

# **FEMINISMS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: SOME KEY DEBATES**

*Dissertation Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for award of the degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**New Delhi- 110067**

**2012**



Date: 04/07/12

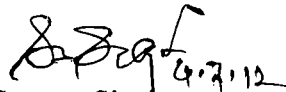
DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled “FEMINISMS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: SOME KEY DEBATES,” submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

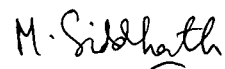
  
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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed to the examiners for evaluation.

  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I extend my profound gratitude to my Supervisor, **Dr. Siddharth Mallavarapu, Assistant Professor, CIPOD, SIS, JNU, New Delhi**, for his extreme guidance motivation and care enabling me to complete this dissertation on time. He has been instrumental in ensuring my academic, professional and moral wellbeing.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank **Prof. Swaran Singh, Chairperson, CIPOD, SIS, JNU, New Delhi**, for his support during the completion of this dissertation and also allowing me to work on this topic.

Then I would like to extend my earnest acknowledgement to **Mr. Alok Kumar Nath, Deputy Librarian, National Library, Kolkata**, for allowing me to obtain information and materials imperative to my dissertation.

Last but not the least I am deeply thankful to my parents, friends and sisters, for their moral support and patience which has borne fruit through the completion of this dissertation. It would not have been possible for me to finish this work without their help, valuable suggestions and encouragement and for providing me a friendly atmosphere throughout.

**Place: New Delhi**

**Date: 18-06-2012**

  
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## INTRODUCTION

The feminists in the global South claim that the voice of the non-Western, non-white women have been uncared for all these time and this has led to resentment among the women in the Third World. Feminism in International Relations (IR) is relatively a nascent theory. Feminist scholars in the west have been critiqued to be partial and have a tendency to generalise (Anzaldua 1987; Spivak 1995; Sylvester 1995; John 1996; Arafy 2005). This study assumes that feminist scholars of the west concentrate on the white, middle-class and western women. The feminists have aimed at endowing women their due position in society and giving them their rights and liberties. On the contrary, the women of the Third World face far complex situations that are complicated by structural constraints and cultural apathy. The feminists of the West have a tendency to marginalise the problems of the ‘women of colour’<sup>1</sup> and universalize their solutions. They have attempted to shed light to the atrocities faced by the women in Third World. The scholars perceive that such problems are more difficult compared to the western women. Therefore, they assert that one should recognise their problems separately and find new solutions to them.

The feminists of the Third World countries have tried to view the women and their status in a different prism. The women of the developing countries have to face diverse problems compared to the women of west. The situation of the women of the Third World has underwent a change especially after the colonial rule (for e.g. in Southeast Asia and Africa), something which the women of the developed countries have not experienced. Though it has been seen that the feminist movement rose simultaneously with the nationalist movement in these countries but after independence, this subject of women’s concern somehow got sidelined. The women belonging to the developing countries face much more troubles than their counterparts in the developed countries, the social, economic and political situations here are much more vulnerable than the latter countries. The women are not only subordinated on grounds of culture, religion, race and ethnicity but also are victims of poverty, illiteracy, tradition etc. These are some problems which the women in the first world have rarely experienced. They are not aware of the

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<sup>1</sup> The term, “women of colour” was quoted by Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1991), against the use of the term “Third World Women.”

violence the women of this Third World have faced in the name of culture and tradition and even during the colonial period. Thus, the solutions given by them can never be completely satisfying for the women of the global South. Moreover, one has to accept the fact that condition of the women in the Third World itself differs to a great extent. Be it because of class or culture or ethnicity or race or religion, the sorts of troubles the women face are quite dissimilar. This is what the western feminists have denied; they have unseen all sorts of diversities existing in these societies.

The dilemma of 'we' and the 'other' is another area where the feminists of the First World and Third World have separate opinions. Though the women of global South talk about differentiation and diversity but the one upheld by the western feminists is in relation to subordination and superiority. The 'other' is defined in relation to the dominant white heterosexual account, an interesting adjunct, an intervention that momentarily arrests the white and/or heterosexual reader into self critical thought. The 'other' feminisms are restricted to a reactive mode, almost in some ways, a servicing function in supplying the missing chapters to the dominant story, as if they have nothing to say about and for themselves. Hence, 'difference' is transposed to 'division,' becoming 'no more than a tool of self-defence and conquest' (Trinh T. Minh-ha 1989: 82). This led to the rise of another tendency and that is of exclusion. The western feminists have the propensity of ruling out the 'women of colour' and their experiences and thus, failing to provide any suitable solution to the problems of the women of this region. Then many thinkers have also talked about the 'language war.' In this regard, Mary Joe Frug suggested that human experience is located 'inescapably within language' (Frug 1992: 1049). It can never be denied that language not only shapes but also restricts our reality. Moreover gender is not something natural, it is something which is constructed and defined. Even the language used by western feminists is not free of binary dualities and is thus, highly biased. Again it has been seen that in the Asian or African context, the distinction is largely communitarian and extended family complex of relations, which is very distinct from the spatially atomized individual existence that is more typical of Western societies. Hence for them a language that separates the self from the collective is both alien and undesirable. This is something which goes unnoticed in the works of the western feminists.

There are many other factors which have led to the rise of disagreement among the Third World and First World feminist scholars. State, identity, justice, rights and globalization are the spheres where we find that the difference of opinion exists between the Third World and First World feminists. We find that the role of the states in the developing part of the world and the one in the developed part of the world quite differ. The nations states formed in the global South are quite new and are formed after the end of the colonial reign. Thus, the roles taken up by them differ hugely from the one performed by the political systems of the developed countries. While the feminists in the West support the minimal role of the state, the feminists of the Third World speak in favour of a welfare state, hence expecting more responsibilities on behalf of the state. They also talk about social justice but not the one given by John Rawls, in his *Theory of Justice* (1971), where he did not give importance to the women's issues, like that of unjust division of labour and unjust power relations within families (Cohen 1997). Hence they also demanded for distribution of justice and rights on the basis of gender. This era of globalization, has put an impact on the life of every individual and has affected the 'women of colour' in particular. The issues of equal pay, division of labour, development process, etc. have affected the lives of the women of the developing countries but in a different manner when compared to the first world women. Moreover, deregulation in the present era has further led to the deterioration of the condition of the Third World women is also because of the advent of the globalization.

So, the difference existing between the two streams of feminisms is needed to be recognized. The feminist scholars of the Third World thus demand for an identity beyond the one established by the western feminists. They want an approach which is more inclusive and comprehensive, where the problems of the women of the global South will be given equal importance. Even they deserve a 'non-coerced space' which could be provided by the western feminist thinkers (Lugones and Spelman 1983). The 'women of colour' preferred a separate dealing with their problems because of the variety existing in them. Hence they tried to highlight differences in colour, race and ethnicity which formed the inspiration for specific forms of women's activism. They also talked about the careful choice of local over either the indigenous or ethics as the term that best describes the varieties of non-western feminism. Hence this is what is needed to be realized and accepted.

## EXISTING LITERATURE:

Some feminist scholars have contributed to the issues relating to the 'women of colour'. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1995), in her work "Can the Subaltern Speak?" has held that there should be authorial inclusion and has condemned the fact that the theories that disclaim the right to speak is very much dependent on the First World women. This has been further supported by Sara Mills (1995) and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2004) who speak in favour of theorizing of difference. This branch of Third World feminists also talks about decolonizing feminism by questioning the traditional ways where the feminists in the West have defined their experiences to be universal to all women. They mainly belong to the group of postcolonial feminists, who also said that with the decolonization process, the problems of the women did not come to an end. They, thus, spoke against misrepresentation and the politics of exclusion. Sarah A. Radcliffe (1994), in her article, has mainly tried to deal with how the feminist geographers while talking about the relation between black, Third World feminists and first world writers have made the former belong to the minority group both authorially and politically. These exclusive tendencies have been further criticized by other feminist thinkers of non-western countries. They also raised their voice against not granting women their status of citizenship (Hooks 1989). This is something which the post-colonial feminists have also dealt with (Mohanty 1988).

The feminist scholars of the Third World have also dealt with other aspects which affect the condition of women in society and have been neglected by the western feminists. They said that the issues of class, ethnicity, race, religion has not been included in the feminist literature of the West. Asuncion Lavrin (1989) and Lourdes Arizpe (1990) these Latin American thinkers unlike western feminists and other Third World feminist thinkers converged to new Marxist notions. They tried to understand the gender problems in relation to class and mode of production. The evolving relation between the women's movement and class struggle along with being a reality in Latin America, it is also a way to shape the struggle against capitalism and the construction of socialism by looking at the issues of culture, ideology and democratic practices. The women of this region got a voice of their own to place their problems through the formation of women's trade unions. Then the problem of race has been brought to limelight by many black feminists. They have not only talked about the problems of the women in the continent of Africa but also the one settled in America (Hooks 1989). The women of belonging to this region while talking about their atrocities not only blame the men but also hold that the white women are also



responsible for their miserable condition as they have deliberately sidelined them. Alice Walker (1961), Bell Hooks<sup>2</sup> (1989) and Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989), have all come together, while saying that racism has further resulted in deteriorating women's status in society. They are victims of all sorts of sexual and physical exploitation not only because of the gender but also because of their colour. Their voice mostly goes unheard and they are rarely given any recognition. Bell Hooks (1984) has brought out another aspect. The effect of racism and sexism on black women, has led to their lowest status and worst condition in American society. Even Alice Walker (1961), in her work has tried to deal with the African and the African-Americans women as well. The African feminist movement, according to them, is not only having its base in the activism against colonial rule but also racist ideologies. Bell Hooks (1981) in her work has said that white women and men are taken separately, but in the case of 'blacks' only the 'black men' are considered.

Then the Islamic feminists, have taken refuge in religion to give women their due independence and rights (Shihidian 1998). They say that instead of borrowing techniques from the feminists of West, they would prefer to get solutions from their own religious works. They have talked about the equal status of women and men based on certain phrases in Quran. This was reinterpreted to be anti-Islamic, thus leading to victimization of women and reduced to mere sexual desire. Then these Islamic feminists have opposed to all these negative connotations about them and they have also denied the inferior status given to them by the Western women. Hence many Muslim women are embracing their religion as a means through which they can express gender identity, power and creativity (Karim Ask and Marit Tjomsland 1998). Then it is found in case of some Southeast Asian countries as well that religion has played quite an important role. It has been found that women are expected to live and abide by religious norms. Though this is something which is not acceptable but then it is found that these notions have undergone huge change. Even women take shelter in the realm of religion in order to prove their variation from their western counterparts (Hasan 1994). Here in this context, Janaki Nair (1996) has talked about the right wing forces that are now dependent on women and are mobilizing them as a citizen of an authoritarian "patriarchal Hindu Rashtra." So, religion has been used as both a means to revive the women from their lower position and also as a means to exploit women

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<sup>2</sup> The name- Bell Hooks has been used here in capital letters for consistency. However, this is in contrast to her own unconventional lower casing of her name. According to hooks, what is more important is the context of her work rather than who she is.

further. But still the third-wave feminists have looked into their indigenous social, cultural and traditional values to rediscover women in the Third World.

The feminists of the Third World further differ from the western feminists on the ground of their disagreement regarding abstract, self-propelling individualistic beliefs. The Third World feminists give more importance to the self-effacing feminism and were communitarian in essence. Then thinkers like, Maitreyi Chaudhuri (2000), Bell Hooks (1989) and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1989, 2003) believed that 'women of colour' should come together in demanding their position and they can bring change together. They have also talked about the extended family institution. Though the 'women of colour' asked for a separate identity for themselves but unlike the west they do not take the means of gender separatism, the man-women antagonism is absent in their opinion. They also demanded for their rights but not at the cost of the ones endowed to their male counterparts in the society. They do not believe in making men or western women the yardstick to measure their condition in society. They rather prefer in having an identity of their own based on their indigenous culture and tradition (Chaudhuri 2005, Hooks 1989, Mohanty 2003, Baksh-Soodeen 1998). These feminist thinkers have rejected the essentialist notions preached by the western feminists and went for difference and diversity within the society and with the west. They also said that the idea of equality spread by the Western feminists cannot be implemented to the conditions of the Third World women. Then Mary Joe Frug (1992), in her article, "A Postmodern Feminist Legal Manifesto (An Unfinished Draft)," considered the language used by the feminists of the First World were biased and conflicting. The feminist theory of the West has neglected the challenges faced by the Third World and their works rarely represented the 'women of colour'. Everything is explained in relation to west. In this context, Robin Tolmach Lakoff (2000) has claimed about language [and] who has the ability and the right to make meaning for everyone.

While dealing with the crucial topic of identity, the feminists of the global South, have criticized that the notion where women are taken as "invisible sign of visibility" they are seen as commodities, as signs produced in social discourse by and for men, and excluded from the universe of cultural production and discourse itself (Gayle 1975, Cow 1978 and Reuter 1978). A concept related to this has been put forward by Marysia Zalewski (2006), "Distracted Reflection." Here she tried to say that imperceptible role of women should also be given

importance. But then surprisingly exclusionist behaviour was more prominent not only in the activities but also in the literary works of the western feminists. Hence, in order to gain one's identity, one should look upon the indigenous and ethical aspect which best describes varieties of non-Western feminism. Mohanty (2003), in her, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*, gave importance to collective identity as the society here is based on cooperative sentiments. They also highlighted the diversity existing in different form of identities which has been negated by the western thinkers thus, upholding the notion of particularization over generalization. Truth which is preached by the western feminists cannot be taken to be absolute and hence the identity should also differ as per individual uniqueness (Cade 1970). They, thus, talk about the multiplicity of identity. They further say that it cannot be imposed. It is something which is to be imbibed and not to be borrowed from the West (Mohanty 1988, Molyneux 1993, Pfeil 1994, Narayan 1997). Relating to this the Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989) has said that thus has talked about identifying the difference. Alice Walker (1961) while talking about identities of women, has also fought in favour of the abortion rights which was denied to them, even Anzaldua (2000) has also talked about reproductive rights.

Along with this they have concentrated on the issues of prejudiced division of labour. Division of labour was made rigid by choice and which led to the devaluation of the status of the women. Thus, this division of labour is unfair and even the payments done to the women are partial and biased. The condition of the women at the work place is also not safe enough. The women are not well aware of their rights at the work place. The women who are involved in hazardous works are rarely given any insurance of their lives. Whereas when we see the condition of the women in the west it is very different, the degree of exploitation is less as the women there are educated and conscious of their rights and liberties. So, when the western feminists deal with issues of labour and their conditions, they fail to represent the real situation of the lower class women of the non-Western countries. This is something which has been brought to the limelight by many Third World feminist thinkers (Hooks 1989, Chinchilla 1991, Mearten 2004, Chaudhuri 2005). Then there are certain structural constraints as well which have been highlighted by the women of the Third World. There exists patriarchal control and structures within law, which has extended more rights to men than women (especially in Muslim countries) (Mojab 2001). Women in these countries fall victims of domestic violence quite often than compared to women of the West (Walker 1989, Kusnesof 1993, Gangoli 2007). In relation

to this they demanded for the political reform and change and extension of the rights of the women. Unlike the West, they relied on the state to take up a more active role in improving the condition of women and endowing them their due rights (Miller1991, Gangoli 2007, Litcher 2009).

The division of labour has been further affected by the new phenomenon of globalization. Globalization has been considered to be gender neutral and that economic, technical transformations are far beyond the conflict related to gender. But then this has been rejected by the feminist thinkers who have considered globalization to be predominantly a male discourse (Hawkesworth 2006). They further say that with globalization many new institutions have come into being which have affected the women in particular (Chaudhuri 2005). This view has been supported by other thinkers who hold that globalization has not proved to be beneficial for the people of the Third World (Wangari, Kamau and Kinyau 2005). It has played an active role in marginalizing women. The economic and social structures mainly affect women's lives adversely in the developing countries. Division of labour in the economic market have led to the formation of the institution of cheap female labour. Women in these economic institutions are forced to perform much crucial work (they are limited to health hazardous jobs like (such as apparel, chemical leather, chemical, leather and electrical equipments), they are mostly involved in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs, limited to the secondary market) but with very less pay. It is seen further that with globalization and the market based reforms encouraged by it, have led to reducing women's control over the scarce economic resources which has further led to deteriorating their capacity to participate and make choices within their family and communities (John 1996 and Bacchus 2005). This has led to withering away of the identity of the women of global South. Then the issues of individualism, development and deregulation have made the condition of women more miserable. But then another group of people look at a different side of the coin. For them globalization has improved the condition of women. They claim that with globalization the issues of gender inequality have dealt with and now women are enjoying a far better position in society. With the advent of globalization, egalitarian trends are now visible because of effectiveness of economic policies (Goode 1963, Parsons 1970, Bell 1973, Inglehart and Norris 2003, Giele 2006, Jackson 1998). So much so, it is pointed out by feminist thinkers like Ruchira Ganguly-Scarce (2003) that women in the developing countries are in a sort of mirage where they think their condition has improved with advent of globalization. There is a

tendency of increment of self-worth and progress among the Third World women. However, it is seen that though there's an opening for the women in the professional field but rarely any measure is taken to implement it and other female dominated occupation, domesticity is always sidelined (Stevenson 1973, Elson and Pearson 1981, Baron and Bielby 1985, Pearson and Mitter 1993, Joeques and Weston 1994, Gothaskar 1995).

Carisa R. Showden (2005) has raised the question about how is political related to new feminism. She said that when we take the case of the Third World feminism the case is very different. They participate in politics and are well aware of their culture. But their definitions of politics is very different as they try to display a position from which knowledge is articulated can have dramatic implications for the kinds of politics that are then seen as viable and valuable. However, there are other feminists who have said something different to this. It is seen that many policies have been made that deal with the issues which trouble women, but how far they have been implemented is a big question. Though women have been given many political and legal rights but how far they can be implemented is a big question because of certain cultural, religious and social barriers, including that of family resistance and illiteracy (Pintor & Gratschew 2002, Moghadam 2003). This has also been taken up by many Muslim thinkers like Bibi Khanum Astarabadi (1894), Nazira Zain al-Din (1905) and Shahrzad Mojab (2001) have pointed out how the dogmatic religious books of law (for e.g. Shahriat) have neglected the area of human rights. Women in the developing countries are limited to the private world and hence this has led to a political gap as they are less interested and knowledgeable in political affairs (Corrin 1992, Chhibber 2002; Burns et al. 2001, chapter 10). The State can play an active role in encouraging women to participate more in the political scenario. Though in this era of globalization situations have undergone a change. With the process of deregulation, the power of the nation-state has reduced to an extent as the international institutions, like International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, World Trade Organization (WTO) have become the real actors. Multinational Corporations now seem to be the real engineers of the new system who rarely pay heed to the national concerns or political and social consequences. Hence the policies made by the state in aid of women and for the improvement of their condition, become useless as the states lack the power to implement them (Kannabiran 2002). Julia Sadbury (2005) has also talked about this women's problem which has resulted because of minimization of the fundamental role of the state as a result of neo-liberal globalization.

## **RATIONALE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY:**

The Feminism of the Third-world might be better understood as an identity, rather than a distinct theoretical perspective, or cohort. The main reason behind this was while theorizing the Western feminists showed a tendency of disregarding the problems faced by their non-western counterparts under the concept of Global Sisterhood. The movement on the basis of class, race, ethnicity, religion and also the movement of the indigenous groups have never been taken into contemplation by them. Hence the third-wave feminism mainly came as a protest against this negligence by the first-world feminist writings, which were more ideational and they described their own experience and perceptions. What are the reasons for this kind of negligence in the feminist theory? The problem of exclusion arises as the feminists of the First World have given recognition only to the women of the West.

Again in the theoretical field of feminism the 'thought provoking framework' is missing. The theory though has been talking about the improvement in the condition of the women but in reality the interpretation done is partial. They only deal with a part of the story thus overlooking the misery of the non-western women. This should also be kept in mind that the demonstration of the Third World is equally essential. Thus, as said by Amrita Basu (1995), that the Third World instead of waiting for the first world to portray their tensions it is their duty to deal with their own miseries themselves. Then the western feminist theorists need to take on board critiques by black and Third World feminisms, especially in relation to notions around the family patriarchy and the State. But here also a question arises of how to theorize them. Even the language taken by them is also biased and thus fails to represent the overall problems.

The role of the State is much different in the developing countries than in the developed nation-states. The function of the political system in the West was only to give equal status to the women compared to men but here in the non-western countries the case is entirely different they demand for a separate identity of their own. They are not that well-off like the western women and hence their needs are to be catered differently. The State should also take up certain steps to endow the women their position in society. The women belonging to different groups have different claims. This is to be recognized.

Then we can come up to the problem of identity crisis prevalent not only among the Third World and the First World but also within the Third World itself. It is seen that the problems of all the women of the world have been rarely described. Only partial picture of the scene has been described. Even within the Third World, the feminist writings are mainly carried on by the middle class women of their society and hence they somehow fail to deal with the problems of the marginalized section of their community. When viewed in a broader spectrum the Western feminist thinkers do the same thing with the non-western women thus making them the minority. But this is rarely taken into consideration. Another area of contemplation is the aim has been to get rid of the binary dualities and the dependence on the literature of the western feminists.

Globalization as a process has a greater impact on feminist thinking at present. With the advent of globalization, is the condition of women on the path of betterment or is it getting worse? The Third World feminist movement began from the 1990's time when the globalizing tendency was also visible in the world scenario. It is also to be seen whether this has led to the accounting of the Third World problems or more homogenization of the feminist IR theory.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

**Question 1:** What is to be included and what is to be excluded when dealing with the theory of Feminism? This question deals with the fact that the feminists of the West, have shown a tendency to exclude the issues related to women of the developing countries which do not bother them but then they claim to be global in their approach. Had they been really so they would have also included the lived experience of the women of the global South?

**Question 2:** It has been seen that women of the West take a generalized technique to represent women. These feminists have not paid any heed to the real situation, i.e., women of the various diverse groups, face much different condition not only compared to the West but among them. Why has the middle class white women ignored the challenges faced by the marginalized sections of the society? Is this a deliberate attempt? How can the problems of the women belonging to the various diverse group highlighted?

**Question 3:** What 'identity' best represents women of the global South that puts an end to the binary dualities? The women of the Third World have been given no recognition beyond the women of the West or their male counterparts. Moreover, they have been endowed with the negative attributes of the existing dualities. The Third World feminists oppose this and demand for a separate identity for themselves, this has been considered in this question.

**Question 4:** What are the roles the State is expected to perform to represent the women and give them their due position in society? This question deals with the functions that State should perform in improving the condition of women. In the developing and under-developed countries, the State is expected to take responsibilities to cater to the needs of the women unlike the developed countries where the State has minimal task to perform.

**Question 5:** It has been claimed that with globalization the circumstances faced by the women of the developing countries will get better. With globalization the gender inequality will also fade away. Is globalization helpful in escalating women's status or rather demeaning it? Is it possible that even in this globalizing era the choice of the local will be given representation?

**Question 6:** There exists many difference of opinion between the Third World feminists and the feminists of the West. The non-western women accuse the western women for their miserable condition. Then the women of the west deny accepting any of the charges. Is there a way to bring the Third World and the First World feminists under a theoretical umbrella?

#### **HYPOTHESIS:**

- The feminists of the Third World have been demanding a separate identity for themselves, by rejecting the exclusionist and universalistic tendencies present in the opinions and works of the Western feminist scholars.
- The State can implement certain measures to represent and improve the condition of the women but its role differs in various countries. However, in this globalized world, where deregulation is the present phenomenon, the State has failed to give the right



amount of protection to the 'women of colour'. The policies implemented by the State have been found to be counter-productive.

- The Third World women believe that there is a way forward in dialogue between Western and Third World women, a dialogue which could potentially address the gendered and racialized relations.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

The study will deal with secondary sources of data along with proper analysis by using the deductive and inductive method. Here the available resources regarding the conditions of the Third World women will be taken into consideration and then a conclusion will be based on that. The basic information related to the problems of the 'women of colour' as given by the feminists of the global South collected will also be analysed and compared with that of the European Western feminists which would in turn help in understanding the real situation of the women in the Third World countries. The study will also use historical, qualitative and analytical methodologies to explore the various causes and consequences of the miserable condition of the women in the developing countries and the differences in their intensities in various debates regarding the situations faced by the women in the Third World: (1) The Third-wave feminists have opposed the universalistic technique used by the First World feminists which has led to implementation of binary dualities, thus, making the women of the developing countries subordinate to their position. (2) They have also challenged the basic notion of identity established by the feminists of the developed countries, as according to them, they have a separate identity which is needed to be recognized. (3) They have also challenged the present role of the State which has become minimal after the advent of globalization, which has further led to the circumstances of the 'women of colour'. It is seen that in order to deal with them one has to challenge the existing theories especially of Western origin. This has been taken up in this study based on the theoretical information available. Then inclusionist approach will have to be used to explain these debates further. All these methods are important for getting the wholesome idea of the situation which is expected to be researched. Only knowledge from the secondary source is not enough as it is a condition that is prevalent till now hence if possible survey can

also be conducted, a participant observation method can be used. The secondary sources of data will include books, various journal articles, news reports, newspaper clippings and various academic papers. Theoretical method is also expected to be applied.

#### **TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION:**

##### **Introduction:**

Here a detailed discussion about the issues related to Third World women will be taken and this will be further dealt through the existing literature regarding this. Then the research questions shall be mentioned along with the hypotheses, scope of research and the chapters related to the research.

##### **What are the Feminisms in Global South? :**

Many feminists did raise the question of where women are represented in IR. But then it has been claimed by the 'women of colour' that while doing so their demands have been sidelined by the Western feminists. Thus, they have talked about a more inclusive approach. This chapter mainly studies the diversities existing in the Third World. While doing so different approaches of Third World feminism came to the forefront. The Post-colonial feminists, the Black feminists, the Indian feminists, the Latin American feminists and the Islamist feminists, claimed for recognition by opposing the essentialist notions upheld by the feminists of the West. They tried to explain their position through different means which has been further dealt here. They tried to explain their range of diversity not only existing among themselves but also with the women of the developed countries. Their problems are quite different and hence the way to solve them should also be unique is what they tried to explain in their works. All these matters have been taken up in this study.

##### **Third World Feminism and the Question of Identity:**

Third World feminists considered separate identity to be one of the fundamental slogans of the feminist movement. This study tries to draw attention to the basic issues which have led to diminishing of identity of the 'women of colour'. It has tried to concentrate on how the western feminists while dealing with the tribulations related to identity have generalized the issue and rarely given any recognition to the challenges faced by the women of the developing countries which differ hugely from the ones faced by the women of the West, thus, problematizing the

notion of 'Global Sisterhood.' How the social factors like- culture, religion, language and race have been neglected thus leading to identity crisis has also been referred. How the politics of identity leading to the breach of identity of the women of the Third World has also been discussed. Trying to deal with these structural and cultural constraints how far have the Third World feminists succeeded in rendering a solution to endow the women of the developing countries with their new identities has been taken up here.

### **Globalization- A Boon or Curse for the 'women of colour':**

Globalization has been considered to be a gender-free concept. But it has been claimed by the feminists of global South that globalization has further led to concretization of gender separation. Globalization has rarely questioned the patriarchy still existent in the system. This has been further dealt with in the study. How the individualistic notion upheld by the process of globalization, affected the 'women of colour' has been further taken up. The women of the West have been affected by the process of globalization differently because of many social, economic and political causes have also been looked upon in this study. The debate regarding whether globalization has led to gender equality or gender disparity has also been seen here. How the prejudiced division of labour affected the 'women of colour' has also been mentioned. The study further analyses how the diminution in the power of the State because of the rise of many international institutions has led to the deterioration of the condition of the women of the developing world. The biased development process has not been helpful enough to improve the condition of the women. How can these exclusionist tendencies be dealt with have also been mentioned in this study.

### **Conclusion:**

Here the questions related to the problems faced by the third world women will be dealt with. The hypotheses mentioned in the beginning of the study will also be taken up and proved. Whether the condition of the women will improve, whether the Western and the third world feminists can be brought under one platform will also be discussed. How identity, State and globalization have impacted the women of the global South will also be considered.

## WHAT ARE THE FEMINISMS IN GLOBAL SOUTH?

Feminism as a theory has existed for a time to have a set of labels: liberal, radical, Marxist/socialist, psychoanalytic, multicultural/global, ecofeminist, postmodern/third-wave and postcolonial. All these varieties of this thought clearly explain the fact that feminism is not a monolithic ideology and that all feminists do not think alike. They have differed in their opinion regarding the exploitation of women and also the degree. But what really has been found that feminism has also not been able to save itself from the North-South divide. It has been seen that the feminists belonging to the Third World have a different notion compared to the women of the first world. The reason being their experience regarding life differs. This was mainly brought to the limelight after the advent of the third-world feminism. The reason for this division as claimed by the new feminists is that though the feminist thinkers did raise their voice for the inclusion of women in IR, but the women for whom they demanded belonged to only one class, i.e. the middle class women mainly belonging to the West. They have paid no heed to the plight of the women of the marginalized view as that would help in shaping the Feminist IR better.

It is a very clear fact, that the prevailing feminism is nothing but of middle-class origin and Western inspiration. As pointed out by Amrita Basu (1995), vast literature on women's movement of the post-colonial has not been represented (silence and omission); and they consider the sameness in the forms of women's oppression and women's movement should take place cross-nationally (commonality). They raised the slogan of – "Sisterhood is Global." But this global tendency has led to the negligence of the local characters. Along with dealing the problems of the women cross-nationally, one should also deal with it nationally. As also seen in the notion of "distracted reflection" by Maria Zalewski (2009: 44), she claimed that the invisible things should also be given equal importance. She further said that, the role of women has been neglected in the working of the State. In the same way, when the analysis is narrowed down it is seen that it is not just in the comparison of men and the women that this kind of negligence is made, but even in the sphere of women this kind of unequal treatment has been taken up. It should not be forgotten that the condition of the women in the Third World is very different from their counterparts in the first world. The situation of women within the Third World differs a lot. For this reason the feminists belonging to the postcolonial think tanks, have claimed that the

problems of the women belonging to these regions should be dealt differently. They have recently started talking about the difference in the levels and intensities of the pain of the women in the global South. How they are treated in this part of the world varies hugely from the western part of the world. Be it Gayatri Spivak, Bell Hooks, Trinh t minh ha or Nivedita Menon, all have dealt with these neglected area of concern as according to them the voice of the women belonging to the post-colonial world has been misheard, avoided, resisted and rejected.

It has been said by these thinkers that women of this region fall victim of- double jeopardy. The women in the area are bound to face more problems than the women in the western world, which is mainly because of two reasons, firstly, they are women and secondly, they belong to the Third World. Chandra Mohanty (1991) has represented them with the name 'Average Third World Woman.' Average Third World woman leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (i.e. sexually constrained) and being Third World (i.e. ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, religious, domesticated family-oriented, victimized, etc.). The women belonging to these regions face very different genre of tensions compared to the women of the West. In the West, women are only involved in getting their rights and liberties, but in the case of the Third World they not only face breach of the freedom, but they also face many unusual kinds of torture. Hence a very different and new methodology should be created to deal with the unique problems of these women. The emancipatory movements taken up by these women are also bound to be different, as the source of their problem is also different.

One of the negative aspects of the feminists belonging to the West is their tendency of 'universalizing' and 'making abstract' women's experience and their discourses are often misunderstood to represent women globally (Judy Kimble and Elaine Unterhalter, 1982). They believe in the sameness of the problems of all the women in the world. But in reality it is not so hence this essentialist nature of theirs is to be rejected and in this regard the non-western feminists have called for diversity. Hence it can be said that the Third World feminism is a form of feminist philosophy which centres around the idea that racism, colonialism and the long lasting effects (economic, political and cultural) of colonialism in the postcolonial setting, are with the unique gendered realities of non-white and non-western women. Third-wave feminist thinkers like Mary E. John (1996) has challenged the dualism, which instead of emphasizing on abstract foundation theories, begin from the situated perspectives of different(ing) women. Then

the other area where there is disagreement between the western and non-western feminist is the dilemma of the 'we' and the 'other.' There lies the problem as in the most version of the 'other' is defined in relation to the dominant white heterosexual account, an interesting adjunct, an intervention that momentarily arrests the white and/or heterosexual reader into self critical thought. The 'other' feminisms are restricted to a reactive mode, almost in some ways, a servicing function in supplying the missing chapters to the dominant story, as if they have nothing to say about and for themselves. In this context, Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989) illustrated how 'difference' is transposed to 'division,' becoming 'no more than a tool of self-defence and conquest.'

The other area of difference is that of the language. Mary Joe Frug (1992) suggested in this context that human experience is located 'inescapably within language.' It can never be denied that language does shape and restrict our reality. Moreover gender is not something natural, nor is it determinate and definable. But it is really astonishing that the language used by the western feminist is not only biased but also inequitable. The Third World society instead of supporting individualism go for communitarianism so is the case with the feminists of this region. Hence for them a language that separates the self from the collective is both alien and undesirable. They have rarely spoken about the plight of the non-western women. There is a new language used by women of the Third World that emphasizes a feminism rooted in their own experiences and positionality. It is seen that language not only plays an important role in describing the situation of third-world and first-world, but it also helps in understanding the viewpoint of various thinkers as well. For e.g., it can be seen that within the Third World feminist thinkers like black feminists namely, Bell Hooks claim that feminist labels, others feel more comfortable adopting Alice Walker's "womanist" identification (Walker 1983, xi-xiii; Hooks 1984). Other than these a lot of other factors have led to contestations between the first-world and the third-world feminist thinkers, starting from the issues of the state, identity, justice, rights, globalization, etc. With notion of 'authentic experience' it can be said the problems of difference and exclusion should also be dealt with. Surprisingly, this third-world has been made the minority. Hence it is said that western feminist geographers need to provide 'non-coerced spaces' (Lugones and Spelman 1983).

The feminist of the Third World expressed their alienation from the white women's movement because they felt that it did not deal with survival issues and hence was not relevant to them. The main issue for these women is- survival. All drew on their daily life experiences including race and class oppression and focused largely on their survival needs. In their own ways each was also engaged in challenging women's subordination, although this may not have been articulated as their primary goal.

Another aspect where the Third World feminists have differed from the first world feminists is their apprehension of women as not individual. This is because they mainly stress on communitarian and extended family complex of religions which is very distinct from the spatially atomized individual existence that is more typical of western societies. This is the notion which differentiates them from the white feminists, as former remain anchored in their own communities/movements, where they worked together with men- even as they repudiated their misogyny- on issues of cultural, racial/ethnic and economic survival. Other than this it has been seen that there are varieties of feminisms available in the global South. The reason mainly being the differences in colour, race and ethnicity are often the inspiration for specific forms of women's activism. It is further pointed out by the Third World in context to the western feminists is that living in the intersection of class, gender and race, many resented what they perceived as the women's movement's single-minded focus on gender and the gender separatism that often resulted from this analysis. Regardless of the differences they had with the men in their movements, activist 'women of colour' remained aligned with them. Although not all of the activities were from poor backgrounds, their ties to their communities made class issues paramount.

The different varieties of feminisms available in the global South share some kinds of similarities. It is their willingness to accommodate diversity and change. Then they are particularly eager to understand how gender oppression and other kinds of human oppressions co-create and co-maintain each other. The third wave feminists let 'women of colour' speak for themselves about the gender issues they face and how these issues interlock with each other, some of which these women may view as their main problems. According to Third World feminist, Chila Bulbeck (1998), women in developing countries lead a particularly complex life because their world, the Third World has different contradictory identities.

It can thus, be understood that the Third World feminism mainly came into existence in order to bring to the limelight the notions of diversity, particularity existing in the world which had been vehemently ignored by their western counterparts. They prefer integration which means inclusion which has been excluded and subordinated and then transformation suggesting re-imagining established knowledge and then order the things. The various class, race, ethnic and economic differences existing in different parts of the world should never be done away with. The feminists of the Third World hence tried to highlight this point that- diversity should be celebrated. The reason given by them is that the problems faced by the women in various societies differ so they should be dealt differently. Feminist theories belonging to the Third World are collaborative, interdisciplinary inquiry and a self-conscious cultural critique. So, we see that in this part of the world many forms of feminisms came into being. Starting from the Postcolonial Feminism, this mainly came to the limelight to deal with the situation of the Third World women, followed by some narrowed approach taken by the Black Feminism, Islamic Feminism, Latin American Feminism and Indian Feminism.

#### **POSTCOLONIAL FEMINISM:**

Post-colonial feminist theory is based upon the theories of psychoanalysis, Marxist-feminism, and post-colonialism. One of the central ideas in postcolonial feminism is that by using the term 'woman' as a universal group, they are then only defined by their gender and not by their gender and not by social classes and ethnic identities. Further it is seen, postcolonial feminists emphasize that "the oppression of women in one part of the world is often affected by what happens in another, and that no woman is free until the conditions of oppression of women are eliminated everywhere." The postcolonial feminists try to analyze how the state of affairs disempower and disadvantage Third World women in particular. They also claim that though gender issues play an important role but according to them, political and economic issues and social practices tend occupy the centre of the stage as they often marginalize and oppress women. They stress that their oppression as members of a Third World people are often greater than their oppression as women per se.

Postcolonial feminists criticize western feminists because the latter have a tendency to generalize women's issues and their discourses are taken to represent women globally. It is claimed by them that they have denied the voices of the non-Western, non-white women for



many years, which has led to rise in resentment among the feminists of developing nations. To quote Aihwa Ong (1994): “Western feminists seek to establish their authority on the backs of non-western women, determining for them the meanings and goals of their lives.” The non-western women have been kept in the category of ‘the other’ to make our familiar faces to look strange, to offer new interpretations. Hence, these postcolonial feminists have struggled for recognition, not only by men in their own culture, but also by the western feminists. Third World feminism has been described as a group of feminist theories developed by feminist theories who acquired their views took part in feminist politics in so-called Third World countries. They mainly believe in rejecting essentialism in almost everything. They are the ultimate acceptor of diversity. Some of them prefer to valorise women and the feminine over male and masculine. The Third World feminist thinkers further argue that if they have their women are to be liberated, they have to raise their voice against the various issues like essentialist construction of the Third World women; universalist assumptions of sexist oppression across different cultures and binary construction of modernity vs. tradition.

Two prominent protagonists of this feminism are: - Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak and Chandra Talpade Mohanty. They mainly explore the history and legacy of colonialism and postcolonialism and their effect on the enforcement of gender constructions. By questioning both western feminism and patriarchal postcolonialism, these theorists begin to explore the complexity of how transnational feminisms can inform both theory and practice.

Gayatri Spivak asks ‘Can the subaltern speak?’ as she finds western feminism gets its prominence centring Europe. She even blames Foucault for doing so. Her ‘subaltern’ is the woman from the Third World. She was one of the first theorists to draw connection between the women and postcolonial. The voices from the Third World woman utter the ‘subaltern speaking’ – as she holds. She further holds that in regard to theories the authorial move of disclaiming the right to speak about/with Third World women is very much dependent on the first world women (and men), under the conditions of racism, neo-colonialisms and patriarchies. Hence she tried to find ways of moving away from authorial exclusion, and towards authorial inclusion with re-conceptualized ideas about the political means this generates. In this regard she has further dealt with two senses of representation which go together- representation as ‘speaking for’, as in politics and representation as ‘representation’ as in art or philosophy. Since theory is also only

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'action', the theorization does not represent (speak for) the oppressed groups. Spivak further said that the process of academic production changes such that the post-colonial critic learns to speak in a form that is taken seriously by disenfranchised women. 'Unlearning our privileges as our loss,' as she suggests, thus means recognizing that our productions of representations of what she calls the 'gendered subaltern,' although authorized and generally accepted in the north are missing authorizing dialogues and communications with Third World women. She has been complemented for producing a 'thought-provoking framework.' She has claimed that the female sex belonging to the Third World have never been allowed to speak and are always shown as "deeply in shadow." To quote her:

I think it is absolutely on target to get a stand against the discourses for universalism, essentialism it comes to terms with the universal of classical German philosophy or the universal as the white upper class male...etc. But *strategically* we cannot. Even as we talk about *feminist* practice, or privileging practice over theory, we are universalizing. Since the moment... become vigilant about our own practice and use it as much as we can rather than make the totally counter-productive gesture of repudiating it.

Another thinker who has dealt with this branch of feminism is- Sara Mills (1995). She remarks,

perhaps the most important area in which post-colonial feminism can develop is in the theorizing of difference, whereby women can speak across nations and cultural barriers, not to assume their context or concerns are the same, but rather to develop a set of theoretical principles of translation so that alliances can be formed in spite of and perhaps (paradoxically) because of, differences in power and differences in culture (Mills 1995: 109).

The theories given by the Third World rather than working from established and usually abstract foundational theories, begin from the situated perspectives of differentiating women.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2004), in *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*, elaborates on these connections and extends postcolonial feminism to include issues brought up by global migration and recent disturbances to relationships of power. She also wrote of decolonizing feminism through the questioning of traditional ways that

feminists in the United States and Europe have defined their experience as universal to all women. Earlier she claims that the western feminist writers have imposed their misinterpretation of Third World women on feminist thought, these Third World women have been dubbed as ‘the last colony.’ Hence it can be said that Mohanty is right in arguing that the glib assumption of a selfsame universal oppression

limits theoretical analysis as well as reinforces western cultural imperialism. For in the context of a first/third world balance of power feminist analysis which perpetrate and sustain the hegemony of the idea of the superiority of the West, produce a corresponding set of universal images of a ‘third world woman,’ images such as veiled woman, the powerful mother, the Chaste Virgin, the obedient wife, etc. These images exist in universal, ahistorical splendor, setting in motion colonialist discourse which exercises a very specific power in defining, coding and maintaining existing first/third world connections.

Use of the term ‘Third World Women’ by the Western feminists has been widely critiqued by her and in place of that Mohanty uses the term interchangeably with “‘women of colour’.” Another important contribution by Mohanty to the discourse is the importance of feminist re-imagining of history through the perspective of marginalized women:

Feminist analysis has always recognized the centrality of rewriting and remembering History, a process that is significant not merely as a corrective to the gaps, erasures, and misunderstandings of hegemonic masculinist history but because the very practice of remembering and rewriting leads to the formation of politicized consciousness and self-identity (p. 78).

Then many other thinkers namely, Sara Suleri, claim that the position of Third World women can be established as tangential to official history. Creating spaces of solidarity in the interstices of patriarchal and imperial culture, women transform a vulnerable position into moments of subjecthood. With this stance *Meatless Days* defies both essentialism and postmodern multifariousness. The category of woman is, therefore, reinscribed as an aporia. By representing Pakistani women through their omission from the official history, she reconstructs a whole community of women who were only occasionally aware of themselves as women.

The west/rest divide creates a false sense of easily definable identities for women whose lives are hybrid and complex. There is no easy formula to identify what it means to be “liberated,” “empowered,” or “repressed” in diverse cultural contexts. Groups of women around the world use their particular cultural contexts and needs in order to create feminist activism. This activism may take forms that are quite different than those recognized in the United States or Europe. Western feminists might not feel comfortable with a group that focuses on the biological and traditional role of woman as mother or those that use religion as the basis for their work. While feminist theory in the United States and Europe has often been predicated on the idea that there are no essential differences between men and women, many in other contexts use gender difference as a source for strength and activism.

These thinkers have tried to highlight that the women in the Third World have experienced a lot of atrocities during the colonial rule but with the process of decolonization, the position of women did not undergo change. They were exploited even after independence of the nation-states as the institution of patriarchy still prevailed. The women in the developing countries had to face much more problematic situation than the women of the west. However, this condition was rarely considered by the western women who were mainly indulged in universalization and generalization of their theory without paying any heed to the non-western women. This led to rising of the voice of the third feminists. These groups mainly struggled for recognition, not in by men in their own culture, but also by Western feminists. They mainly talked in favour of the realizing the existing difference. They further claimed that this diversity should not be taken in the sense of domination.

The postcolonial feminists have thus asked to give importance to the local aspect as well, because without doing that the women belonging to the non-Western world can never be relieved from their plight. Thus realizing the problem of the Third World is very important. In the theoretical perspective it can be seen that the Third World is missing. Hence postcolonial feminism is a theoretical and activist project for societal transformation. The first world feminist never made an attempt to include their other counterpart. They have been perceived as the minority, both authorially and politically. Thus, the postcolonial feminists spoke against the politics of exclusion and misrepresentation. Another fact which can be seen now is that the

western feminists are reluctant to take on board the critiques of western feminisms articulated by these writers.

### **BLACK FEMINISM:**

The African women's movements has been strongly influenced and shaped by the activism against colonial rule and racist ideologies. Surprisingly, the African situation shows that the acceptance of certain social roles does not necessarily include subjugation of women. In African modes of society, the emphasis is usually less on the individual. Economic and political relations are collective and not individual. This makes African women's role important in trade relations. The condition of women was better off in the African societies. There are instances where existence of female leadership is found but that does not mean that individual ordinary women had equal rights. But with western education and arrival of the colonizers the legal and economic position of the women changed drastically. They systematically overlooked women by always noting down men as the owner of farms or land. Even the division of labour was done according to gender. Then the attitude of considering 'women's place is in the home' and thus, suppressing women. The western education is further giving more opportunities to men.

The gap between black women and the white one is very deep indeed, on certain grounds. In their fight for equal rights, the white women ignore all African and African-American women as claimed by the black feminists. Sexual violence was high on the black women's agenda. They had to fight for the racist stereotyping and for many other causes and hence have certainly diversified the feminist outlook. It has been seen that African gender politics has become increasingly complex and contradictory. Feminism, as a movement that is both global and local, leaves little untouched. In postcolonial contexts, it presents a praxis that directly opposes the hegemonic interests of MNCs, international financial and developmental agencies and nation-states as well as the existing male domination of disparate traditional structures, civil society formation and social movements.

Thinkers like Trinh t Minh ha, Bell Hooks and Alice Walker opposed the western feminist theory as they have been following the dualist notion and considering the Third World feminism as the "other" and defining in relation to dominant white heterosexual account. For e.g., it has been found that the black, minority and immigrant women have been on the whole

invisible within the feminist movement in Britain and within the literature on women's or feminist studies. In this context Bell Hooks said,

In much of the literature written by white women on the 'women question' from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, authors will refer to 'white men' but use the word 'women' when they really mean 'white women'. Concurrently, the term 'blacks' is often made synonymous with black men. (1981: 140)

They thus, tried to problematize the notion of "Global Sisterhood" and the implicit feminist assumption that there exists a commonality of interests and goals amongst all women. Within black feminism the most dominant approach defines black women suffering from the 'triple oppression' of race, gender and class. They appealed to give different importance to the problem related to the ethnic and gender problems. The 'ethnic' context of feminist struggle has been systematically ignored and this has further led to both political and theoretical inadequacies within feminist and socialist analyses. But it is the blacks who have dealt with this issue. They also criticized the Marxist traditional attempt on ground that the later dealt with the relation between ethnic and class division and also gender and class division but they neglected the terms between ethnic to gender division and vice versa. Gender and ethnic divisions particularly are underpinned by a notion of 'natural relations.'

There are various thinkers who have raised their voice against the partial treatment of the not only the male theorists but also the western feminist thinkers. They are- Bell Hooks, Alice Walker and others.

Bell Hooks in her book, "*Aint I a Woman*," she has dealt with the effect of racism and sexism on black women, which led to their lowest status and worst condition in American society. White female abolitionists and suffragists were often more comfortable with black male abolitionists such as Fredrick Douglass, while southern segregationists and stereotypes of black female promiscuity and immorality caused protests whenever black women spoke. Hooks points out that these white female reformers were more concerned with white morality than the conditions these morals caused black Americans. She also criticized the Black Nationalist movements on the ground of being patriarchal and misogynist. Then like all other Third World feminists, she says, the "feminist movement", a largely white middle and upper class affair, did not articulate the needs of poor and non-white women, thus reinforcing sexism, racism, and

classism. She suggests this explains the low numbers of black women who participated in the feminist movement in the 1970s, pointing to Louis Harris' Virginia Slims poll done in 1972 for Philip Morris that she says showed 62 percent of black women supported "efforts to change women's status" and 67 percent "sympathized with the women's rights movement", compared with 45 and 35 percent of white women (also Steinem, 1972). In her other work, "*Talking Back: thinking feminist, thinking black*," (1989) she has again said how the literary works of the black feminists have been neglected and how their voices have been unheard. She said in this context, "... the voices of the black women- giving orders, making threats, fussing- could be turned out, could become a kind of background music, audible but not acknowledged as significant speech."

According to Hooks, the numbers of black feminist writers are increasing but they are not allowed to come to the public easily. The context of silence is varied and multidimensional. Most obvious are the ways racism sexism and class exploitation act to suppress and silence. Hence her solution to this is-

[m]oving from silence to speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited and those who stand and struggle side by side a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of "talking back," that is no mere gesture of empty words that is the expression of our movement from object to subject- that liberated voice" (Hooks 1989).

As one of the most prominent voices in black women's literature, Alice Walker brings a wide array of historical and cultural information to her work, not similar to the contemporary works. Walker's sense of black literary tradition was broader than the moment. Alice Walker since her very student life realized the negligence towards black and in the educational institution she thought that there were more important things to do than learn to behave like a lady (1961). "At that time educating young black women was unusual enough. She further found that their contacts with men were carefully monitored; the college authorities were determined to counter stories of the sexually free black women and worse, the pregnant, unmarried black girl." (Zinn, 18-19). All these issues and personal experience led Walker to become a prominent and vocal supporter of abortion rights. She was very surprised by the level of ignorance among the American blacks, that the experiences of their own people were completely foreign to them.

Thus, she gave importance to the “[f]olk history of her people.” She found that though blacks in the South theoretically had the right to vote, but in reality they were prevented from doing so by unfriendly landlords and defiant law enforcement. She raised her voice against these kinds of injustices as well that were racist in essence. In her most acclaimed work, “*The Colour Purple*” (1982), Alice Walker uses twentieth-century southern history as a vehicle for highlighting racial and gender oppressions writ large. Walker in her novel blends historical sensitivity with her own peculiar vision of Afro-American culture, especially as that culture shapes black female relations, for e.g., rural sexual division of labour that have been widely affecting the status of women in the society. She further explicates the lives of black women through their suffering, courage and just plain quirkiness. She further enriches our understanding of their historical dimensions even as she offers alternatives to rigid gender roles. The relations between the black males and females in the Afro-American society has been well brought out by Walker and then through the various characters in the book she tries to explain the relations that used to exist between the blacks and the whites and how the latter ill-treated and exploited the former. It can be understood through Sofia, a character in the novel, endured both the best and the worst behaviour that Southern whites have to offer blacks (and the best is not so great) ridicules the notion of ‘common humanity’ “all the coloured folks talking about loving everybody just ain’t looked hard at what they thought they said.” (p. 235). Thus, it can be said that Walker’s life and enormous body of work stick closely to her concerns with women, people of colour and justice. Here defence of the environment, opposition to globalization and interest in alternative forms of knowledge are consistent with this worldview.

The Black Woman’s Manifesto claims,

The black woman is demanding a new set of female definitions and a recognition of herself of a citizen, companion and confidant, not a matriarchal villain or a step stool baby-maker. Role integration advocates the complementary recognition of man and woman, not the competitive recognition of same (p. 42).

The relation between black males and females got worsened with the intervention of the western biased notions. This is a glaring fact which cannot be denied. The black feminists have been very



critical about the western feminist writers as the latter are in the habit of treating the women belonging to the Third World as mere recipients. They have been perceived as the minority.

Hence the feminist social movement activists, tried to develop new ways of thinking about race, class, and gender and of reconnecting across race. They learned that in order to be inclusive, they had to lose some of their ideals, to construct relationships based on who they were and not who they wanted to be or others wanted them to be. White women worked hard to understand their own racism and how a women's movement could become inclusive. Black women worked hard to make white women understand how race, class, and gender intersected in black women's lives.

The movements started by the black feminists though they claimed for equality but it was not at the cost of making the men unequal compared to them. Thus, their goal was to create a society in which resources were shared equally, not simply to provide more opportunities for women. Undoubtedly, the issue of feminist racism is unfamiliar to most people, who identify the women's movement as being about gender, not race. The black feminists vehemently rejected the universalization and abstraction means of the western feminist theorists. They claimed that the third wave books let 'women of colour' speak for themselves about the gender issues they face and how these issues interlock with other issues, some which women may view as their main problems. The women belonging to this region do not have problems relating only to breach of freedom and rights. The women here have a complex life and for this they have different contradictory identities. This has been deliberately neglected by their western counterparts. This is the point of discontent for them. For this reason the thinkers of this area have taken a very open and multiple, varied and rhythmic and more important full of possibilities attitude in their writings. They attempted for an interdisciplinary attitude to save themselves from the isolation. Thus Black feminists' theorizing reflects a proactive/reactive stance of pragmatic activism which addresses those issues deemed deleterious to the well-being of Black women. Although Black women are often characterized as victims, theorizing is a form of agency that provides them with opportunities to "learn, think, imagine, judge, listen, speak, write and act" (Stimson, 1989)—which transforms not only the individual (from victim to activist, for example) but the community, and the society as well.

## **INDIAN FEMINISM:**

Feminist Movement in India, have posed challenges to established patriarchal institutions such as the family and to dominant social values and structures, most significantly in the areas of violence against women. Indian feminism as a movement has challenged hegemonic notions of the 'Indian family,' detractors have constructed Indian feminism as a distinctly western phenomenon. It has tried to extend the study and interpret the 'local issues' and the concept of patriarchy as well. In India, like the other Third World countries, feminism and nationalism were closely interlinked. As observed by Vina Mazumdar, "the independence of a country and of women had become so intertwined as to be identical" (2001: 135). But surprisingly, the women's movement in India had none of the man-woman antagonism characteristic of women's movement in the West. The story of women's oppression clearly cannot begin with colonialism, but colonialism has recast many of our traditional hierarchies and self conscious feminism. Though women's issue went side by side with the nationalist concern, but in independent India, scholars have expressed both dismay and bafflement over the disappearance of the women question from the public sphere.

It has been seen that most women have limited participation in decision making process. Indian feminism is deeply divided about the state today, so women's movement takes interest in matters related to state, politically as well as theoretically, rather than disengagement from the State. Presently, women's rethinking of the State and women's movement's attitude towards it and concomitantly, towards questions of rights, equality, legal justice, minority/group rights and civil society have been prompted by reflection on the perceived failure of the efforts of the past two decades of activism in the women's movement. Indian feminist have thus, attempted to intervene in the area of law in at least three ways:- Firstly, by exposing the working of patriarchal controls and structures within law, critiquing civil marriage and divorce laws that extend more rights to men than women. Secondly, to unpack the plural ways in which law operates, including offering some redress to women in situations of domestic violence. Finally, to campaign to extend the rights of the women, such as, campaign against sexual assault and rape (Gangoli 2007).

It is however claimed that Indian feminism is highly influenced by western feminism. This has been brought to the forefront not only by the State but also from certain sections of the

society, including by right wing Hindu fundamentalist forces who claim that they (feminists) are being alienated from the 'Indian' realities of family structures. But in reality, the case is quite different. In order to prove this the Indian feminists have referred to the 'indigenous roots'. The search for the indigenous roots of feminism is linked past to our colonial past and the imperatives of imagining anew our past to map both our present and future. Hence feminists went for the exploration of tradition and also paying heed to the grassroot level i.e. the local that helps in describing best the varieties of non-western feminism. Sensitive to an orientalist vision, Liddle and Joshi (1986) opine that the heritage of feminism in India shows that the roots of women's struggle and resistance go back a very long way, and provide the Indian women's movement with a history of its own, in which the intervention of the British feminists represented only one strand amongst many.

They also opposed the western feminisms on the ground of the latter's generalizing nature. According to them, universality within feminism is a fiction based on essentialist notions. They also differed in the individualistic nature of the white feminists. Hence they went for self-effacing feminism because they believe that 'the self' that is independent of or that overarches the many roles prescribed for the Indian woman is a luxury, an indulgence, an unnecessary (illusionary) pleasure. As per the Indian feminists, the language that separates the self from the collective is both alien and undesirable. In the Indian context, it can be said whatever differences that exist between the Dalit and mainstream women's movements, between the organized left and autonomous women's groups, between the first-generation and second- and third-generation feminists, the concern with the issues of a broader collectivity of women and the dispossessed is a constant feature.

They further hold that the claim of the Western feminists of giving importance to all the women in the world is baseless. For the first world women to combat the causes and consequences of global enquiry and forge global solidarity would mean sacrificing many aspects of their privileged lifestyle. The notion of equality preached by the western feminists has also been negated by the Indian feminists on ground that they have failed to translate the core western promise of equality to equality for women.

Nowadays it can be said that while Indian women's movement is influenced by and in turn influences, western feminism, it is unusual within feminisms in the strong links it has forged

with other social movements. Therefore unlike in the west, Indian feminists- including those within separatist feminist organizations- work with left-wing movements on issues relating to women's rights. The need to protect the home- and by extension, gender relations within the home- from the corrupting influences of the west is a continuing concern in contemporary India, one with which feminists are constantly confronted.

The Indian theorists who played an important role regarding this are: - Maitreyee Chaudhuri, Mary E. John, Nivedita Menon and others. They have talked about the feminist movement that has been taking place in India. For them the Indian feminist movement has its base in the nationalist movement a notion shared by most third-world feminist thinkers. But along with that they share a belief that feminism in India is a much older phenomenon and hence to create their own theory of feminism instead of borrowing from the west they should try to take inspiration from our own traditions. They also talked in favour of the communitarian essence to be the base of the movement rather than the individualistic attempt of the western feminist.

Maitreyee Chaudhuri (2005) is one of the prominent theorists, who have dealt with the status of women in India. In her work, *Feminism in India*, she insisted on teaching history as according to her, feminist scholarship in India has been historical. Self-conscious history writing is crucial for any modern society but more so for one with a colonial past, in the narrativizing women have been made key marker of the nation's culture and identity. Feminism in India as per her opinion stems from the disconcerting historical fact that feminism in India has had to constantly negotiate, define and distinguish itself in relationship to the West and willy-nilly has been located in an international order that has been historically dominated by it. She, thus, went for 'Indigenous feminism' which is a flip side of the persisting legacy of an uneasy relationship with western feminism. Other than this she has also talked about the communitarian and extended family complex of relations which she has tried to distinguish with the individualistic tendency of western feminism. She has also talked about the impact globalization has on the Indian society at large and women in particular. Here she has further talked about the unequal relationship between Indian and western women. She further pointed out two salient features of dominant western theory surface in this model. First, the privileging of the abstract, self-propelling individual who now finds new embodiment the enormously resilient poor Third World women, an entrepreneur in her own right and second, a reincarnation of the personal and

political maxims in its more limited avatar whereby the myriad actors, such as transnational corporations, international institutions, banks and arms dealers, states- both foreign and one's own- impacting Third World spaces retreat from the given frame of analysis. Hence Maitreyee Chaudhuri has tried to give importance to the traditions of India as according to her they form the very basis of Indian feminism. She has also talked about the collective essence of Indian culture that can never be done away with.

Another work by Mary E. John (1996), *Discrepant dislocations: feminism, theory, and postcolonial histories*, traces a series of responses to the experience of Western domination from personal, political and theoretical perspectives. She tries to prepare a ground for alternative theorizations of the divergences and connection between United States and India. Then while dealing with the theoretical arena she claims that the postcolonial and feminist theorists should shun the use of such partial and composite characteristics, further giving up its universalistic assumptions. She further hails for greater self-reflexivity which would bring the 'East' and the 'West' more close to each other, somehow helping to understand the indigenous term. She is also concerned with the questions of race and the demands of 'women of colour', both for what they tell us about Western culture and in the belief that these issues might speak to the impasses besetting contemporary feminist debated in India. She has further tried to show how the differences between the first- and third-world locations translate into an association of feminism with the West. She has also tried to do away with claim that no theoretical contribution has been done by the Third World theorists. Thus, she has tried to give a vivid description of the development of the feminist scholarship in India mainly concentrating on the post-independence era. While doing so she has taken a historical perspective an attempt taken by many other thinkers of the third-world. She further enriches us with the knowledge that in nineties, feminism in India has been responding to- and influencing the course of- profound changes in the country. She has tried to explain the present scenario, by highlighting how the Indian middle-class is trying to get them acquainted with the images, goods and lifestyles of the world. But on the other hand, the emigrant brothers and sisters are trying to hold on to their roots in the United States attempt to compensated for their cultural dislocations by cultivating a variety of fundamentalisms that collude strangely with those of their counterparts at home. She has thus, tried to deal with the various aspects of Indian feminism by comparing it with the Western feminism. John while

dealing with these issues has tried to give importance to the culture and tradition along with the national identity as well.

The Indian Feminism is also a product of the unequal treatment done to the women not only by their male counterparts but also by the western feminists. For them, their identity lies in the difference. But what they really oppose is that women by virtue of their positioning in the private domain are expected to live and abide by religious norms; their fidelity to religious values becomes the basis for the judgment of community identity as a whole (Hasan 1994). But again it is a very glaring fact that it is these Indian feminists who in order to prove their difference from their western counterpart have taken shelter in the realm of religion. Janaki Nair (1996) has talked about how the right wing forces are now dependent on the participation of women but she's strictly against the mobilizing of women as citizens of an authoritarian "patriarchal Hindu Rashtra." According to her, such a program, despite the obvious powers that it confers on some categories of women bears little or no resemblance to feminist aspiration and may even undo the legacies of the nationalist, left or feminist politics. Hence according to some Indian feminist thinkers religion is now ineluctably the property of right wing. Women have thus to realize for the survival that they have to go beyond religion, indeed beyond nationalism as well. Hence goes their search for 'indigenous roots' of feminism and traditions.

In the Indian context, it cannot be denied that diversity is one of the most important factors. Disparity within the society is quite huge. With the existing dissimilarities the types of problems faced by the women in different societies can never be same. Hence the measures to solve the problems can never be identical. This is the thing that has been neglected by the first-world feminists. Their tendency of universalizing the problems of women into one single point can never be accepted by the Third World feminists. They have also talked against the notion that women mainly concentrating in the private domain are apolitical. Rather women are not indifferent or insensitive to struggles in the political domain, nor are they now a mere mute witness to them. Only problem is that the voice of the women, regarding political struggle, often gets submerged in the general. They have talked about legal equality undoubtedly an important dimension of the strategy for consulting gender identity. This identity factor has given importance to the divergence and hence the Third World feminists claim that it is now their duty to represent the women of their country.

## **LATIN AMERICAN FEMINISM:**

Like any other Third World feminisms, even Latin American feminism also believed that all identity is constructed across difference and uniqueness. Though the origins and evolution of Latin American feminism have been influenced by interaction with international feminism, it evolved in response to the specific socioeconomic and political conditions of the region which differed from those conditions of the region which differed from those facing feminism in Europe and in the United States. For them it was necessary to develop a strategy based on a combination of three levels of problems: as women, as nationals of a particular country and as women from a particular region (Oliver 2007). They also highlighted the female perspectives: which looked at challenges and main issues that we face with the new millennium. Movement building as an issue of democracy and citizenship were highlighted by the working groups. Enhancing diversity was also placed as a priority by 'women of colour', women with disabilities, individual women, young women and migrant women among others. They also aimed at depolarizing the existing debates and rather they try to pay heed to their differences and hear one another (Toro 1999). The women of the Third World rejected any sort of homogenization, arguing that it did not address the singularity of their experiences. They highlighted the gender specific issues affecting women.

Another exclusive nature of the feminism in this region is their open acceptance of the Marxist theory which has not been accepted whole heartedly by all Third World feminists and also the western feminists. It is seen that while many feminists in developed countries choose to ignore or consciously reject Marxism as outmoded, irrelevant, an obstacle to the emancipation of women, feminist activists in Latin America are adding to and converging with new Marxist thinking. They take Marxist contributions to the understanding of class and the mode of production seriously, while contributing to an understanding of the interconnectedness of production and reproduction, practical and strategic gender interests and an evolving understanding of the relationship between class and other form of oppression. In addition, feminist demands for equality in the social relations of daily life, control over reproduction and greater freedom in sexual expression draw attention to the need for the holistic view of change and offer a vision of a future in the context decidedly lacking in alternative utopias (Arizpe 1990). The evolving understanding of the interrelationship between the women's movements,

class struggle and the struggle for socialism is not only grounded in particular realities of Latin American societies (the complexity of the class structure, for example, and the extent to which it has been conditioned by external forces, i.e. imperialism) but in a new appreciation of the culture, ideology, democratic practice and daily life in the struggle against capitalism and the construction of socialism. These are insights that have who seek to understand the link between class, race/ethnicity/nationality and gender and between Marxism and feminism (Chinchilla 1991: 306). Race/ethnicity became a key platform for exposing differences in women's lived experiences of subordination, resulting in feminists defining themselves as 'black,' 'native America,' 'women of colour' and so on.

The feminism in this region highlighted the old and new models of domination, which looked at the domination, which looked at the different expression of social, political, economic and cultural oppression throughout the last three decades. Central to the recent kinds of oppressions of women are neo-liberal policies and structural adjustment. They further pointed out that feminists are not taken into account in the process of design and implementation of programs based on issue based on issues placed in the public agenda, which results in watering down of the essence of the proposal. They aimed to deal with the challenges and main issues that one has to face. The women here dealt with issues of democracy and citizenship as well. Enhancing diversity was also placed as a priority by 'women of colour', women with disabilities, individual women, young women and migrant women among others (Toro 1999). In this regard, Danielle Magloire (1999) said, "... we are making a sisterly call upon the Caribbean and Latin American Feminist Forum to join us in saying no to the humiliating deportation of our sisters and brothers, no to the denial of human rights of our sisters and brothers of the Caribbean."

The Caribbean feminists have set certain basic political, economic and social goals. In the political area they aimed at reforming the Civil Code, relating to marriage, divorce, custody of children, elimination of discrimination against illegitimate children (not universally supported by all feminists), and end discrimination adultery provisions. They went in support of suffrage, representative rights. They also hailed their voice regarding the access to education, freedom to seek public employment. For them independence coincides with the increased education for middle-class women and more women paid labour force as professionals as well as workers. They also encouraged women to participate in international groups. They had the tendency



towards networking and coalition-building, between (i) feminist, 'traditional' women's organizations, and women's machineries in the region, women's studies groups/programmes in the universities and intergovernmental organizations and (ii) the feminist movement and the left political parties and NGO movements (Baksh-Soodeen 1998: 83). The Latin American feminist movement is also considered to be different from that of the West because the former emphasized the rights and dignity conferred by motherhood and the struggle for social justice for all, both male and female. Here women central to independence movements as mothers were symbolized also as patriots. In this context, Stoner writes, "although divided in some issues, nearly all Cuban feminists insisted upon a reverence for motherhood and desire to complement men's lives" (Stoner 1991: 9). It can be seen that women not only demanded the end of slavery but also women's rights since long back in 1898.

Many thinkers have given their views regarding women and their status. They have dealt with all the spheres of women's lives and have claimed that all these aspects have been neglected by the women of the first world. It is found that some of the goals are similar to the other 'women of colour's, like that of rejecting polarity and embracing their indigenous tradition. Like any other Third World countries even the nations in the Latin American and Caribbean region have gained their independence from colonization quite late and hence the situation of the women differed a lot from the women of the west who didn't have any experience like this. Maria Luisa Dolz, was the first Cuban feminist to link educational reform to nationalism and feminism. Since colonial times, lower class women, enslaved or free, black, of mixed blood, or white, have worked and fought for economic survival. Their history may be reconstructed through their daily activities and their many informal roles, which involved them in conflict, confrontation and resistance. These "women of history," whose memory may be recovered through manuscripts and contemporary accounts, frequently penetrated what by conventions supposedly governing male and female behaviour were considered masculine spaces.

One who brought all these issues to the limelight through her literary expertise was Gloria Anzaldua. In her, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Anzalduah in the preface itself, she clearly stakes out place, plan and process: "The actual physical borderland that I'm dealing with," she says,

is the Texas-US southwest/Mexican border. The psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands and the spiritual borderlands are not particular to the Southwest... Hatred, anger and exploitation are the prominent features of this landscape... Not comfortable but home. She speaks of ethnocentrism as the tyranny of Western Aesthetics. She explores issues of race, class, culture - specifically its language or languages. She has further chosen the most difficult task, that of mediating cultures without concession or dilution (Randall 1987: 8).

Then another Latino feminist, Elizabeth Kusnesof has pointed out, many recent studies suffer from a tendency, "to separate women's experience from that of society as a whole, rather than seeing women's legal position, employment and life chances within the context of social life in general and within the context of class and relation and a specific historical time and place in particular." She raised her voice against the stereotyped conceptions of the patriarchal family and the seclusion of women were taken as representative of Latin America as a whole regardless of culture and social class (Kusnesof 1993: 121). Here many feminists also took up the issue of labour force much before the era of globalization, being influenced by socialist ideologies. Asuncion Lavrin, in this regard has said that the mobilization of female workers that began shortly after the turn of the century forced the leadership of the Left in some of the countries of this region, to go beyond mere lip service to women's role as member of the labour force and begin an exploration of the possibilities of matching feminism and `socialism in practice. But then the women in this field had a different opinion later. Within the labour movement, women remained evolutionaries rather than revolutionaries with the acquiescence of men (Lavrin 1989: 109).

Then in the political and legal field also women had a different role altogether. Francesca Miller (1991) in her, *Latin American Women and the Search for Social Justice*, said, "In examining the history of feminism in Latin America, we have seen that women have been most successful in putting forth their programs during periods of general political reform and change" (p.187). The feminists of this region also expressed their dissatisfaction with the injustice and unequal treatment by legal codes and social customs. Even Anzaldua has expressed her view regarding this. In her, "*La curandera*," she has simultaneously dealt with psychosocial and socio-political realm. Then women in these regions tended to see themselves as distinct from institutionalized women's organizations. They also said that the politicians also had a huge

impact on the gender and family roles and thus have an enormous contribution in marginalizing women.

Thus, the works of the feminists of Latin America and Caribbean region have talked about the basic issue, i.e. endowing women with their due status in society. They have thus upheld the attitude of embracing rather than being divisive. Latin American feminism connects their perception of women's unequal position in society to other social inequalities. According to them, identity is something relational and it exists in relation to some Other. Identity is enacted and it is performed (Anzaldua 2000: 12). The work of the feminist authors contributes to the gradual process of reconstructing the complex story, sometimes inspiring, sometimes puzzling and contradictory, of Latin American women and their struggle for equality (Samara 1994: 142). The women of these regions thus, had waged their effort for equality but their ways mainly led to affecting their ethnic community and family, i.e. they wanted to bring about change from within.

#### **ISLAMIC FEMINISM:**

'Islamic Feminism' is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms. It aims to recover the notion of equality. Patriarchal thought, institution and behaviors largely remained resistant over time to the revolutionary Quranic notion of gender equality to the extent that the equation of 'patriarchy and Islam' became axiomatic. Islamic feminism is an inter-Islamic phenomenon produced by Muslims at various locations around the globe. The triumph of the Muslim feminism also lies in the enhancement of social justice and equality. The women belonging to these regions have attempted to move beyond patriarchy and refiguring obedience. Islamic feminist *tafsir* (theory) elaborates a compelling explication of the equality of all human beings, male and female alike, while at the same time recognizing gender difference.

It is seen that in all Muslim societies, the interaction of Islamic culture and religion with secularism, nationalism, ethnicity and other important historical, social and economic mechanisms structure the lives of men and women. Too often Islamic culture and religion is considered to be the primary element determining the identities of women in Muslim majority societies. Islamic culture as we know is basically patriarchal in origin. Women get a secondary position in this part of the world. Women have been subject to inhuman tortures, exploitations, ruthlessness, etc. They have been limited to the private world only. The functioning of gender in

everyday lives along with institutional and legal gender constraints on women's lives are a matter of concern. The base given to all these injustices done to women is that of religion. Hence the Islamic feminists also tried to prove their point based on the words of the Quran. Aushaf Ali (2001) claimed that that in this holy text there are two words mentioned, *khilafa* (trusteeship of God on Earth) and *Tawhid* (the one-ness of God) are delegated to all irrespective of sex. Again in 4:34 of the Quran the term, "qawwamuuna 'ala" has been used to justify and perpetuate male authority over and protection of women as a prerogative and duty of men. The new women place the statement that men are qawwamuuna 'ala women in the context of child bearing and nursing when women exert labour that men do and cannot and read this as men having responsibility 'a degree above' in this context in a way that acts as a balancing or equalizing of labour. Hence women as Islamic feminists remain committed to elaborating and living a gender-egalitarian Islam that they understand to be the very core of the religion- a notion radical at the time of revelation and radical today.

The Islamic feminists have also questioned the liability of Western feminism. Iranian activists have been both inspired by feminism and damned because of the identification that feminism has with the West. Since the revolution of 1979, women's fundamental rights in public, familial, and personal domains have been undermined under the aegis of "returning to ourselves" and "reviving an authentic national identity." They have also fought these incursions on the basis of the universality of human rights and opposition to patriarchal domination. They face the same dilemma as the other third wave feminists have gone. These feminists found that they cannot reject the relevance of Islam for contemporary Iranian women. What they find illuminating in feminism must go through the filters of the Islamic government's cultural politics to be tolerated (Shahidian, 1998). So, here as well the feminist movement cannot be taken on grounds of individualism. The Muslim feminists further distinguish themselves from the western feminists in order to justify their claim for authenticity. Hashemi claims, "... freedom is rendered meaningful in the context of culture..." (Zanan 1996: 13).

The images of the women belonging to the Islamic province have been divided into three forms: - the first being that of *Zenana*, whereby 'veiled' Third World women are looked upon as simply the mindless and merely physical members of a *harem*, preoccupied with petty domestic rivalries. Thus, these women are deemed inferior to the Western women just because they remain

confined to the private sphere and do not play part in public affair (Enloe 1991: 4). The second image of the women belonging to the Islamic society is that of a mere sex object. They are represented as inferior to and subjugated by men and also as mere objects of sexual desire as by the west. Women have been compared to machine of producing children and also used as a means of exchange to settle any kind of conflict (Schick 1990: 143). Finally, the third image is that they are simply portrayed as victims. The feminists who hold on to such notion claim that have a tendency to homogenize the experiences and the conditions of western women, without even taking into note the individualistic disparities and apply this indiscriminating view to women.

There have not been many famous theorists in this part of the world because of the breach of freedom. For this reason, Brownyn Winter, in his, "Understanding Islam, Islamism and Islamic feminism," pointed out, what typically goes under the rubric Islamism and Islamist movements is oppressive and doubly oppressive for women. The oppressiveness of Islamism is leading these women not to abandon Islam but to question issues of gender within Islam and possibly abandon Islamism. It was seen that from a very ancient times, there were writings supporting women's emancipation in the Islamic world. Qasim Amin (1899), in his, "*Tahrir al-Maria*" (Women's Liberation), is often described as the father of Egyptian feminist movement. Amin criticized some of the practices prevalent in his society at the time, such as polygyny the veil, purdah and sex segregation in Islam. He condemned them as un-Islamic and contradictory to the true spirit of Islam. Then in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Aisha al-Rahman writing under her pen name Bint al-Shati, was a woman of modern thoughts who undertook Quranic exegesis, and though she didn't consider herself to be a feminist, her work reflects feminist themes. Mah Sharaf Khanum Kurdistani(1805-47), the first historiographer, of her time and Qurrat al-'Ayn (1814), were very radical in their approach in her break with the dominant religious tradition. She is known to have appeared unveiled among male followers. Then Bibi Khanum Astarabadi in 1894 in Iran, wrote '*Vices of Men*,' demanded nothing more than a fair treatment of women by their husbands. Nazira Zain al-Din (1905) was the first woman to offer detailed re-interpretation of the texts in favour of women's rights (Mojab, 2001).

Like other feminist movements belonging to the Third World, Islamic feminism was also influenced by the nationalism and colonialism. It was seen that in the first-half of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century, Islamic societies were changing both internally and externally through the impact of colonialism, modernism and nationalism and socialism. The upper and middle-class urban women long confined to the private domain of the household, were demanding participation in public life. Some rural women too had been drawn into anti-colonial struggles and land reform movements. The spectre of feminism was haunting not only the Islamic religious establishments but also secular forces and states. Then it was seen that the Islamists faced not only the 'Western' phenomenon of feminism, but also indigenous feminist movements, nationalists, communists and other political forces interested in this struggle.

Then certain contemporary scholars have also come to the limelight, Leila Ahmed (1992), Aziza al-Hibri (1982), Razzat Hassan (1996) and Fatima Mernissi (1991) have produced and initiated new efforts to reconcile feminism with Islam. They claimed that in Muslim world, the debate was centred on the compatibility of the idea of women's emancipation with the principle of Islam. They found Islam was compatible with demands for equality between men and women. They also opposed the notion of gender equality in literal terms as they found it non-Islamic and Western concept. Janet Afary (2005), is one of the most prominent theorists among them notes that- careful distribution need to be made between conservative discourses- both Sunni and Shi'ite- that praise women's roles as mother and guardians of the heritage yet deny them personal autonomy and progressive discourses on Islam that argues for a tolerant and egalitarian view of gender roles. Then Wadud (1999), one of the contributors to a just published book called, *Windows of Faith*, said that Muslim Women Scholar-Activists in North America, which looks "at women's issues from within the Islamic perspective [which] must include and indeed unite, issues of theory and practice." They employ the Islamic methodology of *ijtihad* to realize the full potential of Islam, which they see as guaranteeing social justice, including gender justice and equality (Mojab, 2001).

Though we can see that many women reformers came to the forefront to give women their due prestige, but it can never be denied that they took a huge amount of risk to materialize their thoughts. So much so that Meena Keshwar Kamal had to pay with her life. Meena, Seddiqi and Samar were the fierce critics of Islamists and found the Sharia' laws biased (Litcher, 2009). It was seen that the Islamization of gender relations was extensive. For all these reasons many activists raised their voice against all these kinds of unjust treatments. Further it was found that

while raising their voices against all these unfair actions they found answers in the religious text itself. For e.g. Bernard Lewis found egalitarian nature of Islam “represented a very considerable advantage on the practice of both the Greco-Roman and the ancient Persian world.” Then Haddad and Eposito stated that “Muhammad granter women rights and privileges in the sphere of family life, marriage, education and economic endeavours, rights that help improve women’s status in society.” Likewise many Muslim women’s are embracing their religion as a means through which they can express gender identity, power and creativity, instead of borrowing from the western feminist theories. They showed Islam as a religion undergoing re-interpretation and change- especially in relation to gender identities- rather than as a monolithic movement reacting against Western and modification. Through their political, educational and recreational activities, more and more women are setting agendas of their own and are actively redefining the role of women in Muslim society (Karin Ask and Marit Tjomsland 1998).

We can thus say that the various varieties of the feminisms belonging to the global South have one thing to say in common that as their problems differ hugely so their solutions should also be varied. The Western feminists have the tendency of generalizing their solutions to all existing problems of women. This is what differentiated the third world feminists from the white feminist activities. They remain anchored in their own communities and movements, where they worked together with the men- even as they repudiated their misogyny- on issues of cultural, racial/ethnic, religious and economic survival (Nancy A. Naples 1998). In the same way, Chela Sandoval has also challenged the hegemony of “white feminism” and forwarded more plural and differentiated feminisms (Sandoval 1982). When the western feminists are more dealing with the area of rights and liberty, for the non-western women the main issue is- Survival. This was one factors based on which the Third World feminists expressed their alienation from the white feminists as the latter didn’t include the survival issues and was not hence not relevant to them. They also opposed the biased, dualistic and phallogocentric language and hence searched for a new language that would emphasize on feminism rooted in their own experiences. Another area which made them move away from the western feminists is that they found the formers’ movement had a single minded focus on gender and gender separatism. But in the case of the ‘women of colour’ they remained aligned with the men-folks regardless of the differences they had with the men in their movements (Nancy A. Naples 1998).

But again the theorists belonging to the Third World have also been criticized on certain grounds. In a direct attack on Mohanty, Trinh as well as hooks, Sara Suleri argues that-

...rather than extending an inquiry into the discursive possibilities represented by the intersection of gender and race, feminist intellectual like hooks misuse their status as minority voices by enacting strategies of belligerence that at this time are more divisive than informative. Such claims to radical revisionism take refuge in the political untouchability that is accorded the category of Third World woman and in the process sully the crucial to be the first narrative of what the ethnically constructed woman is deemed to want (Suleri 1992: 765).

She further criticized Hooks and Trinh for claiming that “personal narrative is the only salve to the rude abrasions that Western feminist theory has inflicted on the body of ethnicity.

It can never be denied that so much of importance given to diversity might lead to other kind of fundamentalist troubles. Then also it should be kept in mind that unless and until we do not give importance to the problems differently we can provide proper solutions to them. This was the main attempt of the non-western feminists to get their problems identified beyond the ones pointed out by the white feminists. It can never be denied that there are as many centres as there are women. Hence we can say that the feminisms in global South mainly came into being for the reason of survival. Another reason to be fulfilled is to get their presence realized, to get their due status and identity in the world.



## THIRD WORLD FEMINISM AND THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY

One of the basic issues which have been put forward by the Third World feminists is that of- Identity. The Third World feminism might be better understood as an identity, rather than a distinct theoretical perspective, age group or cohort. As we know, that feminism as a movement came into prominence as women wanted a separate identity for themselves. Feminism has always been many movements working for multiple ends. The recognition of identity is one of them. They rejected the present status women had in society. They could not accept the fact that women are regarded as “invisible signs of visibility;” seen as commodities, as signs produced in social discourse by and for men, and excluded from the universe of cultural production and discourse itself (Gayle 1975; Cow 1978 and Reuter 1978). So, they were never considered as a separate entity but were always identified with someone or something (men, especially). The Western European centred feminists raised their voice against it. Although while doing so they deliberately or accidentally overlooked the differences which existed among themselves. They talked about the imparting of separate identity but it has been found that while doing so they rejected the importance of giving due recognition to their other counterpart, i.e., the Third World feminists. In relation to this, Adrienne Rich has challenged some western feminist assumptions; her radical questioning as to who is *we* raises important social and political implications (Rich 1984).

Identity as a concept is very controversial. Timothy J. Owens, Dawn T. Robinson and Lynn Smith-Lovin (2010), have dealt with the different faces of identity. The first two traditions, which stress (a) the internalization of social positions and their meanings as part of the self structure and (b) the impact of cultural meanings and social situations on actors' identities, are closely intertwined. The third, the burgeoning literature on collective identity, has developed quite independently of the first two focuses more on group-level processes. The notion that identity is more internalized than affected from outside forces has not been supported by them. They thus talked about theories of identity that focus on internalization and consensual, cultural identity, focus on how consensual cultural meanings associated with identities are imported by actors into local interactions and how situational environments shape the localized meanings of

the situational relevant identities. The situation and the culture within which it is embedded are more central than any internalized aspect of the actor.

In the modern times, identity is not only linked to the society, now many other aspects have been added to it. The conventional argument is that social and institutional complexity of late modernity (Giddens 1991) or postmodernity (Gergen 1991) has fractionalized the contemporary self. According to Wimmer (2002), the new forms of identity related to nationality and ethnicity have given rise to modernity a notion very opposite to that of the existing notions. Wimmer distinguishes three positions on the issue of nationalism and ethnicity. The first is that nations and ethnic groups are truly modern phenomena. Second, nations and ethnic groups as we currently understand them are transitory—what he refers to as “birth pains of modernity.” Third, national and ethnic identities are perennial and basic to human social organization. Hence Nelson N. Foote has been rightly said that one’s identity is not the product of the individual i.e. it is not because of internalization. But it is the result of one’s surrounding which helps in framing one’s identity. Thus, it can be held that “One has no identity apart from society; one has no individuality apart from identity” (Foote 1951: 21).

### **Third World Feminists have a Different Notion of Identity:**

The Third World feminists have also given a different picture of identity. Unlike the western feminists, they have not supported the individualistic notion of identity. They have put forward the concept of collective identity. Thus main emphasis has been given on the umbrella of ‘identification with’:- identification with others, identification with values and ideas, identification with ourselves- as individuals and collectives. Model of identity (Hegelian-existentialist) is not taken as sameness, but as an historical process of holding together not through stasis, but through transformation. In this context, Maria Lugones (2003) has talked about the received identification- an identification based not on presumed sameness, but on recognition of the other and an openness to transformation of the self. She has called this “deep coalition” of our identifications. She quotes, “The coalition requires that we conceive identification anew” (Lugones 2003: 98). She further says- identification requires overcoming the indifference that maintains lonely independence, and becoming able to see oneself in another. The capacity to see oneself in the other (rather than simply recognizing the other’s separateness, independence, difference) is essential for a recognition of our interdependence. Without this, we

are “not quite whole.” Our identifications, our commitments and values- our solidarities- shape our design of identity. So, according to the Third World feminists like Chandra Mohanty (1987), though she strictly rejects says that, feminist solidarity plays- and must play- an important role in constituting women’s identity. We participate in the construction of our identities. Hence, it can be said that there is no given or categorical or positional identity (based on Spivak’s “strategic essentialism,” given by Grosz (1984/1985)) of women. But this “objective” categorical identity, however essential or constructed, interacts with a “subjective” interest driven; identification- based relational identity, such that what we have in common is in part a product of our interested interpretations and affective commitments. Thus we need to shift from our preoccupations with the metaphysical questions of the category of women to a different approach to the question, “Who are *we*?” (Weir 2008: 116).

The authors belonging to the Third World have long been frustrated and angered by the tendency of white Western (Northern) women to dominate international feminist politics. So, they have focused on differences and challenged the universalizing generalizations about women. The non-western feminist activists instead of focusing on global feminism, have tried to concentrate on reconstructing “feminism without borders,” through analyzing local struggles and moving from local to the common interest that link Third World women and all women. The Third World feminists have rejected the new notion of feminist solidarity to be an important criterion to give due status to the Third World women. Chandra Mohanty argues for a transnational feminist politics focusing on decolonization and anti capitalist critique, along with critiques of “the interwoven processes of sexism, racism, misogyny, and heterosexism” (Mohanty 2003: 3). Many other theorists are developing analyses of the intersections of multiple sources of oppression, and their implications for feminist practice.

These are the issues which have not been taken up by the western feminists. They have not given any importance to the concept of separate identity of the women. They have only dealt with the identity of women irrespective of any existing differences; this means that they have generalized the concept of identity of women. This is the point where the Third World feminists have opposed their western counterparts. They preferred particularization instead of universalization. According to the non-western feminists, the Third World women have a

different world altogether and thus they have a separate identity as well. Hence, the difference of their identities is very much needed to be recognized.

Identities of the women belonging to the Third World have been neglected in their society. Be it because of the culture and tradition or because of the political reasons they have not been given any recognition. The state has also been very reluctant in giving women their due status. The laws made by the states are very gender biased. They rarely think about the development of the women separately. The rights of the women have been rarely recognized. This is one of the reasons why the feminist movement came into existence. However, when looked keenly it has been found that the Third World women have faced more negligence in this respect. Starting from evasion of their freedom, they have also not been given any right to speak in the public. This is why the Third World women wanted a separate identity of their own so that even they can have a say in the political system. Again in the cultural sphere as well this has been seen that they have been sidelined. The women in the Third World have been limited to the private world and hence they lack any kind of recognition in the public area. Then again when compared to the conditions of the women in different part of the world, it can be seen that their conditions differ to a large extent. Not only when compared to the women in the non-western world but also to the western world it is seen that the conditions of the women within the Third World itself are very distinctive. They have dissimilarities regarding religion, ethnicity and race. The level of atrocities faced by them also differs among them. When we compare the condition of women in any Muslim country (for e.g., Afghanistan) and any other third world country (for e.g., India), we see that women in the former State, even lack freedom of mobility (i.e. they cannot move out alone without any male companion) which is not seen in the latter's case. This is mainly because of the diverse circumstances existing in various parts of the global South. This is the reason why the Third World women wanted completely separate cultural and political space for representing themselves.

#### **Women Lack Recognition in the Third World Countries in a Different Way:**

It has been seen that in these Third World countries women played a very important role in the national independence movement, as these countries were decolonized lately. Though they were active during the freedom struggle but after that the position of the women in the political sphere suffered heavily. As we all know that the feminist liberation movement didn't have its own

source and was a part of the nationalist movement, it was found by the end that the feminist movement was nowhere in the scene. It was later found that they got little recognition in the constitution. For e.g., in independent India, scholars have expressed both dismay and bafflement over the disappearance of the women's question from the public sphere.

They were allowed to vote in some countries like India and others, but still it was found that their rate of voting is very less. Although women have the legal right to vote and stand for elections in almost every country of the world, cultural barriers to women's use of their political rights, including family resistance and illiteracy, remain (Pintor & Gratschew 2002, Moghadam 2003). Hence it can be seen that women belonging to these regions have been rarely identified in the system. The women given at least the right to vote can be considered better-off than their other counterparts as it was seen that, in some other countries, women either continue to lack the right to vote (Saudi Arabia) or are entirely represented by male legislators (e.g., Kyrgyzstan, Micronesia, St. Kitts, Solomon Islands, United Arab Emirates).

It has been seen that though women's representation has been increased in the present years but still it's not up to one's expectations it can be seen that women are still lagging far behind in the political arena. Women are represented in the parliament in different parts of the Third World but still the problems of women have not been taken up in the public policies. It can be seen that women even in the parliaments of these region seldom get the opportunity to represent women's issues and concerns. Hence it can be said that the nature of the institution is just not 'women-friendly.' This has given rise to a new syndrome of political gap as it has been found that in the developing countries men are more interested in politics and have more political knowledge compared to their female counterparts (Burns et al. 2001, Chhibber 2002, Frazer & MacDonald 2003). Black women have the smallest gender gap (compared with black men) in political knowledge but the largest gap in interest in national politics. Latinas are consistently the least interested in and knowledgeable of politics (Burns et al. 2001: chapter 11). The women in the Third World hardly ever have any say in this field. Interest or ambition aside, women have fewer of the necessary resources to participate in politics. Time to participate in politics is a critical resource, and around the world women have less time than men. Women still perform the lion's share of domestic tasks such as cooking and cleaning and are the primary caregivers for

children, patterns that may deprive women of the free time required to participate in politics (Corrin 1992, Chhibber 2002; Burns et al. 2001: chapter 10).

It can be said that women have been restricted only to the private world because they have no say in this political system. But the scenario is different in various places as the structure of the system differs. There are instances of representation of women in countries like India right from the grass-root level (for e.g., Panchayat system), there are women who hold important governmental posts in some countries (Benazir Bhutto, Sheikh Hasina, etc.) and there are also cases where the women living in the middle east and northern African countries, are not only neglected but also penalized for raising voice against the existing system. The women in these regions are somehow or the other deprived of their freedom and rights and hence denied their identity in society. Though it has been found that there are most women leaders in the global South, but it should also be understood that with just few women breaking out of the established norms and getting due recognition does not mean that all women are emancipated at the same time nor does it mean individual ordinary women have equal rights. It also should be accepted that that women are not indifferent or insensitive to struggles in the political domain; nor are they mute witnesses to them nowadays as they are affected by any change in the political system some way or the other (Hasan 1994). This is what the western feminists should take into notice. It should be understood by the Western feminists that when the condition of the women differs so much in the Third World then their similar solutions to diverse problems will never help them get liberated. Liberal equality is undoubtedly an important dimension of strategy for constituting gender identity. Then this is a very different situation in the Third World where even the political relations are collective and not individual. The feminists of the Third World shall try to get answers as per the situation demands.

#### **Women have no Identity beyond the Imposed Traditional Ideologies and Cultural Notions:**

Another area which has given no importance to the factor of identity of women is the cultural aspect. The very language of traditional ideologies singles out women as the symbolic repository of group identity. Women by virtue of their positioning in the private domain are accepted to live and abide by religious norms; their fidelity to religious values becomes the basis for the judgment of community identity as a whole. Forging community identities does not imply or guarantee that women will always identify themselves with or adhere to prevailing religious and

social doctrines which legitimize their subordination (Hasan 1994). It has been found that culture of many Third World countries have either given secondary status to women or not given any recognition either. McCreary, Lewis, & Walker defines “culture as the thoughts, beliefs, practices and behaviours of a people in the areas of history, religion, social organization, economic organization, political organization, and collective production” (p. 150 in *Promoting Optimum Mental Health Through Counseling*, Hinkle 1999). Culture has been considered as a system of building identity. It is also considered to be acquired from social influences. Culture is a process for identity of living creatures and cultural evaluation raises the identity of society, benefit goes to its individuals. Culture is developed by beliefs, faith, practices, customs, way to live, art, intelligence, language, food habits and economy etc.; cultural growth gave identity to the societies that named Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish or Buddhism thus leading to establishment of different cultures. So, when we come across art, customs, etc. we identify what is their culture or which religion they belong. Culture is also said to be something dynamic and not static.

It is also found that culture as such has also undergone changes in many places but then the question is how it has helped in improving the condition of women, especially in the developing countries. Culture is one of the important factors that shape our lives in some way or the other. This has been rightly pointed out by Fred Pfeil-

For among us, after all- white or non-white, Western or not- is not always caught precisely in the space between “inherited traditions” and “modern projects”? And where else, how else, do “cultural interpretations” come from- “theirs” or “ours,” local or global, - resistant or complicit, as the case may be- other than from the spaces between the two, and with the ensemble of material they provide (or, indeed, from the lack of space, the sometimes desperate need for new conceptual and material resources.)” (Pfeil 1994: 222- 223)

Culture and gender are complexly interrelated in ways that make gender inequality that might conflict with liberal multiculturalism. The defence of ‘cultural practices’ is likely to have much more impact on the lives of women and girls than on those of men and boys. Most cultures have one of their principal aims i.e. control by men.

National culture and national identity are considered problematic as they create trouble for the feminists in Third World countries in national context. Many feminists from the Third World confront voices that are eager to convert any feminist criticism they make of their culture into a mere symptom of their “lack of respect for their culture,” rooted in the “Westernization” that they seem to have caught like disease. It is believed by many that feminist activism is mainly originating out of a Western, bourgeois, modernist perspective. This is one of the criticisms brought to the forefront against the feminist movements in the global South. The critiques further claim that the critiques of the Third World feminists are just one prevailing form of intra-cultural criticism of social institutions. In answer to these claims of the critiques, the Third World feminists say that “those who perceive our feminism as merely a symptom of our “Westernization,” or accuse us of lack of “respect” for “our cultures”, fail to see how complicated are an individual’s relationships to powerful influence that shape both their conformities and their conflicts, fail to see the closeness between us and the contexts in which we have become both daughters and feminists” (Narayan 1997). Third World feminism is not a mindless mimicking of the “Western agendas” in one clear and simple sense- that, for instance, Indian feminism is clearly a response to issues specifically confronting many Indian women.

It is rightly said that women in different parts of the world, have a diverse mentality in relation to the emancipation of the women because of the cultures in which they are raised. Feminist movement in various parts of the world developed when historical and political circumstances encourage public recognition that many of the norms, institutions and traditions that structure women’s personal and social lives, as well as the impact of new developments and social change, are detrimental to women’s well being, and enable political constitutions in which the status quo is criticized and alternatives envisioned. Those in Third World contexts who dismiss the politics of feminists in their midst as a symptom of “westernization” not only fail to consider how these feminist analysis are results of political organizing and political mobilization, initiated and sustained by women within these Third World. Women’s movement in these countries differed not only because of the political system but also because of the culture and tradition of the place as well. Due to the cultural diversity their claim for identity also differs within the countries in the Third World and hence the use of similar technique to get oneself identified can never be accepted. This is what is to be accepted and supported not only by all the states in the Third World but also by the West. This identity has brought under one single agenda



that difference is to be recognized as it is another way to give respect to the diversity existing in this region.

Surprisingly, it has been found that before the arrival of the imperialists in these Third World countries the condition of women was much better. Then with the arrival of colonizers their situation in these colonized regions deteriorated. They (women) were limited only to the private world after that. At present it is found that women are lagging behind because of this. Be it in the Asian countries, or in the African, or Islamic states, the condition of women differ hugely and the effect culture has on them also differs. It is found that in the Islamic countries women don't have any identity of their own without their male counterparts. They are linked to their father and then to their husband and then to their sons. This was not the case in the countries like India and other African countries. They had a different identity of their own but after the arrival of the imperial powers this situation underwent a change. Division of labour which was just by choice was made rigid and the status of the women devalued. For this reason the feminists of these territories claim that one should look up to their indigenous roots. They claim that one should delve into one's past and tradition as a source for contemporary feminism as this is something which is lacking in the feminist movement of the present times. As one should understand the fact that submerged identities can become the foci of resistance and alternative solidarity. Hence to regain one's identity one should look upon the indigenous and ethical aspect which best describes varieties of non-western feminism. In this context, Kumkum Sangari has pointed out that women's identity like other social identities need not be sought along a single unified axis.

### **Language has also played an Active Role in Subjugating the Identity of Third World Women:**

Identity is one of the aspects which is related to the cultural sphere. Culture as such is a very huge concept and hence there are many attributes it has which often act as the inspiration for specific forms of women's activism, the chief among them being the claim for separate and new identity for themselves. This is further seen that the identity of women have been sidelined not just in the real life by the west and others in the Third World but also in the literary works as well this differentiation is found. It has been found that the game of exclusion is prominent here

as well. They have been described as the 'other' in relation to the white heterosexual account. Language is an important aspect which cannot be denied. Sex itself is considered to be constructed through language a view which is most notably propounded. When seen further it is found that language not only differentiates and excludes the authentic experience of the women as a whole but also it sidelines the problems of the Third World women. Thus, 'women of colour' are considered to be a minority section of the society. Universalizing women's experience is the recent concern in the sphere of feminism. Earlier it was found that there was lack of women's identity in the literary works. But now when the feminists have started pointing out this crisis a new crisis has come to the forefront. The women of Third World lack representation in the literary works of the present time.

Hence the Third World feminist think-tanks have taken the notion of difference to be the basic criteria in the gender-language interaction. Partial integration of the range of linguistic phenomena that seem sensitive to gender is sometimes attempted by trying to explain them all in terms of a general feature of gender identities or relations (Eckert and McConnel-Ginet 1994). This is required to understand the uniqueness of the women belonging to this region of the world because representing them together with their western behalf will never allow them to highlight their true condition. Hence the perspective of semiotic study is of strict nexus between theory and practice there is a re-location of the very relationship of language to the object and to the speaker. Transportation of information is always simultaneously an appropriation or assimilation of it. Women's issues have not been dealt separately in any of the works. They have been sidelined and reduced to position of mere commodities. Thus, language, gender, philosophy, women's identity as Blacks, Third World, as well affect the nature of domination, feminist criticism and female creativity (Rich, Essed and Medina 1984). They have further opposed the notion of universality of truth. Truth according to them is relative and hence if the truth is not absolute then identity should also differ as per individual uniqueness. In this context Toni Cade, in her "The Black Woman: An Anthology" asked:-

...how relevant are the truths, the experiences, the findings of the white women to Black women? Are women after all simply women? I don't know that our priorities are the same, or even similar enough so that our concerns and methods are the same, or even similar enough so that we can afford to depend on this

new field of experts (white, female). It is rather obvious that we do not. It is rather obvious that we turning to each other. (Cade 1970: 9)

Language and sexuality have gained much importance nowadays. The main reason given by many works in this respect is that identity is one of the important aspects of sexuality. Then it is found that many critiques of identity based studies preferred to replace it by desire-oriented research. But after research Hall and Bucholtz (2004) concluded that desire is itself a part which gets mediated by identity then by making it (desire) the base would make the study more narrow and partial. Hence it is to be agreed that the 'women of colour' whose very basis is that of difference need to give importance to their particularistic identity. Many writers belonging to this region have criticized the first world feminist for being deliberately ignorant about the difference existing between them. This is to be recognized as pointed out by Bell Hooks-

In much of the literature written by white women on the 'women question' from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, authors will refer to 'white men' but use the word 'woman' when they really mean 'white woman.' Conservatively, the term 'blacks' is often made synonymous with black men (Hooks 1981: 149).

It has been rightly stated by Mary Joe Frug (1996) that women's experience is located inescapably within language. Maxine Molyneux (1993) has recently argued that what separates Third World and western women is not so much the specific culture or historical contexts in which they are engaged but differences of a theoretical nature. Hence it has been claimed by Third World writers like Gayatri Spivak and Chandra Mohanty that it is time when the Third World authors should come up with their own theories and deal with their own problems. The 'other' feminisms are restricted to a reactive mode, almost in some ways, a servicing function in supplying the missing chapters to the dominant story. In this regard, Sara Mills remarks

perhaps the most important area in which post-colonial feminism can develop is in the theorizing of difference, whereby women can speak across national and cultural barriers, not to assume that their contexts or concerns are the same, but rather to develop a set of theoretical principles of translation so that alliances can be formed in spite of and perhaps (paradoxically) because of, differences in power and differences in culture (Mills 1998: 109).

It is a well-known fact that language is a very essential means of representation. Hence the Third World feminists should make use of it to render the 'women of colour' their identity and their due place in society. A focus on language and gender as practice within communities can, provide a deeper understanding of how gender and language may interact and how those interactions may matter.

### **State and the Identity Question of the Women of the Third World:**

The western feminist state theory is found to have largely ignored the experience of the Third World women under the post-colonial state. In this context, Suad Joseph has observed that theories of 'developmental state' have been developed in gender-blind and sometimes in Orientalist ways and hence ignore the particular relationship that women in the Third World find themselves in vis-à-vis the post-colonial state (Joseph 1993: 26). Hence, the ongoing work on Third World states is an important alternative perspective that the universalizing debates among Western feminists neglect to take into account. The state has been regarded by them as of critical importance in women's lives affecting both the public and the private sphere. They went for the notion of welfare state and did not support the police state as upheld by the feminists of the global North. With the establishment of a welfare state the power of the state became more important in the lives of the individual. Regulating, defining, providing and monitoring these were the roles the state was expected to be performing. Women thus began to enter the arena of local political and legal dispute in order to represent their own interest. Memissi (1991), even speaks of 'feminization' of the male in the post-colonial state as traditional role of the economic provider is no longer the exclusive concern of the man in family and as the modernizing state draws women into the public arena through both law and public provision such as education. Hence we can say that the state played an important role in establishing the identity of women.

Secularization, democratization and modernization of the state and of the political sphere are regarded as relevant to the lives of women while at the same time there is an acknowledgement of the state's penetration by the community (Rai 1996). As Alvarez (1990), argues in the context of South America, "feminists should neither dismiss the state as the ultimate mechanism of male social control nor embrace it as the ultimate vehicle for gender-based social change. Rather under different political regimes and at distinct historical

conjunctures, the state is potentially a mechanism either for social change or social control in women's lives" (Alvarez 1990: 273). Women experience power of the state differently as their demands and struggles develop. The Third World women are not aware of many areas of state, legislation and action. Illiteracy and exclusionary social practices further exacerbate this isolation from the process of the state. The lack of political will to disturb traditional expediency overrules the rhetoric of social justice fairly easily when the state perceives the threat to its continuance. The lack of the infrastructural power of the state means the laws are altogether ignored in many parts of the country. Depending on their race, class and caste situation, most Third World have fewer resources to withstand violations of the state.

For most women in the Third World the state figures only marginally in their lives. It looms only large only when women transgress the boundaries set by the state in various areas of public and private life that has jurisdiction over. Therefore, for the majority of women the question is not whether or not approach the state. It is they that are approached by the state, in many instances in a brutal and violent way (Spivak 1987). Western feminists neglect the way social class and ethnicity as well as gender also contributes to political exclusion and marginalization contribute to a distorted understanding of the relationship of the social to the political in the third World. So, a growing number of studies of the Third World 'add women in' to or make women visible in politics. They usefully reveal the roles played by women in bringing about democratic change and highlight the ways in which they have been excluded from power (Pankhurst and Pearce 1996: 45). An important conceptual problem therefore remains how to relate a rigorous structural analysis of why these political shifts are taking place, with the contingent elements of women emerging as agents of struggles. Merely adding women or simply making them visible is therefore a necessary but ultimately insufficient step towards intellectually and politically satisfying explanations of political change in the Third World today.

Culture is another factor which affects one's identity and in the recent times it is seen that state also has to perform certain functions in relation to culture. Culture and politics are innately intertwined. Focus on politics of cultural geography within the Third World, or more especially, on the nature and consequences of interactions between national and international cultural values within Third World. Some states take far more active role not only to patronize but also protect what they consider to be essential elements of cultural identity (Kamrava 1999: 9). When the

states take up the task of defending the existing culture in the case of the developing countries, it is found that the women of this region fall victim to this. Some gender biased culture and tradition pose as hindrance to formulation and implementation of some laws which might be radical and helpful to women. For the women in the Third World, the state and the civil society are complex terrains: fractured, oppressive, threatening and also providing spaces for struggle and negotiation. Both the state and the civil society form the boundaries within which women act and are acted upon. Women are affected differently from these institutions in comparison to men; the favours asked for not only are financial, but also can be sexual. The state is thus expected to re-imagine its relation to the family, particularly to women's sexuality and reproduction, in denser ways than simply assigning it to the realm of the private (Skidmore 2007).

Another way through which the Third World feminists can get a new identification of theirs is by problematizing the notion of 'Sisterhood' and also by the implicit feminist assumption that there exists a commonality of interests and/or goals among all women. We need to challenge the existing universality. The absolute truth is needed to look down upon and a relative truth is to be brought about on its behalf. The Third World feminists should try to deconstruct the established global sisterhood and create a new identity for their own self. The existing generalizing tendencies are expected to be done away with and be replaced by diversity, particularity and embodiment. For them identity is the difference existing between them and so, the intellectuals are not likely to abstain themselves from representation.

This separate identity is necessary for the Third World women as they have gained independence after quite a long time. Though they participated in the nationalist movement, but sadly they were given no recognition after these colonized states attained freedom. The issue of women and their rights were sidelined by their male counterparts. On the other side, one group of feminists, i.e., the western, white, middle class feminists, who started fighting for women's liberation and rights, did not bother to show any concern over the matter. They tried to claim that women all over the world faced same kinds of atrocities, a notion which can never be accepted. The condition of the women in the Third World is far much worse than the women in the developed countries. They are victim of double jeopardy, i.e. firstly, they belong to the

developing nations and secondly, they are women. So, they not only have to pay for the gender they belong to but also for being a part of some society.

In this regard, theorists like Foucault also stressed on making visible the unseen (Afary and Anderson 2005). The neglected area should also be given equal importance is what held by the Third World feminists. They claim that the plight of the women in this region have been on the whole invisible within the first world feminist movement. Their problems and their impediments have rarely been brought to the limelight. The white feminists should understand the thing that the nature of movement in various parts of the world (Asia, Africa, America, etc.) differs from their very source. This difference is to be recognized. This can only help them in creating a separate identity. This has been said by Young (1988), who note that beyond the common history of gender oppression, women's identities are informed by other, more context-specific experiences. It is very clear that as the white, middleclass feminists have never directly faced the racial-ethnic or class oppression and hence they can rarely view this side of women's oppression and hence these problems need to be identified separately. In this context, Chela Sandoval have challenged the hegemony of "white feminism" and forwarded more plural and differentiated feminisms (Sandoval 1982). Hence one should go for the grass root feminism and thus, deal with local area. It can be hence said that for the theorists of the grass-root development should emphasize on drawing on principles of particularization and conscientisation (self-awareness).

It is also found that structural factors like, caste, community, race, ethnicity, religion and class status have a huge impact on women's access to rights and freedom from violence. Then again poverty is another glaring factor along with other social deprivation has been found to be the single most reason that women in these regions enter into sex trade, which has been seen as an area of concentrating violence against women in the trade. Then the division of labour which is a product of the mind of the colonizers and also because of the ownership the land, the condition of the women deteriorated in these Third World societies. Then women in these regions often have limited access to mainstream political power and studies have found tenuous links between feminist movements and the political interests of women parliamentarians. Another factor related to these is that of illiteracy and thus leading to lagging behind in all the sectors of development.

All these factors have led to the breach of status of the women in society further leading to identity crisis. This is something which has rarely been taken up by the western feminists. They have not faced these problems and hence they have no idea how these could affect ones identity. Thus, it is the work of the Third World feminists to work for the betterment of the 'women of colour'. This is their work to bring these drawbacks to the forefront not only in front of the other first and the second wave feminists but also to the system (both political and social). This would also change the relation between the Third World and the western feminists. No wonder rights and liberties of the 'women of colour' are to be restored too. But prior to these there are other factors which act as grave obstacles to improvement of the condition of the women. They are to be dealt with first and as this would help in self realization of the women and the lacuna they are facing and hence they will be more aware of the importance of their identity in the society they live in. These should be realized by the western feminists only they can come under a similar platform to fight for their demands and separate identity.

Only understanding why identity is necessary for one's development is not enough. It should also be attained through certain measures. 'Disidentification,' which means identification against something, is one of the techniques. For the 'women of colour's, this refused identification is frequently, with or against first or second wave feminism. Then they also rely on a positivist notion of history to show their feminism, which has been in turn criticized by many western feminists but then it should be understood that the condition of the women in the Third World is not similar to theirs. They cannot go for an individualist notion of feminism rather they should aim for a collectivist concept of identity. This is the reason why they should look up to their own history and indigenous roots than depending on the theories of first and second wave feminisms. Identity is something ingrained and it can be best understood through one's own roots. The power of the west is manifested, in its ability to project its influence beyond its own geo-national border- to render selectively permeable through the boundaries of other states and nations. This is something which the 'women of colour's should be aware of. They should not look over the differences existing in these regions. They should aim for their own base for understanding and discovering their identities.

Again one thing which cannot be denied is that inequalities existing between first and the Third World locations translate into an association of feminism with the west. One thing which is



a new phenomenon is the international circulation of the scholarship is directly related to what is dominant in the geographical west an understanding of the heterogeneous character of US feminism is an indispensable step forward a more far reaching and critical exchange between feminists in India and the US than been possible so far. This is a new form of approach to identification where one can also borrow from each other to have a better idea of the situation.

However, it is seen that while borrowing from other feminist theories might lead to a problem. It leads to solidarity and thus to a model of identity which is framed on the basis of sameness. This has been opposed by thinkers like Susan Okin and Chandra Mohanty. They thus support a different form of technique, i.e. the transformative historical process. But surprisingly most of the feminist theorists in order to gain their own identity prefer to look over their own history, culture and traditions and religious practices. They say that their customs and traditions are much different from that of the west. They believe in collectivist notion and this is what the past of these societies provide. They know it that once abiding by the western feminists notions would not lead to discovering one's own identity. Identity as is said by them is constructed. Chantal Mouffe said in this context, "Identity... can be constituted through the acts of identification" (Mouffe 1992; quoted by A. Weir 2008: 119). They thus talk about the identity in many forms not the one given by the west. This is the aim of the feminists in the global south and this is what they try to establish. Identity is something which cannot be imposed on any one; it should be imbibed within the individual. But for this one should have his own realization. This is what the 'women of colour' should aim for themselves. They also talked about a thought provoking framework. This is one of the ways by means of which the 'women of colour' can understand their distinctiveness and importance.

Hence, the Third World feminists aim for establishing their own identity based on collectivity, as anything other than this is alien and undesirable according to them. They want to move out of the world of darkness where they have been pushed not only by the male folks but also by the white feminists. They want their identity separate from the white, middle class women as they differ from them in their origin. They are not subordinate to them this is what they should understand and realize. For this in the very beginning self-realization is required, as without this nothing is possible. But along with self-realization, realization from the other counterparts is also required. Hence, the feminists from the Third World should aim at changing

the existing political system, which is less enthusiastic in recognizing the existence of women equivalent to men. Though theoretically they show changes but in reality they fail to establish those laws. Again the ancient culture of these countries of the Third World as themselves very rich and liberal but they are rarely paid heed to. So, it is the duty of the feminists of the global South to bring them to the forefront.

What most clearly differentiates them from the white feminists' activists is that they remained anchored in their own communities/ movements. They also negated the essentialist notion which was based on the universality within feminism. They also opposed the hierarchy of language existing and thus went for a new language used by 'women of colour' that emphasized on feminism rooted in its own experiences and positionality. Again a new tendency seen is that the women not only have differences based on the division of North and South but they also differ hugely among themselves as well. The culture of the countries which are part of the global South are quite varied and hence the demand for identity will also be dissimilar. Like the form of identification claimed by a black woman will be very different from that of a Muslim woman or a Hindu woman. Then due to intra-cultural diversity as well they differ hugely. Hence, it has been pointed out by Chila Bulbeck (1998), a Third World feminist, and women in developing nations lead a particularly complex life because their world, the Third World has contradictory identities. If the third wave feminists share any character, it is their willingness to accommodate diversity and change. They based their notion of identity on particularity and diversity rather than simplistic generalization. This is where the Third World feminists have a unique standpoint.

## GLOBALIZATION: A BOON OR A CURSE FOR THE 'WOMEN OF COLOUR'

Globalization as a phenomenon though can be traced long back but its recent impact is very different from its previous impression. It has affected the lives of the individuals in various ways and in wide measures. There are various doctrines related to globalization- deregulation, privatization, economic liberation, labour flexibilization and diminished state supported social provision (Harvey 2007 and Lindio-McGovern 2007). Globalization as a process has been understood in dichotomous terms as either this or that. Globalization has mainly been considered as a concept free from any kind of gender related concerns. It is generally found that the absence of women and feminism from mainstream accounts of globalization contributes to a variety of misconception suggesting that- (1) globalization is a neutral phenomenon that affects the lives of men and women similarly; (2) gendered power relations are not at play in the complex process of globalization and (3) globalization is not and has never been a women's issue (Hawkesworth 2006). It is generally taken that gender has nothing to do with globalization. It is generally taken as an aspect of individual identity or as cultural constitution of masculinity and femininity, gender may seem altogether irrelevant to these dramatic economic, political and technological transformations. The analysis of the relation between gender and globalization tends to be restricted to either a global perspective or a perspective concentrated on local effects of global influence.

The unequal impact that globalization had on women has been hugely neglected. Globalization can both empower and disempower women. The patriarchal power structures have been transformed, rather than erased, by globalization. New forms of resistance have emerged as women are increasingly integrated into the global production process. Though participation of women has increased in this globalization period, it has been found that the conditions in which women work is rarely taken into consideration. Though women work in sphere similar to their male counterparts but whether their jobs are well-paid, safe, provide protection from harassment, and allow for organizing to improve labour conditions is a big question. Then a great deal of service work in developing countries is hidden in the informal labour market and is therefore underrepresented in the official labour force statistics used in the construction of my occupational sex segregation indicators. Moreover, while women are entering high-status

occupations as a result of trade and financial liberalization, the research on gender wage inequality indicates that they are being paid considerably less than the men (Meyer 2003: 374).

Here comes the view of the feminist thinkers who have again stressed on the differential impact of this phenomenon. Feminist scholars have demonstrated that globalization has varied effects, differentiated by gender, race, ethnicity and nationality. Then they have further suggested that globalization is predominantly a male discourse. It impacts in other ways the lives of the men and women as workers, consumers, service providers, re/producers and loan/aid recipients. With globalization, important changes marked this process affecting the societies we live in at large and women in particular. Globalization has also witnessed the role of the international institutions like the World Bank, the IMF, the World Trade Organization in the lives of men and women.

It has been seen that the lives of the individuals have been influenced by the multinational corporations and transnational corporations, even the non-governmental organizations and the inter-governmental organizations have a huge impact on the lives of the women. This has led to the development of new concepts like NGOization of feminism. Surprisingly even globalization as a phenomenon has been affecting differently the women as a whole. The women of the first world are influenced in a very different manner than the women of the Third World. It is said the women belonging to the Third World have been implicated within the western global structure since the colonial period. Question of IPE have always been central to the Third World societies such as India (Chaudhuri 2005).

It has been claimed by the feminists of the Third World that there should be de-marginalization of the 'women of colour' in the mainstream discourse on neo-liberal globalization. They claim that the Third World women face quite a different situation when compared to their first world counterparts. This has rarely brought to the limelight that the conditions of the women in the global South have faced a very different impact of globalization. So, experience of the Third World should also be taken into consideration. It has been seen that Third World women are found in most places, in poor and rich countries, in the North and South, in the core and periphery/semi-periphery as neo-liberal globalization continues to structure and re-structure class, race and gender inequalities. It is, therefore, important that experience, voice and politics of Third World women be de-marginalized and included in the mainstream analysis

and knowledge construction about neo-liberal globalization. It is necessary to pay heed to their viewpoints because as affirmed by the Third World women's initiative it is the experience of the Third World in their struggle to ensure the basic survival of their families and themselves that provide the clearest lens for an understanding of development processes and thus advocated an alternative development process that would give principle emphasis to the basic survival needs and of the majority.

### **Impact of Globalization on the Notion of Communitarianism Upheld by the Third World Feminists:**

With the impact of globalization on the Third World societies, the notions of the members of these societies started changing. The feminists of the South framed their logic on the basis of communitarianism which is very different from the concept of individualism held by the western feminists. But it is found that in this era of globalization, these notions are being challenged. It is claimed that now a days, globalization has encouraged women to be individuals rather than members of family or communities. It is found that the abstract, self propelling individual now finds new embodiment in the enormously resilient poor Third World women. But then also it cannot be denied that the impact which globalization has on women in the developed countries differs hugely from the women of the developing states. So, it can never be denied that there exists an unequal relationship between Western and non-Western women. It is found that in countries with developed economies, approximately gender parity prevails and women hold a significant enrolment advantage in higher education (Shavit et al. 2007, UNESCO 2008). While in less economically developed societies, boys and men predominate at all stages. Some of the largest gender disparities are found in the poorest countries, especially in Sub Saharan Africa and West Asia. But large gaps are also found in higher income Arab countries, where cultural and legal restrictions on female public sphere participation remain firmly in place. Gender differences are relatively small in Latin American and East Asia, where female enrolment closely approximates and sometimes exceeds male enrolment (UNCEF 2003; also Baker and Wiseman 2009 on variability across developing countries).

This new concept of individualism and self-dependence has led to the worsening of the condition of the women in Third World because it is seen that the women of the global South face problems much different from that of the developed part of the country. They have faced

breach of rights too but this is very different from that faced by the Third World women. The overall condition of the Third World women differs hugely. They are poor and under-privileged, they have to face lots of atrocities which are unknown to their counterparts in the first world. Globalization for which the Third World came in contact with these liberal concepts, somehow helped in maintaining a global core and periphery (North-South), not just that it also seems to create a regional core-periphery within the South. Another reason which these neo-liberal principles of globalization failed to highlight the 'women of colour's' plight because integration of women into global capital accumulation did not liberate most Third World women, especially peasant and working class women, from exploitation and poverty after all. Hence these individualistic notions will not be suitable enough for the women here in this region as claimed by the feminists. Rather they should be considered as a social group. So, along with considering the problems of the Third World women separately, their holistic troubles should also be taken into consideration.

#### **Debates Regarding Gender Issues Influenced by Globalization:**

It has been claimed by many scholars that gender equality has taken place because of this process of globalization. Grounds of expecting a continuous decline in gender inequality can be found in two lines of social theory. The oldest and most established links egalitarian trends to requirements for economic efficiency (Goode 1963, Parsons 1970, Bell 1973, Inglehart and Norris 2003, Giele 2006, Jackson 2006). Discrimination becomes increasingly costly as economies develop and are exposed to greater market competition, to survive or thrive in modern, knowledge-based economies, employers and organizations must disregard ascribed traits, such as gender, race, ethnicity and class, unless these are directly relevant to task performance. As a result of these economic pressures, cultural values gradually shift in an egalitarian direction and gender inequality decreases in all economic and political domains. Robert Max Jackson in his, "*Destined for Equality*" (1998) offers a contemporary formulation of this classic sociological account: -

Full equality is women's destiny because gender inequality is inherently inconsistent with modern economic and political organization... In modern society, the process sustaining gender inequality has become increasingly fragile and vulnerable (p. 242).

Many thinkers claim that these equalizing trends are not only visible in developed countries but also observed in countries with widely divergent economic and social structure.

But then it is seen that the thinkers of the developing countries hold a very different view altogether. They claimed that gender equality has been increasing steadily and equality has increased more in affluent, culturally progressive countries than in poor, traditional ones. This is mainly because of globalization. It is held that discrimination is becoming increasingly costly as economies develop and are exposed to greater market competition. As a result of various economic pressures, cultural values gradually shift in an egalitarian direction and gender inequality decreases in all economic, political and social domains. But again it is a well-known fact that despite the spectacular scope and speed of these egalitarian trends, certain forms of gender inequality remain firmly entrenched. This is the point which has been highlighted by some other feminists who in turn hold globalization to be responsible for this. They consider globalization and neo-liberal policies build on and increase existing inequalities of which gender inequality is also a part. The gendered system of power in the globalized economy like most traditional system, encourages the exploitation of women workers, as maintainers of family and sexual objects (People's Global Action, 1998).

Globalization has not benefited majority of people in the Third World in spite of numerous development programs and international human rights instruments. The international human rights regime has mostly concentrated on civil and political rights while economic and social structures that limit women from means of production are cursorily addressed. Globalization has, therefore, impacted more negatively on women than men in particular (Wangari, Kamau and Kinyau 2005). Then with the establishment of international free trade policies, such as North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and GATT, transnational corporations are using the profit motive to guide their factories toward developing nations in search of "cheap" female labour. Corporations prefer female labour over male labour because women are considered to be "docile" workers, who are willing to obey production demands at any price. In developing nations, certain types of work, such as garment assembly, is considered to be an extension of female household roles. Thus, cultural influences in developing nations also impacts employment stratification. The economic policies and structural adjustments (which are the products of globalization) associated with globalization create the most negative impact

on women in the developing world. The denial of social and economic rights is the most inhumane aspect associated with the formal and informal sectors. Economists and policy makers who implement these adjustments need to consider the impact of the current policies on women's lives and the inequalities that exist between men and women. Enabling the advancement of female opportunities and guaranteeing female workers more rights will increase the quality of life and create a more sustainable living standard for women and their families in the developing world. Without these changes, women will continue to suffer in their subordinate positions within the economic market (Bacchus 2005). Globalization and the market-based reforms impelled by it are particularly decreasing women's control over scarce economic resources and diminishing their capacity to participate and make choices within their community and their households.

It can never be denied that globalization has and continues to have differential impact on men and women (Basu 1995; Bergeron 2001; Freeman 2001; Oza 2001; Walby 2000). It has been argued that the privatization of public sector enterprises, reduction in public sector investment, and lower government expenditure on poverty eradication programs have not served the interests of women (Panini 1995: 57). The women of the present generation consider themselves to be in a better off position than their previous generations but in reality it is not so. They do not think themselves to be the victims of neo-liberalism and globalization. In this context, Ruchira Ganguly-Scarce writes that, "... against the overwhelming evidence of the negative impact of economic liberalization, I found that women do not perceive themselves to be the victims of neo- liberal policies" (Ganguly-Scrace 2003: 547). Surprisingly, they have their own sense of worth, self-esteem and advancements. Some young women claim that the emerging diversity of role models available for women as a result of the opening up of the media due to global influences presents them with greater opportunities and freedoms. Despite the fact that this belief of the women belonging to the Third World is highly doubtful as it has been found that capital, economic liberalism and globalization has rarely questioned the patriarchal system existing in these regions. It is thus found that for women, this is a double-edged sword. On one hand, many acknowledge the significance of state support in education and its vital role in mobilizing women to gain entry into the workforce, which in turn enhances their sense of empowerment. On the other hand, feeling increasingly insecure in terms of the well-being of



their families, they share a sense of economic marginalization with the poor (Ganguly-Scarce 2003).

Women's ability to earn an independent livelihood in this era of globalization is reduced and instead of experiencing increased status and opportunities, their lives remain tied to the success of the male family members. Women's status in a given country hence appears to be reliably associated with that country's involvement in a global economy. Then the relationship between economic globalization and women's status differs by the type of globalization, type of status and era. Though one has found more support for the claim that economic globalization has improved women's status, than for the claim that it has degraded women's status, yet it can be said that the contribution that this process of globalization has in restoring the status of women is a big time question. It is the misconception which has been planted in the mind of the women of the Third World and thus, inequality is still prevalent in the Third World region.

#### **Globalization and Unequal Division of Labour Based on Gender:**

As we know that globalization has not only affected the economic but also the political and cultural arenas, but as we say that globalization is primarily an economic phenomenon so we see that the division of labour is indeed an important area which cannot be neglected. But we see that this division of labour is highly biased. With the demand for equal pay and equal status at the work place in the present era, there is a big question how much they have been fulfilled. Women have been considered to be the weak and hence it is considered to be unfair to give equal share to men and women who were involved in the process of production. Now the scenario has changed a lot of men and women are found to be working in same amount and intensity and hence the demand of the women for equal pay is quite legitimate. But it was found that the psychology behind the establishment of equal share of work was something different. Women's "nimble (and cheap) fingers" made them the workforce of choice for these labour-intensive industries, which increased the profits of the MNCs as it brought much needed foreign currency to local governments (Wichterich 2000: 1-33). So, it is seen that female labour is crucial and companies go out of their way to make the work attractive to the local women. This is a very glaring fact in the Third World region.

The difference of labour among women has shown and has created friction, divide and animosity not only among men and women but also between women in the context of Third

World. It has been found that over the past two decades, more and more women have been recruited to the formal and informal labour force, supplementing the work they do in the home and the production of subsistence. Feminist scholars characterize this phenomenon as 'the feminization of labour force.' In export processing zones across the global South, for example, women constitute 70 to 90 percent of the factory workers producing textiles, leather goods, toys, electronic goods and pharmaceuticals (Wichterich 2000). Again as transnational corporations have moved to outsourcing labour, 200 million women are employed by subcontractors. It is found in the developing countries that a form of microenterprise has been established which is considered to be helpful for their advancement. But then it also cannot be denied that though development strategies grounded in women's microenterprise may help expand capitalist markets and foster economic growth, but they also heighten the economic responsibilities of individual women, magnifying their burden as providers for family subsistence. They increase the debt of poor women, imposing new levels of stress and responsibility. Thus, gender disadvantage is intensified for women who already work longer hours than men, earn less and are restricted to lower quality employment than men (Buvinic 1999: 570).

This is something which has been rarely taken into consideration by the social scientists. Women have indeed played an important role in the process of 'economic globalization' and 'global restructuring' throughout the world for quite a long time (Senior 1991; Momsen 1993; Joekes and Weston 1994; Freeman 2000). The nature of the current global trading system raises some important questions regarding the changing gender roles which have been hugely neglected for all these years. It is found that discussions about the gendered impact of trade are for the most part concentrated in circles of feminist economists and within women's nongovernmental organizations throughout the world (Bakker 1994; Joekes and Weston 1994; Marchand 1994; Beneria 1995; Elson 1995; United Nations 1995; Riley and Mejia 1997; Haxton and Olsson 1997; WIDE 1997a; 1997b). Then in most of the Third World countries and also in some first and second world nations it is found that the domestic and caring work are not only unpaid but also unrecognized. Their contribution of the women folks to the economy of a nation state has not only been neglected but also not given any respect. Women belonging to these regions are also excluded from certain kinds of highly skilled works considering that they are not fit for these kinds of jobs not only because of certain physical disability (women are perceived as the

weaker sex) but also because many mental disparities (lack of access to education and training due to their domestic obligations).

Globalization, liberalization and privatization allowed opening jobs to women in the areas of professional work, such as medicine, law, architecture and the academia. Most job categories were at least officially opened to women, although the struggle to make these legal openings real involved many lawsuits and much emotional staying power (MacLean 2002). On the other side, it is found that female-dominated occupations, related to domesticity and servicing, tend to have lower wages, less on-the job training, fewer possibilities for occupational advancement than male dominated occupations (Stevenson 1973; Elson and Pearson 1981; Baron and Bielby 1985; Pearson and Mitter 1993; Joekes and Weston 1994; Gothaskar 1995). This is a scenario very much visible in developing countries. Women are overrepresented in clerical, sales, and service work, while men predominate in production and managerial occupations (Adler and Izraeli 1994; Joekes and Weston 1994; Anker 1998). Occupational sex differentiation is therefore an important mechanism through which women are denied access to high paying and high status jobs and it is a barrier to gender equality in the labour market.

Then another aspect which is visible through the process of globalization is the reduction in the employment opportunities of women. Women's job security is threatened by the prohibition on unionization and decentralization through subcontracting (Dalal 1995). On one hand, it is likely that the unorganized sector will grow due to the lack of labour legislation, making it attractive for employers to recruit women. On the other hand, in the agro-processing industry where women work in large numbers, the import of modern technology in firms that are to be taken over by corporations such as Kellogg's, Pepsi, Nestle, and General Foods will reduce employment in low-skilled jobs (Mathew 1995). Yet there does not seem to be any prospect of women being offered training and technical skills as education now is premised on user-pay principles, which limits the access of poor women.

It is this gendering of work that has been pointed out by the feminists who have in turn used a grounded approach to examine how subjectivity is drawn upon and contested in shaping context-specific relationships between "globalized" capital and "localized" labour (Nagar, Lawson, McDowell and Hanson 2002: 271). Chandra Mohanty (1997) illustrated how global processes of capitalism use local ideologies and gendered identities for their own ends.

Naturalized assumptions about work and the worker are constructed around "notions of appropriate femininity, domesticity, (hetero) sexuality, and racial and cultural stereotypes" (Mohanty 1997: 6). Then in the industries of the developing countries it cannot be denied that other than economic needs a lot of other factors involve in the process of production. The specific ways in which women, men, and children are drawn into these arrangements, are centrally shaped by communal discourses of religion, honour, respectability, and machismo; by the workings of state and legal structures at the local level; by the specific ways in which the public-private dichotomy is reproduced and reified; and by the forms of cooperation that emerge between unions and community groups (Prugl and Boris 1996; Mirchandani 1998). In this regard, Cravey (1998) analyzed how gender and class intersect in the transformation of industrial strategy, from one focused on import substitution to a neoliberal export orientation based on transnational investment. Cravey showed how micro-scale negotiations over the gender division of labour within house-holds and neighbourhoods influenced global and regional dynamics and was also shaped by national policies and global competition. Then it is also held by theory that, product market competition will drive out discrimination in the labour market. Because discrimination is costly in the sense that discriminating employers must forego profits in order to indulge their "taste for discrimination," (Becker 1957) firms with market power can afford to continue discriminatory practices for longer than can firms in competitive markets earning zero economic profits. Thus, the loss of market power in an industry is likely to reduce discrimination and increase the relative wages and employment of women in that industry. While a number of studies have demonstrated the apparent existence of discrimination, few have focused on this dynamic implication (Black and Brainerd 2004: 557).

### **Deregulation and its Impact on the 'women of colour':**

Another impact which cannot be denied is the fundamental shift in the role of the state that has occurred as a result of neo-liberal globalization. As we all know that the role of the state has been reduced to a mere police state with the arrival of the new concept of globalization. Hence this has led to new problem that the rights of the women are no more a concern of the state as a whole. Thus, the new process has limited the state to be just mere spectators. While the National Policy for Empowerment of Women picks up the concern about the women, Kannabiran (2002) rightly observes that "the elimination of the impact of or its source of power."

This deregulation which has taken place at the present time with onset of globalization is indeed a matter of concern as this has led to decrement in the role of the state and has thus, made the condition of the women far more miserable. It has been found that the state system has undergone huge changes and so has the state relations in this contemporary globalizing world. No wonder there is notable change in the character of the state as well, its capacities, its constituencies, its policy-making processes, its policy contents and so on. It has been argued that new pattern of women's incarceration has been forged by three overlapping phenomena. The first is the fundamental role of the state that has occurred as a result of neo-liberal globalization. The second and the related phenomenon is the emergence and subsequent global expansion of what has been labelled a 'prison industrial complex' made up of the intricate web of relation between the state penal institutions, politicians and profit driven prison corporations. The third is the emergence of a US-led global war on drugs which is symbiotically related and mutually constituted by the transnational trade in criminalized drugs which are build on the older system of racist and patriarchal exploitation to ensure the super-exploitation of the 'women of colour' within the global industrial complex (Sudbury 2005).

It is found in the recent times that government has reduced its role in the economy in order to promote global competitiveness. But because women are generally among those in greatest need of social assistance programs, cutbacks owing to globalization greatly affect women (Bergeron 2001, Hemmati and Gardiner 2002; Rao and Kellener 2005). Women's subordination is seen as serving the interests of capitalism and consequently, their situation will not improve until international structures will not become more equitable (Jockes 1987; Kazan 1993). Thus, the state should take up certain measures to give women their due status. Moreover this is important in the developing states because the conditions of the women are not those developed here and are hence lagging far behind. Thus, it is to be made clear in this context that women not only are affected by the structure of domination but also willingly or unwillingly participate in them, sometimes taking advantage or benefitting from them in turn for disadvantaging other women.

It is held by the western feminists that liberation of women is self-evidently a part of the project of modernization and democratization. This is a notion which is not widely supported by the 'women of colour'. Then it can never be denied that the lack of self-identity which these

Third World women are facing because of neoliberal globalization, it is by the state only that one's status can be restored. It has to be accepted that in the Third World countries, the state has to play a very important role as in these countries the people are not developed enough to perform their own roles like that of the developed countries and hence it is endowed with the state to protect its people rather than just performing the function of protecting its citizens it should also take up the task of implementing laws and policies which would help in their all-round development. Apart from certain positive function the state as such is more needed to protect the women of these countries as they are the most vulnerable section of the society. As the majority section of these countries are not developed enough hence they are not aware of their rights and liberties and hence in this era of globalization and liberalization they have a huge chance to be exploited too.

With globalization comes the assertion of the end of the nation state and the imminent unbundling of the sovereign territory. Scholars have critically examined new spatialities of power; assertions about the flows, flexibility, borders and fixities of globalization; shifting scales of governance; and the shifting terrains and rhetoric of geopolitics (Herod, Tuathail, and Roberts 1998; Castells 2000; Giddens 2000; Greider 1997; Mittelman 2000; Kelly 1999; Luke and Tuathail 1998). Though globalization has emphasized on gender equality, but in reality the formal spaces of globalization is fundamentally masculinist in its exclusion of the cultural and political spheres that operate in households and communities. It has been pointed by Greider (1997: 24-25), that the biggest, most obvious loser is labour and likewise the national governments have also lost their ground thus becoming the mere salesmen. Then it has been further emphasized in Castell's (1996) analysis that networked capital is irreducibly global while labour, as a rule, is local and is becoming ever more so in the context of increasingly strict immigration laws, which seem to accompany the deregulation of markets and the dismantling of national borders in aid of global trade.

#### **Development as a Process and its Biased Impact on Third World Women:**

With the advent of globalization, terms such as development, economy and empowerment get transformed in the new regime. The development theory which has claimed it to be gender-neutral is being questioned. It is found that the international institutions have often used their feminist findings to buttress a model of development that all may not think is the best way of

addressing women's development in general and women's development in particular. The feminist critique has introduced the gender factor to development theory arguing that the equal distribution of the benefits of economic development can only be achieved through process of development (Momsen 1991). Here also though it is found that the status of women has been clearly denied. Mary E. John (1996) in this context describes the manner in which the new economic policy, international institutions and states see women as 'good' subjects. It makes good economic sense to laud the thrifty and diligent women who need no state to help them, while their unruly men, such as, prone to violence, and become the bad subjects. Significantly, macro institutions like the state and transnational corporations disappear from the frame of analysis.

Globalization and development concept are interlinked. But again it is found that the latter concept is biased. Development never meant so in the real sense. As it is a very glaring fact that the women had been neglected from this process. The development process has never taken them into consideration or given them a secondary importance. It is evident from the development perspective that socio-economic relations are based on artisan, food production, small-scale rural economies and work in the level of everyday existence. Since these kinds of work are mostly done by women in the Third World, a significant number of people fall outside the charmed circle of the electronic net of socio-economic relations (Madeley 2002; Shiva, 2000a; Tinker, 1990; Visvanathan et al., 1997, Parts I and II). Sectoral development has also become one of the biggest stumbling blocks in the Third World development process. It has contributed greatly to the lack of correspondence between economic and social development. It cannot be denied that the Third World still face the stark reality of wrenching poverty and deteriorating living standards for the growing populations where women fall to be a victim of all these circumstances. Division of domestic labour also remains strongly gender differentiated in societies at all level of economic development. Even Mohanty (1993: 211), has held that we must not lose sight of 'the complex and mobile relationships' between materiality and the discourses around the gendered nature of Third World development. Hence the development scholars agree that irrespective of where it is happening women are disproportionately affected by this economic neo-colonialism. Women tend to be among the poorest members of countries in receipt of aid and loans. It has also been pointed out that as countries are diverting resources away from social provisions to repay debt those affected are the poor, especially women.

“Development” is taken synonymously with “economic development” and “economic progress.” Whether women are affected positively or negatively by economic development policies forms the basis for cross-cultural comparison (Mohanty 1991: 63). Perdita Huston (1979) tried to explain the effect of development process on the family unit and its individual members in developing countries on the basis of problem and need as expressed by rural and urban women in these countries. According to these women, all their queries regarding their needs centre around education and other services, political participation and legal rights. However, it is seen here that women have been excluded as a group or category in relation to these concerns. While giving these views, Huston has neglected the diversity existing among the women of the Third World. Hence the solution given by her was implementation of improved development policies which emphasize training for women fieldworkers, use women trainees and women rural development officers encourage women’s cooperatives, etc. Here, women are assumed to be a coherent group category, prior to their entry into the development process, thus, making her area of analysis quite narrow. On the contrary, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1991) has said that development policies do not affect both groups of women in the same way. Women are constituted as women through the complex interaction between class, culture, religion and other ideological institutions and frameworks. They are not women, a coherent group, solely on the basis of a particular economic system or policy. These reductive cross-cultural comparisons result in the colonization of the specifics of daily existence and the complexities of political interest which women of different social classes and cultures represent and mobilize. The women in the Third World countries (as mentioned by Perdita Huston) have needs and problems but few have any choice or the freedom to act according to them.

It has been found that with the passage of time the concept of development has undergone changes. In this time of globalization, development is not just related to the tasks performed by the state but also by economic systems as well. Now it is found that technological advancement has got more importance than the development related to social and political fields. Development as we know now is interlinked with economic globalization so it can be found that it somehow biased. The Third World countries are not benefitted by these kinds of development strategies as these women of these countries are neither trained nor educated like the western countries. The women of these nation-states are poor and lack far behind. So the development process should not be western in origin rather it should indigenous to the developing countries.



### **Role of the Non-state Actors in Improving the Condition of the Third World Women:**

It is a well known fact that in this well-known fact that in this globalized era, with state becoming more secondary in its position, a new phenomenon is seen to come to the fore front which has been called by Mayitreyee Chaudhuri- the feminization of NGOs. These nongovernmental organizations though came up for dealing with various issues related to the tribulations of the women folks but surprisingly they did not perform their roles to the fullest. They were quite biased in their attempts. They not only neglected the plight of the women belonging to developing nation-states, but they also sidelined the ways to represent them in public sphere. Then the intergovernmental organizations like, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and World Trade Organization, which came into existence for serving other purposes but at present their arena of functioning has increased widely but surprisingly, it is found that they leave the depth of gendered experience largely untouched. To one's dismay how one can expect them to represent women when among the members constituting the major bodies of these organizations women were in minorities. For e.g., the people of a democracy must be mercifully soothed when they find themselves ruled by the six men and one woman of the Appellate Body of the Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organization (Chander 2005). When we turn to the development literature on gendered relations, in contrast, we find that the de-contextualized, de-personalized workings of intergovernmental institutions become contextualized as real components of people's lives and experiences (Enloe, 1989; Escobar, 1995; Mitter, 1986; Rajput and Swarup, 1994; Scott, 1995; Sen, 1994; Shiva, 1989, 1992; Swantz, 1985; Tinker, 1990, 1997; Visvanathan et al., 1997; Young, 1992). Analyses are predominantly from Third World perspectives, more people and policy oriented, and less focused on information and communication technologies. Their emphasis is on power politics and the capacity of a small minority to impose their will and interests on the majority.

The real actors in this field of globalization are formal political and economic institutions such as corporations and multilateral and financial institutions (World Bank, IMF and WTO). "Multi-national corporations are, collectively, the muscle and brains of this new system, the engineers who are designing the brilliant networks of new relationships... [The] principles [of finance capital] are transparent and pure: maximizing return on capital without regard to national identity or political and social consequences" (Greider 1997: 24-25). These organizations though claim for the welfare of the society at large but it can be seen that they deliberately or

accidentally keep the issues relating to women aside. They mainly deal with economic sphere but they rarely give any credit to the contribution of women in this area. Thus, it should be seen that women should be represented in more and more numbers in these organizations so that they can put forward their demands and needs in these departments thus taking a step forward for the betterment of women as a whole and the women of the developing countries in particular as their condition is more pitiful than their counterparts in western countries. So, it can be seen that these intergovernmental organizations can be used by the women for the betterment of their position too.

Though it is held that globalization blurs the inequalities within regions, but then it may also occur as neo-liberalism intensifies gender, class and racial inequalities. Integration of women into global capital accumulation didn't liberate most Third World women, especially peasant and working class women, from exploitation and poverty after all. The construction of a new discursive order that privileges consumption, choice and idea of a self-propelled womanhood is another aspect of globalization. But then one got to accept the fact that this is not what the culture of the developing states depicts. This is something which has been taken from the West and the values of the Non-western States differ hugely. Thus, Chris Weedon explains that thinking differently is one of the key objectives of Third World. Feminism is both in the West and in the Third World. Barbara Ehrenreich has rightly said that no assessment of globalization is possible without considering its "female underside... the global transfer of the services associated with a wife's traditional role- child care, homemaking and sex- from poor countries to the rich ones" (Ehrenreich and Hochschild: 4-5).

It is seen that with the opening up of markets and deregulation the people of the developing countries thought that their condition would improve. This was more held by the women belonging to this region who hold the view that they are now in a better off condition than their counterparts belonging to previous generations. Although it is a big question that how much this view holds true. Their belief that globalization has recovered their position in society can never be held to be true. They have been denied the real scene of the situation. They have been misled regarding this present situation. It is very clear that the 'women of colour' are still victims of the similar plights that they faced before. Their conditions have rather worsened instead of getting better. Be it due to the reduction in the power of the state or because of the

current rise of the market force it has been found that the condition of the women is deteriorated manifolds. The State which was expected to take up certain welfare measures has reduced to a mere protectionist state, thus putting a halt to the development of the women belonging to the global South. Hence any policies taken up by the nation states hold no longer any value. So in order to restore women their due position the states should be brought back. Only this much is not enough, the state should not only aim to improve the condition of women but also try to make them participate in the political process as it would make the political processes much more moderate and reasonable than they really are at present. Their activist movements must also be given due recognition their demands should also be paid heed to. It has been rightly given that they are already practiced in time giving, re/production and the long-term perspective, at both the family and 'glocal' levels, it is women who are best placed to take on the political offices associated with the rights of time and the global guardianship of the future (Adam 2002: 25).

The division of labour which was considered to be based on equality was also a big sham. As the women of the Third World found themselves to be employed in more numbers, but it was found clearly that they were being cheated. Most of their works are either unpaid or paid very less. Moreover, it has been found that the income distribution existing between men and women are quite huge. Even the difference of distribution of income between women differs hugely as per the strata to which they belong. The winners are likely to be the better off, professional career women, who can take advantage of greater availability of childcare and unpaid carer's leave, while the losers are more probably women already experiencing poverty, either in low paid, insecure work or on the minimal benefits (Ward 2002: 141). Thus it is seen that women are generally limited to works related to their domestic services like that of caring and nurturing. Those who are able to break out of this vicious circle, they are made to work in all sorts of vulnerable jobs but they are paid quite less than they deserve. In order to enhance the position of women certain measures should be taken u The women should be made aware of their rights at their job places, they should also be aware of the fact that they have the right to go against the companies if their valid demands are not fulfilled, here comes the role of the Unions who should work on behalf of the women, this is a measure which would help to some extent in improving the situation of the women at work places. It is well known fact that due to lack of education and technical knowledge, the women of the developing countries are mainly engaged in the semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, where they are paid a very minimal amount which is nowhere

equivalent to the payments received by their male counterparts. Here comes the role of the state and other nongovernmental organizations who should take up certain policies and actions to support the women and give them their due rights.

Though globalization brought with itself the notion of development but surprisingly it was found that this development was not at all positive to the 'women of colour'. Development as a process is found to be biased and partial. They exclude the contribution of women in the process of development. Recently development only includes the technological and highly skilled works, but as seen in the common phenomenon that women are rarely part of these jobs especially in the developing countries where women do not have access to education and other technological trainings. Women of this region mainly participate in the semi-skilled or unskilled work, which rarely gets any recognition. Then their contribution in the domestic sphere is rarely taken into consideration nor are they included in the GNP of the country. Hence, demarginalization of the experiences and involvement of the Third World women should take place not only in the mainstream discourse on neoliberal globalization but also in the development process.

Marchand and Runyan put it, global restructuring entails re-workings of the boundaries between and meanings of femininity and masculinity, which are intimately related to the shifting boundaries and meaning of private and public, domestic and international, local and global (2000b: 18). A feminist analysis dramatically expands the scope of "the economic" in economic globalization by drawing attention to the inseparability of activities in the formal and informal, paid and unpaid, productive and reproductive spheres. While it appreciates the material dimensions of globalization, a feminist analysis also insists on the importance of cultural and political meanings (e.g., of femininity and masculinity, work, justice, and activism). Hence this explains the importance of women in the recent global phenomenon. But it is found that women are mainly excluded from this area of concern. Hence according to the feminists, an inclusive measure should be taken up. The factors affecting the inclusive/exclusive practices should be recognized.

Apart from all this it should not be forgotten that global in the first world is different from that of the Third World. It is the political economic difference that Bina Agarwal (1998) underlines when she argues that "for first world women to combat the causes and the

consequences of global inequality and forge global solidarity would mean sacrificing many aspects of their privileged lifestyles.” So, the need of the hour is commitment to spiritual solidarity, where women of all faiths can work collectively to change the world. Globalization as such is not having a positive effect on ‘women of colour’. But it is on them that they should not stay in any kind of this state of dream rather they should come out of it and build the ability to improve their own condition so that they can enjoy a real status in society.

## CONCLUSION

The feminisms in the global South were mainly the product of the utter discontent experienced by the women of these regions. The 'women of colour' were the one who were not only given a secondary position in the society by their male counterparts but they were also not represented by their sisters, i.e. the women in the North. It was seen that the slogan, "Global Sisterhood," upheld by the theorists of the first-wave feminism failed to justify it. They mainly went for universalization of the problems. They did not bother to consider the different problems of the Third World women rather they tried to generalize their problems and search for the solutions related to that and then imposed them on the developing states. This is the point where the Third World women could not support the Western feminist theory. They thus understood that in order to get recognition, the 'women of colour' should themselves come to the forefront. They should raise their own voice instead of waiting for others to speak for them.

Other than this the feminists of the Third World have mainly pointed the issue of survival. As we know that the women in the developing countries have faced tribulations which are much grave than that of the developed part of the world. They not only have to face breach of their rights and liberties but their life itself is at stake. They mainly fall victim of double jeopardy. This holds that they have undergone the atrocities not only because they are women but they also belong to either the semi-periphery or periphery regions. This is another area where they criticized the western feminists who have rarely taken into consideration this side of the analysis. They have only talked about gender equality based on rights, individualistic tendencies. But when we see the condition of the 'women of colour's this is not possible. The women of the developed part of the world have not been colonized, as in this time the position of the colonized women in the Manichean world has deteriorated manifolds. Their condition has become much more miserable even after these states were freed, as it was found the subject matter of women's condition just disappeared from the concern of the political and economic system after nationalist movement came to an end which also gave impetus to the feminist movement in this part of the world. Though the upper, middle class women could raise questions relating to their situations but the poor, unprivileged women were the one who were not only helpless but also marginalized in these nation-states. Their problems were rarely brought to the limelight. The

women of this part of the world had to face violence because of various factors like that of poverty, race, ethnicity, religion, etc. something from which the women of the western world were far away and hence did not even bother to represent them in their agenda. For this and for a lot other reasons the non-whites were more victimized compared to the white women because they had to face many sorts of sexual violence. They also held the white to be largely responsible for their present miseries.

Hence, the women of the Third World not only have to fight the existing patriarchal system but they also have to deal with the dualities existing in the feminist theories of the West. The feminists in the global South are often considered to be mimicking or interpreting the western feminist discourse. But then the reality is different from what has been claimed. The Third World feminists differ from their western counterparts because they have opposed their generalizing tendencies, individualistic essence and have instead tried to get their solutions from their own indigenous roots, culture and tradition. It should be understood that the solutions regarding the plight of the women of the colours would also differ as per the circumstances. The feminists belonging to these regions have given their viewpoints which are particularistic in nature and hence are distinct in their character as well. It has been found that the voice of the 'women of colour' has quite often submerged in the general demands. They have been given no representation in the political or economic sphere. Though in the recent times there has been a certain change in the scenario with some women found participating in these systems but that does not mean that all women have got back their due status in society, a major part of the women belonging to this part of the world are still lagging far behind and are subjected to many kinds of tortures.

This study has dealt with the following hypotheses:-

- The feminists of the Third World have been demanding a separate identity for themselves, by rejecting the exclusionist and universalistic tendencies present in the opinions and works of the Western feminist scholars.
- The State can implement certain measures to represent and improve the condition of the women but its role differs in various countries. However, in this globalized world, where deregulation is the present phenomenon, the State has failed to give the right

amount of protection to the 'women of colour'. The policies implemented by the State have been found to be counter-productive.

- The Third World women believe that there is a way forward in dialogue between white and Third World women, a dialogue which could potentially address the gendered and racialized relations.

The Third World feminists have criticized the western feminists on the ground that they believe in the sameness of identity. They rejected the importance of giving due recognition to their counterparts in the developing countries. This is what the Third World women brought into limelight. They opposed the existing generalizing tendencies and propounded in favour of diversity, particularity and embodiment. The allegation by the 'women of colour' cannot be said to be wrong. They were right while claiming that the western feminists were exclusive in their approach. They considered their problems to be basic and hence claimed that all the women in the world faced the same kinds of evils and hence the solutions given by them would do away with all the problems of the women belonging to any part of the world. But the reality is something very different. The women in the global South face a very different kind of identity crisis than the women in the North. Hence the techniques used by the women of the North can never be satisfactory to the 'women of colour'. Identity as we know is a social aspect. So, all identities are constructed across differences. Many factors like religion, ethnicity, race, language, etc. affect in building one's identity. One has no identity apart from society and one has no individuality apart from identity. As there is a wide variety of dissimilarities in these regions, so the base of the identity should also be expected to be different. Hence this difference should be understood, realized and accepted.

Another aspect where the Third World women have been criticized by the Third World women is the motto- "Sisterhood is Global." By claiming this they wanted to explain that there exists a commonality among all women. But this truth can never be considered to be absolute. No women can ever be considered to be similar. Their basic character differs and hence the base of identity can never be the same. Thus it can be said that identity is relative. Hence it has to be different and unique in its essence. The claim of the West that they understand the problem of the women related to identity is very much analogous has thus been rejected by them. This is a thing



which should be understood by the Western feminists. They should apprehend the fact that abiding by their notions would not help the 'women of colour' in discovering their own identity. There exists a plural and differentiated identity of the non-western women. This is to be accepted by their western counterparts.

In this aspect of identity they also opposed the hierarchy of language. They claim that exclusion is very much prominent in literary ground. They thus rejected the biased, dualistic phallogocentric language used by the western feminist theorists. The language which does not represent the views of all the women in the world cannot be considered to be complete. They should hence write a new language that would emphasize on feminisms rooted in their own experiences. Hence one should realize that all the aspects dealing with endowing identities not only differs among the western and the non-western countries but is hugely distinct in the Third World countries. Only similarity that the third wave feminists share is their willingness to accommodate diversity and change. The feminists of Third World thus tried to emphasize on the historical perspective which would help in knowing oneself better. They said that looking up to one's own indigenous roots and tradition is what would help in building the identity of the 'women of colour'. Understanding ones history, according to the Third World feminists, would make one aware of the fact that their feminism was not based on man-woman antagonisms like the one given by the western feminists who talk about gender separatism. The 'women of colour' for this reason believe in the collective effort, this may be because they had their base on a very different ground than that of the women of the west.

Thus, the feminists of the global south along with opposing the biased notion of identity given by the western feminists have upheld a new notion of separate identity for themselves. They said that in order to regain one's own identity one should look upon the indigenous and ethical aspect which best describes varieties of non-western feminism. One should accept the cultural diversity, explore the traditions and relate themselves to the national identity to realize their own place in the world and thus set their role and identity. The feminisms in the Third World also highlighted one more point which is very different from the notion of the western feminists. They went for self-effacing feminism. For them identity based on individual perspectives and generalization were abstract and unrealistic. They rather went for the collective essence which is the base of the Third World societies. For them identity should be expressed

along with the existing norms rather than against them (as in the western countries). 'women of colour' must not be taken as a single unit but as a conscious strategy, a new kind of community based on the strength of diversities, as the source of new kind of political and social movement. Here is where the difference exists between the two streams of feminism as the 'women of colour' believe not in subordination but in self-realization. But along with this realization acceptance from outside is also necessary. This is what the feminists of the non-western world want to explain it to the western world. They deny the fact that the 'women of colour' are inferior to them in respect. The feminists in the global south should bring this into notice that there are as many centres as there are women and hence their problems should be dealt separately to find a proper solution to them. Their presence is needed to be realized to get their due status and identity in the world.

Another area of concern is that of the State and that of the present era of globalization. As we all know that the political system differs from State to State. In the Third World region, the nation-states mainly came into being after the decolonization process. The state was expected to pay attention to the condition of the women in these countries. But it was found that the issues dealing with women in these countries vanished with the end of the nationalist movement. The condition of the women in these countries became worse with the arrival of the colonizers as said by the Third World feminists. The policies made by the government rarely gave importance to women's matters. These were no facilities for the betterment of women's position in the society. They were seldom given any kind of aid or help. The women of these region are backward not only socially but economically too. They are given very less openings and were limited to the private world. They were rather considered to be apolitical and they did not have any say in the political and social matters. In this situation only the state had the capacity to come to the forefront and work for the betterment of the women. It is the system which could endow the women with their due position and respect in the society. But then it was found that the state hardly ever involved in this area. They didn't bother to make any policies regarding the betterment of the condition of the women; even if they made some policies they were quite reluctant in implementing them. Hence the state was very unenthusiastic dealing with matters related to women. It can never be denied that the state has a lot of abilities to improve the state of 'women of colour', but then again it cannot be denied that the state is very hesitant in doing that.

Then the process of globalization and liberalization, have affected women in various ways. Marginalization of the 'women of colour' in the mainstream discourse on neo-liberal globalization has taken place. It can never be denied that despite numerous development programs and international human rights instruments, globalization has failed to benefit the women of the Third World. Globalization as a phenomenon has affected everyone in this world. The feminists of the Third World have been criticizing globalization because they found that this economic process has played an important role in doing away with their freedom. They also rejected neo-liberal globalization because they claimed that it is a male discourse. But then the supporters of this notion have raised a point that, gender issues are more of a cultural constitution and hence they seem to be irrelevant to these dramatic economic, political and technological transformations and thus it is a neutral process affecting women and men similarly. This is the point where the feminists have raised a question. They said that globalization does shape class, race and gender inequalities. But still the proponents of this phenomenon have rarely raised a question to the existing patriarchal system.

The formation of a new order that privileges consumption, choice and idea of self-propelled individual is another aspect of globalization. But then this is not the real nature of the Third World, their very essence is that of communitarianism and globalization in some way or the other has been trying to hamper it. Then the homogenizing effect of globalization also disturbed the difference existing in this part of the world, which in some way or the other is not acceptable. This is something which has been borrowed from the West and the values of the Non-western States differ a lot. The feminists of the Third World countries must be aware of the thing that the life of the women in their countries differ a lot from each other and hence the solutions produced by the feminists of west can never be suitable to them. Even though globalization with all its new promises and pomp and show try to allure the women and keep them in a mirage that their condition is improving because of the economic transformation, it is the work of these feminists to make the women of their countries realize this and make them face the reality. Women of these regions are thus disproportionately affected by economic colonialism.

It has been found that there still exists unequal division of labour in the economic sphere and the 'women of colour' do not even have the right to demand for equal rights and pay and

equal status in the workplace. The women here are not given many opportunities and hence are restricted to only semi-skilled and unskilled jobs where the pay is already very less. Women are rarely given any chance to move ahead. Moreover, it is found that domestic and caring works are rarely taken into consideration while calculating the GNP of the country. Globalization is one of prevailing reasons for this kind of inequality. Surprisingly, the 'women of colour' are of the apprehension that their condition has improved with the arrival of globalization. They have their own sense of self-worth and advancements and the emerging economic and social trends have resulted in opening up of new spheres of engagement. But they are not aware of the fact that it is nothing more than their figment of imagination that has led to deterioration of their status and opportunities in reality. It cannot be neglected that women's status is associated with the countries involvement in a global economy. Hence the notion that globalization is a gender-free concept does not hold correct.

Then it has been seen that with globalization coming to the limelight, state has been limited to being a mere spectator. This has further made the condition of the women worse. With deregulation taking place, 'women of colour' unknowingly are falling victims of power play, where the power now lies with the economic institutions. Here it is found that women are rarely represented and thus the problems relating to women are seldom considered. The NGOs, who claim to work for women are found to be inefficient and partial. Even the women sometimes belonging to these institutions willingly or unwillingly participate in making the life of the women belonging to the lower strata of society miserable. No one can deny that globalization has led to a lot of illegal actions like that of migration, infiltration, human trafficking were it is very clear that women are the major sufferers. The unprivileged women are unaware of their rights and liberties and hence fall victims to all sorts of breach of freedom. Lack of dignity and self-identity can be restored by the State, but with globalization's impact, the state has failed to render any sort of help.

Thus the claim of the Third World feminists that State has not completely succeeded in giving the women back their due position in society is quite right. Depersonalization of intergovernmental institutions should also take place so that the women in South can get a better chance to represent themselves. Even the development programs brought to the limelight due to globalization were not that helpful to the 'women of colour' as it had western influence. The

development process should rather be indigenous to the Third World states. The game of exclusion should be done away with and in turn de-marginalization of the experiences and involvement of the Third World women should be upheld not only in the mainstream neo-liberal globalization but also in the development process.

The Third World women have criticized the western feminists for taking up the notions of individualism, generalization and binary dualism. They have rather preferred to look upon their own history and get solutions native to the 'women of colour'. They believe that these women differ from the white, middle-class women and hence they should be treated differently. They have upheld the cultural diversity which has been completely neglected by the white feminists. Hence the 'women of colour' have opposed to all the hierarchy existing in the work of the western feminists. The feminisms in the global South have thus tried to deconstruct the existing norms established by the white women and give a complete new theory of their own. But at the same time they believe that the feminisms belonging to the Third World are collaborative, interdisciplinary inquiry and a self-conscious cultural critique.

The feminists of the Third World thus believe that the white feminists and the feminists of the developing countries can be brought together on the same podium. They talk about spiritual solidarity in this regard where all feminisms together can bring change in the world. They also talk about self-reflexivity that would bring the west and the non-west close to each other somehow helping to understand the indigenous terms and thus, praising the existing varieties. The western feminists should realize the thing that there should be mutual admiration for each other. They both have certain positive qualities and hence they should be into borrowing from each other. The feminisms in the global South mainly came as a reaction to the actions taken against the 'women of colour'. They only aimed to make the world conscious of their existence. They have a world beyond that of the West. The women of the Third World just want a separate place for them in the world of theory. They further want to prove that their only motive is that of harmony and mutual co-existence. They do not believe in any sort of difference which would be based on superior-inferior relation. They want a world upholding difference just based on uniqueness. They want to make the world realize that one should celebrate the diversity existing in each part of the world. The feminists in the global South have never rejected the

Western feminists completely. They have just criticized certain biased viewpoints put forward by them.

The Third World feminists try to make this clear that the conditions of the women in the developing nations are very different from each other. Hence no solution can be said to be acceptable completely. Hence instead of depending on the works outside, the feminists of these regions should try to get the solutions from within as that would be more fitting to the circumstances. So, be it post-colonial feminists, Black feminists, Indian feminists, Latin American feminists or Islamic feminists they all have single aim of gaining an identity separate from the one established by west. They also highlight the fact that they differ among themselves too and this uniqueness should be accepted by the other parts of the world and for this they have to learn to identify themselves beyond the existing norms and views about women. The invisible should also be given equal importance. The women belonging to the marginal groups of the developing countries generally go unnoticed but it the duty of the women of to recognize them and work for them as well instead to trying to identify them with women of the middle class belonging to the developing world. Their diversity should be celebrated and recognized. Along with this, another way by which both the feminisms in the West and the Third World can be brought together in the theoretical sphere is by building a system that would pay heed to the thought and viewpoints of all the women not only in the Third World but also of the West. Everyone should be given a chance to present their perception. Instead of being completely critically one should learn to accept each other's opinion as it would further help in understanding the indigenous term. The habit of judging everything in western context should be done away with. Imagination should also come from within and should be exchanged among the various feminist theories. The feminisms in the global South should have a voice of their own, which would further help them to come to the forefront and make their presence realized and have a new status for themselves.

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