al-Azha "Greater Bairam". Al-Fadl was of good and wellcut figure. Once upon a time, the Prophet made a halt for giving answers to people's questions regarding religious ambiguities. A good-looking woman from Khatham Tribe came near the Prophet to inquire him about some matters. When Al-Fadl was dazzled with her beauty and kept on gazing her with open eyes. There at the Prophet put his hand before his "Al-Fadl's" face and turned it to the other side.

In this hadith a good example and true application of principle of lowering the gaze can be clearly seen.

Abstention from Shaking Hands with Women

Another sample of manners of partnership being abstention from shaking hands with women. In the same way as seductive looking and dazzling being an indecent and reprehensible act, that paving the way for inhuman and illegal relations, shaking and extending hands to women "on part of men" comes under the same category.

Many traditions are there concerning prohibiting and preventing this habit, and it is reported that the Prophet has never shaken hands with any woman during process of swearing allegiance to him.

A hadith is narrated thus:

"By God his "Prophet's" hand has never touched any woman's hand during acknowledgement of allegiance "mubaya'ah"⁴⁰

Prohibiting Crowding of Women with Men

Umm Salamah is reported to have said: The Messenger of Allah (S) used to wait and linger in the mosque after finishing congregational prayers, so as that the women could depart before him.⁴¹

Also, the Messenger of Allah (S) has presented a proposal in regard of manners of coming and going of women.⁴² It is reported too that when the Prophet came out of the mosque once upon a day, he witnessed women and men crowded and gathered in one place. Then he addressed the women saying: You have to keep aside and move on the sidewalks.⁴³

To sum up, we are recommended and commanded to abstain from any act or practice entailing intermingling and crowding, nearness and closeness of bodies and interception of breaths "between men and women".

Abstention from Privacy with women

One of the manners upon which so much emphasis is made, being prohibition of seclusion to the woman with a foreign "unconsanguine" man "with whom marriage is allowable", in a way that nobody else be present and no room before others to come and go.

In many traditions this practice was prohibited with the following expression:

Ibn Abbas reported that the Prophet (S) said: "No man should sit alone and seclusively with any "foreign" woman but only with presence of a consanguine man "with whom marriage is prohibited".⁴⁴

Abstention from Conversation with women

Forbidden is every conversation "between men and women" that entails, with it, sport and entertainment, or some kind of flirtation and seduction or excitement. This subject is indicated in numerous Ahadith.

Khuwat Ibn Jubayr is reported to have said: We have landed one day, with the Prophet, in Zahran "a place outside Mecca". When going out of my tent I noticed some women sitting and conferring with each other. This scene pleased me, so I returned to the tent, put on my best garment and betook myself toward them, sitting beside them for taking part in their conversation.

At that time the Messenger of Allah (S) came out of his tent and summoned me. I became so upset and worried, saying to him: My camel has fled away and I came out in its search "to find it"! The Prophet then passed beside me and I followed him. Then he gave me his cloak and went away. He performed his

ablutions and addressed me: Tell me what did your fugitive camel do?! The Prophet kept on reiterating this sentence every time he coming near me.⁴⁵

Women's Special Etiquette

Proper covering

In many Qur'anic verses the Muslim women are ordered to abstain and keep aloof from displaying their charms and adornment, like the following:

- *"... and display not your finery like the display of the ignorance of yore..." (Qur'an, 33:33).*
- *"... and they display not their adornment save what is apparent of it; and to draw their veils over their bosoms..." (Qur'an, 24:31).*
- *"O "Our" Prophet "Muhammad"! say thou unto thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers that they let down upon them their cover garments..." (Qur'an, 33:59).*

Further many traditions are there emphasising on the proper covering for women, and the Messenger of Allah (S) considers the naked women to be among Dwellers of Hell.

Fatimah daughter of Qays says: The Messenger of Allah (S) said: I never like to see the scarf taken away "removed" from your head, or the clothes be drawn aside from your legs so as men can see them.⁴⁶

This subject will be elaborated more in chapter five, to come later on.

Abstention from perfuming

It is impermissible for women to impregnate themselves with odour while attending any meeting "where men are present". The Messenger of Allah (S) has addressed the women once saying: Whenever you be present at the mosque, never perfume yourselves with fragrance.

Abstention from Speech-Softening

The Almighty Allah said in His holy Qur'an:

"... and be not soft in "your" speech lest lusteth after you he in whose heart is a disease..." (Qur'an, 33:32).

Sobriety of Demeanour

In the holy Qur'an Allah the Exalted says:

"... and let them not strike their feet "in walking" that what they hide of their adornment gets apparent..." (Qur'an, 24:31).

Also the daughters of "Prophet" Shu'ayb were praised in the Qur'an since they walked with coyness:

"Then came unto him one of the two women walking bashfully..." (Qur'an, 28:25).

In conclusion of this subject "of discourse" I draw the attention of readers to the following points:

1. Housekeeping and nurturing and educating the children being an essential duty to be undertaken by the women. And certainly, for maintaining stability and safety and security of the family, men and social foundations should endeavour and do their best to fulfil this goal, since we won't be able to attain to a healthy society without such efforts.
2. Essentiality of duty of housekeeping on part of women never means negation of other social or even family functions for them. Because women are in need of the society and also the society can never attain its healthiness and progress without women. Therefore women have duties other than education of children and keeping warm the house and family.
3. The claim of presence of a decisive and perpetual clash between function of housekeeping and other tasks is invalid and incorrect. Nevertheless, in certain special and rare cases some kind of incongruity may be seen, but it could never be found in the past history, nor nowadays.

In the present circumstances, where children spend their leisure times in educational, cultural and training centres, this nonclash is apparent more clearly. In other words, with more investigation we can discover that most of the women with the ages up to 20 have not got married, and so they got the chance to attend and be active in society, without any predicament.

After marriage, if every couple have, as is common, five children when reaching the age of forty, their last child will be at five and elder child will have reached the age of 17 years. To this meaning that after reaching the age of forty, if average age of women be 60, then they would be able to within twenty years, play an effective role in society with more freedom and devotion.

And throughout these twenty years, that having most of worries pertaining to family, the women can also, with good planning and aid of men, dedicate some time to such businesses.

By this calculation, which is made with great mitigation in behalf of supporters of theory of limiting duty of women in housekeeping, no one can claim presence of clash between duties of housekeeping & social tasks of women, in all cases.

I finish this chapter with saying that every women should regard education of children and housekeeping to be among her first and most important duties and functions, but this thing has no contradiction, whatsoever, with her presence and cooperation in society.

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1. Bihaar Al-Anwaar, vol. XIX, p. 305, Ha 27.
 2. Al-Islam Fi Mowajahat At-Tahaddiyaat Al-Mu'asirah, p. 265.
 3. Anwaar Al-Malakoot, vol. 1, p. 178.
 4. Anwaar Al-Malakoot, vol. 1, p. 182.
 5. Al-Mar'ah Fi Ad-Deen Wal-Mujtama', p. 176.
 6. Fath Al-Baari, vol. XI, p. 220.
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