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FEMINISM: WOMEN AND WORK

Dr. Bibha Hazarika

Assistant Professor, Department of Assamese Telahi Tuwaram Nath College Khaga Kanakpur.
Assam-787052, India.

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Abstract

Women's work is a very important topic in discussions about women's rights and social status. A woman does not depend solely on men without doing anything, yet society does not want to determine the social value of women's work. Society believes that women are unemployed. In fact, women spend most of their time doing household chores, raising children and carrying the responsibility of a household. Society may not include family work as work because these activities do not contribute to the household income. In addition, women who have come out of the household to pursue higher education or are employed are sometimes ridiculed by society. Women face various problems in the workplace – gender division of labour, lack of motivation to engage in public works, balance between family and work, equality of work. They face various challenges such as prices, economic gaps, racism, motherhood and women's careers, and gender bias. Feminism speaks out about these issues and finds solutions to women's problems.

Feminism developed in the liberal democratic political environment of the West, mainly inspired by Western individual freedom and democracy. Feminism originated in the 19th century. Initially, feminist thought took root in France. Mary Allston Craft -Vindication Rights of the Women, Simonda Bivovir's Women in the Sex clarified the concept of feminism. Different types of feminism-- liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, extremist feminism, socialist feminism, environmental feminism-- analyze the ages with feminist thought. Among them, socialist women say that as long as women are dependent on men in all aspects, there will be violence against women in society, so it is very important for women to be self-reliant. Our paper attempts to analyze women's works with feminist thought.



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1.INTRODUCTION

Feminism originated in the 19th century. It emerged in the interest of women to assert their rights. When we talk about women's rights, we talk about women's work. Women are mostly busy maintaining the household. This is a masculine tradition. The work that women have done since the past has not been given social importance and dignity. Women are told that they are only able to do household chores well. Their works have not been given job status because their works are not income generating. There is a strong belief about women's work efficiency that women cannot do heavy, important and complex tasks. These perceptions prevent women from performing social activities. According to society, the most important job of a woman is to take care of the household and give birth to children. These activities do not contribute to the income of a household and so no attention was paid to them by the society. Since the past, women have helped men in household chores including agriculture. The Industrial Revolution of the early 19th century brought about a dramatic change in the way work was done in Western European countries, and women became partners in this revolution. Women went out to work in the carpet, textile industry.

Our paper discusses the societal policies that exclude women from such activities as well as how patriarchal societies have been keeping women under house arrest. States have taken various measures to ensure that women have equal rights to work with men. This is also discussed in this paper.

2. IMPORTANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of preparing this paper is to discuss women's right to work. According to the old tradition, women are busy only with the work of the household. Society makes sarcastic comments about women who have gone out to work. Therefore, it has become imperative to correct the irregularities of the society and speak up against them.

3. IMPORTANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Analytical method has been used in preparing this paper.

4. RECORDS OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Till date, lots of books have already discussed feminism, violence against women, sexual harassment, gender discrimination and inequality in gender socialization. Noted books on feminism in the English language are-- "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" by Mary Wollstonecraft, "Elements on Women in the History of Philosophy" and "Westminster Review" by Harriet Taylor Mill, "Ancient Society" by American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan and "The Second Sex" by Simone de Beauvoir. Prominent books published in the Assamese language focusing on feminism as theme are- "Asomiya Nari : Aitijya aru Uttaran" by Sivanath Burman, "Naribad" by Aparna Mahanta, "Naribad: Tatwa Aru Prayog" by Dr. Diganta Hatibarua and "Naribad Aru Asomiya Upanyas" by Dr. Govinda Prasad Sarmah. Our research paper focuses on study of the importance of women's work and problems.



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5. SCOPE OF STUDY OF THE PAPER

The scope of this research papers is narrow. The subject of the paper is women's work. Although women's work is not given priority in society, some women in society, despite suffering from many adverse circumstances greatly, have moved forward in the field of education due to the generous and liberal qualities of their parents. At present, women have been involved in administrative, management, vocational, technical, clerical, jobs etc. but their role in administrative system or decision making is negligible compared to men. Our paper discusses women's issues from a feminist perspective. The paper is prepared in this context by drawing on Indian women as example. Since feminism speaks out against violence against women, women's rights and relying on feminism, we must find solutions to the women's issues in today's society. Our research paper discusses the role of women in society as determined by society. The paper discusses the issues from the perspective of feminism.

6. FEMINISM AND WOMEN'S WORK

It is unfortunate that women in the 21st century are not free from social oppression, gender discrimination, patriarchy. The women who have been able to move forward amidst various problems have also been plagued by various superstitions and social injustices. Women today are not exempt from gender discrimination. Women have been active in their fields for centuries. Whether it is housewives or social workers, not everyone is dependent on men alone without contributing anything to society, but these activities of women are not considered important. Feminism has been speaking out about women's rights.

Types of feminism are discussed below:

1. Liberal Feminism

This feminism believes that women are oppressed and the causes of these are shaped within customs, traditions and legal systems.

2. Marxist Feminism

Marxist Feminism speaks out against the exploitation of women based on economics.

3. Extreme Feminism

It seeks to change the capitalist society by identifying the cause of the oppression of women.

4. Socialist Feminism

It believes that women will be free from oppression if they are self-reliant.

5. Ecological Feminism

It is a spiritual concept. This type of feminism has established a deep relationship between the environment and women. This type discusses men as collectors and nature and women as givers. This paper discusses the problems faced by women in the workplace from a feminist perspective.



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7. PROBLEMS OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE

Women have to fight against various problems in the workplace. Patriarchy violates women's rights. The problems faced by women at the workplace are discussed below:

➤ Gender Based Division of Labor:

Gender based division of labor is an obstacle to equal work rights for men and women. Society employs women to do household chores while men are given responsibility for public sector works as well as important tasks. Some women themselves have gone out against society and engaged in public works, jobs, etc., but have not been able to avoid household chores. Therefore, feminism strongly opposes to the gender based division of labor for advocating such differences.

➤ Lack of motivation to women workers:

Women's main responsibilities are to take care of the household and nurture the children. There is a belief that if women do jobs or public works, there will be no people to take care of the household. Therefore, women are instructed to ensure that men do not have any difficulty in earning money outside and to fulfill the needs of men. In such circumstances, many women resign from their jobs to take care of their children being unable to be free from household responsibilities.

➤ Imbalance between family and work:

A woman is responsible for all the household chores. Therefore, women are unable to go to work and do their jobs after doing the whole household chores and they face problems. Therefore, feminism demands that the household chores should be divided between men and women. Women are unable to earn money by doing all the household chores.

➤ Unequal Status of Work:

The social value of women's work is always low. Society places more emphasis on those jobs that earn money. Household chores are considered worthless as they do not contribute to the family income. Another issue is that women who want to leave their homes and enter the public sector are not considered suitable for work.

➤ Violence at Workplace:

An unexpected problem faced by women in the contemporary world is sexual harassment at the workplace. But it is not that women are lagging far behind. Now they are moving forward on par with men. Their names range from the first female president to the first astronaut, yet women have not escaped persecution. Sexual harassment of women in the workplace includes abuse, insults, obscene gestures, calls for sexual intercourse, showing offensive photos, bad comments, and calling them by nicknames.



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➤ **Economic Gap:**

It has been observed that men earn more than women. Women earn less than men. In some places, women are paid less. Mostly in the private sector, women are paid less and men more despite working equally.

➤ **Racial Discrimination:**

Women are also victims of exploitation on the basis of body colour, ethnic identity, language, etc. Racial and ethnic discrimination is another factor that hinders women from performing in the public sector. Even in the 21st century, there are surprising incidents of racism.

➤ **Motherhood and Women's Careers:**

Another important problem of women with regard to participation in the public sector is motherhood. Women's physical differences force them to participate more in child rearing than men. In addition to pregnancy related problems, breastfeeding is obligation to a woman after the birth of the child. The mother also has to spend time with her child for many years for other related matters. It is really challenging for women to focus on their careers at such times. Women are falling behind in the workplace due to the heavy responsibilities of motherhood.

➤ **Gender Bias:**

Gender bias in the workplace appears as an obstacle in front of the women with regard to working in the public sector. Gender bias is especially the outcome of the patriarchy community. As the impact of such societies, a patriarchal mentality is framed in the workplace too, and women employees are not considered to be as competent or capable of managing or leading a task.

➤ **Co-worker's Mentality:**

The workplace environment depends on the mentality of co-workers too. Many colleagues nurture a dirty mentality against women colleagues. The issue is more sensitive regarding unmarried or widowed women. Colleagues can put a woman in trouble in many ways, such as talking about personal issues that make fun of her, looking for other reasons behind her success, and so on.

8. SOME MEASURES FOR PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Various international organizations or countries have taken measures at various times to give women equal rights in the workplace:-

- I. Equal Remuneration Convention
- II. Discrimination (Employment and Occupation Convention, 2000)
- III. Maternity Protection Convention 2000
- IV. International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)



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V. Convention against Discrimination in Education.

9. CONCLUSION

Although women face various problems in the workplace due to various social gender stereotypes, most of the countries of the world as well as international organizations have enacted various laws to protect women. In many cases, the educated society has understood the problems of women and helped them with household chores despite the problems they face in the workplace. It is necessary to think about how to give justice to women from the grip of patriarchy. Women have the right to live on an equal basis with men. Therefore, society must understand the problem of women. If women's work is shared equally by all, it can be expected that it will help women to advance in the workplace.

10. AUTHOR(S) CONTRIBUTION

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11. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

12. PLAGIARISM POLICY

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