

The Rights and Status of Widows in Islam: A Study from the Perspective of Multicultural Islamic Education in the Context of Bangladesh

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Abstract: *One of the most discussed topics in today's society is the issue of widows' proper rights and status. This research paper investigates the rights and status of widows within the framework of Islamic education in the context of Bangladesh using qualitative methods. It included the Qur'an, Hadith, and various forms of research. Islam has given them a detailed discussion of their rights and dignity just like any other woman. Widows often face unique challenges and social stigmatization in various societies, and this study focuses on understanding their rights and status as prescribed by Islamic teachings and the extent to which these teachings are implemented within the realm of Islamic education. Bangladesh government has fixed some allowance for them which is very little. No steps have been taken to increase employment to make them economically prosperous. This paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on women's rights within an Islamic context and highlights the significance of integrating such discussions within the education system for tangible societal transformation.*

Keywords: *widow, the right and Status, Islamic Education, Bangladesh Context*

INTRODUCTION

In the intricate tapestry of Islamic jurisprudence and societal norms, the rights and status of widows have been a subject of significant discourse and debate. Islam, as a comprehensive faith, lays out a framework that encompasses various aspects of human life, including social justice, equality, and the treatment of vulnerable groups[1][2]. The treatment of widows within this framework carries immense importance, as it reflects the ethical and moral compass of Islamic teachings. This research paper delves into a critical examination of the rights and status of widows in Islam, with a particular focus on the context of Bangladesh[3][4]. By exploring these issues through the lens of Islamic education, the paper seeks to shed light on the nuanced intersections between religious teachings, cultural practices, and gender dynamics[5][6]. The context of Bangladesh provides an intriguing backdrop for this study, as it is a country where Islam holds a significant influence over the lives of its citizens[7]. Islamic education plays a pivotal role in shaping individual perceptions and communal attitudes towards religious practices and social norms.

Understanding how Islamic education in Bangladesh addresses the rights and status of widows is not only crucial for acknowledging the lived experiences of this

marginalized group, but also for fostering an environment that aligns with the principles of justice and compassion advocated by the Islamic faith[8][9]. A woman could lose her husband in many unfortunate situations and leave her as a widow. A widow suffers depression time thinking about losing her husband and life becomes grief[10][11]. Widowhood is highly connected with a wide range of deprivations across low and middle-income communities[12]. The widow is young or old they need financial, social, and mental support. But in our society, widows are considered inauspicious and they are deprived of several ways from their rights. In many societies, they have limited social status and are trimmed from social participation. Widowed, divorced, and abandoned women constitute about 11.29 per cent of total married women in the country[13][14]. Widowed women are stigmatized and humiliated in the community. Even if they want to get married, many of the widows cannot do it because they think the people will neglect them. This study discussed “The Rights and Status of Widows in Islam: A Study from the Perspective of Islamic Education in the Context of Bangladesh.” Although some articles and research have been published about widowhood. The present study has been discussed based on Islam about the rights of widows and included the status of widows, Problems and solutions are highlighted in the context of Bangladesh.

By investigating the textual foundations of Islamic teachings regarding widows, comparing them with contemporary practices, and analyzing the impact of Islamic education on the perception and treatment of widows within Bangladeshi society.

Objectives of the Study

1. To present the rights and status of widows in Islam
2. To Analysis of problems and solutions in the context of Bangladesh

METHODOLOGY

The research is conducted on “The Rights and Status of Widows in Islam: A Study from the Perspective of Islamic Education in the Context of Bangladesh” using qualitative methods. It included the Qur'an, Hadith, and various forms of research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Holy Quran and the hadiths discussed the widow's rights and status. But there is no more beneficial research about “The Rights and Status of Widows in Islam: A Study from the Perspective of Islamic Education in the Context of Bangladesh.” Although there are some articles and research the analysis of the rights and status of widows in the light of Quran and Hadith is very small. Various articles or research have been written about widows at different times. For example-

A study, (Islam, 2020) studied that most of the widows in Bangladeshi society don't get respect and they don't get any property from their husbands. One study explained the situation of widows generally in all cultures of the world is very hopeless. All of the problems are related to widowhood one of the problems is the financial crisis. According to Islamic tradition and jurisprudence, Women are created by God to be man's partners of each other[15][16]. Another study, study analyses that the stigma of a widow's life makes them more bored of lifelong suffering. They can't easily enjoy the status of living, they fail to adjust to their family members and community. Most of the time they have to bear destitute living, poverty, exploitation, and humiliation. Another study described widow's allowance that, women who are getting widow allowance had a better life. However, in the case of women empowerment non-beneficiaries had low access to various sectors of income-generating activities, household decision-making, socio-cultural and political activities, and mobility but the beneficiaries had relatively high access to these sectors. Whatever, Beneficiaries are enjoying a better life than the

opposite group whereas they were relatively satisfied with their life in comparison to the non-benefice.

In the summary of the research, it can be said that although there is a discussion about the allowance of widows, their problems, etc., their rights and status in Islam have hardly been discussed in the context of Bangladesh. Islam is a complete code of life. All issues are discussed in detail here

Qur'anic and Sunnah views on the rights and status of widows

Rights to Get Remarried

The first of the rights Islam has given to widows is that a widow can marry a second time and lead a life with dignity. So we will say that second marriage is a mercy for the widow. Because through this she can get used to a socially normal life. Through marriage, she finds a guardian, and her loneliness ends. After becoming a widow, she has no choice but to remarry for social status and security. Especially for these very young women. Islam has implemented this right of a widow with great dignity. And in this context, in various places of the Holy Quran, widows are encouraged to marry after the Iddat. Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

Meaning: As for those of you who die and leave widows behind, let them observe a waiting period of four months and ten days. When they have reached the end of this period, then you are not accountable for what they reasonably decide for themselves. And Allah is aware of what you do. (Surah Baqarah 02: 234).

Regarding the instructions to arrange the marriage of widows, the Qur'an says:

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيْمَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ إِنْ يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ

Meaning: And marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male slaves and female slaves. If they should be poor, Allah will enrich them with His bounty, and Allah is all-encompassing and knowing. (Surah Noor 24:32)

Here, Allah has given instructions to marriage, He will remove the lack of His servants. Therefore, we can consider it our social responsibility to arrange a widow's marriage. In the explanation of the verse, Allama Ibnu Kasir (rah) said: "According to the commentators, in the above verse, Allah commands the unmarried to marry including widows to marry[17][18]." That is, in Islamic Shariah, it is that no one should be single, everyone should be married. Moreover, abstinence from sin has been made imperative for all. And marriage is a unique way to survive the sin of lust. Especially for those who are widowed at a young age, its importance is more for them.

According to Sunanut Tirmidhi, Ali (r.a) said, The Prophet (s.a.w) said to him, 'O Ali, do not delay in three matters. Salat when its time comes, Janazah when it comes, and a marriageable woman when you find her suitable partner.' (Sunanut Tirmidhi: 171). The word 'Ayam' mentioned in the hadith is comprehensive[19]. Applies to both virgins and widows. After mentioning this hadith, Shaikhul Hind Mahmud Hasan Ganguhi said in his Tafsir, "The people who turn their noses up when they hear about the marriage of widowed women, understand that their faith is not secure." Regarding the rights of widows, the Holy Quran says:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا
ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفُحْشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ
تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا ۚ وَيَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

Meaning: “O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to take women as inheritance by force, and do not detain them to take from them a share of what you have given them; Live well with them until they commit fornication, even if you do not like them.” (Surah An-Nisa 4 : 19)

In Islamic social life, no man or woman should remain unmarried, thereby closing the way to going astray and indulging in sin. In a hadith narrated by Abu Huraira (r.a) The Prophet (sm) said, "It is the responsibility of Allah to help three people. 1. Jihadist in the path of Allah 2. The man who wants to collect the loan of the owner 3. Marries for custody of honour [20]. It is also narrated by Abdullah Ibn Masood (RA) that – “You seek wealth through marriage.” In the Holy Qur’an, husband and wife compare each other's clothes and declare:

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ هُنَّ

Meaning: They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them. (Sura Baqarah-2:187)

So, when a woman marries again after becoming a widow, she can cover her life with a blanket of security from all sides, like being covered with a garment. By second marriage the widow can live with her status. It is very unfortunate that some of the Muslim castes also consider widow marriage to be a crime just like the ignorant castes. But Allah himself has ordered it[21]. People will say bad things about widow marriage just because of that it is not correct to be left behind. It is irreligion to make halal things haram against the instructions of Allah. Another new relative will be created through the second marriage.

Otherwise, there are many widows in society whose husbands died at a young age. As a result, many evil people in society with widows harass them from time to time with various bad suggestions. We often see their condition in various media.

Rights to Observe Iddat

In the holy Qur'an, Allah has declared widows' benefits, value, and status. Allah says:

وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ ۚ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ
إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَبِعُولَتِهِنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرِدْدِهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا ۚ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ
الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

Meaning: Divorced women remain in waiting for three periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation. And due to the wives is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. (Surah Baqarah, 02:228)

In the same Surah, Allah says-

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَرَوْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

Meaning: And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - they, [the wives, shall] wait four months and ten [days]. And when they have fulfilled their term, then there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner. And Allah is [fully] acquainted with what you do. (Surah Baqarah, 02:234)

Therefore, they have rights to observe iddat at the time of her husband's death or in case of divorce and its compulsory.

Rights to get Dowry (Mahar)

Although Islam has instructed us to pay dowry in cash most of the people in our society leave the dowry balance. So a widow is entitled to her husband's unpaid dowry. It is not that you will not get dowry only if your husband dies. Like dowry debt, in the absence of the husband, the heirs of the husband are obliged to pay it from the assets of the husband. Here we can refer to an article by Siraj Pramanik, a lawyer at the Supreme Court of Bangladesh[16][22]. He wrote – “Debenture is unsecured debt. A widow is entitled to her husband's unclaimed dowry. It is not that the dowry is not paid after the death of the husband. As with dowry debt, the husband's heirs are bound to repay it in the future. In addition, the widow is entitled to collect the debt from the estate of the deceased husband like other creditors.

According to Muslim law, a widowed mother inherits a share of her deceased husband's property. A widowed mother will be given 1/8 share of her deceased husband's property. The widowed mother has the right to freely use the portion received from the property left by her husband[23][24]. The maintenance of a widowed mother is not imposed on anyone, but it is definitely on the children[25][26]. If the father dies and the father does not pay the dowry to his mother, then the widowed mother can claim the dowry from the child. If the dowry is not paid, she can collect it within three years of her husband's death by filing a case in the parbarki court. Besides, Bibi Bachan v. Shakhe Hamdi (1871) 14 M.I.A. held that a widow could not freely use or possess the portion derived from the property left by her husband. Reference is made on page 377.

A widowed mother is entitled to maintenance from her children. There is an opportunity to go to court if the children do not pay maintenance. (Jamliia Khatun v. Rustam Ali, 48 DLR (Appellate Division), p. 110) If a widow has her husband's property on demand of dowry, if she is wrongfully evicted from the property, she can file a suit for recovery of possession. (Majid Mia v. Bibi Sahbe (1916) 40 Bom. Page-34)[27]. In the case of immovable property, the case has to be filed within 6 months from the date of eviction. (Mashal Sanih v. Ahmad Husain 1928, 50 All. p.-86, Tamadi Act, 1908 Schedule 1 to Section 3). However, in the case of immovable property, the case has to be filed within three years from the date of dispossession. Tamadi Act, 1908 Schedule 1 to section 48).

A widow can freely use the wealth received from the property left by her husband. No one is bound by law to maintain a widow. However, children are legally bound to support themselves to the best of their ability[28]. In the case of childlessness, parents also have a moral obligation to provide maintenance for their widowed mother. In addition, a woman gets wealth from her father based on inheritance, so even if the father is not there, the widow will be the inheritor of her father's inheritance.

In this regard, the Holy Quran says:

يَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ الَّتِي ءَاتَيْتَ أَجُورَهُنَّ

Meaning: O Prophet, indeed we have made lawful to you your wives to whom you have given their due compensation. (Surah Al-Ahzab 33:50)

The widow can freely use the wealth received from the property left by her husband. No one is bound by law to maintain a widow. However, children are legally bound to support themselves to the best of their ability. In the case of childlessness, parents also have a moral obligation to provide maintenance for their widowed mother[29][30]. In addition, a woman gets wealth from her father based on inheritance, so even if the father is not there, the widow will be the inheritor of her father's inheritance. In this regard, the Holy Quran says:

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِّأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَّتَّعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرِ إِخْرَاجٍ ۖ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

Meaning: And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - for their wives is a bequest: maintenance for one year without turning [them] out. But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no blame upon you for what they acceptably do with themselves. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. (Al-Qur'an - Surah Baqarah 02:240)

Also, they are entitled to maintenance for at least one year after the death of the husband. If they don't want to go somewhere else on their own, they have been instructed not to force their father-in-law out of the house[31][32]. However, if they want to go somewhere else according to the rules (for example, they want to live with their children or father's house with all the property they deserve, or they want to live independently by doing business or work) or they want to marry someone else according to the rules, then there is no fault in that. In this case, they cannot be stopped.” (Daily international.com. Published: Thursday, 30 August 2018)

Inheritance of Husband's Property

Just as a widow is allowed to marry, there are clear instructions in the Qur'an regarding her husband's inheritance. The Holy Quran says-

﴿وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ وَوَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَوَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرَّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِينَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۚ وَالنِّصْفُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَوَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَوَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلِّلَةً أَوْ امْرَأَةً وَلَهُ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ فَإِنْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ ۚ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرِ مُضَارٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ﴾

Meaning: And for you is half of what your wives leave if they have no child. But if they have a child, for you are one-fourth of what they leave, after any bequest they [may have] made or debt. And for the wives is one-fourth if you leave no child. But if you leave a child, then for them is an eighth of what you leave, after any bequest you [may have] made or debt. (Surah Nisa, 04: 12)

Through the said directive, it is ensured that a widow does not face financial problems in her life. And we should make them understand what they deserve[33]. Do not cheat them in any way. Action should be taken against those who try to deprive them of their rights. Because every person must help the helpless.

Rights for Maintenance

However, the responsibility of raising children is not only for widows. Islam freed widows from sole responsibility for children. According to Islamic Shari'ah, the grandfather in the absence of the father will be the guardian of the child and in his absence, the judge of the Islamic state will determine the guardian in terms of assets and expenses. The state will alleviate their poverty through financial support[18][34]. It is mentioned in the hadith Aslam (r.a) Narrated. He said, One day I went out to the market with Umar Ibnul Khattab (RA). There a young woman met him and said, O Amirul Mu'minin! My husband has passed away leaving a small child. By Allah, they don't have even a goat's hooves to cook their food, and they don't have a cropping system or a milk camel or a goat. I fear they may die for lack of food. But I am the daughter of Khufaf Ibnu Aima Ghifari. My father participated in the battle of Hdaybiyah with The Prophet (SAW). After hearing this, Umar (r.a) stood beside her without crossing her.

Then he said, thank your tribe. They are very close people to me. After that he came to the house and took a fat camel from the stable and put two sacks of food and some cash and clothes in it and put them on the camel's back and put the reins in the woman's hand and said, you pull it. Maybe Allah will donate something better for you before this end. Then a person said, O Ameer UI Muminin! You gave her too much. Omar (r.a) said, May your mother lose you. By Allah, I saw the father and brother of this woman restraining a fort for a long day and then conquering it. Then we demand the war booty from their share gained that fort. (And we take some of it ourselves and give them some of it).

Of course, the mother will raise the child until she married elsewhere. Here we can refer a Hadiths-

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، أَنَّ امْرَأَةً، قَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ ابْنِي هَذَا كَانَ بَطْنِي لَهُ وَعَاءٌ وَتَدْبِي لَهُ سِقَاءٌ وَحِجْرِي لَهُ حِوَاءٌ وَإِنَّ أَبَاهُ طَلَّقَنِي وَأَرَادَ أَنْ يَنْتَزِعَهُ مِنِّي فَقَالَ لَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَنْتِ أَحَقُّ بِهِ مَا لَمْ تَنْكِحِي "

Meaning: Abdullah Ibnu Amr Ibnu al-'As (r.a) reported. A woman said: Messenger of Allah, my womb is a vessel to this son of mine, my breasts a water-skin for him, and my lap a guard for him, yet his father has divorced me, and wants to take him away from me. The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) said: You have more right to him as long as you do not marry. "You are more entitled to children until you marry." (Abu Dawud, Hadith: 2276)

Rights to be protected by the country's Law

A widow live in a kind of defenseless situation, because she lost her husband who would protect her. So, she has to confirm that the law is on her side, to protect all her rights and her children rights. Allah says:

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ

Meaning: Mothers may breastfeed their children for two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is the mother's provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child. (Surah Baqarah 02 : 233)

Mothers' lives are not allowed to be damaged on the pretext of raising children, and they are not allowed to be devalued.

Ibn Kasir said the child's father will support the child and the child's mother. They will collect it as the prevailing custom of the city. Will bear the expenses of the mothers of the children as far as possible. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir)

Imam Jahhaq (RA) said, that when a man divorces his wife and has a child with her, the husband must bear the expenses of the child's mother until the child is weaned.

Rights to be protected by the Government. The government is certainly responsible for the welfare of a widow and her children. So, the government should ensure every widow that their life and children are part of the government's responsibilities. The companion of Prophet (s.a.w) Omar (r.a) when he was a Khalifah (Responsibility of Government) he was saying in his khutbah (responsibility of the government)-

لَعْنُ سَلَمْنِي اللَّهِ لِأَدْعَنَ أَرَامِلَ أَهْلِ الْعِرَاقِ لَا يَخْتَجُنَ إِلَى رَجُلٍ بَعْدِي أَبَدًا

“If Allah should keep me alive I will let the widows of Iraq need no men to support them after me.” (Sahih al-Bukhari 3700)

Status of Widows

It is seen in the society that there are many widows who do not remarry out of love for their children and thinking about their future. That is, if they do not remarry and want to live with the memory of a husband like him by protecting his honor, Islam welcomes that too and has declared a special status for him. Islam honored their self-sacrifice. Prophet (s.a.w) said,

عَنْ عَوْفِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ الْأَشْجَعِيِّ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَنَا وَامْرَأَةٌ سَفْعَاءُ الْحَدِّ يُنِكَهَا تَيْنِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَوْمًا يَزِيدُ بِالْوَسْطِ نَوَالِ السَّبَابَةِ امْرَأَةٌ آمَتَمِنَ زَوْجَهَا دَائِمًا نَصِيبٌ، وَجَمَالٌ، حَبَسَتْ نَفْسَهَا عَلَيَّ تَامَاهَا

Meaning: Auf Ibnu Malik (r.a) narrated. The Prophet (s.a.w) said, 'I and the woman with a scarred face (due to lack of self-care) will be like this in the Hereafter or there will be a distance between us greater than martyrdom and the middle finger. She is the woman whose husband is dead and despite her lineage and beauty, she withholds herself from orphaned children—until the children become separated (independent) or die. (Abu Dawud, Hadith: 5249)

About the status of widows, Abu Huraira (r.a) described from The Prophet (s.a.w) He said-

أَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ يُفْتَحُ لَهُ بَابُ الْجَنَّةِ، إِلَّا أَنَّهُ تَأْتِي امْرَأَةٌ تُبَادِرُنِي فَأَقُولُ لَهَا: مَا لَكَ؟ وَمَا أَنْتِ؟ فَتَقُولُ: أَنَا امْرَأَةٌ قَعَدْتُ عَلَى أَيْتَامٍ لِي

Meaning: I am the person for whom the door of Paradise will be opened first. But a woman will come and want to go to heaven before me. I will ask her that, what happened to you? Who are you then she will say, I am the woman who restrained

herself (from marrying) to take care of her orphan child. (Musnad Abi Yala, Hadith No-6651)

Through the above Hadiths, the status of widows becomes clear. A widow sacrifices her life and youth often just to look after her children. He takes responsibility for his life - youth and her children's education and even raising them. A man will take on so many responsibilities. He is certainly entitled to special status. And Islam mentions its status as a way of life based on justice.

Status of Widows to Cooperate

Regarding widows and their rights, Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا ۗ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِيَنْتَهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفُحْشَةٍ ۗ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ ۖ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا

Meaning: O you who have believed, it is not lawful for you to inherit women by compulsion. And do not make it difficult for them to take [back] part of what you gave them unless they commit a clear immorality. And live with them in kindness. For if you dislike them - perhaps you dislike a thing and Allah makes therein much good. (Surah Nisa, 04: 19)

The Prophet (s.a.w) stopped social neglect and contempt by marrying multiple widows and encouraged them to be kind to widows.

عن صفوان بن سليم رضي الله عنه يرفعه إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال الساعي على الأرملة والمسكين كالمجاهدين في سبيل الله او كالذي يصوم النهار ويقوم الليل

Meaning: Safwan Ibn Sulaim (r. a) narrated it as a Maruf Hadith from the Prophet (s.a.w). The Prophet (s.a.w) said Allah belongs to the one who tries to provide food for the widow and the poor like a jihadist on the street or like a person who prays at night and observes fasting during the day.' (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith: 3482)

A similar hadith is also narrated by Abu Huraira (r.a),

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: الساعي على الأرملة والمسكين كالمجاهد في سبيل الله وأحسبه قال: كالقائم لا يفتر، وكالصائم لا يفطر.

Meaning: The Prophet (s.a.w) said, "The person who tries to provide food for the widow and the poor is like a jihadist in the way of Allah, or like a person who prays at night and provides sustenance during the day. "Not lazy and like the fasting person, who does not break his fast." (Always fasting without interruption.) (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith: 3484)

In another narration, "The Prophet (s.a.w) used to meet the needs of widows and needy people when they were on the road." (Sunan Nasa'i, Hadith: 1425)

Statistics of Widowed

Widowed, divorced, and abandoned women constitute about 11.29 per cent of total married women in the country (BBS, 2009).

Bangladesh Government Action for Widows

Bangladesh government has taken allocation for the widow allowance program. During the inception of the widow allowance program, the total allotment was 12.5 crore, the number of beneficiaries was 1 lakh and the monthly allowance was 100 taka. With time gradual expansion of the program occurred and now in 2011-12 the total allotment has been increased to 331.20 crore taka, the number of beneficiaries increased up to 9.2 lakh and the monthly allowance reached up to 300 taka. Now, in the financial year 2022-23, 24 lakh 75 thousand widows and widowed women are being given allowance at the rate of Tk500 per person per month. 1495.40 corers have been allocated for this sector in the current financial year.

Table 1. The year-wise statistics of the distribution of the Widow Allowance since inception are given below

Financial Year	Number of beneficiaries (in thousands)	Allowance per month (taka)	Annual budget (in corer taka)
1998-99	403.11	100	4.03
1999-00	403.11	100	4.03
2000-01	207.58	100	25.00
2001-02	207.58	100	25.00
2002-03	265.80	125	39.87
2003-04	500.00	150	90.00
2004-05	600.00	165	118.80
2005-06	625.00	180	135.00
2006-07	650.00	200	156.00
2007-08	750.00	220	198.00
2008-09	900.00	250	270.00
2009-10	920.00	300	331.20
2010-11	920.00	300	331.20
2011-12	920.00	300	331.20
2012-13	920.00	300	331.20
2013-14	1012.00	300	364.32
2014-15	1012.00	400	485.76
2015-16	1113.20	400	534.34
2016-17	1150.00	500	690.00
2017-18	1265.00	500	759.00
2018-19	1400.00	500	840.00
2019-20	1700.00	500	1020.00
2020-21	2050.00	500	1230.00
2021-22	2475.00	500	1495.40
2022-23	2475.00	500	1495.40

Source: Ministry of Social Welfare, Gob, 2023 (<http://www.dss.gov.bd/>)

Problems Faced by Widows

Widows are harassed by social and family of various problems in Bangladesh. The condition of widows in Bangladesh is not so good. They are discriminated against by their families and sometimes do not have any space at their maternal home. Some widow is illiterate, they have no skills with which they can earn a living. They find themselves stymied by all hands. The widows in Bangladesh suffer multiple problems, disadvantages, and deprivations. Some are described below;

i) Calling inauspicious

In Bangladesh, some people think that the widow is inauspicious. Widowed women are ridiculed by people in the community as untoward, hapless, accursed, etc.

ii) Widows are deprived of social rights

Widows are deprived of social rights. That is, they are deprived in various ways of family work, social movement, political movement, going to market, visiting relatives' houses participating in events, etc.

iii) Remarriage

The widow faces problems in case of a second marriage. It even happens to both men and women. Because the people of society cannot accept the widowed woman as they consider her to be an inauspicious person. Even if a man is willing to accept her. But the people of the society reproached him to marry a widow.

iv) Helplessness in old age

Widowed women feel very helpless when they reach old age. Especially when a widow is childless or despite having children, they do not take care of them. And for this reason, it is seen that their number in old age homes is increasing in the country.

v) Disruption in normal life

Many people think that a widow must wear white clothes. Bangles cannot be read. A widow is disturbed in her normal life due to superstitions such as not being able to keep herself tidy.

vi) Being depressed

When they are socially deprived of various rights due to the prejudices and prejudices of society against the widow. Then they suffer from mental depression.

vii) Inability to earn

Widows are unable to work for various reasons. Especially for aged widows. Because they are unable to hard work. For this reason, they are financial condition is very poor. On the other hand, young widows are sometimes sexually harassed by their colleagues. That's why many times they don't want to work outside. If a widow has a fair amount of property, she does not have to face many difficulties moving up in society or remarrying. And in that case, of course, it will not be possible without local public representatives and administrative cooperation.

viii) Family and social neglect

Widowed women are neglected by their families and society in many ways. They are interrupted at various times in their normal life.

CONCLUSION

Islam declares fulfilling the responsibilities of widows, to support them as a great act of virtue. Treating widows well, and showing them compassion is a very rewarding and necessary act for every Muslim. Therefore, should be protected for all widows' social and economic security and provide for their basic needs which are among their fundamental human rights. As Muslims, we should be recognizing the rights and status conferred by Islam and take steps to establish their rights. To implement the rights of widows, the government can transparently prepare a list of all widows through a survey across the country including their allowance and come forward to solve the economic problem. Besides, people can be made aware of their rights through religious meetings, seminars, campaigns, etc.

Recommendations of the Study

To ensure the rights and status of widows following steps should be taken: 1. The view of Quran-Sunnah should be present to the people in creating religious values. 2. People should be made aware of the rights and status of widows. 3. The widows themselves should be educated in self-care. 4. The widow's family (father and husband)

should be assisted in collecting the property received by meeras (hereditaries). 5. To implement the rights of widows, the government can come forward to solve the economic problems by making a list of widows through a transparent survey across the country and including their allowance. 6. Various steps can be taken to encourage people socially to remarry widows. 7. Training workshops on various subjects can be conducted for widows where they will acquire skills on a subject. Then it will be through this they can become self-sufficient. 8. We need to have a detailed survey providing current data on the number and conditions of the widows. 9. Above all, the rule of law must be ensured to realize the rights declared by the Qur'an-Sunnah and the state.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the main contributor to this paper, all authors read and approved the final paper, and all authors declared no conflict of interest.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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