

WOMEN DEVELOPMENT AND FEMINISM**Neetu Singh Rai****Abstract**

The world has gone through numerous phases of development in the fields of science and technology, commerce, and economics. Some theories of feminist empowerment were developed through the course of history. Women in Development (WID), strategy regards women as contributing members of society. It addresses not only the household concerns of women but also recognises and supports women in increasing their capacity for productivity.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy This strategy, which gained popularity in the early 1970s, focuses on income and wealth disparity. It emphasises that poverty, which results from income and wealth disparity, is what causes women to be underdeveloped (Mose, 1993). Thus, the main goal of the Anti-Poverty approach was "poverty reduction" Snyder and Tadesse (1995) have stressed that income generation for women through better access to credit, land and other productive resources could reduce the poverty level and thereby help in emancipating women.

Women and Development (WAD), entered into development theory and practice as a result of criticisms against the WID approach. WAD approach is based on dependency theory and maintains that there exists a discrepant international structure which is characterized by class struggle and inequality. It considers that women had always been parts of production process, so there is no need to involve them with development process. It further believes that both men and women are equally affected by the existing system. According to this approach only when the international order becomes more equitable the condition of women could change. The WAD principle doesn't seek to address the biased gender roles and the resultant prejudicial social order.

Gender and Development Approach (GAD), places equal importance on almost all aspects of women's life. It addresses the gender roles and the resultant social order that considered women as a weaker class. It places importance on the dynamics of the relationship between men and women in the society and inquire into the causes of women's exclusion not only from the economic front but also from the social front. (Mose, 1993). It places emphasis on the interaction and social structure and not only on the personal front but also on the social relations between men and women in the workplace as well as in other settings. The theory favours for the involvement of organizations to help women overcome the obstacles they encounter in the endeavours. These grass root organization could be used for capacity building of women by providing education and assisting them in economic activities. The GAD approach targets to raise the level of women where they are fully capable enough to organise themselves and fight for their own rights and preferences.

Keywords: Feminism, Electoral Representation; Elections; Quota; Gender Equality; India; Politics; Women; Feminist; Jurisprudence; Gender equality; Political Participation; Reservation; Women Empowerment; Women Development; GAD; WAD; WID

Introduction

Every human being has inherent dignity and rights that begin from birth. Everyone has the same freedoms and privileges regardless of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, or place of birth. What is most unfortunate, though, is that women have been relegated to subordinate roles in practically every society on this earth. In ancient India, women and men were treated equally in all areas of life. Later eras between the middle and modern centuries have deprived women their proper position of dignity.

The leaders of both pre and post independent India paid nothing but lip service to the upliftment of women in various walks of life including rightful representation in the legislatures, both at the centre and in the states, with the result that even now women do not enjoy place of pride in the power centres of legislation, administration and party leadership. At the international level also, on women's issues, women's political empowerment was at the center stage of all the discourses, but still, in any political system, participation of women is very low as compared to men right from the developed to developing countries. No doubt, the principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The Constitution of India guarantees adult franchise and provides full opportunities and framework for women to participate actively in politics. The objective of this paper is to support and encourage the enactment of the Women's Political Reservation Bill. Additionally its aim is to stimulate the initiatives for stopping corruption, criminalization and communalization of politics, for enforcing stringent ceiling of funding expenses incurred for election campaigns and creating awareness in the society in order to inculcate the values of gender equality and gender justice. In order to achieve these objectives, the present work is based heavily on United Nations reports, International norms and conventions, Indian Constitutional provisions and other statutory enactments providing favourable laws rendering special privileges for the benefits of women, Government of India reports, NGO reports and important works by modern jurists who contributed a lot towards the evolution and growth of feminist jurisprudence and studies.

It contends that increasing women's production would have a favourable impact on development by increasing their access to loans, technology, and extension services. This concept ignores the complexities of gender relationships and overemphasises the economic side (Mose, 1993). The equity strategy is also known as the integrationist strategy. The productive roles of women were the emphasis of this equitable strategy. It supported the idea that women can only be empowered through gratifying work and financial security (Connelley & Barriteau, 2000). According to this argument, women were also afflicted by social inequality that was brought about by the capitalist market economy. As a result, it supports the introduction of equality as the only means of resolving the social issue at hand. It emphasises the significance of acknowledging women's paid

and unpaid labour as well as their potential to participate in public life rather than being constrained to the domestic realm.

Feminist Movements

The history of the feminist movements is divided into four waves. Each wave indicates a specific cultural period and involvement of women with the media. Feminist movement stands on a series of political and social activities, which changes the social, political, and cultural position of women in the society. Although feminism has many forms and has passed through the multiple waves, its importance is prevailing for alleviating women's subjugated positions in the modern societies (Malinowska, 2020).

Feminism is a widespread movement started by women from various backgrounds to end all types of male oppression of women that exist in patriarchal societies. It always fights against all forms of female oppression. It involves making an effort to comprehend gender norms and advocate for the inclusion of women's interests in social organisations. It makes an attempt to explain gender inequity. Having gender equality in all areas of society is regarded as a political objective. Equal individual rights and liberties for men and women are something that feminists promote. Women from diverse backgrounds started the feminist movement as a way to combat the male oppression of women that exists in patriarchal societies today. It consistently works against all forms of oppression against women. This process advocates for the inclusion of women's concerns in social organisations and makes an effort to comprehend and construct gender roles. It makes an effort to explain the problem of gender inequality. The achievement of gender equality in all areas of society is regarded as a political goal. Feminists advocate for ensuring that men and women have the same personal freedoms and rights.

Alison Jagger has defined four theories of feminism; liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, and radical feminism more clearly for the first time (Jagger, 1983). The rise of feminism in Europe occurred as "women of all classes became increasingly aware of the way in which their sex influenced their life chances and experiences" (Fuchs & Thompson, 2005). The idea that "women should share equality in society's possibilities and finite resources" is supported by the feminist movement and ideology (Delaney, 2005). Feminism is "the conviction and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men; the struggle to accomplish this aim," according to the Oxford Dictionary. "Activism for the purpose of confronting and transforming women's subjugation to males" is what defines feminism (Ferree, 2006). Bimer Eyayu Enyew and Alemeneh Getaneh Mihrete have analyzed the appropriateness and applicability of liberal feminist theory and strategies that attempt to achieve gender equality and to reduce women oppression and subordination (Enyew & Mihrete, 2018). Silvia Federici focuses on aspects of feminism and gender in Marx's theory. She has discussed the significance and the importance of Marxism on contemporary feminist theory and feminist movements (Federici, 2018).

Different theoretical approaches of Feminism:

- **Liberal Feminism**

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), and Harriet Taylor Mill (1807–1858) are considered the founding figures of liberal feminism. They fought for women's rights and liberation at a time when the status of women in Europe was extremely precarious both economically and socially (Herouach, 2019). The liberal feminist movement was started in 1792 by Mary Wollstonecraft, whose seminal feminist work "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" was written. In order to instil liberal principles in women, liberal feminism first appeared in western nations between the 17th and 18th century. These concepts were eventually spread to the rest of the world. Ultimately, feminists expanded their justifications for women having equal legal rights to vote and own property in the 19th century. It is the primary component of modern feminism that seeks to bring about gender equality in society (Maynard, 1995). Liberal feminism supports suffrages, such as equal rights to education, equal political and civil rights, right to vote for all citizens irrespective of men and women. It concentrates more on issues, such as equality in the workplace, in education, and in political rights (Jaggar, 1983; Hackett & Haslanger, 2006). The social and political ideology of liberal feminism is the most popular among feminists. It has developed as a theoretical foundation to support feminism (Herouach, 2019).

- **Marxist feminism**

Marxism, sometimes known as the economic theory of history, is a left-leaning political philosophy that was created and inspired by the two renowned German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

They have maintained that capitalism is the cause of patriarchy. Men are assigned to economic production in capitalism, whereas women are assigned to social reproduction (Marx, 1844; Engels, 1884). According to Engels, the wife "represents the proletariat within the household, whereas he (the man) is the bourgeois" (Engels, 1884). Marxism holds that the state serves as a tool in the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat classes. Instead of fighting males, women should fight capitalism's bourgeois system, which is the result of both men and women working together. According to Marxism, capitalism is to blame for the gender gap in society, and "men's dominance over women is a result of capital's dominance over labour" (Wably, 1990).

The exploitation of the proletariat (i.e., low pay) is profitable for the bourgeoisie (Marx, 1867; Abbasi, 2015). They believe that women are oppressed by capitalism and gender inequality will vanish when capitalism is replaced by socialism (Papa, 2017). Marxist feminists have observed that oppression on women is visible in home environment, workplace, and social life due to economic, social, and business reasons (Kuleli, 2019).

- **Socialist Feminism**

It is inspired by Marxism, and is developed for the reaction to liberal feminism, but it does not lead to the abolition of patriarchy in social relations. Marxism is stuck with the complexity of class analysis which socialist feminists consider as gender blind. Socialist feminism is gained popularity in the 1960s and 1970s. It has gradually faded from the 1980s and has abolished after the collapse of communism in the early 1990s (Holmes, 2007; Fraser, 2009). Although it was developed in opposition to liberal feminism and was Marxist in origin, it does not result in the elimination of patriarchy in social interactions. Marxism is constrained by the nuanced nature of class analysis, which socialist feminists view as gender insensitive. The 1960s and 1970s saw a rise in popularity for socialist feminism. After the fall of communism in the early 1990s, it was abolished after gradually waning since the 1980s (Holmes, 2007; Fraser, 2009). They concur with the essential tenets of both radical and Marxist feminism, which holds that patriarchy is to blame for women's subjugation and blames capitalism for it (Buchanan, 2011). In order to understand the relationship between gender and class, socialist feminism seeks to examine the impacts of equitable reward distribution (Bell et al., 2020).

- **Radical feminism**

Radical feminism is the radical evolution and extreme development of liberal feminists inside the 20th century (Graham, 1994). It is based on two principles: i) women are of absolute positive value, and ii) they are oppressed violently everywhere due to the system of patriarchy (Rowland & Klein, 2013). It views patriarchy and sexism as the most fundamental factors in women's oppression. It opposes patriarchal oppression and female maltreatment, and tries to prevent male-dominated society. It focuses on power of men and patriarchy, and privilege within the social system that seeks to promote women organizations as separate social organizations (Jensen, 2017). Radical feminism is the radical evolution and extreme development of liberal feminists inside the 20th century (Graham, 1994). It opposes patriarchal oppression and female maltreatment, and tries to prevent male-dominated society. It focuses on power of men and patriarchy, and privilege within the social system that seeks to promote women organizations as separate social organizations (Jensen, 2017).

They think that men to be enemies of women and consider marriage as a hegemonic contract to exploit women. They prefer the use of technologies to men for the fulfillment of sexual desires and reproductive need (Abbasi, 2015).

This concept ignores the complexities of gender relationships and over emphasises the economic side (Mose, 1993). The equity strategy is also known as the integrationist strategy. The productive roles of women were the emphasis of this equitable strategy. It supported the idea that women can only be empowered through gratifying work and financial security (Connelley & Barriteau, 2000). According to this argument, women were also afflicted by social inequality that was brought about by the capitalist market economy. As a result, it supports the introduction of

equality as the only means of resolving the social issue at hand. It emphasises the significance of acknowledging women's paid and unpaid labour as well as their potential to participate in public life rather than being constrained to the domestic realm.

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Literature Review

Freire's concept of "developing critical consciousness," which makes it possible for the oppressed to move from understanding to acting, did not take long to appeal to American researchers and aid workers, but as also activists and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in international development. Starting in the late 1960s, the dominant model that reduced development to economic growth is increasingly criticized. The failures of development policies and programs lead a growing number of researchers and non-governmental organizations to campaign for greater awareness of the social dimensions of development. On the basis of initial field evaluations of development projects, particularly by anthropologists, alternative models based on "endogenous" and "self-focused" development are proposed (Tommasoli 2004).

The asymmetrical technology transfer principle as well as "top-down" planning, information flow, and decision-making are rejected. In opposition to this, "bottom-up" techniques are put forth, in which aid recipients are regarded active, not passive, participants in development. The "International Foundation for Development Alternatives" (IFDA), founded in 1976, is a sign of the rising understanding of the shortcomings of the "vertical" development paradigm, where "political and economic power slide away from the people," both in the Global North and the South (IFDA 1980, 20).

Demands made during the Stockholm environmental conference in 1972 and in the 1975 Dag Hammarskjöld report titled What to Do: Alternative Development led to the IFDA's 1976 introduction of the Third System Project (Friedman 1992). A different approach to development is required for this project, one that is rooted in "local space" and the "main community, whether geographical or organisational" (IFDA 1980, 11). In order for people to restore their independent authority over organised business, the initiative intends to "enhance forms of political decision-making—facilitating people's access to power and resources both locally and nationally" (IFDA 1980, 20).

Friedman (1992) notes that although by the late 1970s the notion that power held by individuals and communities should play a prominent role in alternative development models begins to gain popularity, it is still confined to a small number of academics and development professionals.

The phrase empowerment won't start to be used explicitly in the development pitch until the middle of the 1980s.

As Young (1993) states, empowerment is a complete change of the processes and structures responsible for women's inferior status in the society. It is founded on a "transformatory potential" connected to the "need to transform women's status in such a way that the advancement would be perpetuated. She extends the idea of empowerment from a personal perspective to a more general political one, and she emphasises the significance of collective action as a definite way to achieve individual empowerment. A true democracy depends on the extent to which equal and effective participation is provided to all its citizens without any gender discrimination. Equal participation of men and women in political affairs strengthens democracy. Since women's presence is low in Indian politics, it is necessary to bring women into mainstream politics. The Indian Constitution guarantees equal rights to participate in political activities under Articles 325 and 326. For a well-built and successful democratic system, the participation of women is essential in a country.

In representative democracies, it has traditionally been assumed that voters express their preferences through electoral politics and that it is the duty of the elected officials to hold the government responsible. People urge for closer ties between the people and the bureaucracies that impact them in both the North and the South.

For instance, community governance and more involved forms of citizenship are highlighted in the UK's White Paper on Modern Local Government. Although the principles of representative democracy were the basis for local government, it has since become a passive system. Instead of serving as a continual conduit between the government and the people, the citizen is relegated to becoming an occasional elector.

For instance, the White Paper on Modern Local Government in the UK emphasises the idea of community government and more engaged forms of citizenship: Although representative democracy is still the foundation of local governments, it has become inactive. The citizen is reduced to being a sporadic elector, rather than representing a constant link between government and the populace. It appears that the concept of representative democracy has served to constrain public support for local governance. At the same time, it has been asserted that representative democracy and participatory democracy are completely contradictory.

In fact, due to local scales and its proximity to local people, participatory democracy can strengthen an active understanding of representative democracy, especially in local government (Clark and Stewart, 1998).

Early notions of empowerment that originated in the United States are grounded in a philosophy that prioritises the viewpoints of oppressed peoples, allowing them to not only express themselves but also to take control and end the dominance to which they were subject (Wise,

2005). The conscientization strategy created by Brazilian theorist Paulo Freire in his 1968 book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is one of the most prominent publications on empowerment. The majority of works on empowerment actually make some Freire aspires to "critical consciousness" from the dominant consciousness existing in rural Brazil. In order to acquire the "instruments that would allow him to make choices" and become "politically conscious," he supports an active teaching approach that would assist the student become aware of his own circumstances and of himself as "subject" (Freire, 1974).

The failures of development policies and programs lead a growing number of researchers and non-governmental organizations to campaign for greater awareness of the social dimensions of development. On the basis of initial field evaluations of development projects, particularly by anthropologists, alternative models based on "endogenous" and "self-focused" development are proposed (Tommasoli 2004).

Empowerment, as the name suggests the approach sees development through the concept of power. Power can be defined as control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. Through the control of these resources one can effectively control the social relationship and can efficiently use it for their development (Baltiwala, 1994). As the name suggests the approach sees development through the concept of power. Power can be defined as control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. Through the control of these resources one can effectively control the social relationship and can efficiently use it for their development (Baltiwala, 1994).

It is transformation of structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuates gender discrimination". Empowerment is also a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation, a greater decision making power and control". The above definition charts out women empowerment as a process of ending the patriarchal domination in the society by altering the institutional arrangements that upkeep the patriarchy. It is the process of organizing women and making them aware of their rights, enable their capacity and equip them with the skill and assist them in more participation in the society (Sahay 1998). According to Vijayanthi (2000), "empowerment is a process whereby women become able to organize themselves to increase their own self reliance, to assert their independent right to make their choices and control their resources, which will assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination.

The Gender and Development Approach starts from a holistic viewpoint, looking at "the totality of social organization, economic life, and political life in order to understand the shaping of particular aspects of society" (Young 1987: 2). Despite the Gender and Development approach's emphasis on entirely female solidarity, which is highly prized by radical feminists, the approach welcomes the probable contributions of men who share a concern for issues of equity and social justice (Sen and Crown 1987).

Women's inclusion in global economic, political, and social growth prospects is referred to as "Women in Development" (WID). Advocates for women in development (WID) challenged the constrictive understanding of women's roles as mothers and wives that underlies much development policy that affects women, drawing on research findings. WID arguments portray women as contributing members of society rather than as beneficiaries. Women should be viewed as active contributors to economic progress rather than as passive receivers of welfare programmes. So, women can be considered as a gap in development (Tinker, 1990:31).

The equity strategy has also been referred to as an integrationist strategy. The productive roles of women were the emphasis of this equitable strategy. It favours the point that women can be empowered only through gainful employment and economic independence (Connelley & Barribeau, 2000). The Anti-Poverty Approach This approach which became popular in the early 1970s, focus on the inequality in income and wealth. It stresses that inequality in income and wealth and the resultant poverty as the root cause of women's underdevelopment (Mose, 1993).

Women and Development (WAD), entered into development theory and practice as a result of criticisms against the WID approach. WAD offers a better critical view of women's position than WID, but it does not succeed in undertaking a complete analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, disagreeing modes of production, and women's subordination and oppression.

Gender and Development Approach (GAD), places equal importance on almost all aspects of women's life. It addresses the gender roles and the resultant social order that considered women as a weaker class. It places importance on the dynamics of the relationship between men and women in the society and inquire into the causes of women's exclusion not only from the economic front but also from the social front. (Mose, 1993).

The Gender and Development Approach starts from a holistic viewpoint, looking at "the totality of social organization, economic life, and political life in order to understand the shaping of particular aspects of society" (Young 1987: 2).

Empowerment is not about power over others but to energise own power. Women empowerment is the process by which the women exercise control over the on-going circumstances of their own life. Women are empowered when they are able to access all the opportunities equal to men without any restrictions. When a woman is entitled to take her own decision she gets a sense of empowerment and it boosts self-confidence of other women also. Women empowerment is required in all the spheres of society either it is socio-economic or political. The best way to empower a woman is through political representation.

Women have been victims of gender based discrimination because of patriarchal nature of society. Women representatives are very less in the parliament of India as well as state legislature. When the number of women representatives will increase in the parliament, there

will be a forceful impact on the women related policies, and, that can be ensured only through reservation of seats for women. After the 74th amendment of Indian constitution women representation has been increased at grassroots level and women councillors are playing an important role in women related policies.

Women's empowerment as a concept was introduced at the UN's Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, which defined it as a redistribution of social and economic powers and control of resources in favour of women. The Decade for Women from 1976 to 1985 was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on the recommendation of the first World Conference of the International Women's Year, held in Mexico City in 1975. It was observed to remind the world that discrimination against women continued to be a big problem. The Conference launched a new era in global efforts to promote the progress of women by opening an international dialogue on gender equality. The Conference was designed to improve the status of women and integrate them into all aspects of development.

Conclusion

Women and Development (WAD), entered into development theory and practice as a result of criticisms against the WID approach. WAD approach is based on dependency theory and maintains that there exists a discrepant international structure which is characterized by class struggle and inequality. It considers that women had always been parts of production process, so there is no need to involve them with development process. It further believes that both men and women are equally affected by the existing system. According to this approach only when the international order becomes more equitable the condition of women could change. The WAD principle doesn't seek to address the biased gender roles and the resultant prejudicial social order.

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