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FEMINISM and GENDER EQUALITY... Two sides of the same Coin?

By

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Abstract

The emergence and the dominance of social media, particularly in millennials, has disseminated in members of our society the concept of feminism. Many young individuals are advocating this view, both men and women (though men are in the minority). Feminists present their view as being synonymous with gender equality. Our research aims to ascertain the integrity of this claim. For this purpose we used mixed methods approach and interviewed high ranking government officials and

gathered data through questionnaires from students of different universities. Subsequent analysis of the collected data revealed that though majority of the women in Pakistan are oppressed and deprived of basic human rights, the views of feminists are not those of gender equality. The results of the research study are presented in this paper.

Key Words: feminism, gender equality, male chauvinism

Feminism

Feminism is the preemptory movement to keep in check male chauvinism and oppression of females. In developing countries like Pakistan, it is regarded as a means for giving women a sense of individuality and manumission

Gender Equality

Equality between women and men (gender equality): refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. ***Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women.*** (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women)

Male Chauvinism

Male Chauvinism is defined, according to the merriam-webster dictionary, as "a belief that men are superior to women".

Roles of Man and Woman – An Islamic Perspective

According to Pakistan's Bureau of Statistics⁷, 96.28 % of the total population of Pakistan is Muslim. Hence it is only logical to view the roles of man and woman in the society within the framework of an Islamic ideology.

The concept of woman empowerment in Islam is very different from that of the western feminist worldview. Islam has given the same rights as men but the roles of man and woman in a social setting have been defined to be different. The roles are such that man and woman are two complementary halves rather than being two identical people, as the male being the breadwinner of the household, bearing the responsibility of providing food, clothing, shelter along-with any other requirements of the missus and the children whereas the woman is charged with the upbringing of the children and care of the household. In no way has Islam promoted male chauvinism or granted man exclusive rights but the roles as mentioned earlier are *complementary*.

In fact, Islam has elevated the status of the mother 3 times than that of the father because of the hardships she has to endure.

The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said⁸:-

"Do good to and serve your mother, then your mother, then your mother, then your father, then the near relatives and then those who come after them." [Mazhari]

A similar incident is quoted from the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)'s life:-

A man came to the Prophet and said: O Messenger of Allah! Who from amongst mankind warrants the best companionship from me? He replied: "Your mother." The man asked: Then who? So he replied: "Your mother." The man then asked: Then who? So the Prophet replied again: "Your mother." The man then asked:

Then who? So he replied: "Then your father." (Sahîh Bukhârî 5971 and Sahîh Muslim 7/2)

The Job Market Double Standard

The research data analysis revealed that there are some jobs that are specific to gender and one gender is preferred over the other in specific situations.

The Marketing departments of major multinational companies as well as the news channels prefer that they hire maximum number of female staff to “promote a good image”. Whereas these may or may not be beneficial for the establishment in question, it is against gender equality. Another example is primary school teachers. It was found that parents as well as the school prefers that the primary school teachers be female and have been reported to reject qualified male teachers in the favor of female teachers of equivalent or lower qualification simply because of gender.

On the other hand, construction workers, security guards and majority of the minimum wage workers are men.

Though it is customary for feminists to preach gender equality it is observed that the “female presidency” and blue collar jobs are of major interest rather than equal employment opportunities.

Educational Institutions

Data collected from various universities revealed that female students were given preference over male students in various areas. In summary, the male

instructors pay more attention to the female students and in some cases the female instructors as well.

Quota system in political and educational institutions

Major political institutions even the parliament and senate have a fixed number of seats for women. In addition to these seats the women can apply on a seat of open merit. Same is the case with not all but many educational institutions.

The principle of gender equality states that all of these seats should be on merit irrespective of the gender of the applicant. Such type of quota system's effect is becoming significant in medical colleges.

Female students in medical colleges have a quota and these seats are often wasted as most of the girls go on to become housewives or do not pursue their career as a medical doctor seriously.

A Social Experiment

A social experiment was conducted by a YouTube channel by the name of Joey Salads⁴ where it is demonstrated that how does the society react when a female is being sexually harassed as opposed to male sexual harassment. (Link given in references) Although the authenticity of the experiment may be questionable, it is quite convincing and helps with the argument presented below.

The Incident

On Oct 20, 2016 an incident occurred in Karachi whereby a Frontier Constabulary (FC) guard slapped a female reporter. The news quickly spread throughout the

media accompanied by a clip⁵ of the incident.(Link of video given in references). Though the initial response of the media as well as of the administrative authorities was condemning the behavior of the guard and arresting him, after the escalation of the video clip on electronic and social media it was revealed that the woman was actually at fault and a case was lodged against the woman reporter for hindrance in official work and challenging the writ of the state. President of Karachi Press Club gave an official statement⁶:-

“Whatever we watched over the video is extremely painful and the security guard’s action is condemnable, but I am sorry to say that what the reporter was doing was not journalism at all. Here we need to understand that our broadcast or electronic media is passing through its early years and cannot be termed mature.”

If the genders were reversed?

Since we could not recreate the experiment where the genders of the guard and the reporter are reversed due to obvious legal implications, we interviewed government and police officials about their opinion if the roles were reversed i.e. if the guard was female and the reporter was a man. Our findings are as follows:

1. People would have come to the guard’s rescue.
2. The reporter would have been charged with the sexual assault along with the charges of hindrance of official work and challenging writ of the state.
3. The guard might have gotten away with (maybe even applauded) slapping the reporter and it would not have been turned into a major issue.

Conclusion

Pakistan is a country where the issue of women rights is a major one and should be pursued seriously. But the western view of the feminists is not applicable here and is not synonymous with gender equality because:-

1. Firstly the dynamics and ideology of Pakistan are not the same as that of the western world.
2. Feminism promote self idealization among women, thus defeating the very purpose of feminism giving rise to radical feminism in which women deem themselves superior to men.
3. Feminism is a threat to the basic social building block i.e. the family. Leslie Anne Carbone who is a western author herself writes that “The feminist movement has weakened the foundational institution of life-the family-by blurring ...the roles of husband and wife.”

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- <http://www.islamswomen.com>
- <https://www.academia.edu/>

Interview form
 Director Anticorruption department

Regional director CS officer
 Grade 22nd

Name Dr. Isshad Ahmed.

Address: GOR (Govt. Officers colony)
 near agriculture university

Final doc.

Signature

Ishad Ahmed

Q101 Do you believe in
 Male Chauvinism???

Answer Depends upon how do you
 define it as it is that male
 are superior to female
 and men they have all right
 to do what they want to do then
 needed then I do not
believe

But if you design it as
 a stem of domain in some
 hundred expert like
 domain experts. I do believe
 in multi domain
 so in some part it is
 positive as well as negative aspect

Q#02 Islamic perspective

I don't know much about it
 yet. But I think media
 are giving some serious aspect
 in Islam in case of being
 dominant

Q#03 Job Market

I'm CSS office and
 yes there is some quota
 system as well as
 prospects of job market

Both for women

here I do believe that
they are preferred in
quite a system.

Objective

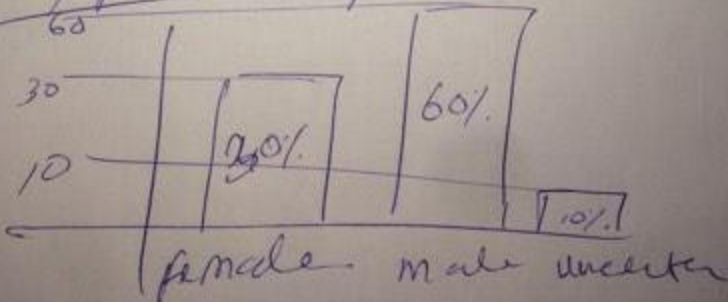
Conclusion - mixed approach

60% for the game zone

20% in bar 10

10% no certain conclusion

Cybernetic system



Interview form

~~Ques~~ ~~to~~ ~~ask~~ ~~the~~ ~~person~~

General Manager
Isidague Process Pvt Ltd.

Singathe Road, Fardelbad.

Name Dr. Hassan Raza

Address h381- st 11 10 - Bagar 2/3
Repeba d fardelbad

Signature

Ques Do you prefer
women over men
while hiring for some
administrative / reception part

Answer We will merit system here
as women are preferred
as they have more
persuasion power and
we try not be prejudiced

Point

امام مسعود

قادیان امین المہدی

سوال: کیا اسکا نام میں مردوں کو پڑھانے پر
شرعی حدودی گناہ ہے؟

جواب: — املا کی صورت میں بہت حد تک
تصاف اور درست فہم کی رہا ہے اور اس کا ایک
مکمل حصہ ہے۔ نئی نئی کتابیں لکھنے
بجائے کہ مکمل نو اسکولوں کا سامان ہے
آگے

Legend

(مزید پڑھی شریف)

- (۱) اپنی حال کے ساتھ اچھا سلوک کرنا
- (۲) اپنی حال کے ساتھ اچھا سلوک کرنا
- (۳) اپنی حال کے ساتھ اچھا سلوک کرنا
- (۴) اپنے والد کے ساتھ اچھا سلوک کرنا

(صنعتی پیداواروں کے لاپرواہی اور ان کا انکار)
 کہیں اسلوا اسن جو انہیں کا مقام دہم پید بنیت
 بلکہ دیلا اور اعلیٰ ہے۔
 خواہش کے فرق کا اثر اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ
 صنعتی پیداوار اور انہیں کے ساتھ کے ساتھ
 دیکھا کہ اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ ہے دیکھا گیا۔
 مکمل صنعتی پیداوار کے ساتھ ہے دیکھا گیا
 یہ وہ دیکھا گیا ہے کہ اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ
 کے ساتھ ہے دیکھا گیا کہ اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ
 اور بنا یا کہ اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ ہے دیکھا گیا
 اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ ہے دیکھا گیا کہ اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ
 اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ ہے دیکھا گیا کہ اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ
 اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ ہے دیکھا گیا کہ اسلوا اسن کے ساتھ