

Women's Struggle and Movements in India: A Journey from History to the Present

Hemant Kumar

Doctor of Philosophy, Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies,
School of International Studies/ JNU

Abstract

The proposed paper is related to women's struggle and movements in India from history to the present. Women now occupy a prominent position on the political agenda thanks in large part to the women's movements. The fight for national liberation coincided with the advancement of the women's movement. As a direct result of the contribution that women made to the independence movement, they were able to secure constitutional protections for equal rights and adult suffrage for all. It is, however, true that the majority of Indian women's lives have not significantly changed as a result of these constitutional protections in terms of social and material transformation. Basically, women's movement is emerged due to patriarchy and gender inequality in the society. Thus, the main objective of the women's movement is prohibited the patriarchy and gender inequality within the family and outside the family. But, It's very sad that, in the spite of many women's movements, patriarchy is still exists in India. This paper's objective is to study and examine the various factors that contributed to the birth and rise of the Indian women's movement. Historically, visages of 'sati' and tales of mass foeticide represent the backwardness of Indian women. On the other hand, India has a rich history of reform movements that took place in the 19th and 20th centuries. Essentially, this history is directly related to modern-day women. In this paper, we will demonstrate how the Indian women's movement is changing their face from pre-independence to post-independence and post-independence to the contemporary era.

Keywords: *Women's Movements, Feminism, Patriarchy, Gender Inequality, Domestic Violence, Constitutional Rights, Pre-independence, Post-independence and Contemporary era.*

INTRODUCTION

The paper is divided into six sections. The first section is outlines general and theoretical understanding of the women's movement. The second, third, and fourth sections respectively trace the women's struggle and movement in the pre-independence era, post-independence era, and contemporary era. The fifth section is based on the women-led and women-related progressive organizations. The last section is related to the conclusion.

1. Women's Movement: A Basic Understanding
2. Women's Struggle and Movement in the Pre-Independence Era
3. Women's Struggle and Movement in the Post-Independence Era
4. Women's Struggle and Movement in the Contemporary Era

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Address for correspondence:

Hemant Kumar, Ph.D.
Research Scholar, CR&CAS/SIS/JNU,
Email ID: hk4900@gmail.com

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5. Progressive Organizations of Women in India
6. Conclusion

Women's Movement: A Basic Understanding:

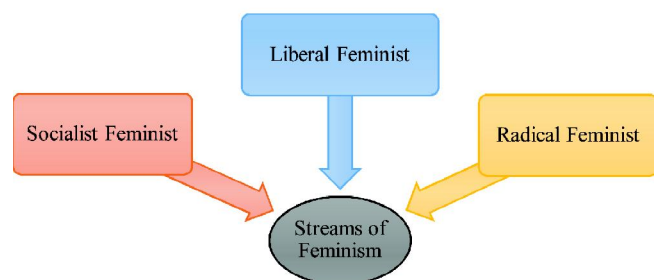
Women's Movement is focusing on the equal rights and equal access between men and women in the sphere of careers, education, and legal-political rights, social equality etc. Basically, women's movement challenged the cultural pattern of male dominance and patriarchy in the family and outside the family (Khurana, 2018, p. 117). Women's movement want's to abolish the sexual inequality, barbaric practices, dowry system, patriarchy, sexual harassment and domestic violence. Most importantly, we must consider how we define a women's movement. Is it one in which only women participate, or one in which only women's issues are discussed? What about women's participation in mass movements aimed at bringing about socio-political change, which include the women's movement? Are these issues or concerns incorporated into the existing ideological framework, or are there distinct theoretical challenges to the current order? (Akerkar, 1995).

There are so many factors which have formed women's movement such as patriarchy, Masculinity, Public men and Private Women and the misinterpretation of sex and gender.

1. **Sex and Gender:** sex is a biological term which is define that this is male and this female. Other side, gender is a social term which determine male and female in particular time or place. According to feminists, sex differences are a biological fact of life, but they have no economic and socio-political relevance or significance. Women and men should be judged as individuals and people, not by their sex. Thus, the main idea of feminism is the attainment of "personhood" (Heywood, 2017, p. 309).
2. **Patriarchy:** In simple term, '**Patriarchy**' means "**rule by the father, rule by the men**" within and outside family. The concept of patriarchy is used by feminists to portrey the power connection between women and men. **Kate Millet** describes "**Patriarchichal Government**" as an instrument whereby "that half of the populace which is female is controlled by that half which is male" (Heywood, 2017, p. 303). Feminist wants to eliminate the patriarchy.

3. **Public men and Private Women:** This concept is related to the "**Sexual Division of Labour**" which runs through society and has been thought to be 'natural' rather than 'political' (Heywood, 2017, p. 303). According to traditional notions, "politics related to public sphere not the private sphere". But, feminist said that, "politics exists whenever and wherever conflict is found". Some feminist believe that, "women emancipation can achieve if responsibilities of private life are transformed to the public bodies like state, child-rearing could become the responsibility of the community such as Kibbutz system in Israel.

Feminism is an ideology which help to aware and mobilize human being for women's movement. Basically, Feminism is the concept in which we are try to understand unequal and discriminatory status of women and try to change it. According to feminism, "all type of relationship between sexes highlight the supremacy of men and subjection of women" (Heywood, Andrew, 2015, p. 72). Feminist movement are try fulfill the socio-political demands of women. Basically, feminism is a doctrine that advocated equal rights for women. There were three distinct streams of feminist perspectives:



- 1) **Socialist Feminist Movement** said that, "without the abolition of capitalism women would not be liberate". **Engels, Juliet Mitchell** and **Kollontai** are the supporter of this movement.
- 2) **Liberal Feminist Movement** was based on liberal philosophical tradition such as British and France feminist theory. This movement focusing on voting, education, legal-political and reproductive rights. **Mary Wollstonecraft, J.S. Mill** and **Betty Friedan** was the supporter of this movement.

- 3) **Radical Feminist Movement** came in 1960s and 70s. Basically, the main goal of Radical feminist movement was overthrow the patriarchy by reordering society. **Firestone, Eva Figgs** and **Susan Brown Miller** are the supporter of this movement.

The women's movement has worked on issues of discrimination against women in both the private and public spheres. Women mobilized the protest against the legal discrimination, violence against women in the family or outside the family, rising prices and unequal wages. These women represented a diverse range of castes, classes, races, and communities from both rural and urban India. There is following four issues which is affecting the women's movement in India:

1. The tensions and fractures in the movement.
2. The way in which these rifts or fractures are connected to how women interact with the state, which at least partly adheres to a conservative notion that how women are treated as property by their families and communities.
3. The possibility of managing or transcending gender disparities in order to forge a political community to which women will join via voluntary association rather than through ownership.
4. The importance of the women's committee in gender-oriented politics (Sen, 2002, p. 464).

Women's Struggle and Movement in the Pre-Independence Era

It's true that, women are victim of many domestic crime from ancient time. But, we should not forget that, there were symbols such as **Sita, Damayanti and Draupadi, three of the Panchkanyas, Ahilya, Tara and Mandodari**, who are still remembered with great respect in Indian society. So, a question is raised that, if there were a great symbols as mentioned above so, why women were exploited from long time? Around the 500 BC, the status of women gradually declined due to the dictats of smritis and other religious texts. These dictats of smritis and religious texts adversely affected women's freedom and rights. The **law of Manu** about the role of women in the family and the outside of family have been rigidly adhered in the patriarchal family and society of our country from the centuries (Sharma, 2002). Thus, many women's movement were began to tackle this situation and enhance the status of women. Basically, women's movement divided into two parts in the pre-

independence era. First part is related to the Indian middle class men who were fighting against the social evils such as Sati-Prtha and they were also encourage widow remarriage and equal rights between men and women. The second part of the women's movement was related to those women who themselves began to be involved in the movement such as **Savitribai Phule**, who established first school for girls education.

Indian men, who belong to new urban elite and upper castes, imbibed the enlightenment philosophy of individualism and humanism due to the colonial education system. These educated people believed that, "women's emancipation was a prerequisite to national revivalism and an index of national achievement in the connected discourse of civilization, progress, modernity and nationalism" (Sen, Samita, 1993, p. 232). Another strand was concerned with creating the female counterpart of the new male elite, "**New Women**", who would share the sensibilities of the men in the family and be able to sustain their new class roles. During the 1820s and 1850s, reformers set up organizations like the "**Brahmo Samaj**" in Eastern India, the "**Prarthana Samaj**" in Western India, the "**Arya Samaj**" in Northern India, and the "**Theosophical Society**" in Southern India.

In the pre-independence era, women's movement focused on the basic rights such as education and widow remarriage and it was also focused on the fight against social evil practices like Sati Pratha (Dhoop, 2018). **Begum Rokeya, Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Anti-Sati Movement-1829), Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar (Widow re-marriage campaign-1856), Rabindranath Tagore** and **Savitribai Phule** were major supporter of Indian feminism. In the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, women's movement were incorporated into the freedom struggle. Basically, a large number of women's participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement, Quit India Movement and Salt March. It were hailed as major landmarks in the history of Indian feminism.

Rani of Jhansi, Rani of Ramgarh, Rani of Taci, and **Begum Hazrat of Lucknow** were the earlier women fighters of the freedom struggle. Women gradually came into the reform movements and played their role not only in changing history but also in the all types of struggle for national freedom. **Mrs. Annie Besant, Dr. Sarojini Naidu, Kamladevi Chattopadhyay, Mrs. Nellie Sengupta, Durgabai Deshmukh** and many others women's worked in the field of education, politics and freedom struggle. Women's also participated in the **Rani**

of **Jhansi Regiment** of the Indian National Army which is set up by **Netaji Subash Chandra Bose**. Thus, it's true that, women's were participated in the violence and non-violence freedom struggle. Women's participation in the freedom struggle was very extensive. **Smt. Kasturba Gandhi, Madam Bhikaji Cama, Sarla Devi, Muthu Lakshmi Reddy, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kriplani, Durga Bai Deshmukh, Priti Lata Waddedar, Captain Lakshmi and Janaki Davar of INA, Jahanara Shahnawaz, Randhabai Subbarayan,** etc. were few of them (Yadav, 2015, p. 78).

Kadambini Ganguly and Chandramukhi Basu were the first two female graduates from India and the entire British Empire, who received their degree from Calcutta University. Women's education also proceeded rapidly in urban centers such as Bombay, Pune and Madras. Remarkable women such as **Pandita Ramabai, Anandibai Joshi, Tarabai Shinde, Haimavati Sen** and **Sarala Devi** challenged patriarchal structure at least in their own lives and also some of them participated in the emerging freedom struggle (Sen, 2002, p. 467).

Saraladevi Chaudhurani was the most remarkable "New Women". She was both a feminist and a nationalist and an active participant in the both social reform and freedom struggle. She was one of the first woman, who realized to need start an association for women. Because, she believed that, women's issues could not be addressed adequately as an adjunct of the National Social Conference, which set up by the Indian National Congress in 1887. Due to efforts several women's clubs, groups and associations were established. For instance, in 1866, the **Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Samaj** was formed by **Keshub Chandra Sen** in Bengal; in 1880s, **Arya Mahila Samaj (The Aryan Women's Association)** was established by **Pandita Ramabai** and **Justice Ranade** in Bombay; in 1905, **Bharat Mahila Parishad (Ladies Social Conference)** was formed as part of the National Social Conference (INC); and **Anjuman-e-Khawatin-e-Islam (The Muslim Women's Association)** formed by **Amir-un-Nisain Punjab** (Sen, 2002, pp. 472-473).

During the 1917 to 1945, two main issues took up by the women's movement. First is political rights for women and second is reform of personal laws. **Lord Edwin Montague**, Secretary of State for India (1917-1922) came to India to join the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford to survey the political scene with a view to introduce constitutional reform. During his visit, Indian women saw an opportunity to demand political rights. In this sense,

in 1917, **Women's Indian Association (WIA)** was formed by the **Annie Besant, Margaret Cousins,** and **Dorothy Jinaraj Adasa** for securing voting rights for women (Somashekar, 2014, p. 130). **Women's Indian Association (WIA)** was the first all India women's association with the clear objective of the political rights for women. The association were joined by **Malati Patwardhan, Ammu Swaminathan, Mrs. Dadabhoy and Mrs. Ambujammal.**

A women's delegation led by **Sarojini Naidu** met the Secretary of State and the Viceroy to plead political rights for women. The women leaders argued that, the absence of women in the legislative assemblies was deplorable and that their presence in the legislative assemblies would be extremely helpful as they could ensure that "children grow up to be splendid, healthy, educated efficient and noble sons and daughters of India" (Basu, 2008). After the joint pressure of women's organizations, the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Parliament agreed to remove the sex disqualification but left it to the provincial legislatures to decide how and when to do so. **Travancore-Cochin**, a princely state, was the first to give voting rights to women in 1920, followed by **Madras** and **Bombay** in 1921.

In the pre-independence era, women's organizations were fighting for women's legal-political and economic rights and trying to improve their position by education and social reform. Women's struggle entered a new phase with the arrival of **Mahatma Gandhi** in the Indian political scene (Kaur, 1968). Peasant and rural women played a significant role in the **Rural Satyagrahas of Borsad and Bardoli**. Women participated in the **Salt Satyagraha, Civil Disobedience Movement, Quit India Movement** and the **other Gandhian Satyagrahas**. A large number of women participated in the meetings, organized protest in the front of shops selling foreign cloth and liquor and went to jail. In 1930, Karachi session of Indian National Congress passed a resolution on fundamental rights gave equal rights to women.

Women's Struggle and Movement in the Post-Independence Era:

After the independence and proclamation of democracy based on universal adult suffrage gave to the Indian women political **right to vote, to elect and to be elected**. Women achieved fundamental right against discrimination based on gender. Women movements against dowry, domestic violence and sexual harassment have resulted in enactment of important legislations

safeguarding women rights. As forms of atrocities have changed, campaigns have diversified to areas such as abortion, surrogacy, sex-worker, and acid attacks. Basically, systematic revival of women's movement started in the 1970's. **All India Women's Association** started raising questions about equity, empowerment, opportunity etc.

The **Constitution of the Republic of India** ensures equality for women and men in every sphere of life and activity. Women in India have been given equality of opportunity in all matters relating to education, employment and legal status (Ministry WCD, 2015). The **Hindu Succession Act of 1956** empowered the Hindu women to inherit property (Gupta, 2022, p. 1). In addition to these laws, a number of other laws have been passed to eliminate undesirable practices and protect, promote and safeguard the interest of women. But, this promises is undermined by the masculinity of nationalist ideology. For example; the **Hindu Code Bill** that proposed equal inheritance for women, prohibited polygamy, and liberalized divorce and custody rights was vehemently opposed by influential congressmen, including the first President of independent India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. It was only in the mid-1950s that some sections of the bill could eventually be passed, although the question of a **Uniform Hindu Code** remained largely unaddressed (Kumar, 1993, p. 97). The laws relating to dowry, rape and violence against women were amended to make more rigid for ensure that culprit is punished and victim get justice. For example; the **Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1983** recognized for the first time domestic violence imposed by the husband and any of his relatives and such violence became an offense under the act.

The **First Five Year Plan (1951-1956)** is related to the social welfare programmes such as orphanages, homes for destitute women and girls, craft centers to teach women skills and nursery schools. In this plan an important distinction has been made between social welfare and social services. On the one side, social welfare was directed essentially at children and women and the other side, social services in health, housing and education were seen as an "investment in betterment of human development". The **Second Five Year Plan (1956-1961)** is also related to the welfare approach towards women. Maternity benefits and crèche facilities for children at work sites were recognized in this plan. It also suggested speedy implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work. The **Third Five Year Plan (1961-1966)** is focused on women's education as a

major welfare strategy. The largest share of this plan was assigned to expansion of rural welfare services and condenses courses of education. The **Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974)** was to promote women's welfare within the family as the basic unit of operation with a continued emphasis on women's education. For the first time there was a shift in the approach from 'welfare' to 'development' in the **Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79)** (Kumari, 2020).

In 1974, the publication of '**Towards Equality**', the **Report of the Committee on the Status of Women** and the **United Nation's declaration of 1975** as the **International Year of Women** beginning with the **First World Conference on Women** in Mexico, created a new interest in and debate on women's issues (Binstock, August 1998, p. 10). Earlier, in 1971, in response to a UN initiative, the Government of India had established a **Committee on the Status of Women** in India to undertake a comprehensive account of all questions relating to the rights and status of women in the context of changing social and economic conditions in the country. A major outcome of the committee report '**Towards Equality**' was the **National Plan of Action in 1976** which provided guidelines based on the **United Nation's World Plan of Action for Women**. The plan identified areas of health, family planning, nutrition, education, employment, legislation, and social welfare for formulating and implementing an action programme for women and called for planned intervention to improve the conditions of women in India. Following the Plan of Action, the **Women's Welfare and Development Bureau** was established in 1976. In 1974 the Indian government published a report, '**Towards Equality**' that put status of women forcefully on the national agenda by arguing that the position of Indian women had declined, not improved, since 1911.

After the independence, three of the most representative movements, from women's point of view, were the **Shahada**, the **anti-price agitations in Maharashtra** and the **anti-dowry movements**. **Shahada**, named after the area in Dhulia district in Maharashtra in western India where it occurred, was a movement by rural landless labourers against the extortionate practices of predominantly nontribal local landlords. But very soon gender-based issues such as wife-beating and alcoholism began to appear, partly because of the large number of women activists in the movement and partly because of raised consciousness of tribal oppression in general and of the female sex within the tribal community in particular. The shift in focus from the fairly private matter of family

violence to a more direct one of public alcohol vending and consumption is significant and has been interpreted as posing a challenge to some aspects of patriarchal ideology. It was because of this particular dimension of the movement that Shahada was claimed as a precursor by the feminists of the late 1970s (Kumar, 1993, pp. 100-103).

The urban-based **anti-price-rise movement** in 1972 was a struggle against inflation. The protest was essentially organized by political parties cutting across ideologies and it grew rapidly into a mass women's movement of extraordinary proportions aimed at consumer protection against rising prices and increased ration allotments (Gandhi, 1990, pp. 50-80). The interesting part was the overwhelming response from housewives. Whether the movement was anti-patriarchal or feminist remains an open question because at no point was the question raised as to why price rises should be a matter of concern only to women. To this extent, it may be argued that the women accepted that their primary responsibility was towards the family. Nor did women challenge their assumed roles as consumers rather than producers. Moreover, their protest was marked by gender-specific symbols, that is, the use of rolling pins during demonstration and the offering of bangles to men as a sign of their contempt for their inaction. However, according to Kumar, "women's collective action by itself implicitly threatens patriarchy" (Kumar, 1993, p. 104).

Anti-Dowry Movement was also breakthrough in the wave of women liberation. It emerged around 1979 continuing through till 1984. It was largely urban based yet nationwide in scope not just in rhetoric but also in the active participation of woman across classes in the country. In 1974 the **Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI)** and later the parliamentary joint select committee found two things that one is female child election or identification and second is prevailing dowry (Kasturi, 1996). Dowry has spread to all castes, communities, religions, and regions. Dowry has to come to include the entire character of gift exchange between the two groups. By 1982 women's organization were insisting that majority of young bride death is due to the reason of dowry or suicide is because of the insisting dowry problems. Some organization like **Mahila Daksataha Samiti, National federation of Indian Women, All India Democratic Women's Association, Nari Raksha Samiti**, came forward to oppose the system by possessing the dishonorable murder of Sudha Goul, in 1983 high court sentenced husband

death penalty and mother in law, brother in law as life imprisonment. In 1984 government amended the dowry bill and further implementation was in 1985 October. Women, who are dissatisfied with the government policies and their status-que joined struggles such as the Tebhaga Movement in Bengal, the Telangana Movement in Andhra Pradesh or the Naxalite movement.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

SI No.	PRE-INDEPEN- DENCE ERA	POST-INDEPEN- DENCE ERA
1.	Women's movement were majorly led by males in the pre-independence era such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Mahatma Gandhi.	The post-independence women's movement led by the women.
2.	In the pre-independence era, women's movement was always attached with the national freedom struggle due to priority of freedom that time.	Today, the women's movement stand separately having their own importance.
3.	Earlier movements were about granting equal rights to women and improving their subordinate positions.	It's not just about equal rights, it's about realizing what equal rights to women can further accomplish.

Women's Struggle and Movement in the Contemporary Era:

Protest by women in India against oppressive conditions comes in many forms. Today the women's movement 'exists in a highly decentralized form with hundreds of organizations in both urban and rural areas throughout the country. Through autonomous, flexible and informal structures and collective types of organizations the Indian women's movement has been able to achieve in both political and cultural spheres (Desai, 1996). Violence against women was on the rise and widely reported in the media. There were cases of rape in police custody, wife murder (usually called bride-burning or dowry deaths) on a large scale, and sexual harassment in the workplace and on the street. Women's issues entered the fields of the **New Social Movements of Dalits,**

Environmentalists, Tribals, Anti-Dam Activists, Peasant and Trade Unions. In a recent time, Muslim women organizations are raising their voices against the inequalities and the barbaric practices. *Vishakha Guidelines* increased economic empowerment and political reservation of women in Panchayat etc. have culminated to a more gender equal future.

Status of Women Committee Report 1975 stated that, a majority of Indian women suffered from poverty, illiteracy and ill-health as well as discrimination in the private and public spheres. This resulted in agitations and campaigns against the worst manifestations of sexism and patriarchy by middle-class women. The report of the Committee on the status of women proved to be a turning point in the path of contemporary women's movements in India. The Status of Women Committee report 1975 made the following recommendations:

1. Equality not merely for justice but for development;
2. Focus should be on economic empowerment of women;
3. Child bearing should be shared as a social responsibility;
4. Recognition of household work as national productivity;
5. Marriage and motherhood should not be a disability;
6. Emancipation of women should be linked to social emancipation; and
7. Special temporary measures for de facto equality.

The researcher focuses on "five mass movements by women in contemporary India" in the paper. This women's movement are following:

Movement against the Delhi Gang Rape

The protest against Delhi Gang Rape became a landmark movement in the history of the women's movement in India. On December 21, 2012, a large number of peoples came out from their houses and the street surrounded Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi was teeming with thousands of people against the brutal gang rape of a 23 year old girl in December 16, 2012 (Bakshi, 2017, p. 44). Historically, it's a first time, when an entire country anywhere in the world come out in protest against the incapability of government to provide satisfactory security to women. After the long protest against the

Delhi Gang Rape, some changes were made in laws regarding rape cases in India.

Anti-Rape Movement was popularized when some organization took the issue as primary concern. These organizations are **Mahila Dakshita Samiti (MDS), Stree Sangarsha Samiti (SSS), Socialist Women's Group, Feminist Network Collective (FNC), Purogami Sangatana, Stree Sakti Sangatana, Pennurumillyyakum** and **some Autonomous Women's Organizations** (Bora, 2019, p. 1245).

Gulabi Gang (Pink Gang)

In 2006, *Sampat Pal Devi* of Badausa in Uttar Pradesh's Banda was faced with an accident where in her friend had been beaten up by her alcoholic husband. She gathered some of her friends and neighbors and rushed to her friend's house and thrashed her husband publicly. This incident sparked off the origin of a group of women vigilantes in Badausa who took upon themselves to correct social evils. Calling themselves the Gulabi gang (Pink Gang), the group did not just limit their activities to a fight against gendered social evils, but rather battled against several other wrongdoings such as hoarding, bribery, caste discrimination and several others. Wearing pink *sarees* and carrying bamboo sticks, they frequently resorted to violence in order to make their voices heard.

Most of the women in the gang belong to the Dalit Community. Speaking to BBC, the self-proclaimed leader of the gang, *Sampat Pal Devi* is reported to have said; "Nobody comes to our help in these parts. The officials and the police are corrupt and anti-poor. So sometimes we have to take the law in our hands. At other times, we prefer to shame the wrongdoers" (Biswas, 2007).

Naked Protest of Manipur Mother's

On July 11, 2004, a 32 year old women named *Thangiam Manorama* was picked up by members of the Assam Rifles (a paramilitary force unit of India) in Manipur on allegations of her being part of the banned **People's Liberation Army**. Next morning, she was found raped and murdered with bullets pumped into her vagina.

Five days after the murder, 30 women came out on the streets of the **Imphal Valley** in protest against the army atrocity against Manorama. They walked down naked to the **Kangla Fort** in Imphal where the Assam Rifles was stationed, carrying a board that read "**Indian Army rape us**", "**we are all Manorama's mothers**" and

“Kill us. Rape us. Flesh us” screamed the women (Singh, 2020, p. 2895; 2897). The shocking protest eventually resulted in the Assam Rifles vacating the Kangla Fort.

Jagmati Sangwan's Movement against Khap Panchayats

In 1995, a young boy in Jind district of Haryana had married a girl from his village against the orders of the Khap Panchayat. As a punishment, the Panchayat Member ruled the rape of boy's 12 year old sister. What ensued was a bitter struggle between the men and women in the village, the men being supportive of the ruling of the Panchayat and the women vehemently protesting against it. Headed by reformer Jagmati Sangwan, close of 1000 women were part of the protest, many among them were married to the men who supported the Panchayat ruling. Over the year she went on to spearhead a strong women's movement in Haryana, mobilizing close 50000 women to join the **Janwadi Mahila Samiti** (Chowdhury, 2017). She along with her supporters led passionate campaign against female foeticide and honor killing in the state.

Anti-Liquor Movement in Andhra Pradesh

In the early 1990s, women in rural Andhra Pradesh took it upon themselves to fight against liquor dependency among their men and the subsequent verbal, physical and emotional abuse that followed. They had just one simple demand *“no drinking or selling liquor”*. Led by a woman called **Sandhya**, the movement began as a **DHARNA** at the collectorate followed by the demand to stop sale of liquor in the village.

When liquor packets reached the sale counters, women rushed there and destroyed them. They later marched to the chief minister with a letter written in blood stating *“we do not need liquor that drains our blood”*. When the Chief Minister refused to ban liquor, they decided to sleep across his door, preventing him from leaving the house, once they realized the futility of pleading for official intervention, they decided to reform their men on the home front. Soon enough, they declared that any men found drinking would have his head shaven and anyone selling liquor would be marched through the village on a donkey. The women led struggle ultimately led to a statewide ban on liquor in 1995. Remarkable on the uniqueness of the movement, political scientist **Kanchallaiah** wrote that *“the methods that they use are neither Gandhian nor Marxian but uniquely their own”* (Chowdhury, 2017).

The recent demands by woman groups for their entry into the **Sabrimala Ayappa temple** or the **Shani Shignapore temple** or their access to the **Haji Ali Dargah**.

Progressive Organizations of Women in India

The roots of the Indian women's movement go back to the nineteenth century male social reformers who took up issues concerning women and started women's organizations. Women started forming their own organization from the end of the nineteenth century first at the local and then at the national level. **Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar**, **Madhav Govind Ranade** and **R.G. Bhandarkar** in Pune and **Mahipatram Rupram Nilkanth** and his associates in Ahmedabad started organizations for prohibition of child marriage, for widow remarriage and for women's education. **Swarnakumari Devi**, a Brahmo leader and sister of the poet Rabindranath Tagore, formed the **Ladies Society** in Calcutta in 1882 for educating and imparting skills to widows and other poor women to make them economically self-reliant. She edited a women journal, **Bharati**, thus earning herself the distinction of being the first Indian woman editor. In the same year, **Ramabai Saraswati** formed the **Arya Mahila Samaj** in Pune and a few years later started the **Sharda Sadan** in Bombay (Paul, 2013, pp. 32-33).

Inspired by the formation of the **Progressive Organization of Women (POW)** in Hyderabad, Maoist women formed the **Purogami Stree Sangathan** (**Progressive Women's Organization**) in Pune, and the **Stree Mukti Sangathan** (**Women's Liberation Organization**) in Bombay. On March 8, 1975, the International Women's day was celebrated for the first time by both party-based and autonomous organizations in Maharashtra. In Bihar, the **Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini** (**Young Students' Struggle Organization**) was formed.

Numerous Non-Government Organizations and other Organizations that support to women's movement in India are mentioned below:

Name of the NGOs and Organizations

1. The Women's India Association, 1917
2. National Council for Women in India, 1925
3. All India Women's Conference, 1926
4. All Bengal Women's Union, 1932
5. Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Sangh

6. Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan
7. Centre for Women's Development Studies
8. Joint Women's programme
9. National Council of Women in India
10. Committee on the Portrayal of Women in Media
11. Kali for Women
12. Sahile
13. SEWA
14. Single women's Organization
15. Bhumata Brigade
16. Gulabi Gang
17. Mahila Atma Raksha Samiti
18. Nari Mukti Sangh, 1990
19. Rahi Foundation
20. Sabala Organization
21. Working Women's Forum, 1976
22. National Commission of Women
23. National federation of Indian Women
25. Maitreye
26. Nav Jargon Women's Association
27. Madras women's association
28. Women's Indian Association

CONCLUSION

In the present time, women's movement are among the most significant part of modern social movement. History shows that though the struggle for women's rights is long and hard, it is a struggle that must be waged and won. The women's movement thus has a long way to go in its struggle for bringing about new values, a new morality and a new egalitarian relationship. Indian women have played an important role from the very beginning of Independence in different walks of life. On the one side, women's movement in the pre-independence era focused on Sati, Widow Remarriage and Girl Child Education. On the other side, women's movement in the post-independence era is related to the social issues, means it's just not focused on the individual rights but that of the society. For example; Chipko Movement, Narmada Bachao Movement, AFSPA, entry into Shani

and Sabarimala temple. The main objective of the women's movement is the prevented the cultural masculinity and patriarchy who see women as the honor of the family. Many contemporary issues are a continuation of earlier ones although they may appear in a more complex and nuanced form (Chaudhuri, 1995, pp. 211-223). Despite a longstanding and vigorous women's movement with many achievements, patriarchy remains deeply entrenched in India, influencing political and social institutions and determining opportunities available to women and men. Today the women's movement in India is deeply cleaved.

With the changes in policies women's have become more powerful in various fields but crimes against women's have grown much with the increase in various rights of women's. Women are still treated, in some respects, in the same old way, yet the perception that Women are second to men has not been erased. Women still has to go a long way to achieve equal status in the minds of Indian men.

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