

Good essay on women's rights in saudi arabia and the united arab emirates

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



In spite of the great strides made by the international women's rights movements over the years, women in Arab countries still face issues related from the economic, cultural to the political. Women are denied the chance to political participation, equal wage, and even access to quality and higher education. Women's rights are the entitlements and rights claimed for girls and women in the society globally. Women in most Arab countries the UAE and Saudi Arabia included are struggling to preserve their dignity and rights. Women have been subject to restrictions of their rights and freedom, but the United Arab Emirates is trying to adapt their laws in order to make their women's life easy. The UAE has made it possible for the election of women. There are many issues that relate to Human rights in Arab countries which include, the right to vote, the right to hold public offices, right to bodily integrity, the right to equal pay, autonomy, own property, legal contracts, and the right to education. According to Mackey, even though women in the Middle East are granted the right to education, they have a lot of hindrances to finish their education. Moreover, they are denied the chance to practice their expertise by their male counterparts. Mackey writes, " In fact, more women receive secondary and tertiary-education than men. Fifty percent of working women have a college education, compared to 16 percent of working men" (Mackey 68). She adds that, these numbers can be deceiving because, the number of women who work is fewer to the number of men. Saudi Arabia has been a country where women's rights have been infringed for a long time. Saudi Arabia is a kingdom that is located in the Middle East region. In Saudi Arabia, power relates to both men and women. However, the majority of men have overwhelmingly held power, thus depriving women

some basic privileges that should be afforded by every human being. In this country, there are varying reasons as to why women's rights and privileges are infringed ranging from their biological inferiority to religious reasons. Known as the birthplace of Islam, Saudi Arabia adheres to strict interpretations of the Islamic religious law, Sharia, which in most cases denies women a lot of opportunities in the society. For instance, men and women are not allowed to attend public events together. Moreover, they are segregated in the workplace and men get better salaries than women, yet, the women work more than men. In addition, in Saudi Arabia, if a woman is given an office to serve in, the office is alienated from the public view, since; men have the majority of power over women, while women are afforded limited rights (Mackey 24).

In Saudi Arabia, gender roles are derived from the Islamic law. The Saudi women are denied economic freedom, social, and cultural rights, yet they are guaranteed in the International Covenant on Social, Cultural, and Economic Rights and additional lawfully requisite international and regional human rights accords (Mackey 98). According to the Saudi culture, a woman's place is at home, and only men are to work. Hence, this limits women's right of the choice of employment and limits them to domestic duties, and this violates their economic rights.

Women in Saudi Arabia are limited by the way they dress, in their marriage and the way they socialize with their male counterparts. Women are required to cover most parts of their body in the name of avoiding sexual temptations. Covering the body applies to the women in most Arab countries, including the United Arab Emirates. A woman's body is to be

covered except the hands and the eyes, and if not, there is a severe punishment (Beck and Keddic 37). The women's rights are violated because, with the extreme temperatures, most women sweat while covering their bodies and this might lead to hyper kidney functioning, yet they have no one to complain to, other than follow the laws set for them.

Saudi Arabia is one of the most conservative countries in the world. In Saudi Arabia, women are banned from driving, although they are allowed to own cars. The issue of allowing women to drive has become a controversial issue in Saudi Arabia with many women defying the ban. This has led to a number of protests in the country over the ban of women behind the wheel. Since the end of last year, many prominent women in Saudi Arabia have defied the ban and taken the wheel. Since, there is no official law in the country that bans women from going behind the wheel, as it is based on a religious edict. Even though the Interior Ministry refused to issue them licenses, most women in Saudi Arabia have protested in defiance by driving their cars which has led to the arrest of some of them. Saudi Arabia continues to suppress their women by confiscating the passports of women who defy the driving ban and even firing them from their jobs, and this makes them, lag behind economically and the development of women in their country. Many people around the world judge Saudi Arabia as a country that is going backwards instead of developing because of the law of banning women from driving cars.

In addition, women in Saudi Arabia are forbidden from working and taking certain professions by the Saudi government. Apart from that, they are not allowed to open bank accounts and enroll for higher education without their

male guardians' approval. This is very insensitive because, these women are entitled to all these and it is their right which should not be deprived of them. Moreover, they are allowed to have a guardian's permission before traveling. In addition to being forbidden from traveling, women in Saudi Arabia are forbidden to conduct official businesses, and to undergo certain medical procedures without their husbands' permission. Moreover, women were denied the right to vote, and these rights have been given to them recently whereby they are to vote for the first time in the 2015's municipal elections. Women in Saudi Arabia are considered as second class since, Saudi is a patriarchal society. Many laws in Saudi pertain to the rights of men and grant them more rights over women, making them inferior beings. While Saudi Arabia is still living in the past with relation to women, the UAE is trying to adapt their laws to the present day. The UAE has become a leader in women's rights in the Arab world as the role of women in their country gradually expands. The United Arab Emirates' constitution guarantees equality between men and women in legal issues, education, and owning of titles. In addition, the United Arab Emirates' cabinet has made it mandatory for women to be included in directing and heading corporations and government agencies. In the UAE, there are four ministers in the cabinet who are women, not to mention that they are also allowed to serve in the military. Comparably, in Saudi Arabia, no woman can be allowed to serve in the military or head a big corporation or government agency. In the UAE, the law allows women to own businesses, and this adds to the economic development of the country (Shallal 120). Unlike Saudi Arabia, women in the United Arab Emirates are allowed to travel freely without being required to

have their male guardian's consent. Unlike Saudi Arabia, the women in the United Arab Emirates are allowed to vote and hold public office in addition to socializing freely with the members of the opposite sex. Shallal states that, women in the UAE are experiencing job satisfaction compared to the women in Saudi Arabia (120).

In United Arab Emirates, women have access to quality education and health services just like their male counterparts, however, their traditional gender roles are ingrained. In addition, most women are allowed to represent in the cabinet, unlike Saudi Arabia. In the United Arab Emirates, eight women sit in the Federal Legislature, which consists of 40 members, giving them a 22.5 percent share of the seats (Shallal 128). Even though they are underrepresented, at least they have been given the opportunity to serve under the Federal National Council.

However, just like Saudi Arabia, women in UAE attend school more than men, but end up as housewives, since the society demands that from them. Men in the United Arab Emirates have higher job opportunities and rankings compared to women, yet women are more educated than them. Even though, it is stated publicly that men and women have equal right in the United Arab Emirates, in reality, this is not possible because the traditional standards still stand, for both men and women. Most women are not allowed to work, and this is evident because, the UAE has the lowest female labor forces in the world.

In both countries, marital rape is not recognized, and men are allowed by the law to discipline their wives. Moreover, women are segregated in every day of their lives, whereby in both countries, women are not afforded social

contact with their male counterparts. In addition, in both countries, rape victims continue to suffer as there no official laws to protect them. Instead of helping the rape victims, the women end up being imprisoned for engaging in extra-marital affairs when they report the rape cases, therefore, most women are forced to keep quiet as men take advantage of their sexuality. Domestic violence has remained a pervasive problem both in the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia. The penal code in both nations gives the men a legal right to discipline their children and wives physically and this cannot be reported.

The United Arab Emirates is ahead of Saudi Arabia in advocating for women laws, policies, and rights. The UAE has adjudicated for women status by giving them a chance to obtain a divorce, despite the law granting the men a privileged status over divorce matters and child custody. Unlike in Saudi Arabia, the laws about women have not taken a turn around as women have no say on matters concerning, child custody, inheritance, and divorce matters. While Saudi Arabia continues to suppress the rights of women through their policies and laws, the United Arab Emirates is working on making policies and laws that help to protect the rights of women both at home and in their workplace. Saudi Arabia cannot be compared to the UAE when it comes to women's rights since the United Arab Emirates is far ahead from them in making their women more comfortable in the society.

Women laws, policies and human rights in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have a regional and international impact on women. Women in the two countries are subjected to laws that infringe their rights, and this affects them negatively in many ways, for instance, in their pursuit of better

jobs, further studies, and even equal enjoyment of rights. Moreover, according to Unni (1078), women in the Middle East are negatively affected by their laws, since they are not allowed to move freely, and this affects their global reputation especially when in search for jobs and business ventures. The position of women in Arab countries has aroused much debate and interest in the recent years. The Arab women have been in subordination for many years and most of them have risen up to fight for their rights because, this is affecting their image worldwide. Women are denied the legal identities by being excluded from the privileges and rights every individual is entitled to in a country. The conflict of women under oppression affects the Arab world because of their discriminatory laws. Most nations have laws that aim at developing and empowering women and this makes Arab countries behind in women's affairs. The discrimination of women in Arab countries affects every Arab woman, regardless of their profession, marriage status, and socio-economic background.

The Islamic ideology and practices plays a vital role in the oppression of women in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The conflict of women under oppression affects the Arab world in many ways. First, the women are taken as second class thus cannot be allowed to do anything without consent from any male relative or a husband. The discrimination of women primarily influences the position of women in contemporary Arab world. While the women in UAE enjoy the good deal of equal rights granted to them by the legal code, the women in Saudi Arabia are still struggling to acquire this legal right for themselves in their patriarchal country. It is very clear that the status of women in Saudi Arabia is marked different from that of the women

in the United Arab Emirates. Unlike UAE, the legal code of Saudi Arabia does not guarantee women equal rights, they are always considered to be inferior to men and this affects their image in the Arab world. According to Ben (124), in Arab Countries, Saudi Arabia rates highest in terms of gender inequality. Women in Arab world

The Arab world ignores the international rule of human rights by violating the rights of women. Most Arab countries fail to put into practice the human rights that every human being is entitled to irrespective of their age, gender, and marital status. The gross gender bias in Arab world affects their country's image, and the roles of women in the society. The state of human rights in the Arab world is deteriorating as time passes by because, most of the Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia are not ready to reform their laws and treat every citizen in the right and equal manner. As the women try to advocate for equal rights and their freedoms, the Arab world goes to an extent of violating their freedom to organize and protest. When these women are barred from protesting, their rights are violated and nothing can be done since, they are considered to be inferior or second class of men. Arab women are legally treated unequally both in their personal lives and in their workplaces and businesses, yet, they cannot report this because they will end up being punished, for the laws only favor men.

Women in Arab world suffer far greater than any other women in the world. In addition, they lag behind in women empowerment due to the laws that suppress them and this affects their growth in the community. Their jobs are limited to certain professions and are not allowed to work away from them and this is limiting their capability to grow in their different professions and

careers. By depriving these women these rights, the Arab world has largely denied itself the productivity and creativity of half of its citizens who are women. In addition, the Arab is depriving itself the chance to grow socially and economically, through the contribution of their female counterparts. The oppression of women in Saudi Arabia and the UAE impacts the Middle East economically, and socially. The women are not allowed to participate in the economic growth of their nations, thus affecting the growth and expansion of the Middle East. The treatment of Arab women has heightened the gender differences. Men in the Middle East consider themselves to be superior to men and this affects the generations to come. Moreover, the Middle East has been adversely affected because, as the West countries take their time to empower their women, most Arab countries lag behind with policies and laws that suppress their women. On the other hand, the women who have stood up to fight for their rights and for equality especially in the UAE, are growing economically and socially and this is a good sign of change in the Arab world. The USA has taken a strong stance against the laws the Arab countries have imposed on their women and encourages the women to fight for their freedom through the help from NGO's and other related bodies.

The violation of human rights in the Arab world stems from the law itself and the absence of the rule of law that governs the rights of all citizens equally regardless of their gender. Therefore, if nothing is done on creation laws and policies that create equality and fights for human rights, most countries in the Arab world will continue lagging behind as other nations promote the rights and empowerment of women. In order to develop the status of women

in the Arab world, a major reassessment is required to be done on the Islamic laws, history, culture, and traditions. Most of the laws that oppress Arab women are derived from the Islamic history and culture and Arab leaders who enact and put these policies into law should start enacting modern laws which work for both genders. Most Arab nations have proved futile in search for a new identity and laws that will bring equality in their nations. Many Arab women yearn for a new identity that will connect them to their future and disconnect them from the oppression in their countries. It is evident that women's issues are a problem in the Arab world and something needs to be done to make a change in the lives of women. The women in Arab countries need empowerment, and they should not be deprived of this opportunity as other women around the world have this chance.

The Amnesty international, the UN, and Human Rights NGO's have played an important part in trying to help the Arab women to fight for their rights and freedoms. Through their Stop Violence against Women Campaign, and Saudi Driving Campaign, the UN has tried its best to fight for the rights of women in Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.(Unni 1075). Through these campaigns, it was thought that they will bring about fundamental changes and reforms for women in Arab world, but little was achieved, especially in the UAE. Most changes brought by Amnesty International did not materialize but the Saudi and the UAE women have never stopped fighting for their rights. However, the UN's stance on the rights of women still remains as they want no more oppression against the Arab women. The United States and other NGO's have taken a strong stance against the laws that oppress the Arab women, and through this most Arab women from the Middle East are

always ready to fight for their rights and this is evident with the Saudi women who went for a defiance strike to protest against the ban on driving imposed on them. The approach taken by most NGO's of prioritizing women's rights in Arab countries will promote true reforms for Arab women. The United Nations wants the Arab women to be given the freedom they deserve, just like other women around the world.

The Arab world is a male dominated world, where the male supremacy is the norm and this is affected it socially, and economically. As most Arab countries are working to grant their women, their rights as stipulated by Islam, some are still lagging behind and enjoying suppressing women.

Grating women equal rights will help in the development of the country. In most Arab countries, the gender equality is currently being confronted with a reactionary tide, but it is important for the growth of the nation. The reactionary tide that is baring women from attaining equality in the society is increasing problems in the society at social, political, as well as economic levels.

In conclusion, it is evident that the issue of women's rights has changed over the years. However, it is vital to note that, much needs to be done in order to improve the women's rights both in Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. It is evident that, the UAE has worked hard to improve the rights of women compared to Saudi Arabia that is still lagging behind by living in the past relations to women. It will take some time to see Saudi women driving cars comfortably, serving in the government fully, socializing freely with their male counterparts, just to mention but a few. The United Arab Emirates has done a lot to improve the lives of women by allowing them to hold office and

to vote. In addition, their women are allowed to work, just like their male counterparts and to own businesses. Moreover, in Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to drive publicly, comparably in the United Arab Emirates, both men and women are allowed to drive. The United Arab Emirates has taken a step forward on working on the human rights, especially for women by formulating laws and policies which work out for them, unlike Saudi Arabia where women are still suppressed. Hence, however different the status of women in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia may be, the similarity is that, in both societies, women exist in a society that is constructed from the intersection of culture, religion, and politics. The women have the right to fight for their rights and make their life easy, especially those in Saudi Arabia who should be fighting for equal rights. The Arab world is largely affected by the conflict of women under oppression and laws protecting women are to be put in place. By allowing women to work in all professions, and pursue their education, the Arab world will largely benefit from the efforts made by these women both socially, politically, and economically. Reforms need to take place at several levels in order to make the lives of women easy, just like their male counterparts in the Arab world. Women have a great relevance in the Arab world; all they need are laws to support them and their efforts.

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