

## **Right of Women in the Family Law: A Zakir Naik Perspective**

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### **Abstract**

Zakir Naik is a phenomenal muslim preacher who also gives his thoughts on women's rights. According to Zakir Naik, women actually have an equal position with men even though the implementation varies. This paper is classified as literature research with a qualitative approach. This research method is content analysis of Zakir Naik's book about women in Islam. The data was collected thematically by referring to the analysis of Zakir Naik's primary book. The results of the study concluded that women have the right to choose or accept their partners. Women also have the right to divorce their husbands if they are polygamous and it is stipulated in a marriage contract. Regarding the rights as a wife, women should not be treated as slaves who take care of housework, women must be treated properly and with respect. As a mother, a woman deserves higher respect than a fathers. In the economic realm, women may work but they are not obliged to give part of their assets to their husbands. However, women have the option to help their husbands if the husbands are unable to meet the economic needs of the family. In the realm of politics and leadership, women may serve as parliament members or government advisors, but Zakir Naik does not agree if women become presidents or prime ministers of a country.

**KEYWORDS** *Zakir Naik, Women's Rights, Family Law*



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## Abstrak

Zakir Naik merupakan salah seorang pendakwah fenomenal yang turut memberikan pemikirannya terkait hak perempuan. Menurut Zakir Naik, sejatinya perempuan memiliki kedudukan yang setara dengan pria meskipun dalam implementasinya bervariasi. Tulisan ini tergolong penelitian pustaka dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Metode penelitian ini adalah konten analisis terhadap buku Zakir Naik tentang perempuan dalam Islam. Pengumpulan data dilakukan secara tematik dengan merujuk pada analisis buku primer Zakir Naik. Hasil penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa perempuan memiliki hak dalam memilih atau menerima pasangannya. Perempuan juga berhak mentalak atau menceraikan suaminya jika berpoligami bila ada membuat kontrak dalam akad dikahnya. Terkait hak sebagai istri perempuan tidak boleh diperlakukan sebagai budak yang mengurus pekerjaan rumah saja, perempuan harus dilakukan secara layak dan terhormat. Sebagai seorang ibu, perempuan berhak memperoleh penghargaan dan penghormatan lebih tinggi dari seorang ayah. Pada ranah ekonomi, perempuan boleh bekerja namun tidak wajib memberikan sebagian harta kepada suaminya. Meski begitu perempuan memiliki pilihan untuk membantu suaminya jika suami tidak mampu memenuhi kebutuhan ekonomi keluarga. Pada ranah politik dan kepemimpinan, perempuan boleh menjabat sebagai DPR atau penasihat pemerintah, namun Zakir Naik tidak setuju jika perempuan menjadi presiden atau perdana menteri suatu negara.

**KATA KUNCI** *Zakir Naik, Hak Perempuan, Keluarga Islam*

## Introduction

One of the core teachings of Islam examines the similarities between fellow human beings, whether based on the dimensions of gender, nation, ethnicity, or descent. The privilege between them is not in their outward approach, but the spiritual dimension in the context of piety (best devotions to Allah Almighty). Many verses and hadiths outline that men and women are equal as fellow human beings, especially for those who are religious <sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Koch and Saeid Barzegarkouchaksaraei, "International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding Movement of Female 's Rights in the World," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 2, no. 6 (2015): 26–32.

Almost all literature, even in non-Muslim history also says that Adam is the ancestor of mankind. When Adam lived in heaven, his heart felt lonely because there was no partner. Then Allah Almighty created Siti Hawa as the first woman from his rib <sup>2</sup>. The ribs are functioning to protect the vital parts of humans, one of which is the heart or liver which is located on the left. The philosophy of the creation of women has its own wisdom, one of which is as a protector of men from crucial problems.

Women are endowed with their own uniqueness and advantages. Besides having a very important role in a paradigm of life, especially family <sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, the development of the times made the condition of women increasingly appear and exist. Women do not have to stay at home, but they can also be equal with men in general to work, having a career, or taking part in organizations <sup>4</sup>. In addition, how women divide their roles. Either as wives and mothers in a family, or as a staff or leader in their work environment. The intelligence of women in dividing their roles and responsibilities is very urgent in order to build a family as Islam has outlined.

Zakir Naik is one of the phenomenal muslim preachers who contributed his thoughts on the rights and obligations of women in Islam <sup>5</sup>. One of his works that focuses on studying women is his book entitled; "*Right of Women in Islam, Modern or Outdated?*" This book tries to examine how the actual rules against women at the time of the Prophet Muhammad were related to the present. Is the rule something worth implementing or is it outdated.

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<sup>2</sup> Nur Syamsiah, "Women in Gender 2009" 9, no. 2 (2016): 344–65.

<sup>3</sup> Eko Saputra and Busyro, "Kawin Maupah: An Obligation to Get Married after Talak Tiga in the Tradition of Binjai Village in Pasaman District a Maqâsid Al- Shari'ah Review," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 2 (2018): 181–219, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qjijis.v6i2.3738>.

<sup>4</sup> Sutapa Saryal, "Women's Rights in India: Problems and Prospects," *International Research Journal of Social Sciences* 3, no. 7 (2014): 49.

<sup>5</sup> Saftani Ridwan, "Ketertarikan Terhadap Islam ( Studi Kasus Muallaf Yang Memeluk Islam Dalam Acara Dakwah Dr . Zakir Naik Di Makassar )," *Jurnal Sulesna* 11, no. 1 (2017): 1–18.

Polygamy, for example, was a natural thing to do in classical Islam. However, when compared to the current reality, polygamy often faces challenges, especially from women who claim the importance of gender equality. Moreover, non-Muslims also often raise the discourse that polygamy is a form of injustice in Islamic teachings. For Western teachings, marriage is only allowed once and can only be married again when his wife has died. According to Western thinkers, Islamic teachings in the past are no longer ideally implemented in modern times.<sup>6</sup>

Likewise with politics, nowadays, Islam tends to limit the role of women in the political arena. This is evident from the lack of political actors or leaders of Muslim countries from women. The same thing also happened in Indonesia, in terms of quantity, the applicable regulations show that the percentage of political seats either as parliament members or as Minister is dominated by men<sup>7</sup>. This is the question, did all of this happen because of the condition of women who are not interested or unable, or precisely because they are only required to live life as housewives?

In the distribution of inheritance, women get a smaller share than men. This is also often debated in the modern era considering that women also already exist to work<sup>8</sup>. In contrast to the reality of women in the past, they were only at home to look after children and serve their husbands. Modern women are more active outside the home, they work and earn income to eat and drink for the family. According to the West, the division of Islamic heritage is also obsolete when implemented at this time<sup>9</sup>. Responding to all phenomena above, especially the notion that Islamic teachings are no longer suitable for facing modernity, Zakir Naik has a

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<sup>6</sup> Maziah Mustapha and Mohd Abbas Abdul Razak, "A Critical Appraisal of Zakir Naik's Islamic Evangelism," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 15, no. June (2019): 71–83, <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.15.2019.007>.

<sup>7</sup> Dhia Al Uyun, "Women's Rights in Indonesian Constitution," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 4, no. 8 (2014): 74–84.

<sup>8</sup> Edith González-bernal, "The Art of Interpreting God's Action in the Theology of Three Medieval Mystic Women," 2021, 1–5.

<sup>9</sup> Back Ground Azaan, By Brother, and Yusuf Islam, "Womens' Rights in Islam – Modernising or Outdated? – Part 1" 1 (n.d.): 1–32.

different view. According to Zakir Naik, Western thoughts are irrelevant if applied in the modern era. Both the provisions for polygamy, working women, women's inheritance, and so forth.

## Methods

This paper is a qualitative-based literature research. The method used is content analysis of Zakir Naik's thoughts. The content analysis directs the writers to do the following things. First, to interpret the work of Zakir Naik which contains women's rights in Islam. Second, grouping themes about women based on main sub-headings such as; women's position, education, work, career, and even women's political rights. Third, mapping the concept and narrating in detail and systematic so that it is not too broad from the study of Islamic family law.

The primary book in this research is Zakir Naik's own writing; *“Right of Women in Islam, Modern or Outdated”* published by Adam Publishers in 2009. *Most Common Questions Asked by Non-Muslims* published by Dakwah Corner Book Store in 2012. *Zakir Naik Answer to Non-Muslims Common Questions About Islam*, translated by Nur Choliz with the title; *Debat Islam Versus Non-Islam (Islamic Versus Non-Islamic Debate)* published by Aqwam Publishers in 2016. *Mereka Bertanya Islam Menjawab (They Ask; Islam Answers)*, Translated by Nur Choliz, and Sawerdi M Amin Hasibuan, 2016. *The Qur'an & Modern Science: Compatible or Incompatible*, published by Createspace Independent Pub in Year 2014.

## Zakir Naik’s Profile and His Views on Islamic Family Law

Zakir Naik was originally a doctor in India who was born on October 18, 1965. He graduated from a postgraduate medical field in Mumbai and

became a doctor in the city of Mumbai as well. Zakir Naik chose the job as a doctor because he considered that the profession was very noble and saved many people. In the next phase, Zakir Naik experienced a conversion of thoughts. Zakir Naik realized that there were jobs that are more beneficial to many people than his previous job, namely as a muslim preacher <sup>10</sup>.

Zakir Naik himself openly explained that the figure who most influenced his thoughts was Ahmed Deedat. An expert in comparative religion from Surat, India who worked as a muslim preacher, lecturer, and writer. Ahmed Deedat is known as a Muslim missionary, holding numerous interfaith public debates with biblical Christians, as well as video lectures on Islam, Christianity, and the Bible. Deedat founded IPCI, an international Islamic missionary organization, and wrote several widely distributed books on Islam and Christianity. He was awarded the King Faisal International Prize in 1986 during his fifty years of work as an Islamic missionary. In addition, he also wrote and lectured in English <sup>11</sup>.

From the biography above, it can be seen that there is a similar pattern between Zakir Naik and his teacher, Ahmed Deedat. Starting from the public debate on comparative religion, the establishment of an Islamic organization (IRF), books and models of *da'wah* (delivering speech on Islam) videos, and they received almost the same award from the King of Saudi Arabia. The difference was only a matter of generation, if Ahmet Deedat received it from King Faisal, while Zakir Naik received it from King Salman. This explains that the pattern of thought, *da'wah* method, and other supporting elements used by Zakir Naik, was almost entirely influenced by Ahmed Deedat as his own teacher.

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<sup>10</sup> Syefriyeni Syefriyeni, "Nalar Zakir Abdul Karim Naik (Perspektif Aliran-Aliran Filsafat)," *Intizar* 24, no. 1 (1970): 141–60, <https://doi.org/10.19109/intizar.v24i1.2183>.

<sup>11</sup> Rio Septian, "Pengaruh Tulisan Ernest Prakasa Mengenai Dr Zakir Naik Di Twitter Terhadap Citra Ernest Prakasa Di Desa Bojonggede," *Jurnal Komunikasi* 10, no. 2 (2019): 176–83, <https://doi.org/10.31294/jkom.v10i2.6386>.

## A Discourse of Women's Rights in the Family: A Zakir Naik's Perspective

Zakir Naik read a lot about Islamic discourse, such as issues of monotheism, fiqh, morality, comparative religion, Islamic law, Islamic economics, and so forth. Regarding women, Zakir Naik also studied it extensively, starting from the history of women who were expelled from heaven (Siti Hawa), women in perspective of non-Muslims, women's human rights, women in worship practices, social activities, and many more.

### 1. Right to Choose a Partner

According to Zakir Naik, marriage is considered a *misaq* which means a sacred agreement, or a sacred contract. In *Surah An-Nisa* verse 19 it is explained; "You are forbidden to inherit women against their will." In other words, to get married there must be the willingness of men and women. It is obligatory for both (male and female) to agree to marry. Not only one side, not even the father, may not force their daughters to marry on the basis of their wishes <sup>12</sup>.

In Bukhari's sahih Hadith, volume 7, chapter 43, number 69 explains; There was a woman who was forced to marry by her father. Then he came to the Prophet and the Prophet canceled her marriage. In the Hadith of Ibn Hanbal No. 2469 also explained that there was a woman who was married to a partner she did not want to <sup>13</sup>. The woman came to the Prophet, the Prophet then allowed marriage if the woman agreed to accept her partner, otherwise the woman may cancel the marriage that her father wanted. It explains that Islam gives women the right to choose their partner.

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<sup>12</sup> Fatiam Tamim Alkhodari and Hadina Habil, "Analysis of Zakir Naik's Persuasion Discourse," *International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology* 8, no. 5 (2019): 1242–46, <https://doi.org/10.35940/ijeat.E1177.0585C19>.

<sup>13</sup> Mir Mohammad Azad and Syeda Shajia Sharmin, "Laws of Muslim Marriage from the Concept of the Holy Qur'an," *International Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences (IJEAS)*, no. 5 (2018): 29.

There are many virtues for women and men in marriage, one of which is stipulated in the hadith of the Prophet that getting married is the same as fulfilling half of the religion. This Hadith must be fully understood, the meaning of half religion is often misunderstood by some people. They consider that if marrying one wife is the same as fulfilling half of his religion, it means marrying two wives (polygamy) is the same as fulfilling one full religion <sup>14</sup>. In fact, it is a wrong opinion, fulfilling half of religion is a figurative form, meaning that if a person gets married, marriage will protect him from the potential for carrying out sins, both eye sins, heart sins, mind sins, promiscuity, LGBT, and many more. In quantity, if all types of sins are collected, it is equivalent to half of the sins in the world.

According to Zakir Naik, marriage makes a human being a wife or husband. Marriage makes a man becomes a father or grandfather. Marriage makes a woman becomes a mother or grandmother. This status is important in the provisions of family in Islam, even inheritance rights are also very dependent on the condition and identity of the heirs after the marriage. Therefore, it explains that no matter how many men marry (polygamy) then he is not considered to have completed a full religion. This is closely related to other practices that have nothing to do with marriage identity <sup>15</sup>.

The West always associates that women are the intermediaries of Satan, this starts from the history of the first woman in heaven who was used by Satan to tempt Adam. As a result, the West accuses women of being the cause of the expulsion of humans from heaven to the exclusion of their rights <sup>16</sup>. Zakir Naik, on the other hand, thinks that women are not the intermediaries of the devil but a fortress to fight against the devil. It is explained in the Qur'an that a good woman will marry a good man, women

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<sup>14</sup> Meraj Ahmad Ahmad, "The Importance of Marriage in Islam," *International Journal of Research -GRANTHAALAYAH* 6, no. 11 (2018): 1–6, <https://doi.org/10.29121/granthaalayah.v6.i11.2018.1082>.

<sup>15</sup> Mustapha and Razak, "A Critical Appraisal of Zakir Naik's Islamic Evangelism."

<sup>16</sup> Judith Reesa Baskin, "Reading the Women of the Bible (Review)," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 23, no. 2 (2005): 158–60, <https://doi.org/10.1353/sho.2005.0046>.



remind their husbands not to go through wrong paths. A good woman is also a protector of her husband's lust through marriage bonds.

## 2. Rights as a Wife

According to Zakir Naik, a woman is often referred to as a housewife, not as a wife of the house. Though she never married or became the mother of a house <sup>17</sup>. This is a satire for men who see their wives only as workers and administrators of household. In Islam, a woman does not marry a man to be treated like a slave <sup>18</sup>. If a woman marries, then she is equal to her husband. In the hadith it is explained: *"The most perfect of the believers are those who have the best morals and behavior, and those who are best for their families and wives."*

In addition, the equality of wives is often damaged by the understanding of a few Muslims through the interpretation of *Surah An-Nisa: 34*. They interpret that the husband is the leader of women, even though the essence of the verse is not like that. Zakir Naik considers that the word '*kawwam*' does not mean '*one level higher in superiority*', but actually the word '*kawwam*' is the root word of '*iqamah*'. When *iqamah* resounds, the congregation stands up. Based on this philosophy, Zakir Naik interprets that this verse leads that men have a higher position in the form of responsibility <sup>19</sup>. Zakir Naik gave an example, if a thief enters the house, then the husband must be responsible for being on the front line to protect his wife and family. So, this verse is directed as a protector not as a leader.

In line with the meaning of *Surah Al-Baqarah 187*; *"Your wives are your clothes, and you are their clothes."* Clothes are useful for protecting and beautifying. Husband and wife, each must look after and protect each other's disgrace, and they must beautify each other, like the relationship

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<sup>17</sup> M. Ma'ruf, "Konsep Mewujudkan Keseimbang Hidup Manusia Dalam Sistem Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Al-Makrifat* 4, no. 2 (2019): 123–37.

<sup>18</sup> Azaan, Brother, and Islam, "Womens ' Rights in Islam – Modernising or Outdated ? – Part 1."

<sup>19</sup> Alkhodari and Habil, "Analysis of Zakir Naik's Persuasion Discourse."

between hands and gloves. Even if the husband is not happy with his wife, he must not be bad. In *Surah An-Nisa* verse 19 it is explained; "*Treat your wife with justice and kindness even though you don't like her. You may not like something, but Allah does what's best for you.*"<sup>20</sup>

### 3. Rights as a mother

Zakir Naik explained that the greatest right of women is to receive respect and attention from their children. According to Zakir Naik, 75% of love and respect goes to the mother, and 25% goes to the father<sup>21</sup>. Three-quarters of the love and respect is given to the mother, while the rest is given to the father. By analogy, the gold medal is given to the mother, the silver medal is given to the mother, the bronze medal is given to the mother and the father must be satisfied with the consolation prize<sup>22</sup>.

Any form that leads to respect for the mother, is worship to Allah Almighty. It is stated in *Surah Al-Isra: 24* that a child is told to be kind to his mother and father. Islam recommends that, even if there are parents who reach old age, it is not permissible to say a word that insults or expels them, but instead honors them with respect, and speaks to them politely, and is humble and prays to Allah Almighty that parents be blessed and loved<sup>23</sup>. The right of a mother to be respected is also found in *Surah An-Nisa* verse 1, *Al-An-Am* verse 151, *Lukman* verse 14, *Al-Ahqaf* verse 15 and other verses. Some verses about the command to respect mothers are always juxtaposed with the services and struggles of mothers in giving birth and caring for their children.

<sup>20</sup> RI Depag, "Alquran Pdf Terjemahan," *Al-Qur'an Terjemahan*, 2007, 1–1100.

<sup>21</sup> Minggusta Juliadarma, "Konsep Pendidikan Islam Dalam Kitab Fathul Baari," *EL Bidayah: Journal of Islamic Elementary Education* 1, no. 1 (2019): 111–32, <https://doi.org/10.33367/jiee.v1i1.741>.

<sup>22</sup> Ridwan, "Ketertarikan Terhadap Islam ( Studi Kasus Muallaf Yang Memeluk Islam Dalam Acara Dakwah Dr . Zakir Naik Di Makassar )."

<sup>23</sup> Sariya Cheruvallil-Contractor, "Motherhood as Constructed by Us: Muslim Women's Negotiations from a Space That Is Their Own," *Religion and Gender* 6, no. 1 (2016): 9–28, <https://doi.org/10.18352/rg.10126>.

## 4. Children's Rights

Zakir Naik informed that children in Islamic law do not emphasize the differences between men and women. Both must be loved and loved by their parents. This is certainly different from the reality of the *Jahiliyah* era, where girls were considered a disgrace and could be killed based on the customary rules of that period <sup>24</sup>. History records that the Prophet once saw a father who sat his son on his thigh, while his daughter did not. The Prophet immediately reminded him, that if the boy was seated on the right thigh, then the girl had to be seated on the left thigh. The Prophet did not allow if daughters were not treated fairly even in the context of affection <sup>25</sup>.

Another example, Islam does not view girls as second graders. Parents should not expect a son so much that they curse if they are given a daughter. The Prophet also gave an example that raising two daughters sincerely until they are adults, will be very close to the Prophet in heaven someday. The Prophet gave an example by placing the middle finger and index finger together as a sign of that closeness. That is, educating girls does not embarrass the family, even becomes an intercessor as promised by the Messenger of Allah.

## 5. Wife's Right to Divorce Husband

Zakir Naik believes that women have the right to refuse polygamy by their husbands. The refusal can be done by making a contract or agreement on the marriage contract which reads that the husband must ask the wife's permission if he is polygamous. Therefore, the solution given to women who refuse their husbands to remarry, is to make an agreement in the marriage contract <sup>26</sup>. The agreement makes husbands who want to practice polygamy

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<sup>24</sup> Mursalim, "Doa Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Al- Ulum* 11 (2011): 63–78.

<sup>25</sup> Azaan, Brother, and Islam, "Womens ' Rights in Islam – Modernising or Outdated ? – Part 1."

<sup>26</sup> Azaan, Brother, and Islam.

must ask for permission from their wives. If proven not to do so, then the wife in this situation has the right to divorce her husband.

Polygamy itself is essentially in the provisions of Islamic family law as a solution. However, its implementation is often misinterpreted by women. Therefore, women have negative assumptions about Islamic teachings. According to Zakir Naik, Islam does not specifically require that the wife's permission is a condition for the husband to marry another woman <sup>27</sup>. The condition is to be fair, even though the wife's willingness is an important aspect so that the relationship between wives will run harmoniously. So, it is clearly stated that a man is not obliged to ask his wife's permission in the case of polygamy unless there is an agreement in the marriage contract which says; *"I don't want you to marry again, as long as I am still your wife."*

## 6. Right to Continue Education

According to Zakir Naik, girls have the opportunity to attend education as experienced by boys. Parents are obliged to provide education or teach their children whether they are girls or not. When women are married and live with their husbands, Zakir Naik explains that Islam does not deprive her of the right to education. Even though she is a wife, she may ask for knowledge or education from her husband. If the husband is unable to teach her, then the husband is obliged to seek and pay for the services of a teacher in fulfilling his wife's education <sup>28</sup>.

When associated with today's era, women may continue their education even though they have married and become a wife. The husband should not use marriage as an excuse to stop his wife's education <sup>29</sup>. If in the past the wife was financed by her parents, when she was married, the cost

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<sup>27</sup> Lawal Mohammed Bani and Hamza A Pate, "The Role of Spouses under Islamic Family Law," *International Affairs and Global Strategy* 37, no. 2 (2015): 104–11.

<sup>28</sup> Syefriyeni, "Nalar Zakir Abdul Karim Naik (Perspektif Aliran-Aliran Filsafat)."

<sup>29</sup> Ummu Salamah Ali, "Peradaban Islam Madinah (Refleksi Terhadap Primordialisme Suku Auz Dan Khazraj)," *Kalimah* 15, no. 2 (2017): 191, <https://doi.org/10.21111/klm.v15i2.1495>.

of education became the burden or responsibility of the husband. It is the importance of education in Islam according to Zakir Naik's thoughts.

In addition, the family is the embryo of a child's early education. A mother or father is a child's first teacher, both in understanding the vocabulary and the insights given in the journey of a child's golden age. An intelligent mother will communicate with the child even since the child is in the womb. Mothers who are smart in education will give good words and avoid bad words in front of children. This greatly affects the development of the child's brain and becomes the character of his thinking towards adulthood <sup>30</sup>.

Likewise with the father's role, although the early childhood phases require more of the mother's role, over time a father's figure is also needed in children's education. The character of the mother, which is generally feminist and gentle, will not be complete without a father who is firm and rational. The completeness of verbal education media from father and mother makes children have complete mental insight, so that they are psychologically better prepared to enter the stage of higher education <sup>31</sup>.

## **Women's Role: A Discourse in Islamic perspective**

In *Surah At-Taubah* verse 71 it is explained that men and women are managers and supporters of each other. The word '*auliya*' in the verse means 'supporter' and 'manager'. They are supporters and defenders of each other. In short, they are each other's brother and sister, and vice versa. The Prophet Muhammad explained that women are '*shakat*' which means sister. It also means half, because man has been divided into two parts (male and female).

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<sup>30</sup> Mohammad Azad and Shajia Sharmin, "Laws of Muslim Marriage from the Concept of the Holy Qur'an."

<sup>31</sup> Fatih Harpci, "'Ā'isha, Mother of the Faithful: The Prototype of Muslim Women Ulama," *Al-Jami'ah* 53, no. 1 (2015): 159–79, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2015.531.159-179>.

## 1. The Role of Women in Social

Talking socially, women take part in phenomena in the field, especially in modern times like nowadays. Zakir Naik considers that the social role of women is a manifestation of their figures when they are outside the family environment. In other words, how women can position themselves properly as elements of the family in public. For a mother, for example, her status in the family must be in line with community assessments. If a mother is indifferent or cruel to her child, automatically the social view of her will be bad <sup>32</sup>.

Therefore, the role of women is very important in responding to community assessments. Either when she is a mother, as a wife, or as a child. For example, if there is a woman in an Islamic family who comes home late at night without being with her *muhrim* (husband or sibling), then society's view of her will be bad <sup>33</sup>. On the other hand, when a woman is able to maintain her honor and obligations as a woman, the feedback will get appreciation from the community.

In addition, women as wives are a medium for husband's consideration in society. When the husband is lazy to participate in social activities in the village, the wife will remind that it will make the family look bad by the community. Likewise, when the husband's anger explodes for his neighbor, the wife will calm and advise him to be patient in society. The wife makes her husband cool again and his emotions are controlled, otherwise the harmony in social life will be damaged from within <sup>34</sup>.

On the other hand, women can also be the cause of the breakdown of social relations. A woman who likes to take someone's husband, for

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<sup>32</sup> Septian, "Pengaruh Tulisan Ernest Prakasa Mengenai Dr Zakir Naik Di Twitter Terhadap Citra Ernest Prakasa Di Desa Bojonggede."

<sup>33</sup> Ahmad Muttaqin, "Women's Identity in the Digital Islam Age: Social Media, New Religious Authority, and Gender Bias," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2020): 353–88, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v8i2.7095>.

<sup>34</sup> Baskin, "Reading the Women of the Bible (Review)."

example, will be branded by the community as a '*pelakor*' and a destroyer of other people's households. Women who do not understand their nature as women can also have a bad impact on the social conditions of the family. The case of LGBT, for example, will embarrass the family and make the public view bad on them.

## 2. The Position of Women in the Economy

Talking about the economy, it will not be separated from work, it means that if we talk about this dimension, it will have relevance to the phenomenon of women working to earn financially<sup>35</sup>. Zakir Naik believes that women have the right to be involved in the economic sphere, this is in line with the current reality where women are increasingly existing in the world of work. However, Zakir Naik restricts women from working. One of them is that women who work must be separated from the environment of men who are not *muhrim* (husbands or sibling)<sup>36</sup>.

For Zakir Naik, if a woman wants to work, she must choose a work environment that separates male and female employees. If not, then it is forbidden for women to work in such an environment. Likewise in the field of work, women are not allowed to work by exposing their forbidden part of the body. Such as dressing sexy or being an advertising model<sup>37</sup>. Likewise, if you work as a flight attendant, Zakir Naik forbids women to work with these conditions. The reason is, because the job can disqualify women. According to Zakir Naik, a good job for women is sewing, selling flowers, selling culinary arts, and other things as long as they do not conflict with Islamic principles.

During working hours, Zakir Naik believes that women are not obliged to work because it is already done by their husbands. However,

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<sup>35</sup> Zait Burden Interview, "Caregiver Burden and Associated Factors amongst Carers of Women with Advanced Breast Cancer Attending a Radiation Oncology Clinic in Nigeria," 2021, 1–8.

<sup>36</sup> Azaan, Brother, and Islam, "Womens' Rights in Islam – Modernising or Outdated? – Part 1."

<sup>37</sup> Ridwan, "Ketertarikan Terhadap Islam (Studi Kasus Muallaf Yang Memeluk Islam Dalam Acara Dakwah Dr. Zakir Naik Di Makassar)."

Zakir Naik believes that women have the option to work if they feel it can help the family economy. When earning income, women are not obliged to share it with their husbands. She can use it for her own benefit without sharing. On the other hand, for the women who work, they can share it to their husbands on their wishes, not an obligation.

### 3. The Position of Women in Politics

Talking about women's political rights, it cannot be separated from the duties and responsibilities of women in having a family. In other words, when discussing women's politics, they will intersect with the family dimension because women are an important element in a family, namely as a mother or wife in their home. However, Zakir Naik believes that there is no special prohibition for women to participate in the political stage. Even Islam allows women to take part in the battlefield only when necessary. On the condition that they must also maintain their hijabs and Islamic ethics, and their modesty. The clearest example is at the time of the Prophet era, where there were several women involved in war, one of which was Siti Aisyah who became the leader in the Jamal war <sup>38</sup>.

When referring to the Qur'an, Zakir Naik takes the example of *Surah At-Taubah* verse 71 which means that men and women support each other. Zakir Naik interprets the word '*support*' in this verse as political support. This means that women can make their choice over male candidates. On the other hand, men may support their choice in choosing a leader candidate from women <sup>39</sup>. This is further strengthened when referring to *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* verse 60; "O Prophet when women come to you to take *bai'at* (oath of allegiance)..." According to Zakir Naik, '*bai'at*' means more than our modern election model. Because of the Prophet Muhammad, he was not

<sup>38</sup> Azaan, Brother, and Islam, "Womens ' Rights in Islam – Modernising or Outdated ? – Part 1."

<sup>39</sup> Akhlaq Ahmad et al., "Women in Democracy: The Political Participation of Women Perempuan Dalam Demokrasi : Partisipasi Politik Perempuan," *Masyarakat, Kebudayaan, Dan Politik* 32, no. 2 (2019): 114–22.



only a messenger of Allah, but he was also the head of state. The women came to meet the Prophet, then they agreed if the Prophet became the head of the state. So Islam gave women the right to choose.

Apart from being involved as voters in politics, Zakir Naik also allows women to be involved as legislators. That means, in Islamic law, women are allowed to become parliament members as an institution in charge of drafting laws in modern times <sup>40</sup>. Zakir Naik gave an example of this incident at the time of the companions, namely when Umar bin Khattab became caliph. At that time, because it was difficult for young people to get married, Umar planned to limit the maximum terms of the dowry. Hearing that, a woman at the back of the line said; *"You can give some of your wealth, or some of gold as a dowry. When the Qur'an does not put a limit on the dowry, who is Umar who dares to set the limit? (May Allah be pleased with him)."*

Consequently, Umar admitted he was wrong, and the woman was right. Shadow, she was an ordinary woman. If she was a famous woman, her name would definitely be listed in the text of the hadith. When there is a hadith that does not mention the name of a woman, it can be understood that the woman is an ordinary woman. It shows that women have the right to be involved in the formulation of laws even though they are from ordinary social classes.

## 4. The Role of Women as Leaders

According to Zakir Naik, there is no text in the Qur'an that prohibits women from becoming leaders in a country. In several hadiths, for example a hadith that states; *"Societies led by women, will not achieve success."* One historian said that "This only refers to a specific (certain) time, to which this hadith relates, specifically to a time when Persia was ruled by a queen. Other

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<sup>40</sup> Tauffiqu Ahamad and Anil Kumar Mishra, "Legal Status and Rights of Women in Indian Constitution," *International Journal of Advanced Research and Development* 1, no. January (2016): 33, <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.5089.8962>.

scholars say, the hadith does not refer to all times. If it is analyzed, if a woman becomes a leader in a country, then she may have to lead congregational prayers <sup>41</sup>.

This shows that women are not prohibited from being leaders. However, Zakir Naik does not agree if women become leaders at the national level, either it as a president or a prime minister of a country. According to Zakir Naik, there are many reasons why women are better not becoming heads of state. Firstly, formal meeting. If women become heads of state in modern society as nowadays, they have to hold meetings with other heads of state many times in closed rooms, in which no one else is allowed <sup>42</sup>. If a woman has a meeting in a closed door with another man, Islam does not allow her to do that. Islam does not allow a woman alone with her *non-mahram* (nor husband or sibling), with a foreign man in a closed room.

Secondly, a head of state often receives more than publicity through shooting video by photographer, and she often involves intimacy with other heads of state, and with other men. Therefore, she can store photos of various heads of state. If a woman becomes head of state, there will be many photos of her shaking hands with other men. Islam does not allow Muslim women to do that <sup>43</sup>. Thirdly, menstruation. According to Zakir Naik, the condition of women during menstruation is unstable and disturbs women's mood. If a head of state is a woman, menstruation can interfere with making important decisions.

Fourthly, the condition of pregnancy and childbirth. In particular, the head of state is a very important figure. A woman is given the gift of being a mother. A woman, she may be pregnant, and she definitely needs to

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<sup>41</sup> Azaan, Brother, and Islam, "Womens ' Rights in Islam – Modernising or Outdated? – Part 1."

<sup>42</sup> Cheruvallil-Contractor, "Motherhood as Constructed by Us: Muslim Women's Negotiations from a Space That Is Their Own."

<sup>43</sup> Koch and Barzegarkouchaksaraei, "International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding Movement of Female ' s Rights in the World."

rest for a few months. If so, the state will be empty <sup>44</sup>. Likewise, at the time of the birth of a child, women become the first educators who are very important in the demands of Islam <sup>45</sup>. More practical, for a man who can do both tasks; as a father, and also a head of state, compared to a woman that she has to perform the duties of a mother as well as the head of the State.

Zakir Naik does not agree if women become leaders of a country, but that does not mean that women cannot take part in making decisions {formulation of laws}<sup>46</sup>. As Zakir Naik mentioned above, women have the right to vote, they have the right to take part in the making of laws. For example, during the treaty of Hudaibia, Umm Salamah supported and guided the Prophet, at a time when the entire Muslim community was disturbed, she guided and supported him. As we know, even though the Prime Minister or the President is the head of State, his advisors and secretaries are often the ones who make decisions, and some of them are women. That means, a woman can help a man as an advisor to the head of state.

## Conclusion

One of Zakir Naik's works that focuses on studying women is his book entitled *Right of Women in Islam; Modern or Outdated*. This book shows and presents how Islam which existed for the first time at the time of the Prophet Muhammad is still worthy of being applied in modern times. The rules and provisions outlined by Islamic teachings do not conflict with modern benefits, instead modern civilization seems like the *Jahiliyah* era if it does not follow Islamic guidelines. Talking about women's rights in Islamic family law, according to Zakir Naik, women are not in the same condition but have equal degrees. There is nothing in Islam that men are

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<sup>44</sup> Shandré K. Jansen van Rensburg, "Doing Gender Well: Women's Perceptions on Gender Equality and Career Progression in the South African Security Industry," *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology* 47 (2021): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v47i0.1815>.

<sup>45</sup> Syamsiah, "Women in Gender 2009."

<sup>46</sup> Alkhodari and Habil, "Analysis of Zakir Naik's Persuasion Discourse."

superior to women or vice versa. The best human indicator before Allah Almighty is not based on gender, but who among them has the highest charity and piety to Allah Almighty. Zakir Naik discusses a lot about the rights of women in Islamic families, whether it is the right to choose the desired marriage partner, the right to be respected as a mother, the right to be treated fairly as a daughter, the right to divorce her husband when making a contract in her marriage contract, the right to continue education and many more. Likewise in terms of the position of women in Islam, women play a vital role in social life. Women are an aspect of other people's assessment of the reality of their household. The position of women is also important in the economy, although women do not have to earn a living, women have the option to help their husbands if they feel that their husbands are unable to provide the needs for the family. In the political context, women have the same rights as men. Women can be elected to be parliament members or run for the parliament members. However, Zakir Naik does not agree if women become presidents or prime ministers. According to Zakir Naik, it is easier and ideal for a man to become the head of state as a father, compared to a woman who is a mother in the family.

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