

UNIT 10

Gender Inequality

Prof. Abdul Majeed Khan (1960)

Students Learning Outcomes:

On the completion of this unit, the students will be able to:

- use pre-reading strategies to predict the content of a text.
- comprehend text by applying critical thinking.
- write and revise business letters using correct format and style of expression.
- create and deliver group/class presentation.
- translate from English to Urdu.
- apply rules of capitalization.

Pre-reading:

- What is the role of women in Islam?
- Highlight the main duties of men and women.

Since the inception of civilization, women have been struggling to win recognition of their rights. They have been subjected to discrimination and tyranny ever since and even today, in this so-called modern era, they are deprived of many rights. Thinkers and philosophers of all ages have expressed various opinions as to her status and position in the society. However, the debate on this subject is still going on and there seems little hope of reaching any consensus by the two extreme schools of thought, regarding their right place in the society.

To understand the nature of controversy about the status of women, it would be pertinent to analyze the proposition in historical perspective. Socrates said, "Once made equal to man, woman becomes his superior". According to Edmund Burke, "A woman is but an



animal and an animal not of the highest order.”

Manu, an ancient India's law-giver, says, “In childhood must a female be dependent on her father; in youth on her husband; and woman must never seek independence.” According to Buddhism “Nirwana” (salvation) which is the ultimate goal of human life, cannot be attained in the company of women.”

The Orthodox Christians consider women as the cause of all evils, for it was Eve that enticed Adam to commit the first sin by eating the forbidden fruit, which caused the Great Fall. In Judaism, Hebrew scriptures condemn women to an eternal curse. It says, “of the women came the beginning of sin and through her we all die.”

The picture of women in pre-Islamic Arab society speaks of the pitiable condition of women. They were considered to be a disgrace to their families. Female children were buried and treated as the personal property of menfolk. Young maidens were traded as slaves in the open markets.

Islam is the only religion which has made serious efforts to place women at a respectable place in the society. It changed the mindset of man, including his social and religious thinking. It gave a vast amount of freedom to women enabling them to contribute towards the general welfare of society.

Islam holds a fundamental principle that woman is a human being; equal to man, and thus has equal rights. They are equal in their rights to realize their material needs in the world, including similar rights to hold property, mortgage it, bequeath it, sell or buy it or exploit it for their own benefit. We must note that the legal systems of the Europe till very recently did not give any of these rights to women. She could exercise these rights only indirectly through a man, her husband, father or guardian. This means that when Islam granted woman these rights, the woman in Europe was deprived of them even after more than eleven hundred years.

Islam recognizes an independent economic status of woman and gives her the right to own property, use and enjoy it without any

intermediary, trustee or mediator. She is free to choose her husband; no marriage is valid unless she agrees to it. Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) says, "No widow should be married without consulting her; and no virgin be married without her assent, and her assent is her silence". Even after the wedding ceremony if she declares that she does not assent to it, the marriage is dissolved.

Let us now focus on the world of today and draw a picture of the recent past to show the changing status of women. The furor over the rights of woman and perfect equality with man is raging all across the western countries, especially the Muslim ones. A propaganda campaign has been launched against the Islamic beliefs and customs by the western media, insisting upon "female emancipation" as essential for the economic and social development of the society. Influenced by the western media propaganda, some people say that no country can make progress and attain prosperity unless its women gain complete emancipation. The most staunch supporters and champions of women's rights are those men and women who profess foolishly, some mischievously, that Islam stands for perfect equality between the two sexes, while others, thanks to their ignorance of Islam or negligence thereof, claim that Islam is an enemy of woman, for it degrades her and lowers her status, holding her intellectually deficient and assigning her a position very much akin to that of animals. She is reduced to no more than a means of sensual pleasure for man and a machine for the propagation of the human species. Both of these two classes of people are equally ignorant of Islam or they intentionally confuse the right with the wrong in order to deceive others and sow the seeds of discord and mischief in the society, so as to further their own nefarious designs and facilitate the foul game they are out to play. Most of the time they parrot the words of others to achieve certain end. The source of their mischief is no other than the movement for woman's emancipation in Europe, whence all the defecting trends in the modern East flow.

Just a few centuries ago, woman was looked upon as a non-entity. She

was the theme of many a discourse of the scholars and philosophers, who debated among themselves over questions such as these. Has woman got a soul or not? If yes, what is the nature of her soul? Is it human or animal? Supposing she does possess a human soul then what social and human position should she occupy in relation to man? Is she born as a slave to man or does she hold a position slightly superior to that of a slave?

Since the inception of civilization down to the period of industrialization, the situation remained unchanged. She was coerced to play the role of a slave. The Industrial Revolution in Europe brought more miseries to woman. She was forced to work in industrial units, apart from managing her home. As most of the factories were established in urban areas, a large number of families migrated there, where they lived solitary life, least bothered by the principles of mutual responsibility and cooperation which was the hall mark of country life. As woman became economically independent, family ties were torn, for she was no longer under the control of man. She was now over worked physically, lost respect as well as her womanhood. She was denied even the natural pleasure of having a family, having children, living with them and realizing her own true self. Inspire of losing so much, she could not even win the right to have equal wages with man. The European man did not, however, easily forego his superiority and egoism with respect to woman. He was forced to recognize equal rights for her after a very tough and intense resistance and hard struggle in which all the usual weapons of warfare were used.

Feminism, a movement for the emancipation of women is an old movement. The word "Feminism" was first coined by the Younger Duma's in a pamphlet "L' Homme femme' in 1872. The book had a deep impact on the minds of the people and the issue of the rights and privileges of woman became an alive issue. In the early period of 19th century women resorted to strikes and non-cooperation, addressed public meetings and employed journalism to advance their cause, which consequently resulted in the attainment of the desired objective of raising the status of women in the

western world.

The United Nations declared 1975 as “International Women's year”. Perhaps for the first time in history, the eyes of the world were focused on that half of its population who, by virtue of an accident of birth, perform two-third of the world's work, receive one tenth of its income and own less than one hundredth of its property. It was the start of an international effort to right the wrongs of history.

The United Nations is not the first forum which launched a campaign for the safeguarding of women's rights. About fourteen hundred years ago, Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) presented the first charter of Human Rights, in which the women were placed at equal level with men. He dismantled the concept of men about women as a necessary evil, a deadly fascination, the devil's gateway, the unsealer of the forbidden tree, the deserter of the Divine law etc.

Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) in his farewell sermon said, “O people, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Do treat your women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers.”

On the other hand, women in the West, in most cases, have confused liberty with license. A large number of them have landed up in a libertine existence which has polluted the whole moral climate of the society. Liberty without moral and spiritual discipline is a potential dynamite. Equality among sexes is one of the most important watch-words of this century. Even among the advanced countries, after fifty years of hectic and continuous struggle, women are still discriminated in many fields of national life. Their representation in political, economic, professional, educational and administrative spheres is not in consonance with their number. Though they have acquired fundamental, legal and constitutional rights, in practice men have upper hand in all these fields as they have outnumbered women. For instance, in politics, women have a right to contest any public office, but even a cursory roll call of the legislatures of western countries will show that

women are playing a very limited role. Same is the case with public and private sectors of employment. Their share in the supervisory positions is very little, whereas at the top ranks in administration, their share is thinner still.

In certain professions like army, police, architecture and engineering, the entry of women is considered to be a taboo. There are quite a large number of women in education, but even in this field they are confined to the teaching side and only a little number of them get a chance to become top educational administrators.

If women are still deprived of many privileges in western countries, their lot in the developing countries is even worse. They are kept away from the mainstream of national life. In most of the eastern countries, women are considered to be fit only for domestic chores i.e. producing children, maintaining homes and looking after the well-being of their husbands.

Islam has been the greatest benefactor of women-kind. As Robert L.Gulick has described Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) contribution toward civilization in the following words:

“Muhammad (ﷺ) established law and order over a large portion of the known world and anticipated a significant number of the great social movements of the 20th century, equality of opportunity, unrestricted by colour, greater freedom for women, emphasis on universal education, consultation as the bedrock of sound administration, even-handed justice and on the personal plane; the mystery of self. The world we live in is, in some of its better aspects, the world Muhammad (ﷺ) made.”

The preamble to the Declaration on Elimination of Discrimination against women, November 7, 1967 states, "Discrimination against woman is undoubtedly incompatible with human dignity and with the welfare of the family and the society, prevents their participation on equal terms with men in the social, political, economic and cultural life of their countries and is an obstacle to the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity; the full and complete

development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women as well as men in all fields.”

Though Muhammad (ﷺ) installed womanhood at a respectable pedestal, in practice women are still subjected to slavish existence. Tribal customs and cultural traditions, in most of the Islamic countries, are some of the factors which contribute towards the degradation of women.

In most of the Islamic countries women are discouraged to play their role in the field of democracy. Politics is considered forbidden fruit for women. The percentage of women parliamentarians has never raised from 10% of the total number of parliamentarians.

In economic sector women participation is almost negligible. The statistics obtained at the NGO forum 1995 indicate that at the current rate of progress it would take 475 years for women to reach equality with men as senior managers in the world.

According to Islamic school of thought, Islam alone does provide a solution to the problems of woman no less than that of man. And all of us should turn towards it, strive hard to re-establish an Islamic state and enforce Islamic law in our lives. Only then shall we be able to realize in practice our beliefs and ideals. This is the only way to achieve symmetry and harmony in our life without any resort to injustice and tyranny.

Women have to actively work together with men towards gaining equality. But first they must understand the true spirit of the Holy Quran and tailor their demands to it so that there is no widespread resistance to their participation in national life.

In the end, let us quote the words of Quaid-i-Azam who, while addressing the audience at the Aligarh University in 1944, said, “No nation can rise to the level of glory unless your women are side by side with you. We are victims of evil customs. It is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners. There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable condition in which our women have to live. You should take your women along with you as comrades in every sphere of life.”

1. Answer the following questions.

- i) What is the view of Socrates about the status of woman in the society?
- ii) How can you explain the point of view of Edmund Burke regarding women rights?
- iii) Explain the Orthodox Christians point of view about women.
- iv) What was the condition of women in pre-Islamic Arab society?
- v) How did Islam change the mindset of man regarding the status of women?
- vi) Does Islam give woman the right to own property?
- vii) Which year was declared as "International Women's Year" by United Nations?
- viii) What does the Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) say about the status of women in the society?
- ix) What jobs are chosen by women in our society?
- x) What kind of role can women play in development of a country?

2. Mark the sentences as true or false.

- i) According to Socrates, women will gain superiority if they are given equal status to man. ☐
- ii) The Orthodox Christians do not consider woman as the cause of all evils. ☐
- iii) Islam gives equal rights to women. ☐
- iv) According to Islam, women are not allowed to choose their husbands. ☐
- v) The word "feminism" was first coined by the younger Duma's in a pamphlet "L'Homme femme" in 1872. ☐

A business letter is a letter which is written from one company / organization to another, or for correspondence between organizations and their customers, clients and other external parties. It is written in formal language. The overall style of letter depends on the relationship between the organizations or companies.

Format of Business Letter

A letter to the editor of a magazine for printing an advertisement of the company in their magazine.

Welfare Educational Society,
Shahbaz Town, Quetta.

} *Heading*

April 21st, 2018.

News Express,
52 – F, Jinnah Road,
Quetta.

} *Inside Address*

Dear Mr. Faheem,

} *Salutation*

We have a Welfare Educational Society at Quetta, managing a group of colleges offering various courses in medical, computer, engineering and management. The detailed list of various courses, their duration and fee structure is attached herewith. We are interested in admitting students from all over Balochistan. We would like to take the help of your magazine to give wide circulation to our admission notice.

} *Body*

You are kindly requested to provide us the details of the cost of the package in this regard. We would appreciate if you kindly enlighten us about the overall impact of this advertisement.

With warm regards,

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

} *Closing*



} *Signature*

Nadir Khan

Welfare Educational Society, Quetta.

Activity

Write a letter to a company to place an order for stationery material for your company.

Oral Communication

Group/Class Presentations

Activity

Work in groups of five to ten. Prepare a presentation on "How to work for the awareness of enrollment in the schools in your province?"

Follow these steps:

- i) Brainstorm your ideas.
- ii) Make a mind map.
- iii) Make an outline of your ideas.
- iv) Write down the introduction.
- v) Support your ideas with reasoning.
- vi) Write down the conclusion.

VOCABULARY

Translation

Translation from one language to another is not an easy job. It needs knowledge of both the languages. A good command on grammar, vocabulary, idioms and phrases are the basic requirements of translation. Word for word translation changes the core concept of the language.

For example:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| i) See him off at the station. | اسے اسٹیشن تک چھوڑ آؤ۔ |
| ii) Work whole heartedly. | دل لگا کر کام کرو۔ |
| iii) Talk politely. | نرمی سے بات کرو۔ |
| iv) I have known him for a long time. | میں اسے بہت دنوں سے جانتا ہوں۔ |
| v) He is an apple of his father's eye. | وہ اپنے باپ کی آنکھوں کا تارا ہے۔ |

Activity

Translate the seventh paragraph of the Unit “Gender Inequality” into Urdu.

Grammar

Capitalization

Rules of Capitalization

(a) Capitalize Proper Names

Capitalize names of particular persons, places and things:

- 1) **Words referring to the Deity:** Allah, God, Almighty, Creator, King of kings and Lord. (Do not capitalize the word *god* when referring to pagan deities)

Note: Capitalize pronouns that refer to the Deity. God always keeps His promises.

- 2) **Name of Satan, angels, human beings:** The Devil, Gabriel, Saima, Fahim, Tariq. (Notice that the abbreviations Jr. and Sr. are capitalized following a name).
- 3) **Continents, countries, states, provinces, cities:** Antarctica, Pakistan, Balochistan, Quetta, Mastung, Lahore.
- 4) **Recognized political or geographical regions:** The South, the Far West, the Northwest (U.S); the Far East, the Near East (Do not capitalize *north, east, south, west, northwest*, etc. when they refer to a direction: west of town, driving east.)

Note: Do not capitalize adjectives that merely indicate a portion of a region: southern France, eastern Balochistan.

Do capitalize adjectives that are part of a name referring to a political or a geographical division: Central America, West Germany, Northern Ireland, Eastern Samoa, South Korea, Western Europe

- 5) **Islands, bodies of water, mountains, parks:** Baffin Island, Isle Royale; Old Harbour Bay, Caribbean Sea; Big Horn Mountains, Mount

Whitney; Hazar Gangi National Park.

- 6) **Streets and high ways:** Zaib-un-Nisa Street, Najeeb Street, Forty-second Street (The second part of a hyphenated number is not capitalized).
- 7) **Special organizations:** The Security Council, Congress, State Department, Library of Congress, Supreme Court of Pakistan.
- 8) **Calendar items and special events:** Friday, May, Eid, Sibi Festival.

Note: Names of the seasons (spring, summer, fall, autumn, winter) are not capitalized unless personified: Then came Autumn in her multicolored garb.

- 9) **Historical events and periods:** Hundred Years War, Battle of Panipat, Great Depression, Romantic Age.
- 10) **Nationalities, races, and tribes:** Pakistani, Dravidian, Bugti, Tareen.
- 11) **Religious writings, groups and terms:** The Quran, Hadith, Catholic, Crucifixion.
- 12) **Languages and particular courses:** Pakistani, Japanese, Functional English 601, Computer Science 205 (The number after the subject indicates a particular course).
- 13) **Brand names of business products:** Dunlop tires, Blue Band (Do not capitalize the common noun after the brand name.)
- 14) **Monuments, bridges, buildings, documents, planets, ships and any other particular persons, places or things:** Death Valley, National Monument, Man, Safina, Balochistan Bridge, Habib Plaza.

(b) Capitalize the titles of works

Note: Capitalize the first and last words and all content words in the titles of *books, magazines, newspapers, poems, stories, plays, musical compositions, paintings, sculpture, and other works of art*. Function words, coordinating conjunctions, prepositions and the articles (*a, an* and *the*) are not capitalized.

- Exploring the World of English (book)
- News and Views (magazine)
- Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening (poem)
- The Merchant of Venice (Play)

Function Words:

The words which have little meaning on their own, but which show grammatical relationship in and between sentences.

Examples: and, to, the etc. they are also called grammatical or structural words.

Content Words:

The words which refer to a thing, quality, state or action, and have meaning when they are used alone.

Examples: world, play, happy, quickly etc. They are also called lexical words.

Miscellaneous

1. **Capitalize the** first word of every sentence (including quoted sentences)

The sleep of a labouring man is sweet.

Vince Lombardi said, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all."

2. **Capitalize the pronoun "I" and the interjection "O".** (The more common interjection oh is followed by a comma or an exclamation point; O is never followed by punctuation.)

Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh, save me for Thy mercies' sake.

3. **Capitalize the first word in every line of poetry, whether or not the word begins a sentence.**

If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill

Be a scrub in the valley – but be

The best little scrub by the side of the rill;

Be a bush if you can't be a tree.

Activity

Read the following paragraph and capitalize the relevant words.

my lively, funny grandfather, akbar, lives in kalat, a quiet superb of balochistan, pakistan. he has occupied the same house for over fifty years. this is my favourite place in the world. whenever i think of the lush gardens by the house, i feel warm and secure.