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Feminism

Introduction

Black feminism is an essential and separate axis of Black women, as distinct from postcolonial feminism and critical race feminism that analyzes race and gender relations in society particularly in the present context of class relations (Fotaki & Pullen, 2024). It goes beyond the current trend of liberal feminism that tends to completely erase women of color or collapse their experiences into a universal womanhood that erases anti-Black racism, to organize politics around the Black women whose existence defines the structures of both racism and patriarchy. This dual oppression is the reason Black Feminism seek to expand traditional Feminism theories and fill missing gaps they contain Black Women's experience. Some of the ways that the movement explains itself are the complexities of how race, gender, and class interact to form multiple forms of oppression. Thus, by amplifying Black women's voices and history, Black feminism makes this equal world for men and women of any skin tone and color performant. In fact, the fundamental belief upon which Black feminist stands for is more akin to the process of progression of society built on principles of justice, social justice incorporating human rights-each has a very high value that represents a fight as well as strength of Black woman story. In the United States, Black feminism is a crucial movement that takes into consideration the peculiar juncture of race and gender oppression, rebuffs the exclusions within mainstream feminism, and contributes to an inclusion of feminist paradigm by centering the experiences and voices of Black women.

Feminism

Feminism is a movement that calls for social and political change that supports the stand of all the genders especially women eliminating Discrimination against women. It lies on the belief that men and women equally deserve equal rights and equal opportunity to freely exercise their rights in all facets of life including at the work place, at political institutions as well as in the intimate spaces of their domestic lives. It was historically beginning with the feminist movement for fundamental women's rights like voting, property, employment and education and much more. Slowly but surely, feminism evolved into a myriad of social, economic and political injustices in which women are placed at a disadvantage. However, the mainstream feminism also attracted much criticism for its inability to speak for women of color especially Black women and other Interest groups. But Black feminism comes to the rescue here with another way of understanding best practices. Black feminism has helped to debunk the myth that women liberation is separate from liberation of Black people, workers, and clients of color. Black feminism wants feminism to expand to a movement that is inclusive of all women through recognizing that race, class and gender are all aspects of the same subject. This will fill up the feminist movement, and equality will be supported and sought in a manner that covers every form of unfairness. Black feminism is what makes me pause and assess the depth of oppression and challenges us to not just come up with solutions for everyone, but ones that can fit each individual's situation.

Historical Background Black Feminism in the U.S.

The roots of Black feminism in the United States go further back to the 19th and early 20th centuries, where Black women began challenging both racial and gender oppression (Simmons, 2021, p.315). Powerful figures like Sojourner Truth and Ida B. Wells fought against the dual injustices accorded them as Black women. Truth's famous speech in 1851 brought to the

forefront the unique position of Black women who were denied racial and gender equality. In the dawn of the 20th century, organizations like the National Association of Colored Women worked to uplift Black women's issues, often under the broad umbrella of civil rights but beginning to carve out some kind of distinct space for their gendered concerns. The Civil Rights Movement and the rise of Black Power in the 1960s and 1970s brought systemic racism into the public eye, yet many mainstream feminist movements did little to acknowledge the challenges that Black women endured. This was because Black feminism came to address intersectional racial and gender oppression. Key moments included the Combahee River Collective, which was organized in 1974 and raised voices in demand of a feminist movement that would address the issues of race and gender. Organizations like the NBFO, which was founded in 1973, were important to the definition of Black feminism in that it called for Black women to become vocal about their experiences and concerns, helping channel these into the feminist movement so that they were no longer relegated to the sidelines.

The Combahee River Collective and Their Contributions

The Combahee River Collective was an organization composed of serious Black feminists (Shorter-Bourhanou, 2024, p.350). Serious in the sense, for one thing, of committing attending to the particular struggles of themselves and others like them. Taking root in 1970s' politics, the group generally considered that all Black women throughout history had suffered, have suffered, or ever should suffer from being victims from racism, sexism with additional elements classism, while others maybe homophiliac as a special threat. Their "A Black Woman's Statement" was in general an early, extraordinary document describing both where this group was coming and goings. This statement crystallized the interrelatedness of different oppressions and insisted that the struggle for equality had to tackle all these issues together. The group, in

turn, underlined the failures of mainstream feminism to deal with racism and the sexism within Black liberation movements. By pointing out such gaps, the Combahee River Collective struggled to broaden the definition of equality further. Their work placed an emphasis on the needs of people to struggle together in a battle against oppression. The Combahee River Collective ideas keep on strengthening debates of intersectionality and equality in feminist and social justice movements of our time. They remind us that, really, genuine equality can't just involve some but actually everyone in true form-when experiences and actions on their behalf take place.

Dual Oppression Concept in Black Feminism

Black feminism explains that Black women face two types of oppression at the same time: racism and sexism. The phenomenon that is described by words “dual oppression” or the “double bind” explains the most significant experiences Black women face at work. For example, a Black woman in a workplace may be discriminated against in terms of her skin color and denied promotions, then she can also be subjected to gender discriminating when she is being paid less than men in the same employment. This double vice in the world puts black women in a different social, economic and cultural position that other groups are not likely to encounter. While black feminism works to combat this by demonstrating the symbiotic relationship between the two. And it requires solutions that address both at once, prospect for fair /equal treatment of Black women and for all others who experience multiple discrimination. Exactly, concept of dual oppression gives a message that justice cannot be brought without addressing all kinds of injustice making a part of the overall social justice and equity cub.

Black Feminism's Critique of Mainstream Feminism

Black feminism has over the years accused mainstream feminism of not only ignoring problems that are unique to black women and other women of color. This was in most cases associates mainstream feminism with the problem of ‘Middle-class White women’ neglecting intersections of Racism, Classism and Sexism. Black feminism speaks in order to counteract this through use of intersectionality- which is a term of pointing out how all different types of oppression converge in shaping life. Thus, Black feminism holds such a worldview as part of its arsenal when fighting for the change in the status female persons of color on the topics such as racism and economic inequality. It stresses the importance of listening to diverse voices and making sure that feminism represents all women, not just a select few. The critique has pushed mainstream feminism to evolve, making it more inclusive and effective in addressing global issues of inequality. Black feminism underlines that equality can only be a fact if one contemplates and successfully combats the layered challenges women of different backgrounds go through. This inclusiveness cements feminism even more, placing it well within a diverse and interdependent world.

Greater Impact of Black Feminism in the U.S.A

Black feminism has run parallel and supplemented the more contemporary movement of feminism and social justice in the United States. One of the greatest achievements of feminists might be seen in the development of intersectionality theory. This has been helpful in elucidating how oppression in forms of racism, sexism, and classism are connected, and that they have to be combatted together. Black feminism also underpinned other movement like #BlackLivesMatter: fighting against racism and police brutality (Bowman Williams et al., 2021). These contributions suggest that marginalized voices and experience are at the heart of issues of equality in various struggles. Black feminism, despite the many partial victories, has continued to face myriad tests:

Feminist movements- resist continues both inside and outside feminist spaces- was potent in framing justice and equality discourse. In so doing Black feminism mend sure that no one is left behind in many fights towards achieving a socially just society.

Conclusion

Black feminism is crucial since it focuses on the problems Black women face and makes them define the problems they face when fighting for their rights. They have historically broadened the scope of the feminism because they take race and gender into consideration; as such, feminism is more diverse. Black Feminism continues the current conversation on justice and equality today and how the concept of intersectionality locates itself in fighting repression. Different voices from Black feminist delineate current struggles and forge the creation of an equal ideal that should prevail for every subject of the human race regardless of color. Black feminism remains in several of the play crucial parts of full movement social equity and inclusion by means of justice within all types of oppression. Through its activism and through on going work it makes one recall that such a pursuit to equity demands commitment, consciousness and effort towards diverse realities in all individuals.

References

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