



## **Study of Women's Movement and Issues Taken up by the New Women's Groups**

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### **Abstract**

Women have been victims of domestic violence since ancient times. Numerous feminist movements arose to address this issue and improve women's position. Women's movements are believed to be among the most important modern social movements. From the 19th century Canadian women's suffrage campaigns to contemporary direct activities for sustainable development in India, national organisations and local grassroots groups have worked together to promote women and girls. Global wealth and power disparities create disparate and sometimes competing compassions for women's concerns. The prevalence of oppression against women has led to the establishment of global women's movements tied to fights for sovereignty, democracy, and secure livelihoods.

**Key word:** Women, movement, society, India etc.

### **Introduction**

It includes problems such as “reproductive rights, domestic abuse, maternity leave, fair pay, women's suffrage, sexual harassment and sexual assault. The movement's aims differ by country and community, from opposing female genital mutilation to opposing the glass ceiling.

Western feminism has gone through three phases. First-wave feminism promoted suffrage and political equality for middle- or upper-class white women. Second-wave feminism sought to address social and cultural injustices. As a result, third-wave feminism is re-enforcing its call for increased female political and media power. In response to political activities, feminists have had to focus on reproductive rights for women, such as abortion.

First-wave feminism was a global movement of feminist activism and ideas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It focused on legal concerns, mainly suffrage for women (the right to vote).

During the First Wave, there was a strong link between the anti-slavery and women's rights movements. Frederick Douglass argued that both movements needed to work together to achieve real racial and sex equality.



The Seneca Falls Meeting, held July 19-20, 1848, promoted itself as a convention to explore women's social, civic, and religious rights. The Declaration of Sentiments, also known as the Declaration of Rights and Sentiments, was signed by 100 people, 68 women and 32 men. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the Declaration's chief author, modelled it on the US Declaration of Independence. Along with Lucretia Coffin Mott and Martha Coffin Wright, she organised the convention. Charlotte Woodward was the sole signer still alive in 1920 when the 19th Amendment passed. Woodward was too sick to vote.

Second-wave feminism is a movement that originated in the early 1960s in the United States and later extended across the Western world. The US movement continued until the early 1980s.

Second-wave feminism widened the argument to include sexuality, family, the workplace, reproductive rights, de facto disparities, and formal legal inequalities. A rape crisis and abused women's shelters were established as part of second-wave feminism's focus on domestic violence and marital rape. Its main goal was to pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the US Constitution, which anti-feminists rejected.

The combination oral contraceptive pill was authorised by the FDA in 1960 and commercially accessible in 1961. This allowed women to continue working without having to leave due to pregnancy. Women's rights were a priority for President Kennedy's administration, and women (like Esther Peterson) held several high-ranking positions.

As a result of reading Simone De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Betty Friedan authored the popular *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963. She argued that keeping women at home curtailed their potential and squandered talent. It was demeaning for women and represented a happy nuclear family, she argued. Second-wave feminism is frequently ascribed to this work. Watch this video regarding Friedan's book's impact:

Third-wave feminism refers to a variety of feminist activities and research that began in the early 1990s and continues now. In part, the movement sprang out of second-wave feminism's perceived failings and reaction, as well as the idea that women come from a wide range of races, cultures, and faiths. This wave of feminism includes a varied collection of women with various identities.

**Women's participation in movements has been in four major forms:**

- For tribal, peasant, and industrial workers' social, economic, and political rights.



- To enhance working conditions and empower women.
- Equal pay for equal labour.
- On topics impacting men and children like abortion, adoption, and sexual exploitation.

### **Issues Taken up by the New Women's Groups**

#### **A. Campaign against Violence against Women**

The movement gained steam after the Supreme Court of India ruled in favour of Mathura, a young tribal girl gang-raped by officers in a police station in Chandrapur district, Maharashtra, in 1972. The Court decided that Mathura was not raped by the guys in uniform but gave a voluntary agreement for sexual intercourse since she was a lady of 'an easy virtue'. Vasudha and her three legal colleagues published an open letter disputing the Supreme Court's ruling. This letter was extensively reported in print.

#### **B. Fight against Unjust Family Laws**

The campaigners realised that the existing personal laws and most customary laws discriminated against women while helping women with marriage, divorce, maintenance, alimony, property rights, child custody, and guardianship issues. Mitakshara's regulations denied Hindu females coparcenary rights in family property.

Christian wives couldn't divorce for adultery alone; they needed harshness, bestiality, and sodomy as well. These outdated regulations were established to protect the interests of British officials who had legally married spouses in England and were living with Indian (or 'native') women. Paradise lost its property rights to non-Parsee women who married Parsee men, and non-Parsee wives of Parsee husbands acquired just half of their husband's property. For example, Shariah imposed purdah, permitted polygamy and unilateral divorce by males from their spouses, but denying divorced Muslim women maintenance rights.

#### **C. Reproductive Rights of Women**

Concerning women's reproductive rights, most of the efforts in India have been geared against abuses done in the guise of family planning. With this in mind, ICMR, AIIMS and IRR have agreed to meet to examine the scientific, medico-legal and operational aspects of human subject biomedical research. UNFPA (1998) and WHO (1998) have



developed guidelines for population policies that emphasise women's reproductive rights above population control. Drawn biomedical research ethical guidelines Abuse of sterilisation and dangerous injectable and oral contraceptives continue to target impoverished women in rural India. Recent studies on adolescent females and abortion have emphasised underage pregnancy, sex trafficking, and the criminal justice system's role.

Amniocentesis, Chrion-villai-biopsy, and sex pre-selection procedures for femicide were banned by central legislation. But much more must be done to make the law work in practise. Dr. Sabu George filed a Public Interest Litigation at the Supreme Court of India, which CEHAT and the Lawyers Collective jointly supported.

#### **D. Anti Arrack/alcohol Movement**

Indigenous women in Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, and Maharashtra have been battling against alcohol/lecre sales since the 1970s, resulting in family breakdown and domestic violence against women and children. Anti-arrack sentiments were prominent in Andhra Pradesh in 1992-93, and they expanded to neighbouring states. Women's movement in Andhra was rewritten when over 40,000 women joined together to oppose an arrack auction. Women elected to Panchayati Raj Institutions in Maharashtra have compelled the state government to proclaim their block/village/taluk a 'alcohol free zone' if 50% of the women vote against alcohol sales and distribution.

#### **e. Women's Movement and Peace Initiatives**

The women's movement has made a significant contribution to peace attempts in places riven by community disputes, ethnic tensions, and mob violence. We need media attention on this subject so that similar work may be done in countries where such groups do not exist. During the 1992 and 2002 Gujarat communal riots, the women's movement supported the victims and campaigned against xenophobia and jingoism.

#### **Conclusion**

The women's movement and the state have worked together and clashed. The women's movement has collaborated with the state on legislative change, gender budgeting, and institutional assistance for abuse survivors (specifically the criminal justice system). The state terrorises people's movements—struggles for safe environment, water, crimes against minorities, mass relocation for big projects”. As many city-based women's groups discovered, individual incidences of violence against women were not only “personal



problems,” but were a result of socio-cultural, historical, political, and economic realities in which Indian women had to exist.

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