

FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

In India, feminist movement was started as a reform movement for women and its credit goes to some great social reformers who were mainly men e.g. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Mahatama Gandhi, Justice Ranade & Ishwar Chand Vidhyasagar etc. Later on it was joined by some great women icon of India as Sarojini Naidu, Indira Gandhi & many more. In the end of the nineteenth century, when women in India were suffering a lot from disabilities like Child Marriage, practice of Polygyny, sale of Girls for marriage purposes, severe restrictions on widows, non-access to education & restricting oneself to domestic & child rearing functions, these social reformers raised their voice against those social taboos, fought for women right of inheritance, pleaded for educating women & to treat daughter & sons equally. Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi** addressed the All India Women's Conference in 1980 & said, "I have often said that, I am not a Feminist, yet, in my concern for the unprivileged, how I can ignore women who, since the beginning of History, have been dominated over & discriminated against in social custom & in-laws. We need women to be more interested, more alive & more active, not because they are women, but because they do comprise half the human race." Though the social status of Indian women has witnessed a great deal of change in the past few decades, still there are various issues mainly concerned with the equal status of women in society and need more severe dialogue. Time is the most volatile element in the human life and this 'volatile' time is marching ahead changing the itinerary and flow of the living beings on this planet and has sown the seeds for a new culture in Indian society & years of lengthy speeches by feminists on women empowerment & equality have finally started to reap a few fruits. Surely it is a welcome change for Nation to be cheered about.

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