

## Islam and Gender: An Exploration of Hadith on the Equality of Men and Women

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to explore and analyze the concept of gender equality in hadith, with the goal of providing a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of how hadith regulates the relationship between men and women in various life contexts, whether in family, social, or professional domains. This study employs a qualitative method with a content analysis approach. The primary data sources are collections of hadith relevant to the topic of gender equality, gathered from various trusted hadith compilations. The analytical techniques used include interpretation of hadith texts, comparison with related Quranic verses, and review of classical and contemporary scholars' views on this issue. The results of the study indicate that hadith generally supports the principle of gender equality in many aspects, although there are some hadiths that require historical and sociocultural context to be comprehensively understood. These hadiths, if interpreted correctly and contextually, show that Islam provides equal rights and responsibilities between men and women and encourages respect and gender justice. However, the interpretation and implementation of gender equality in Muslim societies are often influenced by local cultural and traditional factors, which sometimes deviate from the true essence of Islamic teachings. This study highlights the importance of a critical and contextual approach in understanding hadith texts to support efforts in achieving gender equality that is just and in accordance with Islamic values*

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## INTRODUCTION

The ruling on traveling without a mahram remains a contentious issue for many Muslim women today. According to the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, the prohibition against women traveling without a mahram is viewed as haram, or forbidden. However, the interpretation of this restriction, especially for women traveling without close male relatives, remains ambiguous, particularly among elderly people in rural areas. Many parents in these regions continue to believe that young women should not travel independently for purposes such as studying or working until they are married (Rahman, 2013).

These restrictions have limited women's ability to participate in various activities, from traveling out of town or abroad for education and work to undertaking pilgrimages such as Hajj and Umrah (Esposito & DeLong-Bas, 2001). Generally, women are not permitted to travel without an Islamic companion except for purposes deemed sunnah or permissible. However, scholars hold differing opinions regarding the permissibility of women traveling without a mahram. Their perspectives, particularly concerning Hajj, are clearly outlined in their works, as Hajj requires individuals to leave their homes and journey to the House of Allah (Saeed, 2008). In some countries, these rulings have been incorporated into official government regulations, as seen in Saudi Arabia (Al-Hibri, 1997).

In warfare, Al-Rubayyi' bint Mu'awwidz is noted to have played a significant role by opposing Abu Jahl, one of Islam's key adversaries (Gülen, 2021). Similarly, Umm Haram bint Malihan also participated in military conflicts, demonstrating women's active involvement in the defense of their faith (Tucker, 2018). Such accounts affirm that women's intelligence and skills were recognized and utilized in critical situations (Musta'id, 2023).

These hadith concerning women require a critical synthesis that involves thorough research. For example, studies have shown that these traditions regarding women do not directly address the enforcement of Islamic law, or tasyri al-ahkam; rather, they fall under Fadhail Amal, literature focused on the virtue of good deeds. This categorization may allow for exceptions or alternative interpretations that support gender equality (Ahmed, 1992). For instance, the hadith concerning the ijbar right of the guardian—granting a guardian the authority to marry off his daughter without her consent—is often cited to limit women's rights in marriage. However, some scholars argue that this hadith contains shadz (irregularities) or does not align with broader Islamic principles of justice and women's rights (Kamali, 2006). Historical records thus reveal that Muslim women actively participated and held significant roles in the public sphere in the early days of Islam.

Gender is a social construct that shapes expectations and roles based on biological sex (Butler, 1999; Connell, 2012). This construction often leads to stereotypes that restrict and dictate behaviors and traits deemed "appropriate" for men and women (Risman, 2004). However, these stereotypical perspectives are inconsistent with Islamic teachings, which emphasize the inherent nobility and equality of every human being, regardless of gender (Barlas, 2002; Wadud, 2006). The Qur'an, in Surah Al-Isra' (17:70), affirms this by declaring that Allah has honored all human beings equally. This honor encompasses equal potential, capability, and the right to grow and contribute across various spheres of life. Therefore, the socially imposed limitations on gender roles often conflict with the Islamic principles of equality and human dignity.

Throughout Arab history, social life following the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad brought about significant advancements in the status, opportunities, and rights of women, making them equal to men in many respects. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) challenged the existing patriarchal norms by granting rights to women that had previously been denied to them. For instance, while women traditionally had no inheritance rights, Islam established clear guidelines that secured these rights for women. Islam condemns discrimination against women, promising abundant rewards for those who treat them well (Rockmansha, 2016).

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically utilizing desk research to achieve an in-depth understanding of the subject. Rather than gathering field data, researchers rely on relevant written sources, including academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and various written works that address themes related to feminism, gender equality, and the Islamic perspective on these concepts. Due to its emphasis on literature analysis, this study is categorized as library research. As Webster & Watson (2002) notes, this type of research derives data and insights through a critical review of documents related to the research topic, rather than through interviews or direct observation. This approach allows researchers to explore and synthesize existing viewpoints, identify emerging patterns or themes, and make new contributions to the understanding of complex issues such as feminism and gender equality within an Islamic context.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Gender is an essential social variable influenced by multiple factors, including age, social class, caste, race or ethnicity, and the geographical, economic, and political context. It serves as a framework for analyzing differences between boys and girls, as well as between adult men and women, regarding their roles, responsibilities, opportunities, constraints, and needs.

In many societies, gender relations are unequal and imbalanced, affecting men and women's access to opportunities, responsibilities, rights, benefits, and participation in various activities. For example, disparities exist in access to education and training for boys and girls, differences in workloads between adult men and women, and inequalities in access to and control over resources, benefits, and decision-making roles.

Gender equality refers to the provision of equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, treatment, and value for both men and women in all aspects of work and life. It ensures that everyone has equal access to and control over resources and benefits, allowing equitable participation in development. Promoting gender

equality aims to achieve fair outcomes and shared opportunities for both men and women, so that all individuals are treated with human dignity and have the chance to reach their full potential. However, gender equality does not imply that men and women must be identical in every way, but rather that they should have equal opportunities, rights, and responsibilities, free from discrimination based on sex (Suriyasarn, 2005).

## Hadiths on Gender

### a. A women must leave the house with a mahram

Hadith:

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى عَنْ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ أَحْبَرَنِي نَافِعٌ عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: "لَا تُسَافِرُ الْمَرْأَةُ ثَلَاثًا إِلَّا مَعَ ذِي مَحْرَمٍ" تَابَعَهُ أَحْمَدُ عَنْ ابْنِ الْمُبَارَكِ عَنْ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ نَافِعٍ عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

*"Musadad narrated, Yahya narrated, Ubaidillah narrated, Nafi' narrated, Ibn 'Umar RA narrated that the Prophet said, "No woman should travel for three days except with her mahram." This narration was quoted by Ahmad from Ibn Al Mubarak, from 'Ubaidillah, from Nafi, from Ibn 'Umar, from the Prophet (SAW)."*

Syarah:

لا تسافر المرأة ثلاثا "a woman should not travel for three days." "In the narration of Imam Muslim through the route of Dhahhak ibn Uthman from Nafi' it is mentioned, ثلاث ليل (three-night trip)." "It is possible to combine this with what is meant by a day and a night, and vice versa." "إلا مع ذي محرم." "except with his mahram". In the narration of Abu Dhar from Al Ashili it said, "إلا معها ذو محرم" "Unless she has a mahram with her". "What is meant by mahram is a man to whom it is not permissible to marry. "In the hadith of Abu Sa'id quoted by Imam Muslim and Abu Daud, it is stated, "إلا ومعها ابوها" Unless her father, brother, husband, son, or a man who is her mahram is with her."

Hadith:

حَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي ذُنْبٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ الْمَقْبُرِيُّ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "لَا يَجُزُّ لِامْرَأَةٍ تَوَكَّلُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ تُسَافِرَ مَسِيرَةَ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ لَيْسَ مَعَهَا حُرْمَةٌ تَابَعَهُ يَحْيَى بْنُ أَبِي كَثِيرٍ وَسُهَيْلٌ وَمَالِكٌ عَنْ الْمَقْبُرِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

*"Adam narrated to us, Ibn Abi Dzi'bi narrated to us, Sa'iid Al-Maqburi narrated to us from his father from Abu Hurairah RA, who said: The Prophet (SAW) said, "It is not lawful for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to travel a distance of one day and one night without her mahram." This*

*narration was also quoted by Yahya ibn Abi Kathir and Suhail and Malik from Al Maqburi, from Abu Hurairah RA.*

Syarah:

لا يحل لامرأة تؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر "It is not lawful for women who believe in Allah and the Last Day". "The prohibition is indirectly specific to believing women, excluding disbelieving women from the People of the Book and those who fight against Islam. This is the opinion of some scholars. But this may be answered by saying that it is faith that is the basis for the Shariah command in this case, or it may be that the attribute is mentioned to emphasize the prohibition of doing so, not to exclude what is included in its scope.." *Wallahualam.*

أن تسافر مسيرة يوم وليلة ليس معها حرمة "This narration indicates that it is forbidden for a woman to travel for a day and a night without a mahram with her. "This narration indicates that it is not permissible for a woman to travel without a mahram, and there is scholarly consensus on that, apart from traveling for Hajj and 'Umrah, and leaving a land of polytheism. Some of the scholars made having a mahram for a woman a condition of Hajj, as will be discussed in sha Allah."

Various hadiths on this topic explicitly prohibit women from traveling without a mahram. As a result, some scholars have concluded that this prohibition is universal, applying to all types of travel, including religiously obligatory journeys such as Hajj. They argue that the presence of a mahram is an absolute requirement. However, other scholars suggest that the core issue behind this prohibition is not the absence of a mahram per se, but rather concerns related to security and the potential for fitnah (temptation or harm). Some even argue that the role of a mahram could be fulfilled by a trusted woman for obligatory journeys such as Hajj. Additionally, interpretations have emerged, such as that of Imam Nawawi, who posited that women should not travel without a mahram except for religious obligations like Hajj or Umrah, or to areas where their religious freedom may be at risk.

This perspective is supported by a hadith narrated by Adiy bin Hatim, in which the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) foretold a time when a woman would be able to travel long distances alone without fear, except for fear of Allah (al-Tirmidhi), Another narration confirms the fulfillment of this prophecy, indicating that the conditions for women to travel without a mahram could be met under certain circumstances. These varying interpretations suggest that it may be permissible for a woman to travel without a mahram, provided that her security is ensured,

either during the journey or upon reaching the destination, especially if the journey involves staying outside her home area.

According to certain scholars within the madhhab, it is the assurance of safety and the absence of temptation that determine the permissibility of travel, rather than the requirement for a mahram. Some scholars also hold the view that a trustworthy woman can serve as an acceptable substitute for a mahram, though this substitution is only permissible for obligatory travel, such as Hajj.

Additionally, Imam An-Nawawi, in his *Sharh An-Nawawi 'ala Saheeh Muslim*, expresses the opinion that women should not travel without a mahram except for Hajj or 'Umrah. Outside the context of obligatory Hajj and 'Umrah, travel without a mahram is permissible under specific circumstances, such as fleeing from a region where one's Islamic practices are under threat.

There is another tradition narrated by Adiy bin Hatim, who was with the Prophet when a man approached, complaining of poverty, and another reported the prevalence of robbers (qath'us sabil). The Prophet said to Adiy bin Hatim, "O Adiy, have you seen the land of Al-Hirah?" Adiy replied, "I have never seen it, but I have heard of it." The Prophet then said, "If you live long enough, you will see a woman traveling alone from Hirah to perform tawaf around the Ka'bah, fearing no one except Allah." In another version of this narration, it is reported that Adiy bin Hatim eventually witnessed a woman who traveled alone from Hirah to Makkah to perform Hajj. Hirah is located near Kufa, Iraq, more than 1,500 kilometers from Makkah. This narration is reported by Imam Al-Bukhari and corroborated by other scholars, such as Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and Imam Ibn Khuzaimah, with a saheeh status, as it is included in *Sahih Al-Bukhari*.

This account suggests that the woman from Hirah traveled in a secure environment, as there was no fear of qath'us sabil or robbers during her journey. This illustrates that ensuring security and protection is a priority when considering opportunities for women to participate more freely in the public sphere.

## b. Women's Leadership

### Hadith:

حَدَّثَنَا عُثْمَانُ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ حَدَّثَنَا عَوْفٌ عَنْ الْحَسَنِ عَنْ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ قَالَ: "لَقَدْ نَفَعَنِي اللَّهُ بِكَلِمَةٍ سَمِعْتُهَا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيَّامَ الْجَمَلِ نَعْدُ مَا كِدْتُ أَنْ أَلْحَقَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْجَمَلِ فَأَقَابِلَ مَعَهُمْ قَالَ لَمَّا بَلَغَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّ أَهْلَ قَارِسٍ قَدْ مَلَكُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بِنْتُ كَيْسَرَى قَالَ: "لَنْ يُفْلِحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أُمِرُّهُمْ امْرَأَةٌ"

"Uthman ibn Haitsam narrated from 'Auf, who narrated from Hasan, who narrated from Abi Bakrah: "Indeed, Allah has benefited me through a

statement I heard from the Messenger of Allah on the eve of the Battle of Jamal, after I had nearly justified and joined the people of Jamal in fighting. When the news reached the Messenger of Allah (SAW) that the Persians had appointed the daughter of Kisra as their leader, he said, 'A people who entrust their affairs to a woman will not succeed.'".

The first hadith in this chapter was narrated by al-Bukhari from 'Uthman ibn al-Haitsam, from Auf, from al-Hasan, from Abu Bakrah. "Auf" means Al A'rabi. Hasan is Al Bashri, and all the narrators are Basrahites. Hasan heard it from his father (Bakrah), as explained in the discussion of the peace treaty."

لَقَدْ نَفَعَنِي اللَّهُ بِكَلِمَةٍ سَمِعْتُهَا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيَّامَ الْجَمَلِ "Allah benefited me during the days of Jamal on account of a sentence I heard from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) beforehand."

The word أَيَّامَ "days" related to نَفَعَنِي "benefited me"., "It is not specifically related to the phrase sami'tuha ('I heard'), as it is understood that he had already heard it prior to this event. The term *ashab al-jamal al-'askar* ('participants in the Battle of Jamal') refers to the troops who were with 'Aisha (RA). The phrase *ba'da ma kidtu alhaq bi ashab al-jamal* ('After I almost agreed with the participants of the Battle of Jamal') signifies 'Aisha (RA) and those who were allied with her. This will be elaborated upon in the discussion on trials and tribulations."

After the death of 'Uthman and the appointment of 'Ali as caliph, Talhah and Zubayr traveled to Makkah, where they met 'Aisha, who had just performed Hajj. They then agreed to go to Basra and call for justice for 'Uthman. When 'Ali heard of this, he set out to meet them, resulting in the Battle of Jamal. The battle is named Jamal ('camel') after the camel 'Aisha rode, which symbolized her call for peace. The phrase *lamma balagh* ('when it arrived') was spoken by Abu Bakrah. The term *bi kalimat* ('with a sentence') is understood here to imply a significant statement or message, with some interpretations extending it to mean a large amount of discourse.

كَسَرَى مَلَكُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بِنْتِ "They appointed Kisra's daughter as their leader (king). She was Bauran bint Shirawaih b. Kisra b. Barwaiz. When Shirawaih killed his father as mentioned and his father knew that his location was behind the incident, so he devised a strategy to kill his son after his death, for that he made a poisonous potion which was kept in a special cupboard and written حُقُّ الْجَمَاعِ (potion for intercourse), Whoever eats it in such a degree will have intercourse so many times".

This account, as read by Shirawaih, describes how he consumed it and subsequently died, living only six months beyond his father's death. At the time of his death, Shirawaih left no brother—having killed his own brother in his ambition to assume the throne—nor did he leave a son. In an effort to keep the kingdom within the family, they appointed a woman named Bauran as the leader. This event is mentioned by Ibn Qutaibah in *Al-Maghazi*. Al-Tabari also narrates that his sister, *Arzamidakhta*, was appointed as ruler.

Historical evidence suggests that women as rulers and religious leaders were not uncommon in the history of Islamic civilization. The Quran itself recounts the story of the Queen of Saba', who is portrayed as a wise leader of a great kingdom. Furthermore, the asbabul wurud (context of revelation) of the Abu Bakrah hadith references the leadership of 'Aisha, who is widely acknowledged by hadith scholars as a significant female scholar. She narrated numerous hadiths, and her opinions were often consulted by men. Although in later periods the number of female rulers and religious leaders became comparatively minor alongside male counterparts, this history demonstrates the potential and capability of women to hold leadership roles in both religious and governmental domains.

As a balanced perspective, it is suggested that women's leadership is viable in political, organizational, and governmental matters, with eligibility based on competence and capability rather than gender. However, certain roles—such as guardianship, leading prayer (imam), and family leadership—are traditionally designated by Sharia as male responsibilities.

### c. Women and careers

#### Hadis:

حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ حَفْصٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي، حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي شَقِيقٌ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْحَارِثِ عَنْ زَيْنَبِ امْرَأَةِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، قَالَ: فَذَكَرْتُهُ لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ فَحَدَّثَنِي إِبْرَاهِيمُ، عَنْ أَبِي عُبَيْدَةَ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْحَارِثِ عَنْ زَيْنَبِ امْرَأَةِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بِمِثْلِهِ سَوَاءً قَالَتْ: كُنْتُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ فَرَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: تَصَدَّقْنَ وَلَوْ مِنْ حُلِيِّكُنَّ، وَكَانَتْ زَيْنَبُ تُنْفِقُ عَلَى عَبْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْتَامٍ فِي حَجْرِهَا، فَقَالَتْ لِعَبْدِ اللَّهِ: سَلْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيْجُزِي عَنِّي أَنْ تُنْفِقَ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى أَيْتَامِي فِي حَجْرِي مِنَ الصَّدَقَةِ؟ فَقَالَ: سَلِي أَنْتِ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَنْطَلَقْتُ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَوَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ عَلَى الْبَابِ حَاجَتُهَا مِثْلُ حَاجَتِي، فَمَرَّ عَلَيْنَا بِلَالٍ فَقُلْنَا: سَلِ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيْجُزِي عَنِّي أَنْ تُنْفِقَ عَلَى زَوْجِي وَأَيْتَامِي لِي فِي حَجْرِي، وَقُلْنَا: لَا تُخْبِرْ بِنَا، فَدَخَلَ فَسَأَلَهُ، فَقَالَ: مَنْ هُمَا؟ قَالَ: زَيْنَبُ، قَالَ: أَيُّ الزَّيَانِبِ؟ قَالَ: امْرَأَةُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: نَعَمْ، وَلَهَا أَجْرَانِ: أَجْرُ الْقَرَابَةِ وَأَجْرُ الصَّدَقَةِ

"Umar ibn Hafis narrated, my father narrated, Al A'masy narrated, he said: Shaiq narrated to me from Amr bin Al Harith, from Zainab, the wife of Abdullah RA. Al A'masy said, "I mentioned it to Ibrahim, so Ibrahim related to me from Abu 'Ubaidah, from 'Amr bin Al Harith, from Zainab, the wife of Abdullah who was like him." Zainab said, "I was in the mosque, then I saw the Prophet saying, "Give in charity even if it is your jewelry." Zainab used to give alms to Abdullah and the orphans in his care. She said to Abdullah, "Ask the Prophet, is it sufficient for me to give to you and to the orphans in my care as charity from me?" Abdullah said, "Ask the Messenger of Allah yourself!" So I (Zainab) went to the Prophet and I found a woman from the Ansar at the door, she had the same need as me. Then Bilal passed by us, so we said, "Ask the Prophet if it is enough for me to give charity to my husband and the orphans in my care?" We said, "Do not tell about us." Bilal entered and asked the Prophet, so he asked, "Who are



these two?" Bilal replied, "Zainab." The Prophet asked, "Which Zainab?" Bilal replied, "Abdullah's wife." He said, "Yes, and for her two rewards, the reward of kinship and the reward of charity."

The chapter discusses giving zakat to husbands and orphans under one's care. This was reported by Abu Sa'id from the Prophet. Imam Bukhari cites the earlier tradition narrated by Abu Sa'id with a complete chain of transmission (*mawsul*) in the chapter titled 'Zakat to Relatives.' Ibn Rashid explains that Imam Bukhari revisits the topic of orphans in this chapter because the previous chapter was general, whereas this one addresses the matter in a more specific context. The evidence drawn from the two hadiths supporting this chapter's title is based on their general applicability, as the term *al-i'ta'* ('gift') encompasses both obligatory and recommended actions.

"I was in the mosque and I saw ... and so on." "Here is an additional explanation of the tradition of Abu Sa'id that has already been mentioned, and an explanation of the reason that prompted him to ask about it. I have not found the names of the orphans."

"I found a woman from among the Ansar". In the narration of Ath-Thayalisi, *فَإِذَا امْرَأَةٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ يُقَالُ لَهَا زَيْنَبُ* (I found a woman from the Ansar named Zainab). Similarly, An Nasa'i narrated through the route of Abu Muawiyah from Al A'masy. Then he added another narration from 'Alqamah from 'Abdullah, who said, *انْطَلَقَتْ امْرَأَةٌ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ يَعْنِي ابْنَ مَسْعُودٍ وَامْرَأَةُ أَبِي مَسْعُودٍ، يَعْنِي عُقْبَةَ بْنَ عَمْرِو الْأَنْصَارِيِّ* "So Abdullah's wife, Ibn Mas'ud, set out: and Abu Mas'ud's wife, 'Uqbah ibn Amr Al- Ashari". "I (Ibn Hajar) say, Ibn Sa'd did not mention Abu Mas'ud's wife from Anshar women other than Huzailah bint Tsabit bin Tsa'labah Al Khazrajyah, so it is possible that she had two names, or the person who named her Zainab has made a mistake by transferring the name of Abdullah bin Mas'ud's wife to this Anshar woman".

"and the orphans who are in my care". In the narration of An-Nasa'i it sa, *عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاجِنَا* (To our husbands and the orphans in our care). In the narration of Ath-Thayalisi, it is said that the orphans are the children of his brothers and sisters. Then in the narration of An-Nasa'i through 'Alqamah it is mentioned, *لِإِحْدَاهُمَا فَضْلٌ مَالٍ وَفِي جِجْرهَا بَنُو أَخٍ لَهَا أَيْتَامٌ، وَلِلْأُخْرَىٰ فَضْلٌ مَالٍ وَرَوْجٌ خَفِيفٌ ذَاتِ الْيَدِ* (One of the two has excess wealth, and in his care are the orphans of his brother, while the other has surplus wealth and a poor husband). *وَهَذَا الْقَوْلُ كِنَايَةٌ عَنِ الْفَقْرِ* "and for her two rewards: the reward of kinship and the reward of charity), i.e. the reward of strengthening kinship relations and the reward of the benefits of charity. The plain meaning of this Hadith is that Zainab did not ask the Prophet directly and he did not answer her directly. While the tradition of Abu Sa'id mentioned in the previous two chapters indicates that Zainab asked the Prophet verbally, and he gave an answer directly face to face with Zainab. This indication is inferred from her saying, *يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ، إِنَّكَ أَمَرْتِ* (O Prophet of Allah, indeed you are commanded...) and so on. And also with the words of the Prophet (SAW) in the narration, *صَدَقَ رَوْجُكَ*

(Righteous is your husband). So, it is possible that these are two different incidents, or the statement that Zainab asked directly is in the context of majaz. In fact, the actual question was asked through Bilal wallahu a'lam. This hadith is a proof that it is permissible for a woman to give zakaah on her wealth to her husband. This is the view of Imam Shafi'i, Ats-Tsauri, the two companions of Abu Hanifah, and one narration from Imam Malik and Ahmad. In fact, some scholars regarded it as absolutely permissible.

The narration prohibiting this form of charity is specifically related to heirs. Al-Jawzaqi states, '*Wa la liman talzamuhu ma'unatuhu*' ('Zakat should not be given to someone whose maintenance is the responsibility of the giver of the charity'). Ibn Qudamah expands on this principle, adding, '*wal-athhar al-jawaz mutlaqan illa lil-abawayn wal-walad*' ('The most correct view is that it is generally permissible, except for parents and children').

Scholars interpret the term 'charity' in this hadith as referring to obligatory charity, based on the phrase '*atujzi'u 'anni*' ('Is it sufficient for me?'). This interpretation is supported by Al-Maziri. However, Al-Qadhi 'Iyadh argues that the expression '*wa law min huliikun*' ('even if it is your jewelry') and the fact that the charity in question came from her handicrafts indicate that the charity here refers to voluntary charity (Sunnah charity). Imam An-Nawawi supports this interpretation. They understand the phrase '*atujzi'u 'anni*' ('is it sufficient for me?') as implying protection from Hellfire, suggesting that she was concerned that the charity she gave to her husband might not fulfill the intended purpose of charity.

Ibn al-Munir noted that the scholars who do not permit a wife to give zakat from her wealth to her husband argue that it would effectively return to her as maintenance, making it as though she had not spent anything. The counterargument is that the possibility of voluntary charity returning to her is a similar issue. The rationale for the first opinion is the Prophet's response, which did not elaborate on the matter in detail, suggesting a general approach to the issue. When Zainab asked about giving charity, the Prophet did not ask whether she meant voluntary or obligatory charity, as if he had said, "It is sufficient for you (to give charity to your husband), whether it is obligatory (zakat) or voluntary charity."

Regarding her children, the hadith does not indicate that Zainab gave zakat to her children directly. Instead, it suggests that if she gives her zakat to her husband and he distributes it to their children, they would be more entitled than anyone else. The term '*al-ijza*' (suffice) refers specifically to giving to the husband, while the children are considered recipients once the zakat has reached its rightful beneficiary.

In my view, there are two main issues in this discussion: the first concerns Zainab's question about giving her jewelry to her husband and children, and the second relates to her inquiry about maintenance. Hadits ini menganjurkan sedekah kepada kerabat.

### ***Munasabah with gender equality***

In various hadith and historical sources, it is evident that women during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) were active in various forms of work and possessed specialized skills. Some notable examples include Zainab bint Jahsh and Zainab al-Tsaqafiyah (both engaged in home industries), Malkah al-Tsaqafiyah (a perfume merchant), Sa'irah al-Asadiyah (a weaver), Ash-Syifa' bint Abdullah al-Qurayshiyah (a nurse), and Ummu Ra'lah al-Qusyairiyah (a makeup artist). Additionally, Khadijah bint Khuwailid, the wife of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), was a renowned businesswoman, successfully managing trade across various countries. Apart from Khadijah, another notable figure is Qailah Ummu Bani Anmar.

In a narration by Ibn Majah, it is reported that Qailah once approached the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and asked, "O Messenger of Allah, I am a woman who used to engage in buying and selling transactions. When I wanted to buy something, I would initially offer a lower price, then gradually raise the bid until it reached my desired amount. Similarly, when I wanted to sell something, I would first offer a higher price, then reduce it until I reached my target price." The Prophet (SAW) responded, "Do not do this, O Qailah. If you wish to buy something, negotiate the price you want, whether you receive it or not. If you wish to sell something, bargain at the price you want, either giving or withholding accordingly."

Staying at home does not require women to limit themselves or avoid interaction. In fact, in today's world, there are numerous avenues through which women can remain active and productive. Whether a woman stays at home or works outside, both choices can be equally valuable. It is not the case that women who work outside the home are inherently more successful than stay-at-home mothers, nor is a wife who stays at home necessarily more virtuous than one who works outside. What matters is the value and purpose of the activities being pursued. In the modern era, immorality or wrongdoing can occur within the home, just as goodness and benefit can be generated outside of it.

### **CONCLUSION**

In Islam, men and women are equal before Allah SWT, and their worth is determined by their piety rather than their gender. The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) emphasize the importance of respecting and treating women with kindness. Hadiths call for affection toward wives, honoring mothers, and holding women in

high regard. Prophetic traditions recognize women's rights in various domains, including economic, political, and social spheres. Women are granted the right to education, employment, property ownership, and active participation in public life. Within the family, the Prophetic traditions underscore the equality and partnership between husband and wife, where both have equal rights and responsibilities in creating a harmonious home. However, certain traditions appear to limit women's roles in society, such as the prohibition on women serving as leaders or judges. These limitations must be understood within the historical and cultural context of the time.

This study has methodological limitations, as it did not involve direct fieldwork. Therefore, it is recommended that future research include observations or interviews with individuals who follow these traditional interpretations. Additionally, future studies could explore gender equality from the perspectives of different academic disciplines. Overall, the principles of feminism and gender equality align with Islamic teachings, which emphasize equality, justice, and respect for the dignity of all human beings, regardless of gender.

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