

# Women's rights in iran and saudi arabia

[Sociology](#), [Human Rights](#)



Iran and Saudi Arabia are Islamic countries located in Asia. Iran is Islamic Republic country with 31 provinces and majority of Shia Muslim, where Saudi Arabia is absolute monarchy ruled by king. Saudi Arabia is located in Southeast Asia with population of nineteen million people.

This country was established in 1932 by King Abdul Aziz (Hamdan). The war that America waged against Iraq had effected women and challenged Saudi Arabian society which experienced changes toward women. American presence starts with the production of oil in 1997 in Saudi Arabia which effected on women rights in this country (Hamdan page. 43). Similar, 1979 and constitution revolutions which happened against shah and establishment of parliament in 1905-1911 and 1979 in Iran, women played very important role in politics and social movements (Brooks). In this paper, I will compare social and political rights of women in Iran and Saudi Arabia.

To start with, the 1979 and constitution revolutions that happened in 1905-1911 and 1979 in Iran women played important role in social and politics movements. One of the most important movements by women in Iran was participation in 1979 revolution against Shah (Brooks). Muhammad Riza was a ruler who was interested on westernization and women rights (pg. 4). But still women did not want him. Women in Iran were contact with western feminism and influenced by them. One of the impacts that western women had on Iranian women were about education rights, where women wanted their education rights as western women. In addition constitution revolution was very important time for Iranian women because of political stability shown (pg. 5). In constitution revolution women protested for constitution and parliament where they did not have the right to vote. Iranian women

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were trying to get the same rights as western women had, but they did not get.

Though, this revolution had positive consequences for women where they found their voices through publishing and meetings (pg. 5). For the first time women raised their voice as a woman not as a citizens. The women's movements in west influenced Iranian women. In nineteen and twenty century western women were struggling to gain their rights as men in their country, the same could be said for Iranian women (pg. 6). Women in western and Iran were treated unequal to men in society. These evidences show that women in 20th century did not have any political and social rights and they were not treated equal as men. Women were struggling to gain their rights, but still they raise their voices and show that they also have the power and they are the citizens of the country. And they played an important role in history of Iran by joining in two revolutions which very important for Iran.

In addition, still women in 21th century in Iran do not have any social rights. They are not treating as equal as men in society. Women are known as second citizens in Iranian society. Women in Iran still did not get their fundamental rights (Taheri). Women in Iran are facing different social problems. One of the big problems that Iranian women are facing in Iran is wearing Hijab, where they are not allowed to go out without Hijab. A according to article 63 of penal code that, Those women that appear in the streets and public places without the Islamic hijab shall be sentenced to

prison or fined as a punishment to pay some money to superior authorities (Taheri par. 5).

Women in Iran are getting harassment, abuses and discrimination by Iranian regime for not wearing proper Hijab or headscarf (par. 6). Wearing Hijab is an Islamic traditional that every Muslim women should wear. That is why Iran government enacted law for women that they are not allowed to go out without Hijab, this is one of the reason women in Iran are struggling.

Moreover, Women are ban to travel abroad and enter stadium (Taheri par. 2). Iranian women are not allowed to travel abroad without their parents and husband's permission. Husband can stop his wife from traveling to other country any time (Taheri par. 2). And female athletes are facing many problems by going to stadium, because it is ban for them. Women in Iran are ban from watching men's football and other sports in stadium (Taheri).

International Volleyball Federation, known as the FIVB, uphold its own rules and agree not to allow Iran to host future tournaments “ unless it allows Iranian women to attend (Taheri par. 2)

One of other social rights that women are struggling to get is, work in society without any problems. Women are being discriminated by Iranian government. Because government pays less salary than men and women should must do two jobs (Davachi par. 15). Also according to article 1117 t Under Article 1117 of the Civil Code, an Iranian man can ban his wife from working if he believes this would be incompatible with the interests of the family or with his or his wife's dignity (Bliar par. 9). . Even if women ask for their rights government will send her to jail (Taheri par 3). Which is unfair to

women because they are doing many jobs, they work at home, take care of their children, husband and in laws family , despite all these women work to help her husband and family but government pays them less salary than men. How strict and unfair it is that Iranian government gives the right to husband to stop his wife from working because he thinks that it will damage his family dignity. Women are being property that men are using and controlling them. Iranian government does not give equal rights to women and treating them as property. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Everyone have the rights of freedom without any kind of discrimination of race, sex, religion, color and etc But unfortunately, women under Law giving by Iran government are struggling to get equal rights in society.

In Addition, Women in Iran does not have political rights as men in this country. The percentages of Iranian women in politics are less than men. Women in Iran are not allowed to run for presidential election, but they can run election for parliament. In 290 seats House in Iran parliament nine of them are female; in total which 3% (Blair par. 14). According to CNN which is news TV channel that Rouhani the Iran president did not include women in his proposed list of 17 ministers (Qiblawi par. 1). Which shows that the president of Iran did not give political position for women, though during his campaign for presidential election promised that he will give more rights to women in his cabinet (Qiblawi par2).

Because of this women in Tehran protested that they want female political leader in Rouhani's cabinet, but Rouhani's government claimed that women

are not capable enough to be governor (Jamalpour par. 3). One of the Iranian politicians has claimed that country should not take risk of appointing women in cabinet because they are not experienced (Jamalpour par. 9). Though women played an important role in presidential election In Iran still they cannot get their political rights. Women are half populate of society. They should receive equal rights as men in society. Same, they should have same political position as men in country, where Iran government take away political rights of women in Iran. Because they think women are not capable for leading a country. Even women played important role in history of Iran and presidential election, they thought the new government will give them more right but they treated them as second citizens in Country. There is gender equality in Iran government and society, where women are not able to get their basic rights only because they are women. Women are thought to be weak that is why government of Iran does not give power to women, though women play very important role in society.

Similarly, Women in 20th century in Saudi Arabia did not have social rights and political rights. Arabian women in 20th century were ban from working without male partner (Hamdan pg. 47). Conservative religious scholars said that women should stay at home which is a safe place for women (Hamdan pg. 47). Women were not allowed to go out without hijab and were not equal in the society. When Americans came to Saudi Arabia for production of oil in 1979 they established Arabian American Company ( Hamdan pg. 43). Americans brought their families with them and they built, Western style houses, schools, parks, restaurants ( Hamdan pg. 43). American women started shopping, driving cars, unveiled where Saudi women were forbidden

(Hamdan pg. 430). Arabian women after seeing western women start asking same social rights. Women in Saudi Arabia because of religious traditional society could not work, drive cars and go out without Hijab. Moreover, Gulf war which happened in 1990 which was called in the United States affected on Arabian women because during that war American and Kuwaitis women were driving military's cars and it cause women In Saudi to ask for their rights (Hmadan pg. 44). Women in Saudi Arabia were treated as second class citizens. They were not treated equal as men, because women were not getting the opportunities of employment as men were getting (Alharbi par. 17).

Moreover, Women are not treating equal in Saudi Arabian society. Women in Saudi Arabia are facing problems to get their social rights. One of the main problems that women are facing is working in society where there are strict rules while women want to work. There are fewer opportunities for women to work, because there are restrictions in transportation limitation, having male guardians, and employment regulation (Alharbi pg. 17). The main role or position of women in Saudi Arabia to stay at home, take care of children, family, and obey their male guardians husband/ father(Alharabi pg. 17). Women are discriminated in Saudi Arabia because they not get equal social rights as men get. There is limitation for rights of women in employment (Alharabi pg. 17). The reason is that Saudi Arabia follow sharia law where women should not work without male guardians and follow these laws. Women only can work when her male guardian allow her (Alharabi pg. 180).

In addition, women do not have the right of movement, they cannot travel abroad without their guardian permission, and they cannot drive cars. The guardian system in Saudi Arabia taking away women's basic rights, which is women need their guardian permission when they need to register for university, opening bank account, work, renting apartment, and accessing justice (WRS par. 4). Women in Saudi Arabia are controlled by male guardian since birth to death. Women in this country cannot appear in public without Hijab. Women are required to wear Obaya and cover their head otherwise religious police will harass them (Tarabay par. 3). Women in Saudi Arabia were not allowed to drive and attend to sport tournaments but recently the Muhammad Bin Salam, crown prince of Saudi Arabia give this right to women that they can join sport and drive cars.

These evidences clearly show that women in Saudi Arabian society are not treated equal as men. Women are treated as slave where they should always ask for permission and obey their male guardian. They do not have the right of freedom and other social rights which are working in society. The only reason that women in Saudi Arab cannot get opportunities for jobs because of male guardian system which is their social right. Women are controlled by male and they are as men's property. Their social rights are taking away by their male guardian; they are completely depended on men. Because men think that they are following Sharia law and in Sharia law they have to obey their male guardian which wrong concept. Even when women in Saudi Arabia want to raise their voices and ask their rights they need their male guardian system which is being slave and property of somebody else.



Furthermore, women in Saudi Arabia do not have political rights as other Islamic countries. One of the challenges that women Saudi Arabia are facing is their political rights. The system of government in Saudi Arabia is Absolut monarchy where king has the absolute power and he is the head of government. For this reason women in this country cannot vote and run precedential election. King Abdullah was the king of Saudi Arabia, he had absolute power his word were law in Saud Arabia people had to obey (Alharabi pg. 14) He give the power of decision to council of top religious leaders (Pg. 14). These religious leaders recommend sharia law in this country where thirty years men were allowed to participate in Consultative Assembly where women were forbidden to participate (Alharabi pg. 14).

This law was followed until September of 2011 but king Abdullah change the law and give right to women to participate in Consultative Assembly (Alharabi pg. 14). The only political position that women have in Shura Council could have was being advisor and it means that they will only stay in Shura Council and cannot make any law and talk about their rights (Alharabi pg. 14). King Abdullah for the first time gave 30 seats out of 150 for women in Shura Council which is 20% seats but women in Shura Council do not have legislative power (Alharabi pg. 15). Moreover, recently King Muhammad Bin Slaman for the first time open military job for women and placed a woman in senior government position (Amos par. 1). King MBS is trying to bring equality among gender in Saudi Arabia. But there is lack of women in Saudi Arabia's cabinet. Women still do not have senior position in Saudi Arabia cabinet, king Abdullah and Muhammad Bin Salman give very senior position to women but still he did not give any leadership position in government.

Women still do not have political power in Saudi Arabia and cannot ask for their rights. I think one the reason can be that Saudi Arabia is an Islamic country with Islamic tradition where there is gender discrimination. Women still are known as second class of citizens after men. Still the crown prince of Saudi Arabia did not give equal political rights to women. In my perspective he only wants to show to the world that he is treating women equally and in his government women have same right as men. This is not true in real because he only appoint women in junior position not in senior positions.

As a result, there are similarities between women rights in Saudi Arabia and Iran. Saudi Arabia and Iran are the countries that treat women as second citizens of country. These two countries are Islamic country with Islamic traditional society and Law. These countries follow sharia law where women are not treating equal as men. Women in Saudi Arabia and Iran do not have social rights as men; women have to obey their male guardian. They cannot work, travel, and go out, without their male permission. That is why there are fewer opportunities for women to work. Also other similarities in these two countries are that, women cannot go to public without hijab otherwise they will be harassed by police.

In addition, women were not allowed to join sport and inter stadium. Besides this women cannot rule the country in Saudi Arabia and Iran. Also women do not have political rights as men in these countries. Women only have junior positions in government they do not equal seats in cabinet of these two countries. Women are struggling to get their social and political rights and treat equally. In Saudi Arabia and Iran women do not have the freedom in

society; there is male guardian system that women should always obey that if they do not want to. They always treat as slave and property in these two countries where they have to always obey their guardian. So these were the similarities women rights in Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Likewise, there are some differences between women rights in Iran and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has a government of absolute monarchy system, where the king is the head of state and his words is the law and everybody has to obey. Iran is country with Islamic republic government. Iran is Islamic country with majority of Shia where Saudi Arabia is an Islamic country with majority of Sunni Muslim. Recently women in Saudi Arabia getting their basic rights which is joining in sport and stadium and driving car but in Iran women are even not allowed enter sport stadium. Women in Iran have the right to vote but in Saudi Arabia women cannot vote because Saudi Arabia is absolute monarchy. Women in Iran history played very important role during two revolutions happened which was 1979 and constitution. In addition women in Iran have more political rights than women in Saudi Arabia, because Iran has women in their cabinet where Saudi Arabia does not give senior position to women in politics.

In conclusion, in my perspective the culture of Iran and Saudi Arabia are Islamic and they treat human being according to gender. That is why rights of women are limited or taking away in these countries. Saudi Arabia and Iran are Islamic country they follow Islamic law that is why they treat women unequally and use them as slaves and property. Women are not able to get their social and political rights because of Islamic and traditional society.

Though Islam give equal rights to women as men but people are having wrong concept of Islam that is why they use women as salve and property. Iran is a country where president made a strict law against women that they are forced to wear hijab in public places otherwise they will be harassed by police even though women do not want to wear hijab. But they have to follow the laws. Their rights of freedom are taking away by their own government and nobody is there to listen to their voices. Women in these countries are struggling to get at least their basic and social rights which they cannot get it.