

Why Do We Still Need Feminism?

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To address this question, there is a need to understand the true notion of the term 'feminism.' Feminism refers to the school of thought which believes in equal rights for both men and women. Though the definition is quite simple, it is highly misunderstood. The stereotypes and misunderstandings related to the concept of feminism are spread by the media. Many programs and movies show the idea of feminism to be like women must be considered more powerful than men, or like women hate men, or they deserve special treatment. Many such slogans have also been raised by the women themselves that they don't like this idea or that they don't need feminism because they have equal rights, or they understand that men have problems, too. This mindset or perception is an outcome of the misleading depiction of the [notion of feminism](#) through media and other means.

In the present conditions, when the word 'feminism' is heard or if someone says that I'm a feminist, the first thought that people get is women who don't like men and also do not want to be dependent on them. Some people may also think that feminists are lesbians and they don't need men in their lives. The idea of feminism is contrasting to what is being understood by the people. Feminism has no connection with the outer appearance of women, their personal relationships, or their sex life. There's also no notion of having some special treatment for being a feminist. A feminist doesn't ask for it. The followers of this idea just want women to have equal rights as men. They don't want superiority; they ask for the balance of rights of both genders.

The main aim of feminism is women's empowerment, but it doesn't imply that women are weak. Women are fully aware of their strengths and capabilities. This awareness needs to be accepted by the whole society. Looking at the history of feminism, Simone de Beauvoir, a novelist, wrote that "the first time we see a woman take up her pen in defence of her sex" was Christine de Pizan, who wrote "Epistle to the God of Love" in the 15th century. Simone herself wrote many novels on women's empowerment and against oppression towards women. Feminism isn't about depreciating men, as it's known that men also go through many challenges and problems in satisfying the expectations and responsibilities society places on their shoulders. (hooks, 2000) Equal and balanced rights are the only demands of feminists.

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Now, the question arises as to why we still need feminism. The latest slogans by women who say they don't need it must understand that this concept of feminism does not apply to one woman but rather to the whole female community. It's good if you're not facing any problem in having your rights, but many other women are still deprived of even their basic rights. We still face bias on the grounds of education, occupation, household matters, etc., among both sexes. We observe these differences in

different cultures accordingly.

Married women are accused of being irresponsible and characterless even when they're the ones being targeted for domestic violence. It's the woman who gets raped and then accused of getting out at night alone or wearing inappropriate clothing. They are accused of being lustful and attention seekers. Many countries traditionalize early marriages and allow child brides. There are no regulations regarding marital rape. There are also those nations that allow the act of cutting off and restitching of the female genital organs, which stops them from having pleasure in sex rather than making it more painful. Baby girls are still killed or buried alive in many countries. The want for a baby boy to be born instead of a girl is prevalent in many societies and nations. Many people consider a girl to be a burden on the whole household, while a boy is seen as the support of the family. In Afghanistan, women were not even allowed to step out of the house without any male relative; they were deprived of education, and the list continues. There's also a concept of 'honor killing' prevalent in many societies which only aims at women and not the men. This is the equality a feminist demands: if a woman can be killed in the name of honour, why can't men be killed for the same reason?

Feminism wants women to speak up for their rights. They don't need them because they're the females but need them because they're humans. They are living beings just like men. They have the right to lead their lives their way. Freedom is as important to a woman as to a man. Their choices and decisions have to be respected and honoured. Kathy Caprino says, "There are millions of people who both inwardly and outwardly do not support the idea that there should be equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women," and, "Feminism at its core is about equality of men and women, not "sameness." This sameness she's talking about is about the similarities of men and women. According to her, many people have this idea that when men and women are not the same physically, how can they have equal rights?

Some people are also of the opinion that feminism has worked and now it's not of any use, it is rather hurting the nation. (United Nations, 1979)

"And although women as a group have made substantial gains in wages, educational attainment, and prestige over the past three decades, the economists Justin Wolfers and Betsey Stevenson have shown that women are less happy today than their predecessors were in 1972, both in absolute terms and relative to men." Ann Marie Slaughter, former director of policy planning for the U.S. State Dept., *Why Women Still Can't Have It All* (The Atlantic)

Andi Enns, an activist, states 77 reasons why we still need feminism. She states, "Women who report sexual harassment in the workplace are seen as "prudes", and, "You're emotional" is a way to undermine women's passionate opinions, even when passion is seen as a benefit in men." One notable point is, "Girls are still told "It means he likes you" when boys hit them. Violence is touted as flattery."

All the above-mentioned reasons are why we still need this idea of feminism. There are many apart from these. Women have gone through a lot in the past and are still going through. A woman, being a

mother, makes a nation. Hence, there's a need for her betterment and well-being so that she can ultimately make society a better place to live in.

Conclusion

There's a need to display the real face and true purpose of the concept of feminism. There are a lot of reasons why we're still in need of it. And all these reasons are due to the responses towards the wrong perception of the idea. Many people still need to be educated regarding the social status of women and how they must be treated. Women are taken as objects and treated as property. All these mindsets must be changed for the betterment of women and society.

References

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