

MUSLIM WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES: REALITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Edited by
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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	vii	
Notes on Contributors	ix	
Editors' Introduction	xvii	✓
<i>Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim</i>		
<i>Zaleha Kamaruddin</i>		
 Chapter 1		
Women's Progress in Malaysia:		
Challenges and Achievements	1	
<i>Nik Safiah Karim</i>		
Chapter II		
Access to Justice: The Human Dignity of Muslim		
Women and Divorce in Malaysia	39	✓
<i>Zaleha Kamaruddin</i>		
Chapter III		
In Defense of Islam: American Muslim Women		
Write Back	55	✓
<i>Nor Faridah Abdul Manaf</i>		
Chapter IV		
The Impact of Television Programmes on Muslim		
Dressing: Social Learning Theory	77	✓
<i>Saodah Wok</i>		
Chapter V		
Muslim Women and the New Gods: Psycho-Sociological		
Study on the Influence of the Media on Women	101	✓
<i>Tahraoui Ramdane</i>		
<i>Merah Souad</i>		

Chapter VI	
The Development of Women Magazines in Malaysia and its Educational Impact on Muslim Women	115 ✓
<i>Shafizan Mohamed</i>	
Chapter VII	
Women and Development in the Light of Islamic Legal Principles: A Case Study of Malaysian Muslim Women	141 ✓
<i>Mek Wok Mahmud</i>	
<i>Ghalia Bouhedda</i>	
<i>Akhtarzaitie Abdul Aziz</i>	
Chapter VIII	
Muslim Women under Islamic Family Laws: Problems and Prospects for Reforming the Codified Fiqh	179 ✓
<i>Sayed Sikandar Shah Haneef</i>	
<i>Mek Wok Mahmud</i>	
Chapter IX	
The Influence of Feminist Movement and the Establishment of Women's Rights in Islam	205
<i>Norma Kassim</i>	
Chapter X	
Women, Work and Islam: A Malaysian Experience	241 ✓
<i>Rohaiza Rokis</i>	
Chapter XI	
The Headscarf and the Veil in English Courts of Law: Issues of Free Expression and Proportionality	271 ✓
<i>John Candlish</i>	
Chapter XII	
The Social Status of Muslim Women in Contemporary Society: Headscarf Deadlock in Turkey as a Case Study	283 ✓
<i>Serdar Demirel</i>	

Chapter XIII	
Women and Nursing in the Contemporary Society	307
<i>Aishah bt. Ali</i>	✓
Chapter XIV	
A Review on the Health Status of Muslim	
Women with HIV/AIDS in Arab Countries	321
<i>Falah A.M. Salih</i>	
<i>Quazi Manjurul Haque</i>	✓
Chapter XV	
Perception towards the Importance of Education	
among Muslim Women in Papar,	
Sabah (Malaysia)	333
<i>Hj. Kasim Hj. Mansur</i>	
<i>Dayangku Aslinah Abd. Rahim</i>	
<i>Roslinah Mahmud</i>	
<i>Beatrice Lim Fui Yee</i>	
Chapter XVI	
The Status of Muslim Women in Contemporary	
Australia	351
<i>Jamila Hussain</i>	
Chapter XVII	
The Contemporary Saudi Arabian Woman:	
Leadership and Women's Issues	373
<i>Afaf Jamil Khogeer</i>	
Index	385

WOMEN, WORK AND ISLAM: A MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE

Rohaiza Rokis

Introduction

An activity when performed by men is often more highly valued than when performed by women [Pahl, 1984, Pearson, 2000]. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to analyse the experience of female workers in their private lives. The relevant research questions are: Do employed women have a second shift at home? How do they feel at home and at work? What are the measures developed by employed women in setting the boundary between home and the workplace? Consequently, how do religion and tradition influence the life of these professional women?

This chapter demonstrates the attitudes of employed women towards the family, especially the challenge of the dual-role concept. It has been demonstrated that throughout the years most married women who have a career and earn wages feel that the dual-role contradiction was indeed an unresolved dilemma [Barker and Allen. 1976: Kauppinen and Gordon. 1997]. It investigates how women balance the need to be in the labour force while still carrying out their role at home. The social expectation for a woman to be a good mother or/and wife is strong. This chapter discusses the effects of conservative ideas on the familial structure in Malaysia.