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CHALLENGING TO THE DUAL LEGAL SYSTEM: THE CASE OF THE LEGAL SERVICES OF “SISTERS IN ISLAM”

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Abstract

Founded in Malaysia in 1987, SIS (Sisters in Islam) is an Islamic Feminist group which aims at struggling against gender inequality in various fields. When the term “Islamic Feminism” started to be used in the world, some Malaysian women came together to combat with women’s legal issues and established this organization to present an alternative way for a new law reform on family.

The members and the founders of the group realized that centering only Islamic law would not be adequate for combatting with gender inequality. Because the main reason for the secondary position of women is the misinterpretation of the Islamic sources, not Islam itself. Based on this awareness and in parallel with Islamic feminist approach, the members began to make re-reading studies of the Islamic sources. On the other side, some activities to tackle gender inequality in other fields were carried upon.

This research aims not to assert an authentic classification to the legal services of SIS which already exists in the literature; but to serve a new typology on the functions of SIS’ legal services in a different point of view and which one of those fields SIS works on.

Within this context, during this qualitative research in which content analysis is used as the design of the study, the data were collected through document analysis. As for the technique for data analysis, three phases of qualitative data analysis strategies, that is, description, analysis and interpretation were employed to the gathered data.

As the findings and conclusion of the study, the functions of the legal services of SIS can be divided into five categories such as Direct Consultation Services, Indirect Consultation Services, Andragogic and Pedagogic services, Financial services and Suggesting proposals to the government.

Keywords: Islam, Sisters in Islam, Gender, Islamic Feminism, The Legal Services of Sisters in Islam, Malaysia’s Dual Legal System.

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Introduction

Gender is a term addressing to the different social determinations of the roles, responsibilities and duties of women and men in society. As stated above, gender is a socially constructed phenomenon and the roots of the difference between one's sex and gender cannot be present in their biology.

A very close term to gender, feminism, can be defined as the political and social ideas and beliefs seeking same rights and equality for women as men have (Fiss, 1994, 413). In other words, feminism is "a bunch of activities, theories, assumptions, philosophies and approaches that view the gender as a crucial and basic analysis unit" (Zalewski, 1995, 341). Although a number of feminist groups are available to defend different opinions and bring forward various approaches, all feminists are to carry on campaign within common objectives to improve the condition of women (Jaggar, 1988, 5-8).

The voice of women, who was not regarded as a human once, began to rise in England in the 17th century and the work written by Mary Wollstonecraft in the 18th century went down in the history as the first work for the feminism.

Here, the two key concepts are interblended. For instance liberal feminist approach think that masculinity and femininity are the only things to be discussed in order to regularize the status of women in the society, whereas cultural feminists object to the idea that the categories such as sex, gender, even socially constructed ones may not be stable; but they may be seen in historical, social, cultural and ideological contexts (Conkey & Gero, 1997).

Regardless as what the theories argue about the social constructivism of gender, they agree at one point that the equality that exists between the sexes, that is, gender equality, is the root problem to be solved in order to raise the secondary position of women in the society.

After the enlightenment age and the freedom that people start to demand rights from every walk of life, women also started to get involved in public sphere as much as they do in private sphere revealing that women are to be equal to men in terms of their rights, responsibilities, duties, and everything in society.

This gender inequality problem can be defined as "Legal, social and cultural situation in which sex and/or gender determine different rights and dignity for women and men, which are reflected in their unequal access to or enjoyment of rights, as well as the assumption of stereotyped social and cultural roles." by European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2019).

There are a growing number of organizations in the world acting against gender inequality such as United Nations. United Nations published some global aims and positioned "gender equality" as the 5th aim of "17 Millennium Development Goals" in 2016 (UN, 2019). They claim that "Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Unfortunately, at the current time, 1 in 5 women and girls between the ages of 15-49 have reported experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner within a 12-month period and 49 countries currently have no laws protecting women from domestic violence."

One of these organizations tackling gender inequality was established in Malaysian women under the name of Sisters in Islam, which constitutes the main subject of this research.

Before giving some information on SIS, to give a very brief explanation on Malaysia, different feminist theories and Islamic Feminism is found suitable.

1. A country with a dual legal system

Being a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation and having 13 different governmental regions, Malaysia is a complex country (Nor Wan Daud, 2002). However, the main complexity of the country stems from its dual legal system.

"Islam is the official religion of Malaysia written on its constitution. The 60% of the total population is Muslim and the rest 40% is Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, etc. However, despite this rate, the government runs the nation with Sheriah laws, but virtually." (_ , Vatan, September 23, 2007).

In other words, there is a dualist legal system in Malaysia. The cases such as marriage, divorce and inheritance of Muslim citizens are the cases of Sheriah courts whereas the private or civil courts are engaged with other issues. Nevertheless, the civil courts have some Islamic acts until 1970s. But the lawyers and judges who were educated with English system did not apply these Islamic acts (Başaran, 2007). For instance, when a Muslim commits an illegal act, s/he is judged at Shariah courts. On the other hand, there are private courts for the citizens who are non-Muslim, which creates a duality for the laws. Moreover, when



you are a Muslim, you are forbidden to proselytize, that is, you cannot change your religion (L. Vatan, September 23, 2007).

2. Feminism from the Perspectives of Different Theories

After women's question was introduced to international platforms, it was resulted that some agreements and decisions were made so as to maintain gender equality by the way of the fact that women rights had been voiced out in national and international areas. Women's question, which was not defined as feminism in all areas though, took place in the agenda of all countries thanks to CEDAW in 1979, and Conference of Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 and contribution of United Nations and other grand institutions and organizations. Upon considering feminism in the historical perspective, it is divided into two periods before the 1st World War and after 1968. This movement provided lots of women with the consciousness that some actions should be taken against inequality between women and men. As a result, feminism has been adopted by various groups of women in different countries within different approaches in the way of having tended to influence larger mass of people after 1968 (İmançer, 2002, 152). However, some trends can be defined as the Third Wave of Feminism by means of post-modernism wave in particular recently.

Thanks to these developments, the result that feminism should be dealt with different approaches is raised from the fact that various ideas have emerged through different ideologies and historical transformation aligned with point of views of feminist groups upon the issue of women. Lots of theories consisting of feminism are available; however, Liberal Feminism, Cultural Feminism, Radical Feminism and Marxist Feminism, which take place mostly in national and international resources, are bracketed and detailed in this study.

2.1. Liberal Feminism

Since it came before the other feminist approaches historically, *Vindication of the Rights of Women* written by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792 was the first work of Liberal Feminism as a masterpiece. This book was both the first work written in the field of Feminism and important as it is the constituent of liberal feminism. They are Mary Wollstonecraft, Frances Wright, Sarah Grimke and J. Stuart Mill who were major thinkers to contribute to institutionalize this movement.

Rationalism and Enlightenment, which shaped the thought way of the West this movement, formed the consciousness women should have the same rights as men as well. The case in which women were related to some positions such as housewifery, maternity (motherhood) will enable women to leave out this frame where they have been trapped by the help of historical transformations movement occurring this century. It is because women who are trapped in the house cannot seek her rights. That woman has the rights as men and work independently from the house will lead her to become free and take her further from her current status.

The terms such as "justice, equality and freedom" have a crucial place for Liberal Feminists. So, it is necessary that discrimination and inequality as heading factors to undermine women should be removed, and women and men should be raised in equal conditions as both are treated as human. They claim that women own the intellect like men, and equality will set up if opportunities and services for men are provided for women as well.

"Liberal feminism differs from other feminist movements in two major points: The first point is stated "if the market should be restricted in order to remove such discrimination to which women is exposed although men are provided with the same civil, economic and political rights". Besides, the second point is stated "whether commonly traditional existence of accepted gender roles is an independent part that leads to the rejection of equality for opportunity to enable women to take part in the life out of house or it contributes to this case, or not" (Conway, 2000, 59).

2.2. Cultural Feminism

Donovan defines cultural feminism as "some thoughts going beyond logical and legal movement of the enlightenment theory". Cultural feminists supporting the idea that status of women in private sphere should be transformed and their struggle to take part in public area tended to seek an extended cultural transformation rather than focus on the political change (Donovan, 2009, 69). In the light of this thought, they pursue more extended cultural difference rather than focusing on the policy. To cultural feminists,



critical thinking, education and self-development are important and also illogical, intuitive and generally, collective side of life should be considered. While liberal feminists emphasize over the similarities between women and men, cultural feminists generally dwell on the differences regarded as personal power, pride and public renewal resource of feminine qualities. These feminists devise and think of alternatives over agencies such as religion, marriage, family and so on (Sevim, 2005, 60).

It is Margaret Fuller who is the pioneer of cultural feminists defending that woman should be prioritized and praised apart from the equality between women and men under matriarchy. Fuller makes critics over objective and mechanic structures resulting from the intellect based on knowledge of Enlightenment thought in her work *Women in the Nineteenth Century* (1845). Knowledge is emotional, intuitive and organic, and also women have a natural tendency to reach this knowledge. Fuller claims that the development of femininity will improve the community drastically (Özsöz, 2008, 53).

Sevim also summarizes that cultural feminist theory underlies the point of matriarchy: "Community's opinion of women directed by means of mainly feminine effect and values. It involves pacifism, collaboration, unity of differences without violation and compatible arrangement of public life" (Sevim, 2005, 61-62).

Cultural feminists have also campaigned to their roots from the movement of Enlightenment Reform.

Objecting to matriarch-based Christianity in the heading resources of that term such as *The Women's Bible* and *The Matriarchate*, Matilda Gage criticizes the comments of religion which are against women's interests in the work of *Women, Church and State*. In this context, it is emphasized that the practices such as witchery and goddess are in favor of women's interests by extending the range of religious critics and comprehending. Besides, Charlotte Perkins Gilman explains cultural feminism considering Darwin's evolution theory and objects to dependence of women (that's discrimination) by criticizing the masculine gender-sided comments of this theory (Yörük, 2009, 63).

2.3. Radical Feminism

The theory of radical feminist by a group of "activist women" emerged in the eastern New York and Boston in late 1960s and early 1970s (Donovan, 2009, 67).

Radical feminists reject not only capitalist, patriarch, patriarchal order but also any ideas relying on male domination. According to the theory of radical feminism, the major reason why the women is of subordination and oppressed as compared to man is that she is only Mir-Hosseini "a woman". In other words, this deals with the fact that a woman differs from a man in the respect of her existence and biology. Women should have their own control on their bodies. The events such as sexual harassment and rape are defined as unfair actions of man on the body of women and this case should be readjusted in accordance with the cultural, religious and political conditions. Only by this method can a woman get rid of these constraints. Because the major reason of oppressing women underlies patriarchal ideologies.

In the respect of radical feminist's approach, the most important conflict among people does not have to do with the class one as claimed by Marxist feminism. The gender conflict is the most vital event of human history. As related to this case, Kate Millett mentions in her work the name of which is "*Manifest for Revolution*": "If one group resists against the other, the relation between both is political. If this kind of order remains for a long time, an ideology occurs. All historical civilizations are patriarchal, and their ideologies are based on male ascendancy" (Donovan, 2009, 275).

According to Radical Feminists, a woman must be "an exact woman". By introspecting herself, she must love and keep to herself without resembling with a man.

In the expression of Radical Feminist approach, if something is personal, is political, and the reason why woman is subordinated is raised from the ascendancy or patriarchy but not Capitalism like Marxism. Actually, women should consider themselves as a suppressed class and be led to a resistance against the ones who pressurize them in the shape of civil partnership. In the respect of style and culture, women and man are primarily different from each other and the manner of women should set the foundation of a community in the future (Donovan, 2009, 268-9).

In the light of these ideas, radical feminists clearly deny the agency of marriage since women is trapped in the order of patriarchy. Thus, they deny the biological motherhood. Alternatively, they offer some ways such as artificial insemination and marriage of convenience on the subject of motherhood.



2.4. Marxist Feminism (Socialist Feminism/Conflict Theory)

There is no doubt that historical materialist perspective and concept of alienation by Karl Marx have an influence in the development of Feminist theory. Marx who did not pick up on the issue of women directly and feminists were influenced by the theories of Engels.

The main reason of women's being oppressed underlies economic conditions stemming from the capitalism according to Marxist Feminists. Marx who defended the opinion of determinism economic conditions is the determiners of roots of a community. Therefore, while the ruling group is the one (bourgeois) in a society which has the ascendancy in the economical aspect, to-be-ruled group is the working class which labors in a society (proletarians).

The problem of class consciousness lies behind economical scale of class membership aligning with the above-mentioned idea. It is because Marx also defends the following idea: "A class emerges when it believes in itself as a class and it always requires a common enmity towards another group. (...) Most of Marxists look to the thought of praxis and some consider it as an educational means to enable them to realize the cases in which their groups were suppressed and so take action in order to change their current case by exposing 'false consciousness'" (Donovan, 2009, 133).

That's why the speech of Engel that 'Men represent bourgeois and women represents proletariat' could be attributed to feminism. As a parallel relationship is set between proletariat and women who is a suppressed group, the similar case is valid between men and bourgeois. The suppressed group should be raised consciousness against the group.

According to Eisenstein (1999), "Marxism particularly contributes to the researches of feminism in two points. The first point is that the scope of class is added to analysis in the concept of power. The second one is that it adopts dialectic and historical analysis method. Dialectics was used in the researches for the women as used for conflicts of classes. The method Marx used for the theories of exploitation and alienation, life of genres and emergence of tension in capitalist alienation forms of social life have inspired the researches of feminist. Engels wrote about the cases of women rather than Marx in the traditional Marxist idea. According to Engels, pressure/oppression is defined as exploitation and the pressure on women seems more complicated than that of exploitation system. Although he acknowledges that family union has hid slavery of women, he claims that both the slaveries of women at home and paid- man are resulted from capitalist system. Thus, the overwhelmed class' getting rid of pressure also means the women's getting rid of discrimination and exploitation. He does not suggest another way to redress women." (197-200; taken from Ataman, 2009, 17).

2.5. Islamic Feminism

Islamic Feminism is a feminist movement taking religion into its center, seeking equality and justice for women thinking that the secondary position of women so-called gender inequality stems from the cultural and traditional norms of the old Muslim societies. So, they make some re-reading studies on Islamic sources to uncover that the assumptions of gender in Islam are socially constructed. One point must be underlined that these women are not certain to call themselves feminists or even Islamic (Mir-Hosseini, 2006).

Kandiyoti (1997) interprets Islamic Feminism as;

"Analyses on gender relations and ideologies in Muslim countries focus on the role of Islam. Feminist and anti-Feminist approaches argue how much opportunity Islam could serve the freedom of women. The approaches in these arguments range from the argument of inequality between sexes ordered by the religion to religious texts and first historical development comments of Islamic history. Islamic approach claims that the message of equality in the beginning of Islam as the consequence of the existence of class system, the victory of patriarchal interests or the cultural resistance against imperialist dominant powers has been deflected within different ways afterwards. The other fraction claims that Islam is primarily patriarchal and disfavors women rights".

Gürhan (2010) made the following comments by drawing the attention to the case in which some defend that although women and men are equated in Koran and religious texts, women are subordinated:

"It was rumored that in the beginning years of Islam, the Prophet spared time for the education for women, women who were convenient participated in all praying including Cuma and Bayram praying, Muslim women visited to the house of the Prophet to have conversation, women could converse with him easily and ask lots of questions to him, work in public services and perform



active roles such as providing medical services, logistic support and joining fights in war time. As it is seen, Islam does not leave out women. On the contrary, it places women in the center of life.

However, it is considered that a woman is subordinated to a man in practical terms due to her creation and this case could be tried to testify referring to Koran and Hadith. The points ,which mean two women are equal to a man on the subjects such as heritage, eyewitnesses in Koran, a man is seen as a ruler on a woman, a woman should take care of her veiling, a man has the right to marry four women and a woman could be beaten by her husband if his words are not listened, and rumors, which mean the women is lack of intellect and religion and is sinister, what she said should be done the opposite but taking advice could be acceptable, she can't go into the heaven without her husband's permission and so on..., could be exemplified as patriarchal backgrounds in Islam" (369).

According to Ziba Mir-Hosseini (2006), Islamic Feminist from Iran, who has a wider viewpoint on women's question, this point should be studied and reinterpreted not only in Islam but also in Christianity and Judaism.(...)Some developments in the West(such as researches of Wollstonecraft and Stanton) have brought light on claiming women's rights in the West. To Hosseini, inequality between sexes has to do with the cultural norms of former Muslim communities. While Islam highlights the terms of freedom, equality and justice, this sort of social structures is raised from interpretation that Islam relies on culture.

3. What is "Sisters in Islam"?¹

A group of Malaysian Muslim women has come together in order to seek some alternative answer to this critical question: "If God is just as Islam is just "why do laws and policies made in the name of Islam create injustice?". These women, consisting of some lawyers and their academic, journalist and activist friends, started to organize some meetings and workshops to put forth that Muslim women are the victims of discrimination factionalized in the name of Islam.

It was 1987 when the group was first established within the legal organization of women, the Association of the Women Lawyers and their subcommittee the Association's Shariah, after the implementation of new Islamic Family Laws legislated in 1984 and enforced in 1987.

They aimed to focus on the legal problems that the women face with when they demand legal redress from the authorities. To present some alternative solutions to the implementation of the new Family Law and in line with this target to alert the authorities about these problems were the other purposes of the organization.

They prefer to focus on some laws because they think they are not unchangeable: "As far as SIS is concerned, when applied to laws, the terms "Islamic" and "Muslim" are not interchangeable. When we drafted our model family law, we made a conscious decision to call it Muslim Family Law – it was drafted by us, a group of Muslim women, in accordance with certain interpretations of Islam. Thus, "Islamic" laws may be derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, but their formulation and implementation will always involve human intervention in matters of interpretation. In this sense, the laws are not divine and can be changed." (SIS).

However, in progress of time, they noticed that there was something else rather than solely combatting against the new law reform. So, they designated new targets and began to make re-reading studies of the Islamic sources (Qur'an, Hadith) thinking that these sources need to be reviewed from the perspective of women. Because the subordinated status of women does not stem from Islam but the misinterpretation of the sources of Islam and a root reason of the cultural tradition in the patriarchal system.

Currently SIS began to get stronger and also with their male members, they struggle against justice, human rights and gender inequality in general; polygamy, early marriage, domestic violence, inheritance, hijab, etc.

They carry out congress, symposiums, workshops, trainings, certificate programs, TV programs, panels, they publish some written materials and they run their legal services (the main subject of this study) in order to fulfill their aims not only in Malaysia, but all over the world.

¹ This part is a summary of "The SIS Story" gathered from <http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/page.php?35> (accessed 04.11.2019).

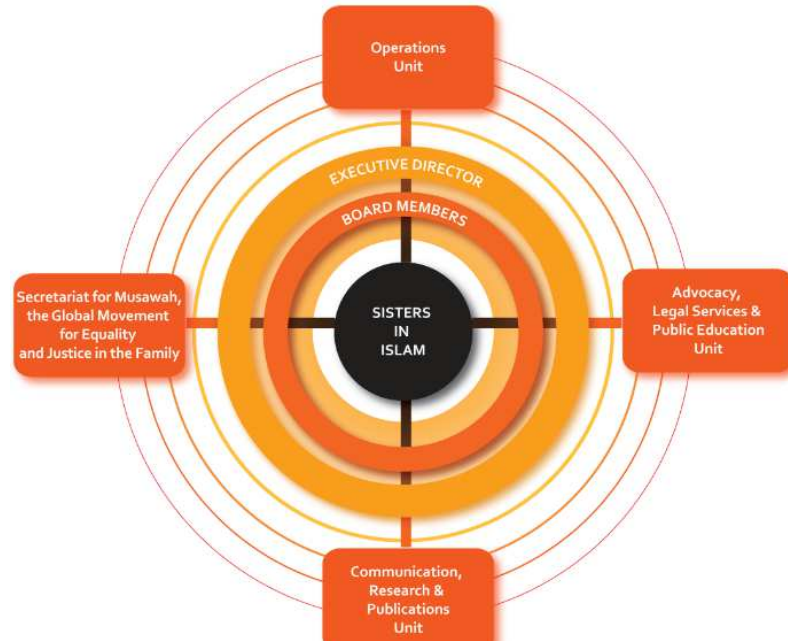


Figure 1. Organisation Unit of SIS²

4. Methodology

This qualitative study aims at presenting a new aspect and insight to the functions of the legal services of SIS. From this point forth, as the design of the study, content analysis was employed as it defines 'the core consistencies and meanings' (Patton, 2002, 453).

Data were collected through document analysis which is one of the qualitative data collection methods. The website of SIS and Musawah, the books, articles and newspaper columns were detected in detail in order to gather information about the legal services.

In a qualitative research such as this one, the way of analyzing the data is a means of turning the collected data into a clear and meaningful form or unit (LeCompte, 2000). As for the data analyses of our study, Baptiste's (2001) new attempt for transforming qualitative data, that is, a mixture and a new qualitative data analysis strategy such as Dey's (1993) and Wolcott's (1994) steps "description, analysis, and interpretation" was employed.

This new aspect of qualitative data analysis consists of three phases. The first phase is defining the analysis at which the analyst gathers the data, make reduction and write them up. As the second phase, that is, Classifying Data, the analyst tags and groups the data by labelling them in a way to distinguish the data within similar sub categories such as numbers, words, phrases, themes, etc. As the third and the last phase, that is, Making Connections, the analyst comment on the themes in order to provide the readers with broader and deeper understanding of the concepts, which is a must in a qualitative research (Baptiste, 2001).

During our research, for the first phase of data analysis, all the legal services of SIS, regardless as their functions, were listed. As for classifying the data, that is, the second phase, these listed items were tagged and grouped according to their functions. Lastly, as for the third and last step, some relations and comments were made on the themes in order to make the connections clearer. All these steps will be given within the findings of this study.

5. Findings: A New Typology on the Functions of the Legal Services of SIS

The organization SIS runs some legal activities by giving legal support for mostly women, but also men, on their rights in some different issues.

There are some readymade researches on the advocacy work of SIS. One of them is written by Nora Murat. The classification of Murat is triple: advocacy through memorandums to the government, advocacy through letters to the editor and advocacy through public education (Murat, 2004).

²_, <http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/page.php?16>, (accessed 11.09.2019).



Another typology on the legal services of SIS is taken from SIS' own publication showing all the advocacy, legal services and the amendment of laws on a chart and revealing five groups: "campaigns, legal aid services, legal literacy, court watch and legal literacy medias" (Ismail, 2011).

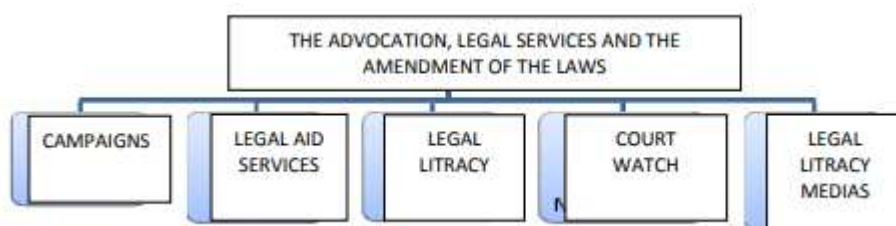


Figure 2: SIS' Advocacy, Legal Services and Amendment of Laws

Despite the fact that this classification above is taken from one of the resources of SIS, on their webpage, SIS presents another classification as dividing their "Legal Advice" into three groups: TeleNisa, Legal Q&A, Legal Aid Fund (SIS, Legal Advice).

TeleNisa is a clinic for legal advisory open some certain days of the week and giving legal advice service to women and men via e-mail, social media, phone, face to face and letter.

Legal Q&A is another advisory service of SIS answering the questions on the subject areas of laws on child, polygamy, divorce and others.

Last service is a fund for Muslim women living in Malaysia. These women who consulted to TeleNisa need some financial aid for their cases both at the Syariah Court and Civil Court.

Last but not the least, Musawah is another point which is a must to be mentioned near SIS.

Established in 2009, Musawah is the movement, or can be named as a project bound to SIS, which aims at building equity in Muslim family. They seek equality and justice for women both in public and private spheres. The members of this movement think that the more equality exists in the family, the more equality exists in the society.

Musawah defines their way of seeking equality and justice for women by dividing their activities into three groups: knowledge building, capacity building, international advocacy.

Considering all these facts and information, as the purpose of this study, that is, to execute an alternative typology on the legal services of SIS, it can be said that the functions of the legal services of Sisters in Islam can be classified into five groups such as Direct Consultation Services, Indirect Consultation Services, Andragogic and Pedagogic services, Financial services and Alerting the Policy Makers:

A. Direct Consultation Services

This function of the legal activities of SIS is about providing legal information to the consultants of SIS as a lawyer or legal expert.

This consultation system is done by the legal clinic called TeleNisa via e-mail, cell phone, direct phone, social media, face to face, letter or mobile legal clinic. The international advocacy of Musawah can be grouped within the direct consultation supports.

B. Indirect Consultation Services

Not a direct and one-to-one meeting, but supporting the consultants with indirect services such as accompanying women to court, making research such as case analysis, translation studies, coordination Projects of SIS can be under the title of indirect consultation services.

C. Andragogic and Pedagogic Services

As an Islamic feminist organization, SIS carries out 'knowledge building' activities which is the theoretical and practical standpoint of feminist approach, just as Musawah's claim.

SIS organizes some trainings, study sessions, workshops, trainings of trainers (tot), public forum, documentary screening, panel, talk show, public lecture, congress, workshops, meetings and symposiums in order to inform the public about their legal rights and in order to preclude gender inequality. SIS also publishes some newspaper articles, monographs, articles, reports, conference papers, newspaper cuttings, annual review, booklets, working papers, pamphlets and audio-visual materials, BARAZA! (the bulletin of SIS) and serves these publications under the name of 'SIS publications' and 'SIS online catalogue' to raise the awareness of the public.



D. Financial Services

By organizing some financial actions such as Legal Aid Fund and fundraising for SIS by being a member of Friends of SIS, the organization gathers financial support for their consultants in case they need them in courts.

E. Suggesting proposals to the government

In order to combat with gender equality that exists in the Family Law, SIS organized some memorandums and sent letters to alert the policy makers of the government on law reform.

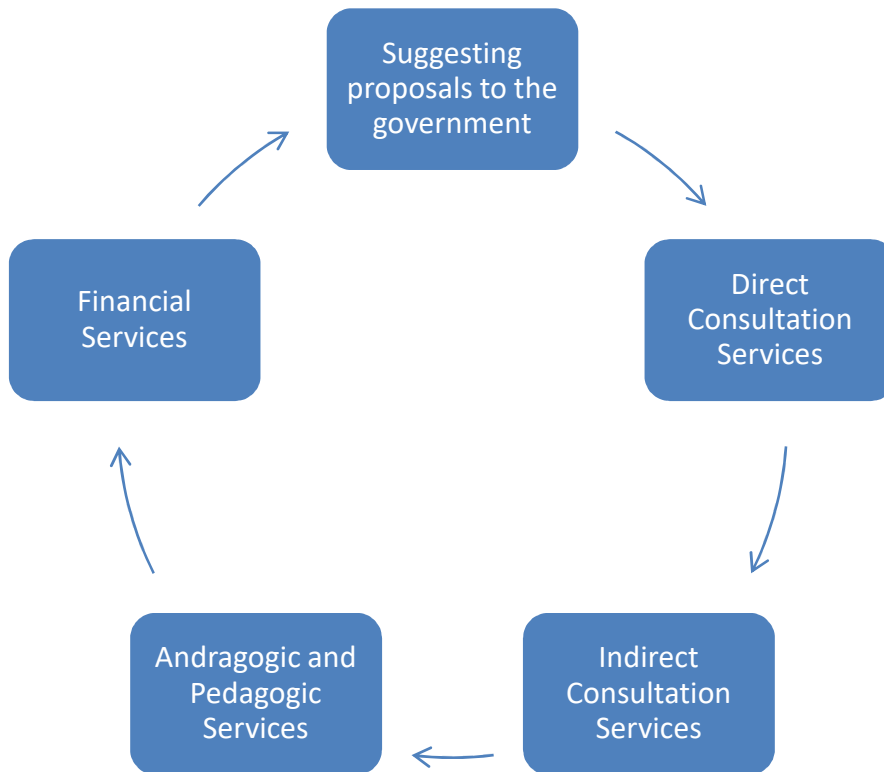


Figure 3: The Functions of the Legal Services of SIS

As a Conclusion

SIS is an Islamic feminist organization established in 1987 in Malaysia by some Muslim women. These women started their activism by concentrating on legal problems that women face at legal positions. However, in time, they realized that focusing merely on legal problems is not sufficient for tackling gender inequality. So, in parallel with the Islamic feminist approach, they started a new beginning: rereading of the Islamic sources, as they think that the subordinated status of women stems from the misinterpretation of the religious sources; not the religion itself.

As the aim of the study, grouping the legal services of SIS according to their functions, some other classifications of the legal services of the organization were evaluated firstly. Yet it was found out that there is no classification of the functional legal services which constitutes the main object of this research.

To achieve the aim of the study, the three steps of qualitative data analysis were used and as the finding of the study, the functional categories of the legal services of SIS can be divided into five categories: Direct Consultation Services, Indirect Consultation Services, Andragogic and Pedagogic services, Financial services and Suggesting proposals to the government. This situation demonstrates that as an Islamic feminist organization, SIS agree that gender equality, is the root problem to be solved in order to raise the secondary position of women in the society. To achieve this target, the organization works with their different services.



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