

# Gender Studies

## Feminist Movements

The historical development of feminism (especially in Britain and the USA) is commonly divided into several key periods. They are characterised by a relative absence of feminist thought and mobilisation, and others by the sustained growth both of feminist criticism and of activism with a high public profile. The apparent pattern of rise and fall of feminism over time has led to the 'wave' analogy.<sup>1</sup>

The wave analogy developed along with the resurgence of feminism in the 1960s, which had been immediately preceded by a period of relative dormancy. A distinction was drawn between the resurgent feminism dating from the 1960s and an earlier period of similarly prolific, high profile feminist analyses and political activism. The earlier period (dating from at least the mid to late nineteenth century up until about the 1920s), became 'first wave' feminism. In turn, the resurgent feminist analyses and activism dating from the 1960s became 'second wave' feminism.

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<sup>1</sup> The peaks and troughs of the feminist movement are characterised as following the motion of tidal water. It has an ongoing cycle of gradual swelling, eventual cresting and final subsiding.

# I. First Wave of Feminism

## I. What influenced the first wave<sup>2</sup>?

The period of first wave of feminism was politically influenced from the French Revolution of 1789 in which demands for the rights of women were first made. The first feminist treatise was also influenced by this event written by Mary Wollstonecraft titled *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792).

It was a direct result of the change in the social structure by Industrialisation. Constitutional rights were being provided to the wider sections of the male which were denied to females.

## II. When did it begin and what was its purpose?

- First wave feminism (in Britain and the USA) is most often dated as occurring between c.1880s and the 1920s.
- It's principal concern was women's attainment of equality with men by securing legislative change.
- In USA it began with the Seneca falls Convention (1848) organised by Elizabeth Caddy Stanton. It was the first woman's rights convention. The declaration of sentiments of Seneca falls demanded;
  - Right to vote (also called Suffrag)e
  - Right to own land
  - Right to education
  - Right to employment

## III. What are the three strands of first wave feminism?

- The tradition of 'equal rights' feminism.
- 'Evangelical' feminism developed from religious evangelical movements. Aimed to protect and morally reform those less fortunate people, such as working class women, 'fallen' women, children and the poor.
- 'Socialist feminism'. It was concerned with social and legal reform. It questioned current forms of marriage and the family and advocated the collectivisation of child care and housework. By the early twentieth century, the question of the suffrage was the most important part of it.

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<sup>2</sup> Name coined by Martha Lear in The New York Magazine in March 1968

**IV. Progression of feminist thought:**

- 1840's Feminist ideas were spread among the middle class
- 1850's It became an organised movement. Began with the Langham Place group that demanded education rights, employment rights and improved legal rights for married women.<sup>3</sup>
- Mid - 1860's The suffrage movement<sup>4</sup> began

**V. Suffrage movement:**

- Began in 1860's
- Early 20th century it was the predominant concern and public campaigning focused on it. (Overwhelming support from all feminists as believed to put equality of females on legislative agenda)
- Due to difference in tactics two societies were formed;
  - The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies formed in 1897, with Millicent Fawcett as the President, consisting of mainly well-connected middle-class women.
  - The Women's Social and Political Union formed in 1903, by the Pankhurst sisters. It employed more militant tactics. Resultantly thousands of suffragettes were imprisoned; many went on hunger strike and were subjected to force feeding.
- The outbreak of World War One in 1914 ended militant activities of the suffragettes and diversified over whether to support war or be pacifists.
- The war itself broke down many traditionally held views about women. Women joined the labour force as replacements for the absent men. So the end of WWI led to expectations for change in many spheres of life.
- In 1918, the Representation of the People Act allowed the right to vote for all men over 21 and women over 30 who were householders, or the wives of householders or had been to university.

**VI. Who else contributed to the movement?**

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<sup>3</sup>Focus shifted to public patriarchy from private patriarchy because of focus on the struggle for vote, access to education and professions as well as legal right of property ownership and better rights for marriage and divorce.

<sup>4</sup> Movement for the right to vote

- The black Rights Movement (1850 onwards) [The abolitionist movement was at it's peak in USA ]
  - The progressive era (1890)
- VII. **Liberal feminists played an important role by writing articles, holding conventions etc.**
- VIII. **In 1900 women were given the right to vote in New Zealand and in 1893 women were given right to vote in Australia.**
- IX. **Affected the US constitution as 19th Amendment in 1920 gave females the right to vote.**
- X. **Notable feminists:**
1. **Alice Paul:** She campaigned for the 19th Amendment and introduced militant tactics to the movement. She was the leader of National Woman's Party. Organised 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession. "I always feel the movement is sort of a mosaic. Each of us puts in one little stone and in the end you will get a giant mosaic"
  2. **Francis Harper:** She was an African American Abolitionist and suffragist. She campaigned for sexual and racial equality as well as the federal government's responsibility to protect rights, regulate morality and promote social welfare. "No race can afford to neglect the enlightenment of it's mothers"

## II. Second Wave of Feminism

- I. It began in the late 1960's. This is when the concept of waves of feminism was introduced. As Mary Evans reflects, 'if every generation has to **re-invent** the wheel – or tends to believe that it has **just invented** the wheel – so feminism in the West in the 1960s and 1970s took some time before it **recognized its history** and the **longevity of the struggle** that it represented'<sup>5</sup>
- II. They lobbied for liberation from oppressive patriarchal society. As suffrage did not lead to equality, the focus of second wave feminists was on the representation of the female body, the meanings attached to it and the biological difference between it and the male body.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Please focus on the words in italics which are highlighted. This is the essence of the saying.

<sup>6</sup> 'One is not born, but rather becomes a woman' - Simone de Beauvoir

Gender differences are socially constructed so ideological opposition of women needs to be focused on.

III. **Notable advocates and their works:**

A. **Simone de Beauvoir:**

*The Second Sex* is a 1949 book written by de Beauvoir. has two major premises. Here are two important components of this book.

First, that man, considering himself as the essential being, or subject, has treated women as the unessential being, or object. The second is that much of woman's psychological self is socially constructed, with very few physiologically rooted feminine qualities or values.

De Beauvoir denies the existence of a feminine temperament or nature—to her, all notions of femininity are artificial concepts

B. **Betty Friedan:**

She wrote '*The Feminine Mystique*' published in 1963 according to which an idealized image of domestic womanhood, which is the feminine mystique, had created an identity crisis among American women. It was reinforced by media, education and academic theories.

"The Feminine Mystique has succeeded in burying millions of American women alive"

- IV. Major works focused on how cultural and social marginalisation of women has been occurring throughout history. It also focused on enormous social change making the existing social structures absurd due to their inherent patriarchy. How the social change will take place was a bone of contention and so it divided the feminists in to marxists, liberal and radical feminists.
- V. Major supporters were from the New Left and civil rights political movement and they tried to raise consciousness through demonstrations and direct actions making their movement more dominant in the public. They raise issues of social and economic injustice such as the glass ceiling<sup>7</sup>, wage gap and commercialization of female bodies<sup>8</sup>. It allied itself with the anti-Vietnam war movement as well.

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<sup>7</sup> This is an unacknowledged barrier to advancement in a profession, especially affecting women and members of minorities.

<sup>8</sup> Exploiting the female body to sell products

VI. Allowed the inclusion of LGBT groups as well as women of color and working class women.

**VII. Objectives:**

- A. Sexual Freedom (Reproductive rights and right to abortion)
- B. Inrersexualisation (Legalising and ensuring rights to LGBT community and safety and equal opportunity to them)
- C. Equality (Overcome gender based discrimination)
- D. Empowerment of women
- E. Integration of women into the workforce
- F. Equal funding to women from banks.

**VIII. Impacts:**

- A. Led to a mass realisation of gender inequality. First World Conference on Women held by UNO in Mexico City in 1975.
- B. Global network of feminist ideology and feminists emerged after the conference which was spread through the phenomenon of globalization.
- C. First accredited Women's Studies course was introduced in 1969 at Cornell and in 1990's the subject was widened to "Gender Studies".
- D. Led to campaigning for female rights in international forums.

### **III. Third Wave of Feminism**

- A. It is the feminism of a younger generation of women who acknowledge the legacy of the second wave of feminism. However it also identifies its limitations such as the fact that it remained too white and middle class oriented and that it made ordinary women feel guilty for enjoying self expression.<sup>9</sup>They also believe that the conditions of second wave feminism no longer exist so it does not resonate with today's women. They are mainly young and university educated women who are sceptical of the concepts of sisterhood and identity.
- B. It emerged in mid 1990s. Some adherents were actual daughters of the second wavers. The Third Wave Foundation which supports "groups and individuals working towards gender, racial, economic, and social justice"; was founded by Rebecca Walker, along with others, who was

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<sup>9</sup> Such as cosmetics, fashion, pornography etc.

the daughter of Alice Walker. The term Third wave is also accredited to her when she published her article "I am the Third Wave" in 1992.

- C. "Feminism aims to end domination, to free us to be who we are- to live lives where we love justice, where we can live in peace. Feminism is for everybody."-Alice Walker
- D. This wave focuses on queer and non white women. It believes that all ideas and concepts are socially constructed including masculism and that everyone should be treated equally. Culture is an important factor as well and productions such as Vagina Monologues help change the course of feminism. Race is also a social construction.
- E. Riot grrrl was thought by some to be the beginning of third-wave feminism. This was a movement based on hard core punk rock that talked about issues like rape, patriarchy, sexuality, women empowerment, and other feminist issues.
- F. Third-wave feminists such as Elle Green often focus on "micro-politics", and challenge the second wave's paradigm as to what is, or is not, good for women.
- G. Proponents of third-wave feminism claim that it allows women to define feminism for themselves by incorporating their own identities into the belief system of what feminism is and what it can become through one's own perspective.
- H. Reclaim derogatory terms such as bitch, spinster, slut etc. Bitch was reclaimed in the 1999 book *Bitch: In Praise of Difficult Women* by Elizabeth Wurtzel.
- I. The utility of the reclamation strategy has been a hot topic among third-wave feminists with the introduction of SlutWalks. The first SlutWalk took place in Toronto on April 3, 2011 in response to Toronto police officer Michael Sanguinetti's statement that "women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimized." The belief is that if victimized women are sluts, then all women must be sluts as well, since anyone can be victimized regardless of what they are wearing.

## **IV. United Nations Conferences on Women**

The United Nations has organized four world conferences on women. These took place in Mexico City in 1975, Copenhagen in 1980, Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing in 1995, which was followed by a series of five-year reviews. 1975-1985 was termed as the women decade.

The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing marked a significant turning point for the global agenda for gender equality. The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, adopted unanimously by 189 countries, is an agenda for women's empowerment and considered the key global policy document on gender equality. It sets strategic objectives and actions for the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality in 12 critical areas of concern:

- Women and poverty
- Education and training of women
- Women and health
- Violence against women
- Women and armed conflict
- Women and the economy
- Women in power and decision-making
- Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women
- Human rights of women
- Women and the media
- Women and the environment
- The girl-child

The Beijing conference built on political agreements reached at the three previous global conferences on women, and consolidated five decades of legal advances aimed at securing the equality of women with men in law and in practice. More than 17,000 participants attended, including 6,000 government delegates at the negotiations, along with more than 4,000 accredited NGO representatives, a host of international civil servants and around 4,000 media representatives. A parallel NGO Forum held in Huairou near Beijing also drew some 30,000 participants.

## **V. Feminist Movements in Pakistan**

### **1. Modern Islamic Feminists in Pakistan:**

They seek to further women's rights by redefining Islamic values and focusing on female centric laws. This school of thought appeals to the upper and lower middle classes which consider religion as the key to their answers. They re-interpret Islamic injunctions as they believe they are taken out of context.

- a) Riffat Hussain
- b) Amina Badoo
- c) Asma Barlas



2. Secular Feminists:

Feminism is an extension of basic Human Rights so they are not concerned with religious connotations.

- a) Fauzia Saeed
- b) Shehnaz Roz

## Timeline of feminist Movements in Pakistan

### **Colonial Rule:**

Between the years 1886 to 1917, ideas regarding women's roles and status in society were transformed among Muslim communities in India. The first women's organization was born due to the efforts of Sir Muhammad Shafi.

In 1908, the Anjuman-e-Khawateen-e-Islam was founded in Lahore for the promotion of the rights of women in Islam.

### **Rise of anti colonialism:**

In 1915, the first All-India Muslim Ladies conference was attended by a few select women from among the elite. In the First Roundtable Conference in 1930-31 a memorandum was presented by Jahanara Shahnawaz, demanding rights for all, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex. The Government of India Act of 1935 enfranchised six million women and, for the first time, reserved seats for women were allocated.

### **Independence:**

The first legislature of Pakistan had two women representatives, Jahanara Shahnawaz and Shaista Ikramullah.

The Prime Minister's wife, Ra'ana Liaquat Ali, was the most outstanding woman who formed a large number of women's organizations and attended to many different areas that affect women, especially welfare and legal reform. In 1948, she started the Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) and in 1949 with their guidance in Karachi the All-Pakistan Women's Association (APWA)

### **Field Marshall Ayub Khan:**

In 1961 The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance (MFLO) was passed. It gave women a few rights with regard to marriage, the custody of children, divorce and registration of marriages and divorces. It was passed as a result of APWA's efforts

### **Zulfikar Ali Bhutto:**

The 1973 Constitution gave more rights to women than in the past.

- Article 25 of rights declared that every citizen was equal before law.
- Article 25 (2) said there would be no discrimination based on sex alone.
- Article 27 of fundamental stated that there would be no discrimination on the basis of race, religion, caste or sex for appointment in the service of Pakistan.

- Article 32 of the Basic Principles of State Policy guaranteed reservation of seats for women,
- Article 35 stipulated that the state shall protect marriage, family and mother and child

The PPP set up a Women's Wing under Nusrat Bhutto. 5% seats for women in PA and 10% in NA.

### **Zia-ul-Haq:**

Hudood Ordinance led to activism by women. In 1981, a group of women met in Shirkat Gah Karachi and formed the Women Action Forum (WAF). In 1982 launched the Dopatta jalao movement in Lahore.

In 1982 the Fehmida and Allah Bux case, filed under the Zina Ordinance (one of the five Hudood Ordinances) motivated women to protect and preserve the few rights they had achieved in the two previous decades.<sup>10</sup>

The Zina Ordinance of 1979 conflated adultery with rape and erased the distinction between them. This law made it virtually impossible to prove rape and, upon failure to prove it, the woman was transformed into the culprit while the rapist went scot-free.

In 1983 Pakistan Women Lawyer marched to High Court with WAF members to protest the Law of Evidence and they were tear gassed and baton charged. In a short span of time, there were chapters in Lahore, Islamabad and Peshawar. For the next decade, WAF became the face of the women's movement in Pakistan.

Kishwar Naheed's Hum Gunahgar Aurtain (We Sinful Women) and Fehmida Riaz's poem Chaadar Aur Chaardivari (the veil and four walls) became anthems for the movement.

In the 1990s there was a mushroom growth of NGOs working on various issues. A large number of NGOs on women's rights were created including Rozan, Bedari, Aurat Foundation among others

### **Benazir Era:**

During Benazir Bhutto's two stints in government (1988-1990 and 1993-1996) some women-friendly measures were taken such as the setting up of Women's Studies Centers in various public sector universities. Furthermore, the First Women Bank was established. Separate women's police stations were set up.

In 1995 Benazir Bhutto represented Pakistan at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing which led to Pakistan acceding to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). But she was hampered from bringing about meaningful change by the patriarchy

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<sup>10</sup> In this case Allah Bux had married Fehmida against the wishes of her family and he was punished with 100 lashes on the charge of adultery.

### **Musharaff Era:**

In the local government, female representation was a historic 33% while 17.5% seats were reserved for women in the provincial and national assemblies.

The National Commission on the Status of Women was constituted as a statutory body in 2000. In 2002-2003, the Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAP) proposed a coherent gender reform to enable governments to implement national and international promises on gender equality.

In 2006, the Women Protection Act was passed and the crime of rape was taken out of Hadd (maximum) punishment and placed in Taazir in Pakistan's Criminal Procedure Code. Rape would now be investigated in the manner done in other countries and the conflation between rape and adultery would end.

The General, while referring to Mukhtaran Mai's gang rape case, remarked that Pakistani women get raped in order to go abroad and get millions of dollars, this led to widespread criticism.

### **Zardari Era:**

In April 2009, a video of a 17 year old girl, Chand Bibi, accused of illicit relations with a neighbor, surfaced in which she was publicly flogged by the Taliban for allegedly transgressing moral norms devised by them in the name of religion. She was subsequently forcibly married off to the man who had entered her house to fix an electrical problem. In

2012, Malala Yousafzai was shot in Swat for claiming her right to education.

Zardari Introduced Anti-Acid Attacks law and Protection of women from sexual harassment at the workplace Bill. Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy's documentary on Acid victims was an impetus in introducing the law against Acid Attacks and her documentary "A Girl in the river" on Honor killing helped close the lacuna in honor killing laws.

World Economic Forum's report on Global Gender Gap highlighted four key issues;

- Violence
- Access to Education
- Participation in Politics
- Availability of health facilities.
- Pakistan ranked 143/144 countries.