

Quranic Solutions To Working Women's Problems: Garment Industries Of Bangladesh

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Introduction



- ▶ The Quran is a guide book to provide basic directions to solutions to all problems of mankind
- ▶ Working women have rights to have a peaceful and secure job place
- ▶ Islam never puts barrier between women and workplace as long as the proper safety and necessary privileges are ensured for them

Main contents of Discussion

- ▶ 1. Establishing Justice in Salary of Workers
- ▶ 2. Abstaining from Adultery and its Primary Steps
- ▶ 3. Prohibition of Verbal and Mocking Harassment
- ▶ 4. Dress Code of Women
- ▶ 5. Establishing Prayer Halls
- ▶ 6. Providing Training on Islamic Rituals
- ▶ 7. Ensuring Security of Life
- ▶ 8. Providing Medical Facilities
- ▶ 9. Providing Leisure Time to Have Rest

1. Establishing Justice in Salary of

Workers

- ▶ Islam is a religion of justice
- ▶ **Allah (SWT) says:** So, follow not (personal) inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort (your testimony) or refuse (to give it), then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted, (Surah Al- Nisa, 4:135)
- ▶ And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask Allah of his bounty. Indeed, Allah is ever, of all things, Knowing”, (Surah Al-Nisa, 4: 32)
- ▶ So, if the duty is equal to man then discrimination in salary is against Shariah law. Male and female both shall be provided equal salary, otherwise, it is injustice.

2. Abstaining from Adultery and its Primary

Steps

- ▶ **Workers should be aware of consequences of adultery** then they maybe abstained from this sinful actions.
- ▶ “And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way”, (Surah Al-Israh, 17:31).
- ▶ **Emergence of abortion among the working women.**
- ▶ And those who do not invoke with Allah another deity or kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever does this shall receive the punishment. The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace, (Surah Al-Furqan, 25:68-69)).
- ▶ **Verses of the Quran and hadiths related fornication should be hanged** or pasted on walls and different places across the workplace
- ▶ **In a hadith Prophet said:** O you who are Muslims, abstain from fornication! Indeed, there are six bad consequences in fornication, 3 of them in this worldly life and other 3 in the life of hereafter. In worldly life (1), his face will be faded, refreshes will be gone away (2), his life time will be shortened, (3) poverty permanently will grasp him and other 3 in hereafter life (1), anger of Allah, (2), hard accountability to Allah and (3), the increment of chastise of Hellfire.

3. Prohibition of Verbal and Mocking

▶ Harassment

- ▶ **“And speak good to people”**, (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2: 83).
- ▶ **And say to My slaves** that they should say those words that are the best. Indeed, Satan sows a state of conflict and disagreement among them. Surely, Satan is to man a plain enemy, (Surah Al-Isra,17:53).
- ▶ **And do not turn your cheek** (in contempt) toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful, (Surah Luqman, 31:18).
- ▶ **O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group**, it maybe that the latter are better than the former. Nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it maybe that the latter are better than the former. Nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it to insult one’s brother after having Faith (i.e. to call your Muslim brother (a faithful believer) as: “O sinner”, or “O wicked”]. And whoever does not repent, then such are indeed wrong-doers, (Surah Al-Hujurat, 49: 11).

4. Dress Code of Women

- ▶ In Islam, they are very much precious
- ▶ Since their physical structure is created quite different from men, for the betterment of society and their wellbeing and safety, Allah (SWT) has instructed a set of rules for them to abide by which for a peaceful and sustainable society is very significant
- ▶ Islam never bars them from workplace outside their home if there is an arrangement of safer work environment
- ▶ O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful, (Surah Al-Ahzab, 33: 59).
- ▶ And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and to be mindful of their chastity, and not to display their beauty and ornaments [in public] beyond what may [decently] be apparent thereof; hence, let them draw their head-coverings over their bosoms.” (An-Nur: 31).

4. Dress Code..... Requirements to be Islamic Dress

- ▶ **The extent of covering:** The dress should be such a cloth by which the entire body of a woman can be covered except the face and hands.
- ▶ **Looseness:** The dress can never be tight by which shape of body can be exposed. It should be loose so that beauty of a woman can be concealed.
- ▶ **Thickness:** The dress should be thick so that body's color and skin cannot be exposed from outside.
- ▶ **Overall Appearance:** This should not be such which attracts men's attention to her beauty. The Quran prescribes here to hide the adornment of a woman.
- ▶ **Additional Requirements:** (i) The dress should not be similar to what is as a male's costume. Ibn Abbas Narrated that "the Prophet Mohammad (SAW) cursed the men who act like women and the women who act like men". (ii) The dress should not be like what unbelievers wear. This rule is derived from Islamic shariah that Muslims should have their distinct personality and differentiate themselves by their practices and appearance from unbelievers.

5. Establishing Prayer Halls

- ▶ The opportunity of performing *salah* is not sufficient at all
- ▶ In Islam, performing *salah* is mandatory upon every single matured Muslim and Muslimah
- ▶ Allah (SWT) says: And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform *As-Salat* and give Zakat, and that is the right religion, (Surah Al-Bayyinah, 98:05).
- ▶ Anas Ibn Malik (RTA) reported that Prophet Mohammad (SAW) said: The first and foremost, Allah (SWT) will take accountancy from a person at the Day of resurrection is *Salah*, if his *salah* has been accomplished properly; his other all deeds have been accomplished properly but if his *salah* is found spoiled, his all other deeds have been spoiled
- ▶ Prophet Mohammad (SAW) said: Islam is standing up on five pillars....
- ▶ Allah (SWT) says: Successful indeed are believers. Those who offer their *salat* (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.....and those who strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) *Salawat* (prayers) (at their fixed stated hours). These are indeed the inheritors. Who shall inherit the *Firdaus* (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever, (Surah Al-Mu'minun, 23:1-9).

5. Establishing Prayer

Halls....continue...

- ▶ **Since the workplace is full of male and female workers**, the establishment of prayer halls in every factory of the country is massively needed. Providing time to workers to accomplish *salah* is better for both- employees and employers since it abstains them from corrupt thinking and many sinful acts.
- ▶ **Allah (SWT) says:** Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do, (Surah Al-Ankabut, 29: 45)
- ▶ **That is why, those industries still have not provided enough space for *salah***, they should come forward to do this. Otherwise, they will be considered as sinful due to not providing chance of performing this '*ibadah* to their workers.
- ▶ **This prayer hall should be built for both male and female separately** so that there is no mixture between two opposite sexes.

6. Providing Training on Islamic Rituals

- ▶ **Allah (SWT) says:** It is He Who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves **reciting** to them His verses and **purifying** them and **teaching** them the Book and wisdom-although they were before in clear error, (Surah Al-Jumu'a, 62:02).
- ▶ **Allah (SWT) mentions mainly three things-** **recitation**, **purification** and **teachings** or training- workers of garment factories need all of them since majority of them come from rural areas of different parts of the country; their educational qualification is not good at all. Majority of them are uneducated except some technical knowledge they achieved.
- ▶ **For the consistency of production of any industry**, workers ought to be morally strong and sound which assist them to fulfil their responsibilities towards their owner as well as their Creator. By morally developed workers, industries expand and prosper but immoral ones destroy themselves as well as destroy the workplace equally.
- ▶ **Even Prophet (SAW) himself said:** Yahya related to me from Malik that he had heard that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "I was sent to perfect good character

7. Ensuring Security of Life

- ▶ **Allah (SWT) says:** Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption (done) in the land- it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one-it is as if he had saved mankind entirely, (Surah Al-Mayeda, 5:32).
- ▶ **The factories' owners should provide proper security** to the workers. Before establishing any garment factory or industry, they should study the feasibility of the lands and surroundings and invigilate the atmosphere of factory's inside before engaging workers so that no one faces insecurity there.
- ▶ **Their carelessness and unconsciousness** will be considered as the causer of workers' death, then owner will be equally perpetrator of a life damage. Because they engaged workers without providing sufficient safety.
- ▶ **Since majority of the workers are women**, the measure of security should be increased into many folds.

8. Providing Medical Facilities

- ▶ Since garment workers majority of them are affected by numerous diseases, already have been discussed before, however, the owners should provide medical facilities as well. One of studies of 2014 showed that among more than 4 million workers of garment industries 3 million of them are women,
- ▶ Such big number of women face myriad health issues that negatively impact their well-being in addition to their productive potential
- ▶ Currently, because of various terms and conditions from government of Bangladesh, companies have started to establish clinic in each industry to provide primary treatment to workers if any of them gets sick or injury due to any unexpected incidence which may take place across the industry during work hour
- ▶ Previous research has found that the companies which have been providing medical facilities to the workers still could not upgrade the standard of medical facilities where 5 major lacking and shortcomings have been noticed

8. Providing Medical Facilities...cont

- ▶ (1) Nurses lack necessary skills and qualifications to perform their job optimally;
- ▶ (2) Insufficient attention is given to health education and promotion of women's health issues;
- ▶ (3) Clinic facilities require upgrading to better serve health needs;
- ▶ (4) Factories' healthcare management systems require strengthening; and (5) Health staff are insufficiently prepared to respond to emergencies
- ▶ It is very sure that if companies fail to provide basic treatment then it might lead workers to the major diseases

9. Providing Leisure Time to Have Rest

- ▶ **Workers need leisure time to have rest** for a while by which they can refresh themselves and reenergize for further engagement in work
- ▶ Having worked the whole day human beings lest get sick and unable He created sleep to reenergize themselves so that the next day they may get involved in work as usual
- ▶ **As Allah (SWT) says:** And We have made your sleep as a thing for rest. And We have made the night as a covering (through its darkness). And We have the day for livelihood, (Surah Al-Naba, 78:9-11).
- ▶ **The modern science also reveals that** human brain may flush out toxins during sleep; sleep clears brain of molecules associated with neurodegeneration
- ▶ Prophet (SAW) said: Never do that, as your body has a right upon you....!

Recommendations

- ▶ Huge number of women's involvement in workplace is indeed overwhelmingly appreciative
- ▶ Hence, to retain their existence and cooperation in the factories and other places Bangladesh there is no any other way by which their existing problems can be solved except the guideline of the Quran and Prophetic tradition.
- ▶ And that is why this research should be taken into consideration of employers and other concerned authorities to apply its directions in work so that the current facing obstacles can be abolished as soon as possible which hopefully will greatly contribute to the sustainable development of Bangladesh.

The End

Thanks to all for your patience and
cooperation!