

## Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women in Bangladesh from Islamic Perspectives

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**Abstract:** The empowerment of women has become an important issue all over the world since last few eras. One of the major debates in our society is whatever Islam empowers women or not. In fact, Islam has given necessary guidance for women empowerment in almost every sphere of life. Islam has ensured the rights of women such as inheritance, working, earning, farming, education, family affairs, sanction of divorce, dower (Mahr), maintenance, ownership etc. If these rights are completely given to the women, the position of women in Bangladesh will become better. But it is a matter of great sorrow that, the position of women in Bangladesh as well as the whole world is still worse than the position of men. This article aims at showing the rights of women in Islam and how the Holy Quran and Sunnah have given respect to women in various socio-economic circles. In this paper, it is tried to focus on how women can be empowered ensuring the socio-economic rights and security and implementing the laws of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. This paper mainly emphasizes on the current status of women in Bangladesh and how this country can be benefited by ensuring the socio-economic empowerment of women which has been legalized by the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

### Introduction

Nowadays the empowerment of women has become the most important issue. The empowerment of women refers to create and increase opportunities for women in every sphere of life; such as, in education, in job sectors, in business, as well as in all socio-economic sectors. The condition of women has to be improved to develop the overall socio-economic condition of a country as well as the whole world. Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state and of public life. Though the constitution of Bangladesh gives equal rights towards man and women, the status of women in Bangladesh is still comparatively inferior to that of men. Women are working here in different workplaces but still there are many sectors where they are neglected, dominated and tortured by male society. If the condition of women will not be improved, the socio-economic condition of Bangladesh will not be developed. So, the position of women should be improved. Islam has given more importance and profound respect to women. Women are recognized as equal partners in Islam. Allah says in the Holy Quran: “And (so for) the believers, both men and women are friends and Protectors of one another: they (all) enjoy the doing of what is right and forbid

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the doing of what is wrong, and are constant in prayer, and render the purifying dues, and pay heed unto God and His Messenger. On them God will overflow His mercy; for God is exalted in power, Wise.” (Sura At-Taubah: 71). The above verse of the Holy Quran shows the equal entity of men and women in the sight of their creation. Thus, Islam has given the empowerment of women by ensuring their rights according to their needs. So, women must have the empowerment to develop a society as well as a country.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to find out the socio-economic empowerment of women in Bangladesh from the Islamic perspective. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the current position of women empowerment in Bangladesh.
2. To evaluate women empowerment from the socio-economic point of view on the basis of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.
3. To provide some recommendations on the basis of Islamic Shariah and Sunnah.

### **Research Methodology**

The study is explanatory in nature and the researcher has followed an observational method to prepare this article. The data have been collected from two sources:

1. Primary sources:
  - 1.1. Al Quran
  - 1.2. Al Hadith
2. Secondary sources:
  - 2.1. Publications by various authors
  - 2.2. Newspaper Articles
  - 2.3. Papers submitted in conferences
  - 2.4. Various books related to women rights.

### **Literature Review**

Though there are many researchers who published the papers concerning women empowerment, there are less number of such research papers about the socio-economic empowerment of women in Bangladesh from the Islamic perspectives. Some of the selected papers are briefly reviewed by the researcher of this study.

Saira (2014) aimed to examine the rights of women in Islam by focusing on the ‘public’ and ‘private’ aspects of life and its effects on the empowerment of women. He stated that there were the dialectical natures of rights of women illustrated by Islamic religion broadly. He found that there were some of the verses of the Holy Quran which constrain the various rights of women in comparison with men. Then he found some of the women scholars around the world. The verses of the Holy Quran strengthen human dignity and faithfulness as the central standard ruling the relation between women and men. He concluded that men are given with a slight authority and superiority over all the women in the society. Finally, the Muslim society should be made aware of reforming all the rights of women as prescribed in the Holy Quran and Hadith so as to empower the women in society and family.

Claire and David (2012) aimed to uniquely identify a conformist perception of description in which the Muslim gender norms underperform the Muslim economic progress using quantitative methodology. They found that the empowerment of women in a society depends on the norms among Muslims and economic performance among Muslim communities. Finally, they found that there was no significant correlation between the religious perspectives and the channels of gender norms linking to economic performance.

Suman and Ananya (2012) pretended to empirically analyze the empowerment of Muslim women within the Murshidabad district of West Bengal, India using quantitative methodology consisting of the statistical tools. They found that the changes in traditional beliefs and life style of Muslim family could accelerate the economic empowerment of women within Muslim community of Murshidabad district. Rokeya, et al. (2015) aimed to find out how the empowerment of women is encouraged in Islam. They showed the political sectors and family education using the primary sources. They found out that the social security and the respect of Muslim women in the community can be ensured by the following verses of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

Nisthar, et al. (2018) aimed to find out the socio-economic empowerment of women in the light of Islamic perspectives under the qualitative methodology using the Holy Quran and Sunnah. It is found that some rights such as the rights of inheritance, Mahr, work and earn, education, family affairs and the sanction of divorce is endowed by the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

Badawi (1971) in his paper, explained in details about the revolution in the life of women brought by Islam by comparing their status before Islam. Bugaje (1997) has elucidated the issue with precedents and evidences from Quran and Sunnah that ensures highest level of women empowerment. Murad (1999) described that the theory of gender in Islam is like an illusion, a web of connections that demands familiarity with a multiple legal code of regional heterogeneity and with the metaphysical not less than with physical.

Dr. Aftab Ahmed Khan (2009) explained that the teaching of Islam must take predominance over the cultures and customs all over the world. He also interpreted about the constructive role of women in many Muslim societies. He ultimately concluded that any empowerment effort in accordance with the vision of Quran which upholds women's status before the law must be fully supported.

Abdul Waheed (2014) aimed to find the empirical reality of women in Islam in relation to divorce which is one of the severe issues on the empowerment of Muslim women.

Professor Dr. Fathi Osman discussed about the rights and roles of women in a family and society in one of his studies regarding women empowerment from Islamic perspective. According to him, the awareness of women rights and responsibilities has motivated many women to be committed to the Islamic message of justice, peace and prosperity.

### **Limitations of the Study**

For preparing this article, the researcher faces some problems. These are given below:

1. For research purpose, various relevant data and information are essential. But the researcher found very little relevant works on this field.
2. There is a lack of information of recent published data on women empowerment issue.
3. There are several confusions among Islamic scholars regarding some women empowerment issues, especially in terms of social and economic issues in Bangladesh.

### **Empowerment of Women**

Empowerment means a kind of process composed of social, economic, cultural and political legal multidimensional aspects which are assisting mankind in various ways to adjust the lives of mankind through increasing the awareness. The term 'empowerment' indicates course of action of enlarging the wealth, capabilities, and prosperity of groups of people of the society to let them gain the challenge useful for their lives and also to convert them into preferred achievements and effects.

The Oxford English dictionary says that "Empowerment is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights." Empowerment means moving from enforced powerlessness to a position of power ensuring education, knowledge, skills and self-confidence in every sphere of life which is necessary for the whole developmental process.

Women empowerment means having the right to determine choices, to have access to opportunities and resources for taking proper decision, to have the controlling power in their own lives and to change others perception by democratic means. According to UNIEM, the basic principles of women empowerment is equality/equanimity in a business, workplace and market place or in a community is a pre-requisite for any society regarding empowering women.

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) asks all state parties to take all appropriate measures including legislation to eliminate discrimination in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil and any other field.

The Fourth United Nations World conference on women in 1995 advocated gender mainstreaming as a strategy for promoting this equality. The platform for action called upon governments and the international community to take prior action for the empowerment and advancement of women besides identifying strategic objectives in twelve critical areas of concern and proposed concrete actions to achieve that objective.

### **Economic Empowerment of Women in Islam**

Economic empowerment is the capacity of women (and men) to participate in, contribute to, and be benefited from growth processes in ways which recognize the

value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth. That means “Economic empowerment increases women’s access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information.”

#### **a. The Rights of Inheritance**

Islam is a systematic and chained religion. A complete code of life has been given to human being by Islam. The economic empowerment of women has been ensured by the verses of the Holy Quran and sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The laws of inheritance have been given by the Holy Quran and Sunnah (Hadith) for ensuring the economic empowerment of women in Islam. From the Islamic point of view, the laws of inheritance exposes how the wealth of parents should be distributed among their children (male or female) at the presence or departure of their parents. The Holy Quran says that-

“Allah commands you as regards your children’s (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females; if (there are) only daughters, two or more, their share is two thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is half.” (Sura Nisa: 11)

The above verse of the Holy Quran strictly enforces on the economic empowerment of women by inheriting the wealth from their parents. According to that verse of the Holy Quran, a daughter gets half portion of a son from their parents’ wealth. If there is only a daughter, she gets half of the wealth and if there are two or more daughters, they get two thirds of the wealth.

The maintenance of the whole family is indebted only to the husband of woman or the father of the family. All the basic needs of the family such as shelter, clothing, food and treatment must be provided by him. The entire inheritance of women can be saved as capital or invested independently in any of the economic activities. Consequently, economic empowerment of women can be strengthened. The Holy Quran also says: “There is a share for men and share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest relatives, whether the property be small or large is a legal share.” (Sura Nisa: 7) This verse of the Holy Quran again confirms the distribution of the wealth and property of parents and the share of the women under the law of inheritance. This inheritance of women can be fully maintained and controlled by them. Though Islam has ensured the inheritance of women from their parents’ wealth or property, the women of some rural areas in Bangladesh are still deprived of the inheritance. Most of the cases, parents feel comfort to distribute their wealth or property among their male children. If this misinterpretation of the rural people can be removed, the economic empowerment of women will be partly ensured.

#### **b. The Rights of Mohr (dower)**

At the time of matrimony, a specific amount of money or property or any types of wealth (gold, silver, land etc.) is given to the bride by the bridegroom which is named as Mohr (an obligatory payment). It is a kind of gift from the bridegroom to the bride at the time of the wedding. In fact it is a kind of financial security of the

women. There is no right for the bridegroom to the amount of Mohr (dower), it is the only right of the bride. The Holy Quran says: "And give to the women (when you marry) their Mohr (obligatory bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) with good heart." (Sura Nisa: 4)

The above verse of the Holy Quran ascertains the right of the women to get the obligatory bridal money from their husbands at the time of marriage. Without paying the Mohr, a bridegroom can't marry a bride. A bridegroom doesn't have the right to get the Mohr from bride though he is the only responsible person for the maintenance of the entire family whether he is economically rich or poor. The Holy Quran Says: "Man are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend from their means therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and to their husbands) and guard in their husbands' absence what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husbands' property etc.)." (Sura Nisa: 34)

The above verse of the Holy Quran persists in the protection and maintenance of the women through their husband as their (women) guardian. The following saying of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) gives support on the above discussion: "Their rights over you are that you should provide for them and clothe them in a reasonable manner." (Ibn Majah: 3074)

In Bangladesh, there are many persons who are not well informed about Islamic Shariah and so they do not pay the Mohr (dower) to their wives before starting their conjugal life. They should know about that and pay the Mohr to their wives. This is one kind of financial security for women which make them economically empowered.

### **c. Rights to work and to earn**

Though the women in Islam are not responsible to earn their living, they are not prohibited to work and earn by maintaining the guidance of the Holy Quran. They can have their own wealth, operate their own wealth and operate their own business. They can work outside the house by covering themselves. The Holy Quran says: "And do not covet what Allah has given some of you more than others; the man shall have their due share according to what they have earned and the women shall have their share according to what they have earned. So pray to Allah for his granting." (Sura Nisa: 32) This verse of the holy Quran depicts the share of earning of women by their own desires. Nobody can interfere in the economic activities of the women. From Islamic history, we know that many Muslim women have devoted their life for the sake of their family and their own activities. Khadija (RA), the first spouse of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a business woman who operated her own business and became rich. The prophet Muhammad has given the approval to her to work and earn from various economic sources. During the period of Prophet Muhammad, a woman was divorced and so she was observing her Iddah (a particular period of time to be concealed herself). She wanted to go outside and work at the cultivation of her date palms while observing her Iddah. She wanted the approval from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said to her: "No, go and harvest

your date palms, for perhaps you will give charity or do an act of kindness.” (Sahih Muslim: 3721) From this saying of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the women even during their Iddah period are allowed to work at their own earning sources to become economically empowered. The women in Islam are given the permission and approval to work and earn for their advancement in the family and the society.

Since last few decades, noticeable changes have been seen in the economic empowerment of women in Bangladesh. The constitution of Bangladesh has also approved equal rights to men and women in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic. In various jobs and business sections, the women labor force is increasing day by day. At the national level, the women labor force had increased from 18.2 million in 2013 to 20.0 million in 2017. The highest women (53.5%) was engaged in agriculture sector followed by 23.7% in industry and 22.8% were in service in 2013. In 2017, this percentage has been increased and 59.7% women became engaged in agriculture, 16.9% in industry and 23.5% in service. If this percentages become increased day by day, the economic empowerment of women will be ensured.

### **Social Empowerment of Women in Islam:**

#### **a. The Right of Education**

Education is one of the most important issues through which men or women can be empowered in their social life. Islam definitely urges the mankind to be educated in the various sectors they need for becoming successful. The first verse in the revelation process of the Holy Quran to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is “Iqrah” which is an Arabic word means ‘read’ or ‘learn’. This word emphasizes on the importance of education for both men and women. The empowerment of women in education is particularly stressed in Islam. The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says: “Seeking knowledge is a duty of every Muslim, man or woman.” (Tirmidhi: 2018)

From the above saying of the Preacher Muhammad (PBUH), gathering knowledge is not only a right but also a duty for every men and women. Seeking knowledge is one kind of responsibility for every man and women in Islam so that they can realize the fundamental and conceptual significance of Islam and follow the righteous way of life. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says: Narrated by Abu Musa Al-Ashari: “He who has a slave-girl and teaches her good manners and improves her education and then marries her will get a double reward; and any slave girl who observes Allah’s rights and his master’s right will get a double reward.” (Sahih Bukhari: 2547) From this saying of the Preacher Muhammad (PBUH), the education of women are encouraged and motivated by the Islam. Under the slavery system in the history of Islam, the women slaves were restricted by their masters. Even in this nature of slavery, Islam stresses the masters to empower the women in education and to give them social security.

In Bangladesh, it’s not very far when there were many reasons for which women could not continue their study. Because, women were got married at the very early age by the force of their parents and so their education had been stopped after marriage. Women had no social security which is the main concern for them to get

their education. Lack of women's primary and secondary educational institution was the great problem. In job sector, the percentage of women employee was extremely low. But nowadays, the women are getting more scope to get education. Early marriage of women is now nearly stopped. The negative intentions of many families and societies to women's education are now decreased. Our government has taken necessary steps to increase women's education. Government has given the social security for women in every educational institution and so campus violence, physical and mental harassment are now decreasing day by day. Many educational institutions have been started so that women can get ample scope for their education. Free and compulsory education has been started to both boys and girls. Free textbooks are given in primary and secondary level. Free education for girls upto grade XII in public institutions is started to empower women in education. The literacy rate of female (7+ years) at national level had increased over time starting from 53.3% in 2012 to 70.2% in 2017. The adult literacy rate of women (15+ years) was 56.6% in 2012 and increased to 70.1% in 2017. The adult literacy rate of women in urban area was 67.6% in 2012 and increased to 78.4% in 2017. In rural area, this rate was 50.0% in 2012 and increased to 63.2% in 2017.

#### **b. The rights in family affairs**

Islam directly forbids mankind to show the gloomy attitudes about the birth of the female offspring in a family. Islam explicitly instructs them to welcome the arrivals of the female children to a family. The Holy Quran says: "And whenever any of them is given the glad tiding to (the birth of) a girl, his face darkens, and he is filled with suppressed anger. He is avoiding all people because of evil of the glad tiding that he has received, (and debating with himself); shall he keep this (child) despite the contempt (which he feels for her) or shall he bury her in the dust? Oh, evil indeed is whatever they decide." (Sura An-Nahl: 59)

The above verse says that the moment of birth of a female child in a family is perceived as one of the glad happenings to the family. The parents of the newly born child should be filled with happiness rather than blaming others. If women are neglected in the family and the society, it will indeed be an evil. It is appreciation rather than negligence which can empower women. Some people of rural areas in Bangladesh who lead a very poor life think that female child is the burden. The rural people consider the male children as their source of income. So, they don't welcome the newly born female child. But, Islam says that, the born of a female child is one of the glad happenings to the family.

Islam says that the mankind (male and female) in the world has been created from one living entity. From this one entity, only one male and female couple has been created by the Almighty Allah. Then, the population has been spread everywhere in the world. The Holy Quran says: "O mankind! Be conscious of your lord who has created you out of one living entity, and out of it created its mate, and out of the two spread abroad a multitude of men and women. And remain conscious of God, in whose name you demand (your rights) from one another, and these ties of kinship. Certainly, Allah is ever watchful over you." (Sura An-Nisa: 01)



The above verse of the Holy Quran stated the single entity of men and women which conveys the equity among the male and female children from their birth in a family. Men and women both are given the same rights in Islam. Thus, the empowerment of women in the family is constructed equally to the men in the family. Though man and women both are given the same rights in Islam, some Bangladeshi people disgrace the women by despoiling them from their right as a result of lacking of proper knowledge. These people should know about the verse of the Holy Quran and give the equal right to women as man. The Quran explicitly addresses men and women without discrimination: "Verily, for all men and women who have submitted themselves to Allah, and all believing men and women, and all truly devout men and women who are patient in adversity, and all men and women who humble themselves (before Allah), and all men and women who give in charity, and all self-denying men and women who are mindful of their chastity, and all men and women who remember Allah unceasingly; for all of them has Allah readied forgiveness of sins and a mighty reward." (Sura Al-Ahzab: 35)

This verse addresses both men and women equally as believers and tells them to be patient, to do charity, to be aware of their chastity and to remember Allah endlessly. This verse also narrates that Allah will forgive their sins and will give them magnificent reward for their righteous works. Thus, this verse gives equal right towards men and women. In Bangladesh, man and women are also given equal rights. According to the Constitution of Bangladesh, the state shall endeavor to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens. Another article of the Constitution of Bangladesh says that, all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law. The position of women is now positively changing as they receive their education but in rural families, women are still dominated in their families. As Islam addresses the men and women equally, the man and the woman should be treated equally.

The women in Islam have the right to choose their life partner as they wish. The Almighty Allah says in his holy Quran: "O you who believed! It is forbidden for you to inherit women against their will. And do not coerce them in order to take away some of what you had given them unless they commit a proven adultery. And live with them with kindness. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something in which God has placed much good." (Sura An-Nisa: 19) This verse says that the women in Islam are given the right of determining their spouses. They should not be bound to choose any of the partners by using force or threats. The verse also indicates that the husbands who married the women, must be very kind towards their wives and concluded that disliking their wives is similar to dislike God's blessings. There are still some cases in Bangladesh where women are forced to get married mostly by their families. Parents here despoil the women from the decision making power which is strictly prohibited in Islam.

The women in Islam have not only the right of choosing the life partners without any pressurization but also have the empowerment of the cancellation of the marriage under any inevitable circumstance. The following verse of the Holy Quran gives the

right to women to divorce their husbands: “But if their intention is firm for divorce, Allah hears and knows all things.” (Sura Al-Baqarah: 227) Here it is referred as women rather than men who also can take decision regarding divorce, if they have reasonable excuse. In Bangladesh, the women who want to sanction of divorce are humiliated by their families and the society and somehow they are tortured which is totally illegal in Islam. The following saying of the Prophet of the Almighty Allah proves the fact of empowering the women at their decision making power while their lives are under the inevitable circumstances.

Narrated by Ibn Abbas: “The wife of Thabit bin Qais came to the Prophet and said “O Allah’s Apostle! I don’t blame Thabit for defects in his character or his religion but I being a Muslim, dislike to behave in un-Islamic manner (if I remain with him).” On that Prophet said (to her) “Will you give back the garden which your husband has given you (as Mahr)?” She replied “Yes”. Then the Prophet said to Thabit, “O Thabit! Accept your garden and divorce her once.” (Sahih Bukhari: 5273) This verse says that the husbands of the divorced women never get the Mohr given to their wives until they (wives) are willing to give them (husbands) back.

The Islam insists the domestic violence free family life. God has placed the affection and mercy between the husbands and the wives so that they may find tranquility in themselves at their relationship at all the circumstances. The Holy Quran says: “And of his signs is that He created your wives from yourselves that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who reflect.”(Sura Ar-Rum: 21) This verse of the Holy Quran clearly portrays that the wives are created by the Almighty Allah from their husbands and for their husbands. So, their husbands should be very careful about their wives in day to day life. Love and affection to each other must be needed to get the mercy of Allah. But some man in Bangladesh never follow this instruction given by Allah. They torture their wives both physically and mentally by knowing or without knowing this verse of the Holy Quran. It should be stopped forever.

### **c. The Rights to the Sanction of Divorce**

The sanction of divorce is unquestionably allowed by Islam between the spouses at the inevitable circumstances. When the wives are divorced from their husbands, they must be under the security and responsibility of their husbands for a period of three months. This precedent of care and protection of the divorced women is sanctioned by the following verse of the Holy Quran: “Divorced women will wait by themselves for the period of three months. And it is not lawful for them to conceal what God has created in their wombs, if they believe in God and the last day. Meanwhile their husbands have the better right to take them back if they desire reconciliation, and women have similar rights to their obligations according to what is fair. But men have a degree over them. God is Mighty and Wise” (Sura Al Baqarah: 228)

This above verse says that during the period of the three months, the divorced women can reunited with their husbands without any doubt. At this time, divorced women and their children will stay under the protection of the husbands. If the

husbands and the wives compromise with each other, they can continue their family life again. Thus, the women of the family become empowered by the protection and care of men. Another fact of empowering women at the time of divorce is proved by the following verse of the Holy Quran: "Divorce is allowed twice, then, either honorable retention or setting free kindly. It is not lawful for you to take back anything you have given them, unless they fear that they cannot maintain God's Limits. Then there is no blame on them if she sacrifices something for her freedom. These are God's Limits. So do not transgress them. Those who transgress God's Limits are the unjust." (Sura Al-Baqarah: 229) In this verse, Almighty Allah strictly orders the husbands of the divorced women not to take any property or wealth from the divorced women which they get from their husbands as reward or as Mahr (dower). Thus, the divorced women become empowered having the obligatory payment rewarded by their husbands.

After the completion of obligatory time period (three months), the husband of the women are given with the ultimate option of retaining the divorced women with them or releasing them free to go to their parents residences. At this time of separation, the Almighty Allah says the men to behave peacefully and humorously towards the divorced women. The farewell of the divorced women must be peaceful. Allah says in his Holy Quran: "When you divorce women and they have reached their term, either retain them amicably or relapse them amicably. But do not retain them to hurt them and commit aggression. Whoever does that has wronged himself. And do not take God's revelations for a joke. And remember God's favor to you and that he revealed to you the scripture and wisdom to teach you. And fear God and know that God is aware of everything." (Sura Al-Baqarah: 231) In this verse, the Almighty Allah strictly warns those husbands who do not follow these instructions given by him. They have to be sincere and careful about their divorced wives.

Men have no right to notifying the decision of divorce to their wives suddenly while they are living together. There is a specific period of time during which the men can be eligible to notify the decision of divorce to the wives. In fact this is a kind of personal security of women which is openly addressed in the following verse of the Holy Quran: "O Prophet if any of you divorce women, divorce them during their period of purity and calculate their term. And be fearful before God, your lord. And do not evict them from their homes nor shall they leave unless they have committed a proven adultery. These are the limits of God whoever oversteps god's limits has wronged his own soul; you never know, God may afterwards bring about a new situation." (Sura At-Talaq: 01)

This above verse says that during the menstrual period of women, the men can not be able to notify the decision of divorce to the women. Only after the complete pause of menstruation, the men can notify the women about divorce. If the men accidentally or deliberately consummate with their wives during the period of purity the notification of divorce becomes invalid between both of them. Moreover the divorced women cannot be forced to leave from the house of the husbands rather they must be respected and their care and protection must be ensured. This fact is supported by the following saying of apostle of the Almighty Allah.

“Narrated by Abdullah Bin Umar: that he had divorced his wife while she was menstruating during the lifetime of Allah’s Apostle. Umar bin Al-Khattab asked Allah’s Apostle about that matter. He said, “Order him (your son) to take her back and keep her till she is clean and to wait till she gets her next period and becomes clean again. Then if he wishes to divorce her he can divorce her before having sexual intercourse with her and that is the prescribed period which Allah has fixed for the women meant to be divorced.” (Sahih Bukhari: 5251)

In Bangladeshi Law, the process of divorce is just in three steps for both the husband and the wife who wants divorce. This three steps are- (a) Giving notice in written, (b) Facing the arbitration board and (c) After expiry of 90 days, taking a registration certificate from registrar. Section 6 of the Marriages and Divorces (Registration) Act, 1974 provides that a marriage registrar may register divorce (Talaq) affected under Muslim Law within his jurisdiction on application being made to him for such registration. If a notice was served and divorce was registered in accordance with Law stated above, a legal divorce (talaq) will be executed. This above discussion proves that the divorce Law of Bangladesh is made according to the Holy Quran and Sunnah (Hadith).

### **Findings of the Study**

Islam has given equal rights in various socio-economic sectors towards men and women but in some rural areas in Bangladesh, female children are still disgraced and ill-treated. Women are dominated by men as a result of lacking of proper knowledge about women’s position in a family according to the Holy Quran and Sunnah. There are still some cases where the women are compelled to get married by the force of their families which demolishes their decision making power. Some people who are ignorant about the laws of marriage and divorce of Bangladesh. Even, they don’t have proper knowledge about the laws of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Most of them don’t give the Mahr (dower) when they get married rather they take dowry from the women which is strictly prohibited in Islam. Though Bangladesh has developed its educational policies and the access of girl’s education has been increased, some people of rural areas don’t let their female child to study. Most of the cases, their study becomes stopped after marriage. Campus violence is also serious cause though it is now decreased. Inheritance is an important issue for the economic empowerment of women. But, in some cases, they are not given the right of inheritance properly. As the women are now get the scope to be educated, they want to involve themselves in work to create their social identity. But, in Bangladesh, there are still some jobs and business sectors where the women feel insecure to work. There are some husbands who don’t want their wives to work because they think that, they will have no control over their wives if they (women) become educated.

### **Conclusion of the Study**

The rights or laws of the empowerment of women have strictly been given by the Holy Quran of Almighty Allah and His apostle Muhammad (PBUH). The religious leaders, institutions as well as the humankind should pay attention to these Islamic laws so that

the women can get their rights properly. Some people who have little knowledge about the empowerment of women in Islam think women as weaker gender. But Islam pays equal attention towards men and women. Government should take steps to create public awareness about the rights and dignity of women in Islam. The security of women should be ensured in various socio-economic sectors. The territories for women's educations have to be increased by creating sufficient educational institutions for them. The Muslim Community also can play a vital role to ensure the empowerment of women in an effective way through the Islamic laws. Thus, the women can get their complete empowerment in both social and economic ways of life. Finally, a saying of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) can be included which raises the women at the pinnacle of honor and dignity: Narrated by Abu Huraira: A man came to the Messenger of Allah and said, "O Allah's Messenger! Who is more entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me?" The Prophet said, "Your Mother." The man said, "Who is next?" The Prophet said, "Your mother." The man further said, "Who is next?" The Prophet said, "Your mother." The man said (for the fourth time), "Who is next?" The Prophet said, "Your father." (Sahih Bukhari: 5971)

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