

# Role of feminism in modern society



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**F**eminism is a way of thinking, a movement, a philosophy that has remained an integral part of society for long. Few subjects have evoked more passion.

At its core, feminism has always been about the feminine, the female. Centuries of being the 'lesser' gender, as detached by society slowly sowed the seeds of anger, frustration and rebellion in women across the world, which eventually germinated into a new thought. The rights of women came under discussion and debate, which still goes on.

Feminism envisages a society in which all men and all women are equal, with equal rights. To bring a patriarchal world order to see the unfairness every woman is subjected was a Herculean task, an effort millions of women across the world took part in. feminism questions the power systems of the world, of how women were denied power, rights and freedom because of their, lesser physical strength compared to men.

Over the centuries and decades, feminism has evolved the early days of feminism was about bringing women to the public domain. Women started speaking out, expressing their desires, hopes, ideas-the rigidly structured society, which hated any questioning of established ideals and status quo decried them. But the spark of feminism had grown into a flame that refused to blow out.

As women slowly gained power, rights and freedom, ideals of feminism attained newer meanings feminism is a vast, complex vision, which keeps absorbing the change in society and evolving in step with the progress of time. Modern society is a far cry from the societal scenario that brought feminism into existence. A majority of the nations of the world have constitutions granting equal rights to both women and men. Society recognizes, acknowledges and appreciates achievements by women. Most

importantly women have political rights.

This means more women have power to make decisions for society as a whole. A good number of women are educated, free thinking utilizers. The global society at large believes in the equality and freedom of all women.

But the picture is far from perfect. One doesn't need to dig deep to know about the injustice suffered by countless number of women everyday. Atrocities and violence against women have increased dramatically, fuelling great alarm over their safety in modern society. Even the power systems have many sometimes subtly build in mechanism to keep the women out. Not every village, town, city, state or nation recognizes women's rights. Many societies and communities still view women as lesser beings. No religion, as it is practiced by the general public seems to encourage absolute equality of women with men. In fact, most religions are actually discriminate in many areas, when it comes to women's issues. These happen in various details, from the subtle and inconspicuous to spen and obvious. Yes, its no secret that men still rule the world.

Modern day feminism stresses on equal rights for all genders. That can't happen if one gender still continue to be more powerful in society. Though legally and institutionally, matters are becoming better, it is at the grassroots that change has to really occur. Unless every man walking on the street believes that every other man and all women have equal rights and freedom and they are all equal despite their differences, feminism hasn't met its grandest vision.

To keep the ball of societal reformation rolling, we need constant engagement of intellectual thought in society. There should be tolerance for different perspectives and beliefs because society is a space for everyone, not just people who conform to some fixed ideals. Feminist thinkers, who may be women, men

or persons of any gender, should never stop expressing their thoughts and philosophies. Because, this quest for freedom lies at the heart of human society and civilization. Humans have always dreamt of freedom, expression and achievement. It is that fire that prompted them to migrate across continents and spread and evolve and develop into the so-called most superior species on the planet. It is the same fire that drove the oppressed the impoverished, the slaves to revolt. No nation has been able to forever subjugate another nation because each human being lives for his or her freedom. It is basically this undying thirst for freedom and individuality that suppressed women feel.

We are at constant danger of falling in line with what the larger society feels, even if it conflicts our deepest beliefs. The world abounds with injustice. The number of powerless, helpless, nameless women outnumber those woman who have power and freedom to an overwhelming majority. Even where there is some reasonable degree of freedom, there needs to be more. Because there is no intermediate goal for feminism. While each positive development to make women feel more equal is a success, we can't lose sight of the bigger picture. That grand vision, as mentioned, is of a world society that treats all its many genders equally. Not a single individual should feel less.

Ideals of feminism propagated to the larger society by many means. The mass media,

including the press, T.V, internet, books, visual content all played and still plays an influential role in bringing information to the public. But the most crucial way to transform society is through education. All the greatest visionaries who ever walked this earth would talk in one unified voice about the power of education. Nothing is more liberating than learning. Right message of gender equality should be passed on to every child of the coming generations. It is utterly disheartening to remember that even today, when the human race is galloping towards technological successes, the most scared institutions, that is, our schools fail to produce complete individuals with the right gender perspective.

From Maya Angelou to Malala Yousaf all great minds have stressed the might of the pen over the sword. We need to push relentlessly towards that currently Utopian dream, all the while taking care of all the problems in the world. Women are not willing to accept the patriarchal system. We need to reexamine all sources of knowledge, including Ancient Scriptures across civilizations to gain more understanding of the fundamental aspects of human race, because gender is the fundamental identity, an idea that goes deep into human culture.

The role of feminism is an ever changing one, but the basis remain the same. Let us all continue hoping and also working hard to make the true destination of feminism a reality.

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