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LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

Kuwaiti women accept discrimination!

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By Muna Al-Fuzai, Staff columnist

Kuwait women accept discrimination. This is not a public rule, but as long as only a few people are fighting discrimination against Kuwaiti women, then this is what I believe to be the case in Kuwait today. It is a sad and cruel reality, but this is still accepted by many ladies even by most of those who call themselves activists! Why can't they say no and why can't they fight back?

We have to stop thinking that allowing women to drive cars and go to work and maybe put on what she likes is all what women need and is enough to reflect women's development in Kuwait. These are tiny details that don't mean anything in regards to making decisions or planning the future of her country. She is expected to follow the male code where the man assumingly knows better and maybe thinks with a better brain!

In public life, women's existence is still insufficient to make her word heard or noticed or even obeyed! She receives hits from different groups because she is a woman and no matter what degrees or experiences she has does not equal them. Men do not want to show successful examples of women in public because her success will only harm them and limit and threaten their power over other women in the society!

An example of this are the laws that area against women, such as laws that hinder her from advancing in her career. A lady with a PhD can teach students law in the university, but she can't obtain the post of a judge because conservative parties use pathetic excuses why she cannot have this job such as women cannot make right decisions since she is too emotional. These excuses are all unfair speculations and false allegations against professional and experienced women. Female judges run the court on a set law and not based on their minds and feelings!

A woman is welcomed to work only if a man consents to her type of work or benefits from it! I know many girls in college who were very talented and yet ended up as teachers in primary schools because their husbands or fathers don't want to see them in a place with men!

A religious Islamic ruling was made recently to approve the husband's right to

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take his wife's salary because the time she spent outside was his own and thus he is entitled to take her salary which she worked hard to earn! Now, men in this society prefer working women because he will be able to use her salary for himself! A law was even issued in Kuwait to prevent women from working after 8 pm. Laws give all rights for men to choose their partner, but if a woman does this, she will be humiliated and punished.

Sadly, many people think that if a woman receives a promotion or a raise, this is due to her wasta or contacts and not due to her abilities or how hard a worker she is! Even when a new government is formed here in Kuwait, it avoids appointing more than one woman at a time. I believe that one article is not enough to recite all the examples of discrimination against women and not only Kuwaiti women, but every woman who happens to be part of this society. Can women fight back? Yes, but this is not an easy step and the process is hard and it requires unity, sacrifice and lot's of sincere effort.

muna@kuwaittimes.net

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