

FEMINISM: AN INTRODUCTION AND CLASSIFICATION

*Rana Ghulam Mustafa**

"Under-discussion topic " FEMINISM : An INTRODUCTION AND CLASSIFICATION" is a different type of its own ,than other topics . It is not only Unique But also important. It is very current issue. It will be very helpful in giving information details about the meaning of FEMINISM. It will also provide a path to reach the depth of its types and waves and impart knowledge about heterogeneous fields of FEMINISM. After perusing this article we shall be able to dilate upon the topics such as women rights of suffrage ,equal rights in every field of life and every department of the government as men are enjoying."

INTRODUCTION

Feminism refers to the cultural beliefs about women. Women are less aware of their rights. There is a perception or sense that there is domination of men. There is a feeling of awakening women about their rights and responsibilities. Therefore, feminism is the realization of equal rights of women. It is considered as a collection¹ of different ideologies related to social ,educational ,economical, and political and employees related women rights.(1). There is a violation of women's rights every where only being their unaware of their social rights. Mostly in rural areas, there is not understood the importance of women education. They are just considered as the home managers. There is also a belief that they are created only to promote population. They are created to be in four walls only. To remove such notions, there is celebrated international days for the awareness of women rights. There is given focus upon awarding women equal rights as the men.

There are many NGOs that are playing very effective role to give justice to women in Pakistan .In the recent past mostly women know their protection in case of injustice in all premises of life .But ,the number of such women is much less . Many women played an effective role in this regard. It is fact that they are different from men (2). But, this difference does not mean that they will not be treated as men . Cultural feminist theory was initiated in 1985 by some logical women who felt the violation of their rights. Same role was played by Salma Tassadduq Hussain and Baigum Shahnaw etc. that

* Lecturer, Dept. of Islamic Studies, Govt. College for boys Model Town, Lahore.

proved very important as in Pakistan movement to lead the women wing actively. International movement for women rights provoked and advanced much by 1900. Same happened in Pakistan and different movements started to give equal rights to women. A number of NGOs stood for women rights in Pakistan . In all provinces of Pakistan , In Punjab ,they are award much . Sindh is a second no. but ,in other provinces , they are not protected .they cannot stand openly for their rights .For their protection in these provinces , Government is not taking serious steps to promote them equally as men. Therefore , this study will prove a great asset for government ,NGOs ,women researches and for men to think about their role for women.

DEFINITION OF FEMINISM

There are different dimensions of definition of feminism . All require legal equality of women to men .All have been written after having a long effort for them that are described as under :

Feminism is consisted of beliefs and ideas on equal rights as men . Women are not treated equally as men only for one reason that they are women . It also refers cultural beliefs about women . It is also referred as behaviour and attitude towards women to bring change (3) . All views that present the differences between men and women are the part of feminism, (4). It is also defined as the group of person who wants to bring change in the attitude of men and in the norms of society towards women . It is also called a culture in which females are treated different from men . This culture is prevalent in Pakistan . In the mind of every person , there is not respect in this regard . Men want their domination and there is not given any importance the views and opinions of women . But, now this tradition is being changed . There is needed to be aware of this reality that women are sensitive and serious when there is assigned a duty to them to perform . InamulHaq said a very beautiful saying about the mother ,

“When she is not reading, she is busy in writing letter, Forgetting her owns woes , worrying, inquiring about others, Always affectionate by nature , delicate as a flower “(5)

There is also defined it as the theory of social equality, political and economic of the sexes. It is an organized practice upon the interests and rights of women . Feminism deals only to the women section that includes all types of areas , sects and rights of women . They are dealt differently in the society . Keeping in views , this concept has been adopted to protect the rights of them.(6)

ASPECTS OF FEMINISM

There are many aspects of feminism . All social movements for the protection of women rights follow and focus an aspect upon which they develop their agenda. MaryWollstonecraft presented a first expression of equalizing the rights .(7) . All movements that have been organized socially seek only the equality of rights of women . Seneca convention held in Seneca in Toronto also demanded women's full equality of rights with men. They focused the aspect of education and compensation.(8). With the passage of time , Different aspects of Feminism aroused that gave proper awareness to women to achieve their rights at the equal level of men at all areas of life. This is the result of such notions , conventions and awareness that today women know much about their rights .When women gained the rights of voting at first time ,they faced much resistance in 1918 . Then , by the mid of this century , there was permission a limited participation of women in workplace . But , in twenty century ,there arose an effective campaign of women to have equal rights in all areas of life without considering the educational status , race ,religion and sexual preferences. That approved much effective and took the world around itself , All movement of women liberation referred it very strongly.

FEMINISM IN ISLAM

Women played a crucial role in ISLAM that refers to the equality of Muslims without keeping in view private life , personal life, public life and gender . This is the basic point in Islamic ideology to give equal rights to all socially, politically and educationally . there is not any discrimination in this context .(9). In the religion of ISLAM , there is given much stress upon the equality of rights and teaching of equality . HOLY QURAN and HADITH are the proof of it. Every saying of ISLAMIC teachings is the representative of the

equality of rights. (10). Muslim countries also produced female prime minister and states' heads. Examples are ShiekhHaseena of BangladashBenazir Bhutto of Pakistan and in turkey , there is Tansu Ciller(22nd Prime Minister of Turkey) etc. Islamic Feminism is based upon ISLAMIC believes and trends that give protection to all Muslims regardless of gender. Even in marriage ,there is necessary to have the female\ bride consent. Without bride's permission , there is not allowed to get marriage . there is also kept a part for females in property and in every phase of life, there is given importance to the equality of rights without considering the gender.(11).

There have been gives strong arguments to prove the equality and autonomy to woman in all areas of life. There was a medieval philosopher named lbne Arai that gave an argument that like males, females can also meet the climax of spirituality. It depends upon their sincerity and true effort. (12). In twelfth and thirteen centuries, twenty six females provided funds for twenty six mosques out of 160. There was the Waqf system though which the funds were provided. There were half female royal patrons of these and involved in a wide range.(14). Secondary and primary sectors were developed by the participation of women . They stood shoulder with men in reference of economic activities.(15). In all cases either that is related to marriages ,rights ,property and education ,ISLAM has given protection to women .All rules gives protection to women ,Europe also adopted ISLAMIC principles and implemented . But , that could not manage it .So, their women have given favour to ISLAM.

BLACK FEMINISM

Black feminism refers the discrimination with black women by white women based upon race and class. Black women oppressed by them in every walk of life. They started to feel inferiority complex. But , there was no one who consoled them. The unequal behave and attitude procoked some logical women to raise voice for their rights at equal level regardless race, social injustice and imbalance of rights. These were the women who arouse an important aspect of Feminism to protect the rights of black women. Alice Walker and her follower said that the black women faced a lot of oppression by the white women. They started to think that they were the

most oppressed and ignored women bases upon class and race.(16). There was also a great scholar women named Patrica Hill Collins who defined the black Feminism. She said that all views that had been given by the black women of ordinary class based upon their experiences about bad treatment with them by the white women in all areas of life were called black feminism. They had given unique angle on their self and their society.(17). Black women faced many difficulties by their own black nationalists and from white women. The organization proved and declared that white women were not b fixed for Feminism and Feminism was not fixed for white women only. They are not unique to others. All are human beings. Then, why were there kept preferences for they. There also ran red blood in us as in their vein.(18) National balck feminist organization is a well knownorganization. It was founded and introduced in 1973. It focused upon classism and racism faced by the African and American African women. It organized all blackish women to demand their rights and equal treatment in all inferences of life . It got success . As the women started to realize their rights , they started to feel relaxation,(19). Men of that society did not use their mind. They just followed the footsteps of white women. Then ,there aroused political movements of black women to have equalled rights and position in the mid of 20th century. They gave slogan that all women were treated inequality being poor once s, black ones especially black American women , Indian women and Puerto women etc.(20). But , basic teachings of ISLAM are to provide equal rights to all one s regardless of race, cast and status .it gives respect to all being human beings.

FEMINISM AND SOCIAL AND LEGAL INEQUALITIES

Middle class women were the leaders of this movement In 1928. They aroused voice for social and legal equalities. Already there was raised voice against in justice and prejudices against lower level women. But, this movement focused only to areas of Feminism that were related to society and rules and regulations. It was started in UK. They proclaimed that educational opportunities for middle class women are much less. They were put behind consciously. For this reasons, they are unable to have job and status in society. All laws were protecting rich women, but no one

was thinking for middle class ladies. There was not made laws for such women. The output was that there was not skill in them. They remained much behind as it was compared to other women. These were the ladies whose efforts brought fruits and there were made rules for their higher education.(21).There were widened professions for them and access was made easy. Secondary schools for girls were made . There were introduced rights for married women that were recognized in Act of 1870. Divorced women were also granted rights.

At last middle women achieved rights of voting in 1928. French women also followed them and started efforts for their rights. But, even since, they discriminated when there are available jobs(22). All movements are following the principles of ISLAM that protects women much as men. Because of these ISLAMIC principles and teachings, a large number of women started to convert their religion. This is the greatest success and glory of ISLAM that it is spreading speedily for protecting all ones considering them as human beings.

CONSCIOUS FEMINISM

At small local level, there were made discussion groups of female to give awareness of present facts. These groups gave them awareness of private and public problems of women to women. They were told about the exploitation of their rights and about oppressed women they , put before government for demands in 1870 at OXFORD. First demand was equal education , equal pay as men and free abortion at demand and children care by government throughout the day of working women(23). These groups gained . But there is still a sense of deprivation in women. They are not protected. They are used and abused (24). Anyhow , the struggle is still continued .

LIBERAL FEMINISM

Liberal Feminism always focuses upon the difference between personal and public life. It says that there must be freedom personally, any women do anything. They must not be stopped (25). They must be supported for this . But, their personal deeds and acts will not break the national rules. It focused upon individual freedom and liberty.

DIFFERENCE FEMINISM

This is the blend of culture influence. They adopted the doctrine of essentialism means women and men are different

biologically. There are found psychological differences in them. Women are more sensitive as compared to men. They are cooperative. But, men are aggressive and violent. So, women should try get liberty and should feel pleasure to be different for men. This gives preference to liberal culture for women where there must not be interference of any one either that is male or female. Both men and women should show best practices for each other. They should adopt positive behaviour at all places (26). Women are treated considering them a low creature. This gives stress that women must process their natural characteristics at any cost.

EGALITARIAN FEMINISM

This aspect of Feminism in the pure form of liberal Feminism that stress upon to be liberal in all rights without any restriction. This believes that nobody can interfere in their matters all rights except rules. Both sexes male and female are equal at all places. They are free to perform their duties and enjoy their lives.

There are many aspects of Feminism that the equality on women in rights regardless status and race. All other aspects of Feminism have same philosophy. As there is another form of Feminism called radical Feminism that is the part of liberal Feminism. Inequalities create disturbance in social order. Same is the case with younger Feminism that focuses the young ladies and girls to provoke them to have their equal rights. Therefore, It has been focused considering this study as the need of hour.

ELEMENT FEMINISM

There are two elements of Feminism that are discussed nationally and internationally. Both elements have their followers. The first element is called descriptive and other is called normative Feminism.

DISCRIPTIVE FEMINISM

This element focuses upon "How Women Are" How are they treated and viewed? Are they treated at equal level considering the written standards of justice? This component gives sense to women about their rights(27). It gives much awareness to women of maltreated of society, men and government. They are not treated at equal level currently as

there is dealt to men. This norm prepared to women to have their rights at equal level.

NORMATIVE FEMINISM

This element refers to the philosophy of how females should be treated . How are they viewed? Either they are given justice or not. They have their moral position or not. Both gender men and women have been made for equal treatment(28) . There must not be any discrimination in respect of granting them equal rights. Both deserve the respect in spheres of life. Nobody can be discrimination from each other. This element gave much sense about women's rights to which they deserved.

FEMINISM AND ETHICS

There have been adopted ethics to have and demands the equal rights for women. Ethics is belief to not go beyond the demand and to be in set bounds demands and movements . Ethics are the basic perspectives of feminist which they have adopted to demand women rights . Here is not given any importance to personal matters of life. Here is decided to not to be violent while demanding their rights and social justice. Emotions will be kept very calm and cool. No attack will be made upon public property . There will be adopted the process of dialogues with authorities to have justice . All members will trust to their leaders. Equal treatment and positives behaviour will be adopted for all other . All members will create a unique relationship with each other based upon trust and love . There is believed that demands of different women will be heard and according to them, the policy will be made for demanding their protection and rights. This is the societies' transformation toward those areas where there is done injustice to women, where there they are oppressed. Where there is done violence upon them. They will raise their voices to eradicate injustice with women in all areas of life. This has been developed upon women's ethical experiences. Manifestation of positive attitude and behaviour toward others is the crucial part of feminism to meet equal rights regardless race, status, social status and different types of complexes.

Person means not a person, but a relation in God. Relation promotes society, love and care of each other. There is not

considered the God's creatures. Only the creatures of God spread love and knowledge. So, there must not be adopted a discriminative behaviour with His creature.(29)

FEMINISM AND CULTURE

Culture is not supportive to women in other religion except of Islam. They are dealt keeping in view gender and sex. Gender mean to deal them socially and culturally. Sex is taken as biological fact. Sexually, women are thought first in other religion without bounding any legal relationship. They are not regarded a prestigious figure on earth in western and European religion , civilization and culture. Sexually they are considered as a tool of sexual satisfaction. When, there is talked socially, they are also put at lower level and are not give equal rights. There is considered color, race, white women, black women and social status. But , it is not in Islam. It gives equal rights and protection to all regardless gender. There is a culture of oppression of women internationally. Some countries adopted the view that is women are agree to do sex, then, nobody can stop them even their parents cannot stop them. There is given a title of liberty to them. But, now, this culture is going to change. There is going to be adopted the culture of their protection from prejudices and injustice. They are given rights at all places.(30)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objectives of the study are given as under:

To study the current status of Feminism in Pakistan

To see the role of NGOs in Feminism in Pakistan

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Feminism is a very hot topic as proven by the history. The war of rights to women continued in all ages. In every age, men thought their selves as a supreme figure and did not allow to any apposite figure before them. They took women just a tool of satisfaction And neverth else. Women's rights where exploited by them . They were treated as slaves . They were discriminated upon the base of race, color and cast. They were looked down upon. In every pace of life, they were considered inferior as compared to men. They were not provided equal rights, position and status as men. They were maltreated in all paces and areas of life. In the contest of

Pakistan, there has not been studied upon this topic. This is first study that will prove a guideline for future researchers.(31) Only NGOs raised voice for them, but properly, this topic has not been taken as a research. So, this study is a distinguished and very important study nationally and internationally to aware the government and women to protected themselves and their rights .

Feminism's focus is upon making the females equal to men socially. It give them the spirit of confidence. It wants to make them powerful by giving them equal rights and by awareness other rights . when there is talked about Marxist feminism, liberal and radical feminism, there is know that all these three types also focus upon the same point and object to protected the women. Marxists says that society is not getting benefits of women because of understanding them a inferior creature. While the followers of radical feminism say that the society is dominant by males . media is also helping them. Forcing women to perform their domestic responsibilities that are not fair. But, liberal feminists say that women are getting awareness in regards of their rights and protection. Media is playing very effective role in this regards. All are discussing about the equality of rights in regards of women. They can lead a successful life when they get equal rights in premises of life. The topic feminism tells them about all their hidden and unhidden aspects of rights. This study gives them an insight to sue their rights and lead a life without feeling a inferiority complex.(32)

Feminism is the name of giving awareness of equal opportunities to women. It is the gaining of rights at equal level. It empowers to them to live with satisfaction. Women are people as there are said by the radical Feminist. So, they deserve to be treated at equal level. Whenever, there is talked about Feminism , it means freedom to women as men. Women did not know about it. But the tyrannical and superior complex of men forced them to think about it. When they thought , they achieved what they demanded at giving precious sacrifices . From here , there were introduced two terms of patriarchy and matriarchy. Firstly refers to the domination of men. Secondly presents the domination of women. this was the topic that changed the thinking of men

and rulers . This is the worth of the topic that equalized the people of society and gave the sense of freedom and equal rights to women . This is the topic that made the women powerful. There are being making rules of women rights in all phased of life only after getting the inspiration from the topic.(33)

There was the time when there aroused hate against feminists . They started to hate them being hairy. They started to complain against women for raising their voices for their rights. (34)But there were the feminists those protected women at all level and places. Feminism reduces the women harassment at work places. It gave them sense of equal rights in society regardless of cast, colour and race . This is the importance of this topic that today women are enjoying equal rights and social freedom. ISLAM always protected women and gave them equal rights. ISLAM put their share in property , their consensus in marriage and gave them rights to rule as a leader. It gave them rights in all paces of life without any discrimination(35). All other countries followed the ISLAM in this respect and then there were started different movements for the freedom of women and for their equal rights.(36) In short , this study will an asset for coming researches. There were not done enough researches in this regard except the surveys of different NGOs that followed by the government.(37) This research will be a worthy addition in this respect from which future researches will get insight for more researches in this area.(38)

REFERENCES & NOTES

1. *Human Development Report: Sustainability and Equity* . United Nations Development Programme. 2011, p. 139
2. Kramarae, Cheri; Spender Dale, *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women : Global Women's and Knowledge* , New York : Routledge , 2000 p.746
3. Autumn and Taylor, Verta, and Leila Verta : *Women's Culture and Lesbian Feminist Activism :a Reconsideration of Cultural Feminism* , The university of Chicago Press, 2006 , pp. 139-140
4. A journal of poetry : *Inspiration* , Quaid-e-Azam Library Publication , Lahore , 1988 , pp. 1-5
5. Mary Wolstonecraft : *A Vindication of Rights* , Peomore press , London,1792, pp. 35-39

6. Elizabeth et.al : *Seneca Convention* , Washington ,1848, pp. 19-22
7. *International Congress on Islamic Feminism: Madrid, Spain* , 2007.
8. Hakim, Souad : *IbnArabi's Twofold Perception of Woman: Woman as Human Being and Cosmic Principle*, Arabi Society , Moorish, Spain ,pp. 1-29
9. Lindsay , James e : *Daily Life in the Madieval Islamic World*, Greenwood Publishing Group, US ,2005 , p.197
10. Maya Shatzmiller : *Labour in the Medievel Islamic World*, Brill Publishers, Netherland , 1994, pp. 400-1
11. Guity Nashat , Lois Beck : *Women in Iran from the Rise of ISLAM to 1800* , University of Illinois Press ,US , 2003 ,p.69
12. Walker, Alice : *In Search of Ore mothers' Gardens*, Phoenix press , US , 2005 , pp. 50-55
13. Burns, Stewart : *Living for the Revolution* , Black Feminist organization , journal of American History, 2006.
14. Robbie McCauley by Alex Schwall : *But Some of Us Are Brave ;A history of Black Feminism in the United States ; Interview With* ,2004 , pp. 70-73
15. Weather, Mary Ann : *An Argument For Black Women's Liberation As a revolutionary Force* ,Cambridge University press, England, 1969, pp.20-25
16. Cliff, Michelle: *Women Warriors*, USA , 1960, pp. 29-31
17. Smith, Barbara: *The Reader's Companion to U.S Women's History*, Houghton Mifflin, US, 1998 ,p. 337
18. Juan Jose Battle , Michael Bennett , Anthony j, Lemmelle : *Free at Last ? Black America in the Twenty –First Century* , Transaction Publisher, USA ,2006 , p. 55
19. Angela Davis : *Women Race and Class* , 1981, pp. 7-10
20. Alexander , M. Jacqui and Lisa Albreht : *The Third Wave*, New York, 2003, pp. 91-95
21. Anderson ,Elizabeth : 'What is the Point of Equality ?'Princeton University Press,US,1999, pp. 287-310
22. Tong , R . and Williams N : *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy , Feminist Ethics* , First published ,1998, pp. 13-19
23. Kohlberg, L : *Essays on Moral Development* , Routlege, New York, 1984, pp. 20-25
24. Rawls J: *Justice as Fairness* ,Belknap Press, 2001, pp. 30-35
25. Blain, Virgina : Clement , Patrica ; Grundy , Isobel: *The Feminist Companion to Literature in English* , New Haven, Yale University Press, 1990, pp. 12-31

26. Gerhard ,Jane F : *Second-Wave Feminism*,Routlege, New York, 2001,pp. 1-5
27. Baumgardner : *Jennifer and Amy Richard, Young Women Feminism , and the Future* , Routlege ,New York , 2000 , pp. 10-14
28. Beauvoir , Simone de :*The Second Sex* , Routlege ,New York , 1974, pp. 2-8
29. Benhabib ,Seyla : *Situating the Self Gender* , New York University Press , 1992 , pp. 21-24
30. Bergmann , Barbara : *The Economic Emergence of Women* , New YorkUniversity Press , 2002 , pp. 45-50
31. Azad ,Abul-Klam , Maulana,*MuslimanAurat* ,Maktabalt-ul-Quraish , Lahore , 1993 .
32. ArshadRazi , (translator) , *Aurat, MardaurTareekh, Nigarshat* , Lahore 2002.
33. Israr Ahmad , Doctor, *Islam Mein AuratKaMukam*, Anjuman-e-khuddam-al-Quran, Lahore, 1987.
34. Islahi, Sultan Ahmad, *Islam kaNazarya-e-Jinss*, Alfaisal, Lahore , 1995.
35. Monthly- Tarjuman-ul-Quran , Lahore .
36. “Taqdees-e-Niswan Number “ Pukarat-e-Millat, Lahore.
37. World wide Events , English , Lahore , 2011.
38. Daily NaiBaat , English , Lahore , 2011.
