

Patriarchal Teachings and Its Practices towards Women Marginalization from the System

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Abstract

From the beginning of civilization, the patriarchal system has evolved in terms of socio-economic and political revolutions. Patriarchy emerged gradually, and its constructed period is unable to predict. Nevertheless, the patriarchal assumptions and practices are not natural and rational. The main objective of this study is to examine how patriarchal teachings contributed to women's marginalization and subordination from social systems. This research mainly depends on library research methods and data gathered from pre-existing studies. My research findings indicate the patriarchal system didn't strengthen women's inclusion in society equally to men. Moreover, the patriarchal assumptions and teachings mainly supported women's limited access to the public sphere. As findings illustrated, even in the 21st-century, women's low performance is obvious in socio-economic and political fields. It is not recovered recently, according to predictions made by social scientists. Patriarchy and women's marginalization have a close relationship, and it maintains dominance through masculine power in the both public and private spheres. Although women achieved successful enhancement on some grounds it is unfair to generalize with all and most of them are far behind the development. Conversely, developing countries lack address to women-related issues and a low amount of funds reserve capacity building women who are in vulnerable circumstances. Although at the state level as well as NGOs started several women's inclusion programmes towards development however in the implementation, level shows many shortcomings and expected outcomes not achieved. The UNO 2015 identified gender imbalance as one of the burning issues and therefore it came among the first five goals under the sustainable development goals. The UN (United Nations) statistics pointed out that millions of women do not have access to fundamental rights, education, body rights, legal rights to work, and lack of legal protection in public and private spheres. It is very obvious, in some states, there is no clear agenda to address the fifth goal of SDGs, and the last eight years period is far behind the goal. In conclusion, women's marginalization has a long history and its historical

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roots evaluation affected even the present era. The Patriarchal system historically decided their roles, appearance, and behaviors. Eventually, in the early stages, women were limited only to the private sphere and looked after their domestic responsibilities and roles recommended by the male-dominated society. Patriarchy changed its style throughout history however women have not achieved victory in terms of social, economic, and political fields. In the 2000 millennium, women's marginalization and discrimination still prevailed in different modes because of patriarchy. If women do not challenge its non-rational practices and teachings, it will remain forever.

Keywords: Masculine Power, Women, Marginalization, Patriarchy

Introduction

It is very clear ancient civilizations were constructed by men and women together and they played immense roles in gradually developing civilizations. However, in these scenarios, women's roles were not noticeably demonstrated like their male counterparts. The argument made by feminist scholars was "why women are invisible in history" and their main argument was that history writers purposely missed recording their active contribution to society. Scott (1988) made an argument that "*recent research has shown not that women were inactive or absent from events that made history, but that they have been systematically left out of the official record*"(Scott:1988). Patriarchy is not a natural concept and was made by men and women who have been victimizing and fundamentally conceptualizing women as primary victims. As Garder Lerner stated that "*Women are essential and central to creating society. They are and always have been actors and agents in history. Women have made history*" (Lerner, 1986). Patriarchal controlling methods have been used visibly and invisibly towards women's marginalization from society.

Ancient political theories propounded women as passive characters and tried them apart from power relations. Prominent Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle their theoretical readings were biased toward masculinity and they wanted to establish a masculine state. Plato's main effort was to create an ideal statesman and his education system has formulated towards the formation of an ideal statesman (not an ideal state woman). In this regard, he thought those female relationships were a hindrance to being an ideal statesman, and since he prohibited maintaining a heterosexual family and children for statesmen. A similar notion made by Aristotle and his theoretical readings promoted male supremacy as well as a male monopoly in his realistic state, and his influential book "Politics" did not consider women as citizens in his ideal state. Thus, ancient Athens kept women away from centers of political power. In his view "*courage of a man lies in commanding, a woman's lies in obeying; that 'matter yearns for form, as the female for the male and the ugly for the beautiful; those women*

have fewer teeth than men; that a female is an incomplete male or 'as it were, a deformity': which contributes only matter and not form to the generation of offspring; that in general, a woman is perhaps an inferior being” (The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,2000). Hegel’s thoughts of women are similar to the Greek philosophers, and he believed that women’s inability, immaturity, and low wisdom. As he describes;

“When women hold the helm of government, the state is at once in jeopardy, because women regulate their actions not by the demands of universality but by arbitrary inclinations and opinions. Women are educated -- who knows how? -- as it were by breathing in ideas, by living rather than by acquiring knowledge. The status of manhood, on the other hand, is attained only by the stress of thought and much technical exertion.” (Gulter, 2018).

It is very clear his notion systematically developed and he wanted to women depart from politics. Indeed, that was a dilemma and a reasonable question emerged about why philosophers developed their thoughts do not allow women enter to the public sphere. They highly stressed the importance of their private sphere and reassumed roles for women. Moreover, Hegel accepted gender roles constructed in terms of biological and he believed it was the reality of society. From the point of view of Hegel, he articulated it as follows;

“the difference in the physical characteristics of the two sexes has a rational basis and consequently acquires an intellectual and ethical significance ... man has his actual and substantive life in the state, in learning and so forth, as well as in labour and struggle with the external world. Woman, on the other hand, has her substantive destiny in the family and to be imbued with family piety is her ethical frame of mind” (Antoinette, 1997).

Although ancient philosophers had efforts women wipe out of the political sphere through their masculine thoughts, however, anthropologists’ and historians’ academic works on women’s roles in ancient civilizations were positive in terms of their research findings. Some scholars argued that in the Indus Valley Civilization (Bronze Age civilization in the northwestern regions of South Asia) women’s roles were unique and they acquired specific knowledge regarding hairstyles, ornaments, and clothing tendencies (women in ancient Sindh). The impressive finding was specific naturalistic goddesses worshipped by ancient Hindus in the Bronze Age and they believed that her power is domain to the forest. Nevertheless, anthropologists and historians interpreted women’s considerable capabilities with examples in some circumstances however those capabilities had not been strong to overthrow the patriarchal system (Jaleel, 2004).

Theoretical Debate of Patriarchy

From history to now, women are exploited in terms of gender, class, sexuality, and economics. Women's invisibility in various spheres vastly affected the autonomy and self-determination of their bodies and behaviors. It is important to note that, women's status, roles, behaviors, identities, positions, stereotypes, and choices were decided by men. The dangerous factor was most of the women were unknown how it happens. Not only that, most of the women's needs, for instance, clothes, jewelry, and other accessories, are produced by men, and they decided it shapes and designs for many millenniums. Somehow, men acquired the power through patriarchy to take decisions on women's bodies, reproduction, sexuality, and what they should do. Some historical records revealed that some kings and landlords forcefully used women as concubines and mistresses. It seems a highly unlucky position and they didn't receive the inheritance like their first wives. However, these privileges are mostly acquired by elites through patriarchal power.

The concept of patriarchy is constructed based on a highly dominant manner and frequently it stressed men (who are the patriarchs) as superior to women. Its salient features were male dominance, male-centeredness, and obsession with male control. In 19th-century anthropological and ethnological circles considered that the patriarchal system was more "civilized" and advanced than matrilineal systems. In a Matrilineal society, the kingship system is handover across the maternal branch instead of paternal lines. The Matrilineal system is mostly associated with a group marriage or polyandry (one woman had two or more men at the same time and did sexual relationships with them). Anthropologists have provided different thoughts and explanations about kinship and its role in society.

19th-century prominent scholars, such as Johann Jakob Bachofen and Lewis Henry Morgan, believed that matrilineal societies predated patrilineal ones and represented an earlier evolutionary stage(Knight,2007). Lewis Henry Morgan also argued that "matrilineal systems would progressively evolve into patrilineal systems (Narayan, 2014) Morgan's notion gained popularity far beyond anthropological and ethnological circles at that time. The males' intellectual circles comparatively had an optimistic assumption of the patriarchal system. The concept of matrilineal society, its norms, and practices were highly discussed in the intellectual community. Scholars have often analyzed the matrilineal system based on their assumptions and made a discourse about the "matrilineal puzzle." Structural functionalism becomes the dominant analysis model in social anthropology by the mid-20th century. The British anthropologist Audrey Richards worked within a structural-functionalist framework and viewed social structures, roles, and norms of matrilineal society. Audrey Richards was puzzled by the position of men in matrilineal societies, and Richard's main question was whether,

in practice, a matrilineal system in which men have ambiguous roles and dual loyalties could work (Power, 2000).

It is very clear, the debate that followed the emergence of matrilineal societies and how their salient features differ from “normal” patrilineal systems. As a consequence, of anthropological debate, and analysis, some scholars came to their conclusions. For instance, Schneider also noted that “in patrilineal societies, authority and kinship were passed on through patrilineal descent (Schneider, 1953). In contrast, in matrilineal societies, males did not pass their status to their own sons and they had huge bonds with their sisters’ sons. Not only those men transfer wealth to their sisters’ sons (Hartung, 2010).

The past matrilineal societies, (China), Bribri (Costa Rica), Umoja (Kenya), Minangkabau (Indonesia), Akan, (Ghana), and Khasi (India) interpreted pieces of evidence of their identical practices. The matrilineal society become a puzzle in anthropological and ethnological circles, some thinkers and feminist scholars introduced it as the only social system women had the freedom to live according to their way. Private property and patriarchy are the main aspects of starting women’s exploitation and domination historically. Indeed, private property has been used further enhance men’s monopoly and strongly established the patriarchal lines historically. That structural changes Friedrich Engels’ Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (1884) elaborated on “the world-historical defeat of the female sex” (Darmagea, 2016).

The concept of patriarchy is explained by different approaches in terms of its main characteristics and power relations levels in diverse cultures. Kamala Bhasin observe that;

“The word ‘patriarchy’ literally means the rule of the father or the ‘patriarch’, and originally it was used to describe a specific type of ‘male-dominated family’ – the large household of the patriarch which included women, junior men, children, slaves and domestic servants all under the rule of this dominant male”(Bhasin,2006).

The term patriarchy is frequently demonstrated as a power production institution and its influence is unanimously used to tolerate lower grounds of the hierarchy. Austrian-born American historian Gerda Lerner her influential book “The Creation of Patriarchy” defines patriarchy as follows.

“Patriarchy in its wider definition means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power” (Lerner, 1986). Another perspective of patriarchy is presented by Allan Johnson, a sociologist in his words;

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“What drives Patriarchy as a system - what fuels competition, aggression, and oppression - is a dynamic relationship between control and fear. Patriarchy encourages men to seek security, status, and other rewards through control; to fear other men's ability to control and harm them; and to identify being in control as both their best defense against loss and humiliation and the surest route to what they need and desire.” In this sense, although we usually think of patriarchy in terms of women and men, it is more about what goes on among men. The oppression of women is certainly an important part of patriarchy, but, paradoxically, it may not be the point of patriarchy” (Becker, 1999).

Kate Millett, she is the author of “Sexual Politics” in 1970 developed the theory that for women, the personal is political she explained patriarchy “men have institutionalized power over women, and that this power is socially constructed as opposed to biological or innate.”(Millett, 1960) This notion was dominated in radical feminist circles in the 20th century. Juliet Mitchell being both a feminist and a psychoanalyst, view regarding the patriarchy was “the origins of patriarchy are rooted in the incest taboo and the exchange of women by men to which this gives rise” (Mitchell, 1971). Walby defines patriarchy as a 'system of social structures and practice in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women (Walby,1990).

Thus, difficult to decide on time demarcations the matrilineal society collapsed, and a patriarchal emerged. By and large, feminist scholars explained the concept of patriarchy is not natural, and that its harmful practices came through the masculinity line. Pioneering figures in Feminist theories sought to evaluate scientifically women’s subordination and marginalization in terms of prevailing circumstances. Feminist theories considered a large number of routes with special reference to historical and cultural specifics and the legal status in certain countries.

Research Methodology

This research mainly depends on secondary data and the collected secondary data gathered from previous research studies. Hence, the accurate data collected from books, scholarly journals and papers, newspapers, and websites. Previous specific studies were their original work and already analyzed and put into context. My main research question is how patriarchal teaching influences gender imbalances and women’s marginalization in society. Before conducting my research with the secondary data. I identified the topic need research and then rostered the research attributes and its purpose. Subsequently, I narrow down the collected data sources in terms of the applicable level of the research. In the next step check the existing data availability and its closeness. In the last phase existing relevant data is compared and analyzed. The research

findings of this research are based on analyzed data and the conclusion depends on the research findings.

Findings and Discussion

The historical and theoretical background of Marxist feminism was developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the 1840s and 1880s. The conflict theory of Karl Marx argues that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles whereby oppressor and oppressed stood in constant opposition to one another.” Moreover, Marx's conflict theory is generally referred to as the economic theory of history (Wasley 1989). According to the explanation of Friedrich Engels “the wife became head servant, excluded from all participation in social production”(Armstrong,2020).

Classical Marxist feminism was inspired by the ideas of Marx and Engels, and they analyzed women’s oppression and marginalization in terms of the class system in society (Tong, 2009). The class system of society is first and the foremost factor that creates unfairness among men and women which was the main argument of Marxist Feminism. Prominent Marxist feminists Maria Dalla Costa and Selma James suggested wages for household work avoid women's labour exploitation in society.

Socialist feminist scholars like Iris Marion Young, Heidi Hartmann, and Sylvia Walby, often used terms like “capitalist patriarchy” or “patriarchal capitalism” to express women’s marginalization from the system. Thus, they wanted to point out the interdependency of Patriarchy and Capitalism and these two concepts are essential to practice the patriarchal system (Tong, 2009). Julite Michele’s influential book *Women’s Estate* expressed “the situation of women is different from that of any other oppressed social groups: they are half of the human species” (Michele,1971) In addition, further she illustrated that “women are exploited at the workplace and relegated to the home: the two positions compound their oppression” (Michele,1971).

Jensen (2021) argued that “the Patriarchal System” is maintaining the hierarchal system in society and limits the life chances of others. In his words, “white supremacy, legally enforced or informal; various unjust and inhumane economic systems, including capitalism; and imperialism and colonialism, including the past 500 years of exploitation primarily by Europe and its offshoots such as the United States” (Jensen,2021).

Due to patriarchal pressure radical feminists branch, developed their discourse against the concept of the patriarchal system. Radical feminists’ main objective was to dismantle patriarchy, rather than introduce adjustments to the system through legal changes. In addition, they critically analyzed how patriarchal practices and their power forcefully dominate women’s bodies. Radical feminist thoughts highly criticized the concept of

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“Patriarchy” and historically the concept used towards dominance.

Radical feminists’ theoretical framework is formulated with three key interrelated concepts, patriarchy, power, and oppression. Patriarchy is a highly analyzed and criticized concept in radical feminist circles and, their argument was, it vastly depends on sexuality (Vukoičić, 2017). Prominent Radical feminist Ti-Grace Atkinson defines the radical feminist branch emerged as a response to deeper understandings of women’s oppression. In her essay ,The Descent from Radical Feminism to Postmodernism stressed that “we needed a more comprehensive analysis of women’s oppression rather than civil rights model”(Atkinson,2014). Thus, radical feminists didn’t believe much in legal remedies and adjustments to diminish women’s’ oppression and marginalization. Radical feminist Catherine MacKinnon her critical argument was that “objectivity of the liberal State is the ultimate culprit of female subordination.” She further argued that “individual rights in law represent male power over women” (Talbot, 2015). Influential radical feminists like Firestone Rich emphasized that women’s reproductive role is under control by men and it’s being the root of patriarchal oppression (Denny,1994). Not only that, radical feminists stressed females’ means of conception were controlled by men. Therefore, Radical feminists had a highly critical overview of the patriarchal culture and their final determination was to abolish it from society. Hence, their thoughts were created against the patriarchy, and wanted to wipe out its teachings and practices. Consequently, radical feminists are against marriage, family, reproduction, and motherhood. Therefore they suggested critical solutions to getting liberation from masculinity for instance Shulamith Firestone suggested that Artificial (ex utero) reproduction would need to replace natural (in utero) reproduction (Tong,2009). Ann Oakley defined three myths surrounding motherhood and her first myth was “all women want to be mothers”. As she stressed, they are just brought up to aspire to motherhood by the patriarchal culture. The second myth was that “all women need their children and the third myth was all children need their mothers (Tong,2009). Okely based on her second myth, argued motherhood is learned not instinctive that women do not instinctively know how to breastfeed and that some mothers neglect or give up their children (Tong,2009). Thirdly, she stressed all children do not need their biological mothers and she pointed out examples of adopted children brought up by single fathers. It is clear, based on her argument she wanted to express children need stability and love but it does not have to come from the mother (Tong , 2009). Radical feminists promoted a political form of lesbianism as an alternative to heterosexual sex within an overall patriarchal culture (Tong, 68).

Thus, radical feminists wanted to destroy traditional gender roles in private relationships and government policies. Their main criticism was that those institutions including government and religion as centered historically on

patriarchal power. Although the other feminist branches criticized the radical feminist thoughts are not practical to society, however, they put effort to discuss patriarchal unfairness at the different levels of society.

By and large, the concept of patriarchy affected the construction of power blocks in the family, society, and state. Not only that, patriarchal power has predominated through norms, rituals, traditions as well as religions in the present social contexts. It is a dilemma to say how it acquired tremendous power from time to time, and its roots still remain strong. From the beginning of civilization patriarchy, obviously existence and its identity changed in terms of the different evolution of the global context. For instance, migrations, wars between ancient civilizations, world wars, civil rights movements, and women's equal rights movements, etc. However, the patriarchal system has changed in terms of industrialization capitalism, and globalization but its inheritance and dominant modes are still prevailing. It is clear some patriarchal thoughts, teaching, and practices are reluctant for women to approach politics, the economy, the labour market, social work, and public sphere functions. Mainly in the political sphere, women's representation rate is significantly little and only 21 percent of government ministers were women. Only 14 countries worldwide have achieved considerable enhancement, and their cabinets consist of 50 percent or more (UN Women, 2022). The Following statistics show that women are poorly represented at all levels of decision-making worldwide and that achieving gender disparity in political life is far off. The Patriarchal system has spread its power towards land ownership and its ownership inherently passes to the male line. Global-level statistics reveal women own less than 20% of the world's land (World Economic Forum, 2017).

The UN reveals that 1 in 3 women are subject to violence at least once since the age of 15. Around the world, women still do not successfully access education as men. According to a Human Rights Careers study, ¼ of young women years 15-24 will not complete primary school education. That uneven access makes up 58% of the people not completing basic education. The study explains of all the illiterate people in the world, ⅔ are women (Human Rights Careers, 2022). The study further illustrated that only 6 countries in the world have given women equal legal work rights as men. The study shows most economies give women only ¾ the rights of men (Human Rights Careers, 2022). The World Bank research 2018 reveals that over one billion women don't have legal protection against domestic sexual violence or domestic economic violence. It is important to note that, it makes a significant impact on women's ability to thrive and live in freedom (The World Bank, 2018). A vast number of women around the globe do not have rights over their bodies. Accessing birth control is frequently very difficult due to various social reasons. According to the World Health Organization, over 214 million women from developing countries don't want to get pregnant however they get pregnant on others'

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consent (The WHO, 2022). Female genital mutilation (FGM) is performed on young girls between infancy and age 15. This irrational practice is happening for non-medical reasons in 30 countries including Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. The world health organization statistics show that more than 200 million female victims today have undergone FGM. FGM is a tremendous human rights violation under that injury to the female genital organs. As WHO pointed out, several side effects women face include bleeding, urinating and after cysts, infections, complications in child delivery, and a higher risk of newborn deaths (The WHO, 2022).

Indeed, even at present labour market activities in the business world are mainly handled by men and there is a huge gender disparity can be seen between both genders. Women receive low income compared to men and women are far behind men in income earning. The global labor force participation rate for females is just over 50% compared to 80% for men (The World Bank Group, 2022).

According above statistical explanations, patriarchal teachings and practices haven't positively influenced women and have created a backward mentality among women. According to findings women's performance in many fields is not reaching the expected level. A high level of women's empowerment needs to apply their inclusion into male-dominant sectors. Patriarchy is the first and foremost factor in the prevailing gender gap further.

The Global Gender Gap Report 2023 predicts that gender disparity does not wipe out immediately and it will take 131 years to reach full parity (The Global Gender Gap Report 2023). It is important to note, that science and technological enhancement highlighted their power and it vastly influenced all subject areas and people are living in the new digital era. However, science and technological improvements are not in a position to minimize gender disparities in the 21st century. For instance, in the statement made by the UN Women's Executive Director on 27 April 2023, she stated that Women and girls are 25% far behind men in the field of digital skills, and globally women occupy less than one-third of positions in the technology field (Statement Digital Skills For life, 27.04.2023) The UN Science Report published in 2021 illustrated that only 22% women professionals working in AI field around the world and only 33.3% women share is in the research field(UNESCO Science Report, 2021). The following table shows women's contribution to the research field.

Female Shares to the research field. (According to the Regional

Region	Percentage
Southeast Europe	51.2 %
Latin America and the Caribbean	49.8 %
West Asia	48,3 %
Central Asia	44.9 %
Arab States	42,6 %
Eastern Europe	41,8 %
European Free Trade Association	36.6 %
European Union	33.8 %
Sub-Sahara Africa	33.5 %
Suth East Asia	26.3 %

(Source: UNESCO Science Report, Link: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377456/PDF/377456eng.pdf.multi.page=1&zoom=auto,-16,842>)

It is obvious female researchers as a share of total researchers still show a low density in the field. The South East region is the least among the other regions according to the above table. It is important to make a mechanism to build up female researchers in diverse subject areas and female critical overviews and research findings have a vast potential for sustainable development.

Some women are excluding their social-political privileges by birth in many cultures and they are subject to the hegemonic power of the patriarchy. Those attributes are prevailing still among indigenous communities and women living as subalterns and denied access to community hegemonic power. The ethics and lawmakers are males and they are the people who are obedient to the system.

Conclusion

Women's marginalization has a long history and its historical roots and evolution affected even the present era. The Patriarchal system historically decided their roles, appearance, and behaviors. Eventually, in the early stages, women were limited only to the private sphere and looked after their responsibilities and roles recommended by the male-dominated society. Although patriarchy is changed its style throughout history however women have not achieved victory in terms of social, economic, and political grounds. In the year 2000, the UN released the Millennium Declaration and eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targeted to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and achieve universal primary

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education to promote gender equality and empower women. It is very important to note that promoting gender equality and empowering women came under the first five goals. However, the MDGs are targeted to be achieved by 2015 and unfortunately, states failed to achieve the expected outcome. Due to the failure of MDGs, the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals were subsequently introduced, in line with 2030. The SDGs' fifth target was to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Thus, the UNO has accepted gender equality is still not reached an acceptable level. Even in this millennium, gender equality is a remaining issue to solve in front of the world. The current patriarchal system does not support women's equal inclusion in the system. On the contrary, women also should question and empower against patriarchal assumptions and unnecessary practices. Women's empowerment should be directly targeted to performing their abilities in the public sphere rather than the private sphere. If women are not strongly fighting against the dominant practices the system does not change and even in the year 3000, its mode inherently works with women's marginalization in society.

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