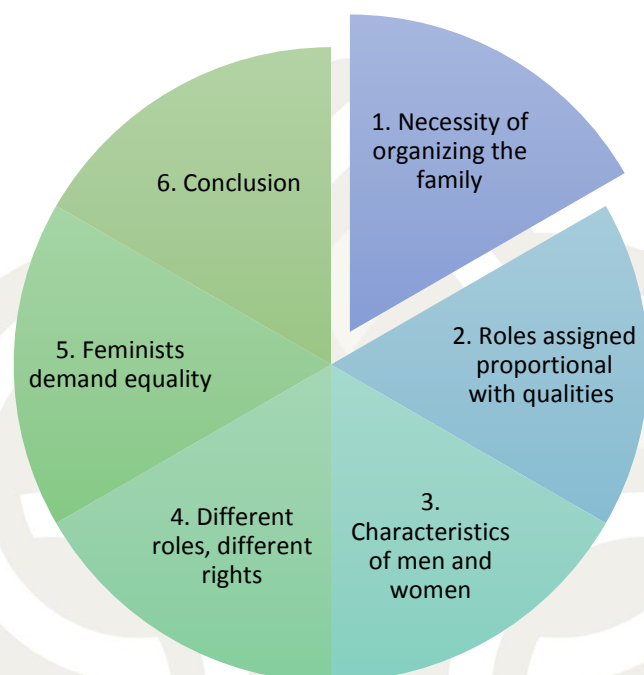


# Organizing the family

In this episode you will learn the following:



## Necessity of organizing the family

In order for any institution to be able to reach its intended goal and aim, each member is assigned specific roles in accordance with their capacities and for the institution to be successful in achieving its objective, each member needs to perform his/her duties well.

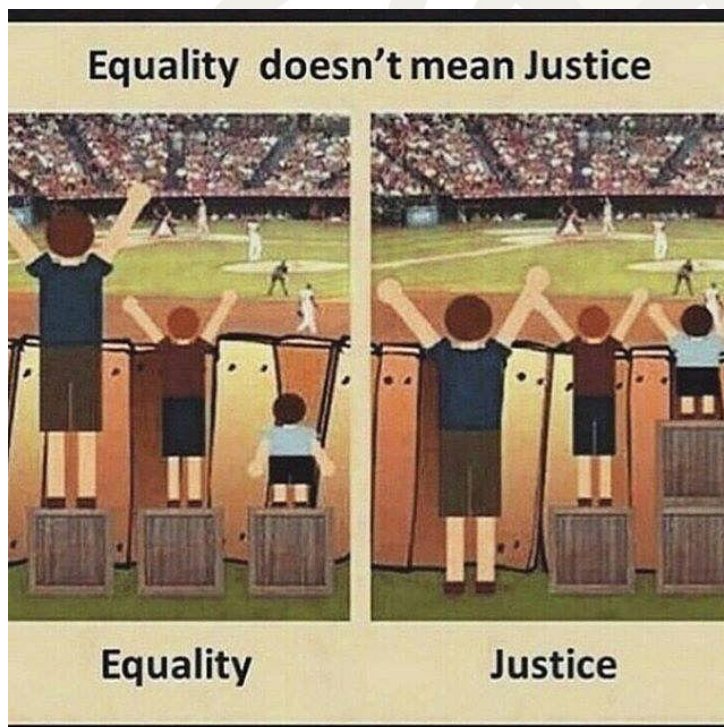
The family like any other organization also needs a system and order to run fluidly as it is pursuing a significant and sublime objective. Therefore, we need to know the specific roles each member of the family plays.

How does Islam organize family life?

### Roles assigned proportional with qualities

In the Muslim family, division of roles of the man and woman is based on their natural qualities and capabilities. Just as in any other organization, whoever has a qualification, he/she will be assigned a responsibility in that same regard and proportional with the characteristics that he/she possesses. This role assignment is based on justice not equality.

In the Islamic terminology, justice means putting everything in its proper place. *وضع الشيء في موضعه*. Justice is not always synonymous with equality. Equality entails almost identical treatment of two people whereas justice means treating each person or identity as is deserving and fair. Sometimes the equality of two people with different conditions and qualities is injustice and unfair.



The qualities that men and women have been created with are different. Since there are differences in the creation of a man and woman, the duties that they are held accountable for are also different.

According to the teachings of Islam, this entire universe and its inhabitants have been created based on wisdom and pursue a predetermined goal. The differences that exists in a man and woman have also been with a wise plan, enabling each sex to carry out their role in the best of manner and for the purpose of creating a harmonious family in accordance with their nature. Therefore, each has his/her own unique place in life and completes the other.

Think of the children who are born in the same family. They each have their unique qualities and characteristics and proportional with their talents, likes and personality, they are channeled into their field of interest by their parents. This method is so much more effective and pleasant for the children. This is justice not equality.

#### Characteristics of Men and Women

Men and women differ from each other in various aspects, physically, psychologically and emotionally. These distinct qualities lead to a difference in the roles assigned to them. This difference is based on God's wisdom in the manner of creation and is in accordance with the best system of the world justice. Ultimately, these differences are there to help us achieve the final goal of perfection that God has created us for.

Some of these differences are indicated below.

#### Characteristics of Men

##### 1. Physical

- More muscular mass, therefore physically stronger than women and capable of doing heavier tasks
- Usually taller than an average woman
- Less immune to diseases
- Life expectancy is less than women usually

- Predominantly use one side of their brain, particularly the left side for verbal reasoning and more.<sup>1</sup>
- Higher testosterone:  
Although testosterone is present in both males and females, there is a higher production of it in the males which affects a man's appearance and sexual development.

## 2. Psychological

- Higher self-esteem
- Higher sense of seeking autonomy
- Communicate with the intent to exchange information.<sup>2</sup>
- 3. Emotional
- Stronger emotional experiences but less prone to express emotions.<sup>3</sup>

## Characteristics of Women

### 1. Physical

- More fat in their bodies making the skin softer,
- Muscular masses less than men, therefore, less strenuous jobs are entrusted to women
- Stronger than men in terms of immunity to diseases.
- Life expectancy is usually more than men.
- Active right and left hemispheres of the brain;  
However, women use the left more which is responsible for verbal-cognitive functions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/anthropology/v1007/jakabovics/mf2.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/148360186.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4928818/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10893-006-0011-4>

- More estrogen: Estrogen is a female hormone which has a calming effect and also brings about beauty, delicacy, softness of skin and setting of the menstrual cycle.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Psychological

- Usually lower self-esteem.<sup>6</sup>
- More dependent.
- Women communicate with the intent of relieving stress, bonding, sympathy, empathy and to feel good.<sup>7</sup>

## 3. Emotional

- More equipped with emotional intelligence and therefore can understand, describe, receive, and control emotions better.<sup>8</sup>

Take a look at how men and women can be different: If a person is upset, or the emotions are disturbing, women's brains tend to stay with those feelings. But men's brains have a different reaction: They sense the feelings for a moment, then tune out of the emotions and switch to other brain areas that try to solve the problem that's creating the disturbance.<sup>9</sup>

- As compared to men, women are more emotionally expressive and respond more to negative stimuli as well.<sup>10</sup>

Due to these differences, men usually tend to get married for physical and psychological reasons (sexual needs and the need for affection and love). In

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<sup>5</sup> Effect of estrogens on skin aging and the potential role of SERMs cited in <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2685269/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2016/01/self-esteem-gender>

<sup>7</sup> <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/148360186.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> "Age and gender differences in ability emotional intelligence in adults: A cross-sectional study". *Developmental Psychology*. **52** (9): 1486–1492. doi:10.1037/dev0000191. ISSN 1939-0599. PMID 27570984.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-brain-and-emotional-intelligence/201104/are-women-more-emotionally-intelligent-men>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4928818/>

addition to a number of similar needs in marriage, women look to find a strong source of reliance.

As another result of these natural and biological differences between men and women, the man in many cases, is the head of the family, having the final say, taking the various aspects, threats, risks, potentials, and benefits of an issue into account when making decisions in life, while the woman is the head of the house. Her husband can provide his opinion about household issues, but the woman is the one making the final choice. In the same way, with regards to the decisions about the family, women should give their opinion, but the man makes the final call.

#### [Different roles, different rights](#)

Naturally, when there are different duties, the rights will be different as well. As a whole, the duties and rights of a man and woman are justly distributed yet if you look at them case by case, you will definitely see differences and dissimilarity. With different responsibilities for the two sexes, comes different rights.

The duty of the man means that there is a right for the woman. The duties of the woman mean some rights for the man. The duties of parents entail rights for children. Children's duties are parents' rights. All these have been clearly defined in the Qur'anic perspective.

#### [Feminism demands equality not justice](#)

In the non-Islamic understanding, specifically in the feminist perspective, regardless of the differences of the two sexes, the equality of the two is demanded and emphasized. Whereas we see this equality in some instances as injustice to both men and women.

### Conclusion

One can conclude that there are differences between men and women in three areas; the first area, being the basis of the latter two justly assigned differences:

1. Characteristics
2. Duties
3. Rights

The first category of differences, namely the physical, emotional and psychological characteristics of men and women are quite apparent. Since such differences exist, they will have to be taken into account and be regarded as valuable, for they are in a way that help men and women complete one another.

