

- Vol. VII, No. III (Summer 2022)    ▪ p- ISSN: 2708-2091    ▪ e-ISSN: 2708-3586    ▪ L-ISSN: 2708-2091
- Pages: 31 – 40    ▪ DOI: 10.31703/gsr.2022(VII-III).04    ▪ URL: [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsr.2022\(VII-III\).04](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsr.2022(VII-III).04)
- Citation: Ali, Y., Shoaib, M., & Ahsan, H. (2022). Feminist Waves and Gender Discrimination in Pakistan. *Global Sociological Review*, VII (III), 31-40. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gsr.2022\(VII-III\).04](https://doi.org/10.31703/gsr.2022(VII-III).04)

## Feminist Waves and Gender Discrimination in Pakistan

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**Abstract:** *Females, for centuries have been suppressed and their feminist traits have been manipulated in various ways, whether it's sexualizing, objectifying, subduing, and confiscating them. Despite the war against gender discrimination, gender inequality continues to entrench the world, where women are deprived of their fundamental rights, specifically in developing countries. The study will evaluate the multidimensional facets of the three feminist waves, illustrating their causes and subsequent effects, with a viewpoint of Pakistan's chronology of gender discrimination. Moreover, the study will also elaborate on several efforts made in Pakistan to combat gender discrimination. The research is based on primary data, involving reflexive interviews, semi-structured questionnaires conducted by the social activist fighting against gender inequality, and a desk survey. The conclusion of the research is based on the solution to fight gender discrimination and reforms that can be brought in Pakistan to resolve the dilemma. Hence, the study will of significant importance for young females all across the globe, specifically in Pakistan, giving them the motivation to stand for their basic rights.*

**Key Words:** Feminism, Feminist Waves, Gender Discrimination, Pakistan

### Introduction

Since the inception of the human generation, and the realization of the existence of human into two genders, one gender has been predominantly suppressed and manipulated in various forms, from the live burial of daughters to using them as sex toys, women have been exploited, and their basic human and gender rights have been repressed. For a long, women have struggled to acknowledge their gender identity and fought against gender inequality, as well as patriarchy which has been ingrained in the conventional and contemporary customs of the world. This struggle has been in several forms, from an individual woman fighting for her rights, resulting in mass protests asking for their acknowledgment, to the social organizations fighting for the liberty of women. Hence, these all efforts ultimately led to a

movement, more precisely referred to as the Waves of Feminism, or Feminist Waves. These waves were defined as political, cultural, and economic movements, with each differing concerning their efforts, and objectives. But still, all of these three waves were inclined to one similar motive of equal rights and freedom. Over time, these movements gained momentum and attained some of their anticipated aftermaths (Delmar, 2018). These waves though were limited to the economically and socially developed world, more principally in Europe and America, the increasing magnitude of these cases also inflicted an emotional sensation in the women of the developing world, making them realize the oppression and deprivation, they had been raised and trained for, surging them to stand against all odds, for they are also one of the two factions of the human species. Hence, this era for the fight for women's

rights began, starting in the US, spreading to Europe, and finally incorporating Asia, and Africa, and all the women across the world were united despite their cultural, social, ethnic, and religious disparities. These waves also had some impact on the women in Pakistan, but because of the lack of support and confidence, these Pakistani women couldn't express themselves and were unable to thwart for themselves until it was the 21<sup>st</sup> century when they had the educational background, and assistance from other strong women, enabling them to stand and protest for the sake of themselves and the prospective feminist generation.

The first wave of feminism started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued till the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This wave was all about equal legal and social rights promoting equal agreement and property rights of women, the opposition of the ownership of married females by their husbands or their confiscation inside houses, bounded to perform household chores, and equal voting rights for women. This wave ended when in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when women of the United States were given equal voting rights with the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the US Constitution. (Steve, 2001)

The second wave of feminism started in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and gained momentum in the 1960s and this movement was all about gender inequality and sexual discrimination. This wave was set to acknowledge the cultural and political equality of women and motivate women to stand against the sexist powers, which suppressed women. This feminist wave was dominantly successful as the women acknowledged their sexual identity and stood with dignity. This wave was far more triumphant as compared to the first wave because of the engagement of the renowned figures involving women and men, all those who believed in gender equality, as it was the only way to establish peace and harmony in the world. This wave ended due to the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave, as a result of the disagreement with its motives. (Mann, 2005)

The third wave of feminism began in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and continued till the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This wave started as a result of the disagreement of several women with the objectives of the second wave, who argued that the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave was centralized towards upper and middle-class white women and that it snubbed the lower-class women as well as the black women. The ideology of the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave of feminism

disregarded the definition of feminism which originated as a result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave, specializing women as beautiful and diligent creatures, arguing that all women are beautiful and dignified, despite their color, traits, or body. This wave was far more successful than the other two waves and revived around the motive that a woman is not necessarily beautiful but being a woman is indeed beautiful. This wave was so popular and so successful that even women from developing countries raised their voices for its support. This wave is continued at an accelerated pace and substantial progress has been made so far. However, several feminists argue that the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave has ended and the 4<sup>th</sup> wave has incepted, while others assert that it is still the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave, and it has to be continued unless all the fundamental human rights are attained. (Snyder-Hall, 2010).

Gender discrimination is a predefined type of racism against a specific gender. Unfortunately, gender discrimination has enveloped the entire world, where females have been specifically targeted, just based on their gender identity. This discrimination is in various ways; incorporating the educational difference, the professional difference, the household obligatory difference, the voting difference, and many others. This gender discrimination has been more dominating in developing countries as compared to the developed world. Similarly, in Pakistan, women are suppressed and they are discriminated against by males in the society, whether its their home, offices, schools, or academies (Hazarika, 2010). The women in Pakistan assert that they are not provided with fundamental human rights, and are not allowed to express themselves and their feminism. But this is gender discrimination is not only limited to the inability of freedom of expression, but to violence that is practiced on the women of the Pakistani community including honor killing, as if attacks, Vani, forced marriages, Swara, and KaroKari. These customs have been ingrained into Pakistan's society and the women have suffered a great deal. It has been asserted that the grief over a girl's birth by her family has been the most primary stage of gender discrimination, which portrays the social patriarchal structure in the country, in which the females are docile to males and are possessed by males, just like property. Initially, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the women of Pakistan were completely unaware of their basic rights, not even realizing their sexual identity.

But since the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Pakistani women begin to realize their deprivations and have comprehended as well as appreciated the feminist movements, in fact; some begin to claim themselves feminist, despite threats from their counter gender. But some improvements are being rendered, and changes are bought. But still, a great deal of effort is required to break the conventional customary walls of illiteracy and pseudo gender dominance. (Mehrotra, 2006).

### **Objectives**

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1. To evaluate the waves of feminism, their orientation, their consequent effects, fundamental objectives as well as their impact on the provision of the basic rights of females.
2. To elaborate on different aspects of gender discrimination and the effect of gender discrimination on the when all around the world, specifically in Pakistan.
3. To illustrate the steps taken to the secure rights of women in Pakistan, and the efforts made by Pakistani women to fight against o

### **Research Methodology**

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The research methodology adopted for this project is exploratory qualitative that is comprised of two ways. Initially, a desktop survey strategy was pursued which incorporated a detailed analysis of the literature review entailing journal articles, feminist official renders, analysis of the books, feminist periodicals, case studies, and web pages and web portals of feminist organizations, media reports, Pakistan's constitution and provision of rights to females in Pakistan, and other bureaus have been consulted wholly and deliberately for giving research context, right recommendations, and reasonable insight to the progress of this relevant study to feminism within Pakistan and in other states, specifically developing states. Further, some official interviews were being viewed along with some unofficial conferences with renowned international as well as national feminists and other famous women to analyze their future strategies in the world and primarily in Pakistan. The data accessible from these case studies enabled us to decipher the impact of feminist waves and the increasing demands of females on the social, political, and economic facets of the country.

Since insight into feminism is limited in Pakistan and because of commitment to a grounded approach to knowledge production policy-relevant areas, hence research will be iterative and inductive. The research will also predominantly consist of semi-structured interviews with females both from urban and rural areas to analyze the occurrences of suppression and oppression, that they have encountered in their lives, their perception of male-dominant society. The research will further include more ethnographic methods such as victim compliance, informal group discussion, and reflexive interviewing, as an effective mechanism to collect data and information to generate interest in the research. There are several possible approaches for obtaining participants for this research. I intend to arrive at a ridge of organizations and institutions of work formally but also developed a snowball sample through work-related or informal contact, enabling me to reach every possible feminist to collect data for my research. Hence, it will provide ample primary comparative data to analyze the results of the research systematically.

The second phase the collection of data, which is principally primary data, including a substantial field/work survey. This included multiple visits to feminist-related organizations, both at the provincial and federal levels, informal conversations, and conventions with famous and successful females. This phase also implicated the discussions with the subject matter connoisseurs of feminism and "Being a female in Pakistan" to assess the subject matter and scope of this research work for the case of relevant studies in feminism to analyze the impact of the feminist waves in Pakistan. Further, these informal discussions included symposia with the professionals of the feminist organizations and constitutional makers to talk over the constitutional aspect of Pakistan, securing the rights of females, that has been implemented over the years. This analysis and dataset provided us with in-depth knowledge and information bestowing us a detailed conclusion and area for future research.

### **Research Questions**

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What are the waves of feminism, what were their causes and effects, and what objectives were these waves intended to achieve?

2. What are the different aspects of gender discrimination and what is the aftermath of this gender inequality all across the world, specifically Pakistan?
3. What improvements have been made to conserve the basic rights of females in Pakistan, and how are Pakistani women preparing themselves to combat gender inequality?

### Theoretical Framework

From the theoretical perspective, the literary school of thought asserted females and males are the two most dominating classifications of human society, who require to stay together, both for their socio-physiological and socio-psychological prosperity. But this prosperity of the individual human is only one facet, both genders need to collaborate for the prosperity of the human race as well. Hence, to attain this basic objective, both races must equally contribute to the betterment of their type. And this equal contribution is only cohered with the equal rights and protection of both classes; females and males. Hence, these waves of feminism are described using the hypothetical approach of two of the most significant theories of gender inequality; Feminist theory and The Second Sex Theory. The feminist theory emerged in early 1794 when the subject of feminism was raised in various publications including *A vindication of Rights of Woman* by Mary Wollstonecraft, and others like *The Changing Woman*, *Speech after Arrest for Illegal Voting*, *Aint I A Woman*, and many others. Each of these publications raised a different voice, each narrating a distinct tale of distinct suffering. The changing women appreciated the women, who endured pain to populate the world, but they never stood for themselves and her basic rights. *Aint I A Woman*, argued against the unequal rights for females, just because of the inferior viewpoint of men, and stood for equality and against patriarchy. While in the *Speech after Arrest for illegal voting*, Susan B. Anthony delivered a speech in court, expressing the constitutional problems, which believed in punishing women, but not securing the women. She suspected the patriarchal language of the constitution as well as the administrative principles of the legislation. These all publications begin the process of the formation of the feminist movements, as well as the feminist theory.

The feminist theory believes in equal rights for women, in every department of life, social, economic, political, ethnic, religious, educational, and others. The theory assets to eradicate gender discrimination from the world, and affirms the implementation of equal rights for both males and females. The theory investigates the social functions of both male and females, their experiences, interests, responsibilities, and rights. The primary principles of feminist theories are gender discrimination, objectification (chiefly sexual objectification), patriarchy, oppression, suppression, stereotypes, and possession of women. The theory revolves around certain facets and involves minor details of every orthodox custom, associated with the suppression of women. For instance, the feminist theory affirms that the word *body* has always been associated with females, which is equivalent to sexualizing them and portraying them as objects for pleasure, or sex toys. And the word *minds* have always been associated with males, implying them as the only intelligent class of the human race. Hence, the feminist theory rescinds this concept of the *body* with females, and *mind* with males, asserting that both male and female can be beautiful as well as intellectual, and that beauty or intelligence, is not specified for any gender. Moreover, the feminist theory also invalidates the standard and contemporary sex, supporting the gender system. The theory argues that sex is the result of chromosomal combination, while gender is a chosen sex based on the behavior, actions, and desires with sex- determinism. Hence, the theory argued that sexual identity is no longer a valid system of identification, while gender identity is a more valid procedure. Hence, the theory asserts that everyone must be allowed to choose their gender for themselves, regardless of their sexual chromosome. In the conversational dialectical perspective, the feminist theory nullifies the masculinized use of language, that fails to manifest the literary connotation of several words. The theory wants to forge a specified identity of females through more effective and unbiased language. The theory has also asserted to use the word *won* instead of *woman* to show gender independence. But these are only the primary principles, the theory also emphasizes the art history and film industry, narrating that art is the most important factor, connecting the human race, hence the theory believes that it must be unbiased

from any sexual or gender limitation, and should equally present both categories of human species. Moreover, the theory also emphasized the revolutions in psychology, psychoanalysis, intersectionality, epistemologies, and other social factors. But these are for developed countries such as the US, the UK, Germany, or France. But not for developing countries like Pakistan, which are still fighting for the provision of basic rights, including nutritional rights, freedom of expression right, educational right, decision right, and all other rights that are for all humans; males, females, and transgender.

However, some people argue that feminist theory believes in a matriarchal social structure, but it is totally because the provisions of the theory assert equality, not dominance. And this desire for equality is evident from the fundamental principles of the feminist theory. Hence, the feminist theory excellently explains the feminism waves as well as gender discrimination using a hypothetical approach.

## Discussion

### The First Wave of Feminism

The first wave of feminism is usually referred to as the feminist movement that was incepted in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued till the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is characterized by the fundamental objectives of attaining legal rights and constitutional equality for women (Conflicts, 2016). The movement started with the realization of women, during the World Wars, of their abilities and capacities to work in factories and industries. The women realized that they were always independent and capable to work, but the men never let them realize this because they knew that it was the gateway to their liberation. The women, hence also realized that politics and competence were completely controlled and donated by the men and that they were merely an object that was possessed by either their fathers or their husbands. They were not even having the authoritative right to file for divorce or demand the custody of children. Moreover, women were not even allowed to cast vote. Hence, the women realized their deprivations and started to raise their voices for their rights. The first wave pertained to the abolitionist movement in the United States and the primary objective of both movements was social

emancipation, liberation, and freedom from the possession of males and a patriarchal society. The first wave of feminism is demarcated as officially the onset of the Declaration of Sentiments, which held at the first-ever convention, aimed for the protection of women (J. Boxer, 1982).

Moreover, it is a dominant fact that many abolitionists were feminists and, hence, the anti-slavery movement accelerated the first wave of feminism. During the wave, the most dominating objective, that females were fighting for, was suffrage, the right to vote, which also led to the formation of the American Women Suffrage Association (AWSA). However, this organization soon collapsed and resulting in the formation of the National Women Suffrage Association in 1869. However, later that year AWSA formed again. Both organizations had different mechanisms, NWSA was led by females only and believed in the complete up-gradation of women in every department of life, whereas AWSA, only emphasized voting right for females. But soon both organizations joined and became the National American woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), and begin to struggle for the rights of women. The first success of the organization was when in 1869, Wyoming granted the right to vote to females. (Werum, 2011).

In 1916, a young feminist, Alice Paul, who separated from NAWSA, formed the National Women Party and started to work for a constitutional amendment, and protested in front of the White House, during World War I. These collective efforts of NAWSA and NWP became successful when all, the citizens of America were allowed to cast a vote, on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1920.

Hence, with this triumph and the attainment of legal voting rights, the first wave of feminism ended. But, the first women were biased and failed to conserve the basic rights of every female, since the wave marginalized the black women, who faced discrimination as they were still restrained to exercise their right to vote, because of their complexion. The white women in the south were considerably racist and didn't allow the black when to join NAWSA. Hence, the black women formed their organizations including the National Association of Colored Women, and the Alpha Suffrage Club, to fight for their legal rights. Despite the common objective, the women were divided internally.

Hence, the first wave though not as successful because of the racism and internal riots, but somehow did set a stage for the second wave of feminism which had a more comprehensive effect and expanded the struggle for equality to other bureaus of society. (Crenshaw, 2008).

### The Second Wave of Feminism

The second wave of feminism started in the early 1960s when 38% of American women, who worked in industries, during World War II, when men are busy fighting wars, were forced to return to their homes and were compelled to quit their jobs. They were expected to continue their submission to males as devoted and subjugated wives. However, the women being liberated during the war from patriarchy never were in favor of the continuation of their prior lives, which resulted in the second wave of feminism. This wave unlike the first wave emphasized the attainment of public and private rights, incorporating the issues of reproductive freedoms, domestic violence, office or workplace security, and rape issues. (Hewitt, 2002) Moreover, this wave was more about the manifestation of a positive and practical image of women, rather than an oppressed or dependent body, that always needs a male shoulder for her survival. During this wave, women also created their culture, and arts, representing their independence and liberation from the male dominant society, and this culture slowly prospered to the film, and music industries, and the feminist discussion was made in books and all public places. The movement was accelerated on the publication of the famous book, "The Feminine Mystique, which motivated the feminists, making them realize the inequalities and oppressions they had been suffering from the beginning without uttering any complaints. This book surged the women, increasing their efforts for the feminine cause. As a result of these efforts, the first-ever contraceptive pill was approved by the FDA, which was made accessible in 1961, giving women control over their reproductive rights. The women were now considerably independent and became a significant body involved in protests and advocacy for eradicating gender discrimination by formulating provincial, state, and national feminists' organizations. (Devereux, 2014) This resulted in constitutional legislation such as the Equal pay Act of

1963, and Title VII of the Civil Rights 1964. In 1966, a feminist organization named the National Organization for Women (NOW) was established and worked for increasing professional as well as educational opportunities for females. This was of enormous success, evident from the fact, that various constitutional bills referred to as the Women's Educational Equity Act 1972 and 1974, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act 1974, and Pregnancy Discrimination Act 1978 were passed in the Assembly. Moreover, the proscription on marital rape in 1993 and the legalization of no-fault divorce, somehow, gave independence to women. (Rosenfelt, 1987) This all indicated the success of the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of feminism. Several ambitious and passionate women played an integral part in this wave. Gloria Steinem, a feminist leader, and a young journalist subscribed to the legalization of abortions and nationally funded daycare centers. Another writer, Kate Miller inscribed Sexual Politics, about the patriarchy and the gender inequality that women had been facing. Another young feminist and writer, Carol Hanisch, composed an essay, Personal is Politics and argued that the personal facets of life incorporating the household chores is a political aspect of women's lives, and must be acknowledged by the public.

Hence, the second wave of feminism as a whole is characterized by a common feeling of solidarity among all the women fighting for equality. Several categories of feminism arose during the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of feminism, but radical feminism was the most dominating, incorporating the complete eradication of male hegemony and patriarchy. The other categories were socialist feminism, which opposed the tyrannical nature of capitalist society and associated racism with feminism. And intersection feminism, the assortment of the different forms of feminism, and a collaborative fight against a different type of oppression and racism by all females, despite their color, ethnicity, race, or religion. (Moran, 2005).

Hence, the second wave of feminism was a great triumph in terms of both cultural and legal equality. But even though this success, the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of feminism failed in uniting all women, as the black women argued that this wave was only for the legal and social rights of white women, and not for black women, as all the organizations were dominated by the white women, who raised voices for their rights, constantly neglecting black, Asian, African, and other



non-American women. Hence, the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of feminism was a bit incalculable in expanding the scope of the feminist objective, but still, it had given the women confidence and hope, that their movements were in the right direction, and that the pursuit of equality was possible.

### The Third Wave of Feminism

Before understanding the provisions of the third wave of feminism, we must understand the sex wars, that began after the climax of the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of feminism. The Sex Wars, was a name given by the feminist to a war between the two classified groups of feminists. One group of feminists was against pornography and sexual pastimes, they argued that pornography was the sexualization of women, promoting commotion against women. This group was against both pornography and prostitution. While the other group of feminists argued that it was the world of sexual liberation and that women must be allowed to do whatever they wanted to, even if it was prostitution or pornography, and asserted that outlawing pornography or institution was suppressive and undemocratic. (Snyder, 2008).

Hence, the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave of feminism began in a more literate and contemporary work, fighting for a broader perspective of women's image. The feminist of the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave openly criticized the feminists and leaders of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> wave and implied these waves as somehow, failures, considering the marginalization of women based on their color, and ethnicity. Hence, the primary objective of the third wave of feminism was or is to attain complete freedom, by uniting every woman of every color, every race, every country, and every religion. Hence, the third wave of feminism is focused more on intersection feminism. (Kinser, 2004).

The third wave of feminism was inception in 1991 when, Anita Hill impeached Clarence Thomas, a strong nominee of the Supreme Court, of sexual harassment. Both belonged to African American political parties. However, Hill was criticized in the entire country, views as a liar, and her character was assaulted despite her testimony being reckoned. Her prosecution was broadcasted live and this sight of black women, facing the allegations, spurred all women across America. This was followed by an article in a magazine by Rebecca Walker, in which she

supported Hill, saying "*I am not a post-feminism feminist. I am the third wave.*" In 1990, women's representation in politics increased, when 5 women joined the US Senate, and it was referred to as the "Year of the Women". Moreover, for the first time, a female attorney general and female secretary were hired, Hillary Clinton, who gave a famous speech, "Women's Rights are Human Rights" at the United Nations in 1995. This was followed by the approval of the Violence Against Women Act in 1995, which proved to be a milestone in equal rights for women. Another important objective for the third wave of feminism was the attainment of reproductive rights and the rights to birth control and abortion. (Braithwaite, 2002).

Moreover, the third wave of feminism was different from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> waves, as it employed the media industry more considerably than the first two waves. A famous girl band, called Riot Grrrl, composed music on the themes of women's empowerment. Moreover, several movies and web series, we're based on the same themes, including Louise Buffy the Vampire Slayer, 30 Rock, and Parks and Recreation. Moreover, to fight against patriarchy, the women of the 21<sup>st</sup> century embraced the term "bitch", "cunt", and "slut", to manifest them as strong and independent women. This wave also incorporated walks by feminists, to fight against the justification of rape by condemning the appearance or apparel of women. Another significant issue raised during the third wave of feminism was the protection of the rights of the transgender, coining the term transfeminism, hence, the third wave of feminism greatly enhanced the perspective of women and their role in society. The third wave of feminism hence is characterized by the gender, sexuality, and body image of women. (Gills, 2004).

But some people and women oppose the third wave of feminism, saying that it's too radical and modern, that it nullifies the basic code of life and the basic principles of ethics, and tolerance. Some people also argue that the third wave of feminism is not about the attainment of equality, but matriarchy, as is obvious from its provision. (Manford, 2004).

However, so far, the wave has been successful in achieving its objectives, despite some complications, and has been of significant importance in the lives of women, who have attained some degree of freedom,

liberation, and equality, but again in the developed countries.

### Impact of Waves of Feminism and Gender Discrimination in Pakistan

Pakistan came into being on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947, when the first wave had already been over, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave had already begun, but it was principally limited to the developed countries, but also encompassed some of the developing nations, incorporating Africa. Though during the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave, Pakistan women were unable to heed the feminist cause, as they were engaged in the liberation process of their country from British rule, and were facing the atrocities of the Hindus, hence they couldn't join the feminist waves (Ramzan, 2013). But it won't be inaccurate to say that they were aware of the circumstance, as they had lived among the Britain women, who would come to the women of the subcontinent, narrating the tale of their deprivations, and the suppressions that they were facing from the hands of Indian men, confiscating them in their houses and engaging in politics by themselves. These women, though knew that they were suppressed and that they were given no right to education or liberation, but remained firm and calm, as their entire motive at that time, was liberation from British supremacy and not male supremacy.

However, during the third wave of feminism, the women of the country were fully aware of the feminist waves, primarily because of the fostered literacy as compared to preliminary waves, and secondly because of the technological revolution, which connected Pakistani women to the foreign women, fighting for their rights. (Delavan, 2013) Hence, since the third wave, Pakistani women have engaged in the feminist cause, for the liberation and privilege of women, for their basic rights of education, marriage, profession, legal and constitutional rights, and their perception in the patriarchal social structure of Pakistan. The waves of feminism, primarily the third wave has surged Pakistani women to stand against gender discrimination in Pakistan, encompassing the fight against rape, domestic violence, acid attacks, child marriages, forced marriages, educational differences, the inability of freedom of expression, the professional freedom, and the freedom of women from orthodox customs of Vani, Karo Kari, and

Swara, all suppressing women in different ways. The Pakistani women so far have used peaceful ways to protest against these oppressions through the formation of non-governmental organizations, incorporating Alliance Against Sexual Harassment at Workplace (AASHA), All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Democratic Women's Association (DWA), Gender and Development, National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), and many others. This fight also encompasses the protest through the arts and the film industry. Several dramas have been made during the last two decades to fight against the oppression of women, and several kinds of music have also been composed to raise harmonized voices for women. One of the most well-known movements referred to as the "Women's March" has also been started in the country, which is conducted each year on 8<sup>th</sup> March, when women from all across the country march against the suppression of women, accompanied by males, who believe in inequality. The main objective of the March is to secure fights against women and eradicate patriarchy and gain equality in the social roots of the country. (Iqbal, 2012).

However, it has been criticized by several people of the country both by males and females, who believe that the March is a foreign agenda, supported by the rivals of Pakistan, as a tactic to bring political, diplomatic, economic, and social turmoil in the country by liberalizing women. Moreover, when we talked to some of the women of rural areas, they asserted that Women March is just a manifestation of the upper-class women, fighting for modern rights, and does not embody the middle- or lower-class women of society. They argue that there is much more to raise voice against, including the domestic violence, Vani, child marriages, forced marriages, nutritional differences, that most of the lower and middle-class women of the country are facing, unlike the upper class (Ejaz, 2011). However, Women March, being conducted by upper-class women does not face these problems and hence does not pay heed to these basic rights. Hence, this argumentation and the marginalization of the Women March by the upper-class women have made the March controversial, giving opportunities to the patriarchal and conventional males to criticize women, and



practice their supremacy on females. (Munnaza, [2020](#)).

Hence, these feminist waves had a great impact on Pakistan's societal culture and had given women a chance to stand for their rights, and the eradication of gender discrimination. But this is only the beginning, and severe efforts are needed to achieve the basic motive of equality in the country.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

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From the above discussion, we infer that gender discrimination and inequality had been the most widespread social stigma that has been practiced in the entire world since the inception of humankind, regardless of ethnicity, color, religion, caste, and race. This suppressive dimension of the feminism and oppression of females had been the same in the world, where patriarchy and male supremacy has ingrained, incorporating the manipulation of their counter genders in different ways: objectification, sexualization, manipulation, violence (domestic as well as social in the form of acid attacks and forced marriages), harassment (sexual, mental, and physical) at both homes and offices, conventional customs (Swara, Vani, Karo Kari, chiefly practiced in South

Asia), rapes, possession by males, and dependence. Hence, this all-feminist turmoil experienced by females in the world led to the uproar for the fundamental rights of females throughout the world, and this fight for the provision of feminist rights provoked three waves of feminism. Though each of these waves was distinct from each other, with different leaders, at different times, they all inflicted a common motive of women empowerment, women liberation, women independence, and gender equality. These waves are marked by the enormous struggles embraced by women for the attainment of not only their rights, but also for the prospective generation, to enable them to live in a liberated and privileged world, without any gender disparity, and where both classes of human species are contemplated as assets, working jointly for a prosperous world. Though this motive has not been attained completely, some successes have been achieved in the form of legal and constitutional rights all across the world and even in Pakistan. Hence the women need to stay on their path and continue their struggle because the world is changing and the good times are to come, and peace is to establish, and harmony is to develop as will gender equality prosper.

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