

# Feminism in India

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**Abstract - This paper about feminism and its historical background. Here I'm trying to find how feminism approach developed, and what are the major debates of it? Feminism has a long historical background, it can be seen in the National freedom struggle and their contribution. The politicization of women, social institutions and the contribution of women, and the most important modern feminism in India.**

Feminism is the worldwide approach, where many thinkers gave their theories and tried to find that what are the issues related to the feminism, and how can it be understood?, But some of the Indian thinkers gave their theories which were the reasons of their persecution and exploitation of women, it has been said that this class was exploited by majority of people due to traditional and their belief system. That is why now many women are demanding their rights and breaking their boundaries. They call their selves equal to men.

Now all countries have been understood that women are also an important part of their countries, during the periods, they proved it by their contribution to the societies. But there is something unknown that is trying to find in this paper.

**Keywords –Feminism, freedom, societies.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper has various aspects, as Historical development of women, debates behind the ideologies, feminism approaches pre-independence and after Independence. Literature reviews.

Feminism is a set of various moments that define the aim of it and demanding political, economic, social rights, and equal opportunity to women in Indian society.

Indian society and feminism can be understood by various ideologies and movements that have been done by the time. There are three phases of feminist ideologies. These ideologies kept on changing and now, there two groups one who is in fever and others who is against it.

This paper will try to find how these debates are developed and what are the major questions of feminism in India.

## II. FEMINISM PRE INDEPENDENCE

Feminism, the first phase which is started due to feminist persecution, and radical thought process of patriarchy society. So, as a result, some famous feminist thinkers came and showed how women were facing exploitation? And what should be done for their development?

### Savitribhai Phule

Savitribai Phule who is known as the first female teacher of India. She played an important role to improve women's rights in India. She is also regarded as the mother of India. She took steps against the discrimination and unfair treatment of people based on caste and gender.

She published Kavya Phule in 1854 and Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar in 1892, and also a poem as "Go, Get Education". As a result, she became an ardent feminist.

Ambedkar and Phule worked for the Dalit Mang caste. They also started the human rights campaign.

### Tarabai Shinde

She was a feminist activist who worked against patriarchy and tastevin 19th century India. She is known for her publication as Stripurush Tulna (a comparison between women and men) which was published in 1882. The second publication was The pamphlet is a critique of upper-caste patriarchy which often considered the first modern Indian feminist text.

She was an associate of the social activists jatirao and Phule and was a founding member of their satyashodhak samaj organization.

Stri Purush Tulna writing-She used to criticize the social inequality of caste, and patriarchy views of another activist who saw caste as the main form of organization in Hindu society.

This book was written in the response to an article as Pune Vaibhav, which was published in a newspaper from Pune, about a criminal case against a Young Brahmin (Upper caste) widow.

### Pandita Ramabai

She was an Indian social reformer, she was also known as Pandita as Sanskrit scholar and Saraswati after being examined by the faculty of the University of Calcutta. She was one of the ten delegates of the Congress session of

1889. She founded the Mukti mission at Kedgroan village, Pune.

She established Arya Samaj in Pune and the purpose of the society was to promote the cause of women's education and deliverance from the oppression of child marriage. When this mission was founded by the Indian government to look into education, Ramabai gave evidence before it.

Ramabai went to Britain in 1883 to start medical training. During this period she adopted Christianity. She wrote many books that were related to the women's exploitation and their development as "the high caste of Hindu women. She founded many organizations for women empowerment.

### III. FEMINISM POST-INDEPENDENCE

**This phase can be understood as the empowerment of women and their development.**

In 1948, Dr. Ambedkar brought a bill for women protection as HINDU CODE BILL which was debated till 1956 and in last, this bill was accepted in various forms of women's rights. In this time, women began to feel that they are also an important part of the Indian country so they began to demand their Rights. To understand this phase, here are some important feminist thinkers who gave their theories to understand the concern problems and solutions.

#### Reservation of women

The first time this bill was brought by Devegeda in Loksabha, 1996. This bill demanded 33 percent reservation for women to their development. By 108 constituent amendment, this bill was passed by Rajyasabha but in 2010 this bill could not be passed in Loksabha, after accepting this bill by the president, this bill converted to act. But still, this bill is waiting for the President's permission. Provisions in the Constitution.

### IV. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION

Article 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39(1), 39(2), 39(3) and 42 of the Constitution are of specific importance in this regard.

The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favor of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio-economic, education and political disadvantages faced by them like The Employees State Insurance Act 1948, The Family Court Act 1954, The Special Marriage Act 1954, The Hindu Marriage Act 1955, Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006.

#### Legal provisions

- a) The critical identified under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)
- b) Rape (sec. 376 IPC)
- c) Molestation (sec. 365 IPC)

d) Sexual harassment (sec. 509)

e) Importation of girls (up to 21 years of age)

f) Kidnapping and abduction for a different purpose (sec. 363-373)

### V. DEBATES IN FEMINISM

There are two groups of feminism. One who is in favor and others who is against the special treatment for women.

Feminism has a long journey of exploitation because of that now many feminist thinkers demanding rights for the employment of women so that they could be able to face societies with confidence. But the side, the second group saying that if women will be treated as a special category then they will be separated from the society as other class. They will not be treated as equal as they want to be, so these demands must be given on the base of their abilities, not for making special treatment.

There are so many thinkers who believe that if women want to be equal so they have to prove their selves by their ability and work. But provided that many thinkers also admit that for development, we will have to make women strong by giving rights to them. So that they would be able to face political, social and economic condition with help of rights.

### VI. CONCLUSION

**On the base of the above research, we can conclude that feminism has a long history and there are many ideologies that define the problems of feminism.**

So many movements had been done, so many thinkers gave their theories for it, **to prove that now women need to empower themselves.** They are demanding economic, social, political rights.

But some thinkers also said that if women will be treated as a special category, they will lose they're identified as an equal part of the country. So women should be treated by looking at their ability and must be treated as equal as a man.

The feminist approach started from Western European countries, where all women were demanding for their Rights as many Western thinkers told in their books. The most famous writing is The vindication rights of women by Mary Wollstonecraft, the subjection of women by J.S Mill. In India, The high caste of Hindu women by Ramabai, Caste, and politics by Rajani Kothari, Brahmana Samaj by Rajaram Mohan Roy.

These ideologies kept on changing society through their writing. So finally, we can say that feminism is a result of different ideologies and struggles of women for their identity and dignity.

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