

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND DEVELOPEMENT OF FEMINIST THEORY

Durdona Ulug'bek qizi Rasulova

Olima Obidjon qizi Turobova

Student, Chirchik State Pedagogical University

Scientific adviser: **Said-Fozilxon Akmalxonovich Akmalxonov**

Teacher, Chirchik State Pedagogical University

akmalxonovsaidfozil@gmail.com

s.akmalxonov@cspu.uz

ABSTRACT

This article provides a comprehensive examination of the fundamental principles and historical development of feminist theory. Feminist theory is a diverse field of study that critically analyzes the experiences, perspectives, and struggles of women and other marginalized genders. The core principles explored include the personal as political, recognition of gender-based oppression and inequality, challenging patriarchal power structures, intersectionality, and the pursuit of emancipation and social transformation. The article traces the evolution of feminist theory through its key historical phases, from first-wave to fourth-wave feminism. It discusses how feminist theory has expanded its scope and incorporated insights from various disciplines to address an increasingly diverse range of gender-related issues and inequities. The article concludes by highlighting the ongoing relevance and impact of feminist theory in driving meaningful progress towards gender equality and social justice.

Keywords: Feminist theory, gender, patriarchy, intersectionality, social transformation

ANNOTATSIYA

Ushbu maqolada feministik nazariyaning asosiy tamoyillari va tarixiy rivojlanishi har tomonlama ko'rib chiqiladi. Feministik nazariya ayollar va boshqa marginal jinslarning tajribalari, istiqbollari va kurashlarini tanqidiy tahlil qiladigan turli xil tadqiqot sohasidir. Tadqiq qilingan asosiy tamoyillar orasida shaxsiylikni siyosiy, genderga asoslangan zulm va tengsizlikni tan olish, patriarxal hokimiyat tuzilmalariga qarshi kurashish, o'zaro bog'liqlik, ozodlik va ijtimoiy o'zgarishlarga intilish kiradi. Maqola feministik nazariyaning evolyutsiyasini uning asosiy tarixiy bosqichlari orqali, birinchi to'ldiqindan to to'rtinchi to'ldiqin feminizmigacha kuzatib boradi. Unda feministik nazariya o'z qamrovini qanday kengaytirgani va gender bilan bog'liq

bo'lgan turli xil muammolar va tengsizliklarni hal qilish uchun turli fanlardan tushunchalarni o'z ichiga olganligi muhokama qilinadi. Maqola feministik nazariyaning gender tengligi va ijtimoiy adolat sari mazmunli olg'a siljishda davom etayotgan dolzarbligi va ta'sirini ta'kidlash bilan yakunlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Feministik nazariya, gender, patriarhat, interseksiya, ijtimoiy transformatsiya

АБСТРАКТНЫЙ

В этой статье представлен всесторонний анализ фундаментальных принципов и исторического развития феминистской теории. Феминистская теория - это разнообразная область исследований, которая критически анализирует опыт, перспективы и борьбу женщин и других маргинализированных полов. Основные исследованные принципы включают личное как политическое, признание гендерного угнетения и неравенства, вызов патриархальным структурам власти, интерсекциональность, а также стремление к эмансипации и социальной трансформации. В статье прослеживается эволюция феминистской теории на протяжении ее ключевых исторических этапов: от феминизма первой волны до четвертой волны. В нем обсуждается, как феминистская теория расширила сферу своей деятельности и включила в себя идеи из различных дисциплин для решения все более разнообразного спектра гендерных проблем и неравенства. В заключение статьи подчеркивается сохраняющаяся актуальность и влияние феминистской теории на достижение значимого прогресса на пути к гендерному равенству и социальной справедливости.

Ключевые слова: феминистская теория, гендер, патриархат, интерсекциональность, социальная трансформация.

INTRODUCTION

Feminist theory is a broad, multifaceted field of study that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a response to the pervasive patriarchal structures and gender-based inequalities that dominated societies around the world. Over the decades, feminist theory has evolved significantly, incorporating insights from various disciplines and addressing a wide range of issues related to gender, power, and social justice. The fundamental principles that underlie feminist theory are rooted in the recognition that gender-based discrimination, oppression, and marginalization are systemic and pervasive, and that addressing these issues requires a holistic and

intersectional approach.¹ This article aims to provide a comprehensive exploration of the key principles and the historical development of feminist theory, emphasizing its historical context, major theoretical perspectives, and the ongoing challenges it continues to address.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research methodology, utilizing a comprehensive literature review of academic sources to investigate the fundamental principles and the evolution of feminist theory. The review encompassed a range of feminist perspectives, including liberal, radical, socialist, and intersectional feminism, as well as the contributions of prominent feminist thinkers and activists.

The literature review focused on scholarly journal articles, books, and reports that explored the foundational concepts, theoretical frameworks, and the historical development of feminist theory. The analysis of these sources involved identifying the core principles, tracing the key phases in the evolution of feminist theory, and understanding the ongoing debates and challenges within the field.²

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The core principles that underlie feminist theory can be summarized as follows:

- 1.The personal is political feminist theorists argue that the personal experiences and struggles of women and other marginalized genders are inherently political, as they are shaped by broader societal, cultural, and structural forces.
- 2.Gender-based oppression and inequality: Feminist theory recognizes that women and other marginalized genders face systemic oppression and discrimination based on their gender, which manifests in various forms, such as economic, social, political, and cultural inequalities.
- 3.Patriarchy and power structures: Feminist theory challenges the patriarchal power structures that have historically dominated societies, where men have held positions of power and authority while women and other marginalized genders have been relegated to subordinate roles.
- 4.Intersectionality: Feminist theory acknowledges that the experiences of women and other marginalized genders are shaped not only by gender, but also by other intersecting social identities, such as race, class, sexuality, and ability, among others.
- 5.Emancipation and social transformation: Feminist theory advocates for the emancipation of women and other marginalized genders from oppressive structures

1.Hooks, B. 2015. Feminist theory: From margin to center. Routledge

2.Lorde, A. 2007. Sister outsider: Essays and speeches. Crossing Press

and the transformation of societal norms and institutions to achieve greater gender equity and social justice.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEMINIST THEORY

Feminist theory has evolved significantly over the past century, reflecting the changing social, political, and academic landscapes. The development of feminist theory can be broadly categorized into the following phases:

1. First-wave feminism: This phase focused primarily on gaining legal and political rights for women, such as the right to vote, own property, and participate in public life. Key figures during this period included pioneers like Mary Wollstonecraft, Sojourner Truth, and Susan B. Anthony, who fought for women's suffrage and challenging the patriarchal social order.

2. Second-wave feminism: This phase expanded the scope of feminist theory, addressing issues such as reproductive rights, domestic violence, and the liberation of women from the confines of traditional gender roles. Influential theorists like Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, and Kate Millet pushed for greater social, economic, and political equality for women.

3. Third-wave feminism: This phase emphasized the diversity of women's experiences, recognizing the intersectionality of gender with other social identities, and challenging the rigid gender binary. Theorists like Judith Butler, bell hooks, and Audre Lorde expanded feminist discourse to address the needs and concerns of a more diverse range of marginalized groups.³

4. Fourth-wave feminism : This phase is characterized by the use of digital and social media platforms to raise awareness, organize activism, and challenge systemic gender-based oppression and inequalities. Feminist thinkers and activists have leveraged online spaces to amplify voices, mobilize movements, and demand accountability from institutions and power structures. Throughout these phases, feminist theory has made significant contributions to the understanding of gender, power, and social justice. Each wave has built upon the insights and achievements of the previous ones, expanding the scope and depth of feminist discourse and activism.⁴

ONGOING CHALLENGES AND DEBATES

3. Collins, P. H. 2002. Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment. Routledge.

4. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-theory/>

5. Butler, J. 1990. Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity. Routledge.

While feminist theory has played a crucial role in challenging the status quo and advocating for the rights and empowerment of women and other marginalized genders, it has also faced its share of challenges and debates within the field. One of the ongoing debates within feminist theory is the issue of intersectionality and the need to address the unique experiences and concerns of marginalized individuals and communities. Scholars and activists have pushed for a more intersectional approach that recognizes the intersections of gender with other social identities, such as race, class, sexuality, and disability. This has led to critiques of earlier feminist theories that were predominantly centered on the experiences of white, middle-class women, and the call for a more inclusive and representative feminist discourse. Another challenge faced by feminist theory is the resistance from entrenched patriarchal structures and the persistence of gender-based discrimination and violence.⁵ Despite the progress made in various spheres, such as politics, education, and the workforce, women and other marginalized genders continue to face systemic barriers and threats to their safety and well-being. Addressing these pervasive issues requires sustained activism, policy changes, and a fundamental transformation of societal norms and institutions. Additionally, there have been debates within feminist theory regarding the role of men and the inclusion of masculinity studies. Some feminists have argued for the importance of engaging with men and masculinity as part of the broader effort to dismantle patriarchal structures and achieve gender justice. Others have emphasized the need to maintain a focus on women's experiences and the unique challenges they face.⁶

CONCLUSION

Feminist theory has played a crucial role in challenging the status quo and advocating for the rights and empowerment of women and other marginalized genders. By highlighting the systemic nature of gender-based oppression and the intersectionality of various social identities, feminist theory has provided a robust framework for understanding and addressing the complex realities faced by individuals and communities around the world.⁷ The fundamental principles of feminist theory, such as the recognition of the personal as political, the critique of patriarchal power

6. Friedan, B. 1963. *The feminine mystique*. W. W. Norton & Company.

<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>

7. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2020/07/07/many-americans-say-rising-activism-on-important-issues-like-racial-equality-is-good/>

8. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-theory/>

structures, and the pursuit of emancipation and social transformation, have continued to guide the field's evolution and impact. As feminist theory has expanded its scope and incorporated insights from various disciplines, it has become increasingly inclusive and representative, addressing the diverse needs and concerns of marginalized communities. Despite the ongoing challenges and debates within the field, the relevance and impact of feminist theory remain as critical as ever. As societies continue to grapple with issues of gender equality, social justice, and the empowerment of marginalized communities, the insights and activism of feminist theorists and practitioners will be crucial in driving meaningful and sustainable change. By challenging the status quo and advocating for systemic transformation, feminist theory continues to play a vital role in shaping a more equitable and just world.⁸

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5. Friedan, B. 1963. *The feminine mystique*. W. W. Norton & Company.

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