

Feminism versus Male Supremacy: An Assessment of the Validity of Gender Equality Theory

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Abstract

Feminism is a movement seeking to restore gender equality between male and female sexes. However, why seek to restore gender equality? Is the male really supreme to the female sex? This work assesses the validity of *gender equality theory*. The paper focuses on the examination of the abstractions presented as arguments in support of gender equality theory. This study project adopted a qualitative research design which employed a qualitative approach in the examination of the validity of the two most popular arguments which support gender equality theory. The paper concludes that, feminist conception of equality is utopian; and, wanting women's freedom from the imposition of what is portrayed as male hegemony is simply ignoring one's transcendence.

Keywords

Feminism, Gender Equality, Abstractions, Utopian, Hegemony, Transcendence

1. Introduction

According to Eddo-Lodge (2020), feminism, at its best, is a movement that works to liberate all people who have been economically, socially and culturally marginalised by an ideological system that has been designed for them to fail. Although it is now trying to make itself understood as encompassing all or nearly all social-political and economic groups, feminism basically deals with establishing equality between male and female sexes.

A number of studies have proven numerous cases of harassment done to women; these include sexual harassment (Holland & Cortina, 2013; Fitzgerald et

al., 1988, 1995), physical harassment, oppression, marginalisation, violence, and gender victimisation (Wollstonecraft, 1891). But, why should one sex oppress the other? Is one sex superior to the other? The view in most studies is that “Nature has made one sex stronger, the other weaker...” (The Economist, 1343b29-30 as cited in (Wilkinson, 2021)).

This paper proves that the wider scope of gender equality theory is an exaggeration of the understanding of the moral duty of man in framing the most reasonable patterns in man-woman interactions. From the initial view that men oppress and violate the rights of women, this study logically analyses two popular arguments in support of gender equality theory to measure its validity: *the argument of physical strength and the argument of patriarchy*. This project considers both, a feminist approach, and at the same time, an anti-feminist approach in order to better understand gender equality theory and its whole.

The author tries to narrow the scope of the discussion and focus on the family level. Sabourin (2017) admits that it is a kind of injustice to throw to nature what belongs to customs because when it establishes itself, we think it is well-grounded. While putting the onus on each and every community member especially parents and/or guardians, this study insightfully posits that if we guide our children to appreciate and respect one another, their own homes and working places will be free from gender based violence.

1.1. Problem Statement

Feminism and feminist movements are currently among special subjects widely discussed all over the world. All, politics, health, economics, sociology, law and human rights, and even philosophy try to examine what feminism and feminist movements have great in them: their effects and contributions to the well-being of human society. Instead of talking of gender equity (Prasad et al., 2021: p. 1581), feminists claim gender equality (Carpenter, 2018) in the family, political, social, economic, and even professional relations.

Is wanting the equality of the sexes, not an exaggeration of what should be done by men for a more equitable world? In her project, Sabourin (2017) shows that the elevation of women can be accomplished only by isolating or separating women from men, given that the relationships between the sexes will always be detrimental to women. So many evil claims are presented in the name of feminism; and if not dealt with by humanity, there is a great danger of getting a more desperate community. Feminists are currently singing:

“(...) I'll give birth, if I want.

And if I don't, let the human race become extinct!

(...) No longer can I stay at home.

To the streets, to become free (Öğüt, 2018).”

Again, feminists deceitfully argue:

“Young women are under so much pressure from family, friends, and even work... to get married, that they are pushed to make terrible choices (Adichie,

2014: p. 31).”

There are widely accepted observations among feminists that women are confined to the domestic life, while public life is reserved for men; and that women are denied the right to own property, study, and participate in domestic life (Wollstonecraft, 1891). Feminists’ debate oscillates around man; this implicitly recognises the fact that man is the key respondent in feminist struggle. Hence, what are men’s roles and responsibilities in the feminist project for gender egalitarianism (Prasad et al., 2021)? Although this piece of work takes a feminist approach in trying to shed light on the importance of both sexes for the well-being of human society, this study focuses more on the assessment of the validity of arguments presented in support of the feminists’ gender equality theory and the dangers of such claims on the welfare of man as a moral agent (Table 1).

1.2. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to assess the validity of the feminist gender equality theory in the struggle to abolish all forms of violence and oppression to which the female sex is victim.

1.3. Research Question

How valid is the feminist gender equality theory in the struggle to abolish all forms of violence and oppression to which the female sex is victim?

1.4. Rationale of the Study

The examination of the feminist “gender equality theory” is ideal today since it helps in the understanding of one’s own transcendence. While conclusions by feminism apologists like: some women are physically stronger than men; or some women best suit ruling positions than men, have implicitly recognised the existing inequality between male and female sexes, various studies on feminism

Table 1. Feminists’ claims.

Claim	Reason/Motive
Refusal to get married	To refute the argument of the holiness of a “family” union (Wanting more freedom “ <i>a pretext</i> ”)
Refusal to carry pregnancy (childbearing)/choosing abortion or child dumping	Not ready to bear children (Sexual equality/Wanting more freedom “ <i>pretexts</i> ”)
Not ready to take care of the family (denied or passive breastfeeding and mothering)	(Wanting more freedom “ <i>a pretext</i> ”)
Sexual and gender equality	(Wanting more freedom “ <i>a pretext</i> ”)
Matriarchy	(Empowering women)

Source: Author’s observation, 2022.

have also acknowledged the existing inequality between the two sexes ((Okin, 1995; Sanday, 1981; Straus, 1976); *The Generation of Animals* (775a5-15); *Nicomachean Ethics* (1177a20) as cited in (Wilkinson, 2021)). From the aforementioned reality, feminists' conception of equality of sexes remains abstract and utopian. Hence, this study seeks to suggest a more ideal concept in the fight against all forms of violence and dominations to which the female sex is victim.

Various studies have portrayed the feminist question as an intersectional problem (Prasad et al., 2021; Adichie, 2014; Wollstonecraft, 1891); something which this study also acknowledges. However, the author opts a slightly different path: of course, the feminist problem has extended its tentacles to all or nearly all aspects of human life; but, where is the main body of the problem? Thus, the entire argumentation in this study project oscillates around this question.

The family being the most basic unit of man socio-economic, political, and cultural interactions influenced the choice of concentrating at family level to better guide the focus of the study. Whereas some families have built people who appreciate the presence of their friends, colleagues, and partners; people who value and respect the work of their friends, colleagues, and partners (Prasad et al., 2021); some other families have also nurtured the irresponsible and insensitive persons who do not value the presence of others; people who toy with their friends', colleagues', and partners' lives and dump them to suffer (Walby, 1989). Hence, this study tries to suggest most elementary things which can uniformly be performed at family level as a step to solving the feminist problem.

2. Methodology

This study used literature survey method from professional articles and journals from most recent studies conducted by a wide-ranging collection of scholars. The examination of presented arguments in support of the feminist gender equality theory helped in the finding the most logical conclusions in refuting the theory. The research assessed the validity of two most popular arguments in favour of the feminist gender equality theory: the argument of physical strength, and the argument of patriarchy. This work involved a qualitative research approach. Qualitative data analysis method includes factual and logical interpretations, comparisons, and explanations of findings from data obtained. The researcher relied more on logical inferences to explain patterns and preferences for easy interpretation of the findings of this study.

3. Results and Analysis

3.1. Results

First and foremost, this study found that although it is viewed as being intersectional, feminism is, first and foremost, an individual attitude of mind identified with unaccountability and indocility or insubordination. Feminist movements are profoundly individualistic attitudes of mind which value personal growth and individual fulfilment over any larger communal needs or good (Frank,

1984).

Secondly, that ill-attitude has negatively impacted the well-being of our community right at the family level. However, this study reaffirms that women are pillars to the well-being of our community: educators, providers, administrators, protectors, consolers, hope-givers, quick thinkers, just to mention a few. With all these attributes, seeking women's freedom from the imposition of what seems to be male values is simply ignoring one's own transcendence.

Hence, humble, respectable, and accountable people will always successfully ensure ethical and moral well-being of a community, than the arrogant, irresponsible and indocile. Admittedly, all forms of violence and oppressions advocated by feminist movements are the work of egoists from all or nearly all encounters with men; these may include, gender hegemony (whether male or female), sexuality, economic, or even political autonomy.

Different from what it was thought earlier that the discussion would limit itself to discursive violence (Moon & Holling, 2020); this study found that the discussion should be extended to physical and psychological violence from mothering to baby harming, sexuality to sexual victimisation, and family to community violence (see gender victimology).

3.2. Analysis

3.2.1. Physical Strength

1) Argument of Physical Strength

a) Men are physically stronger than women. Therefore, men are superior to women (The misogynistic view of the status of women).

b) All men are physically stronger than women. But, some women have proven to be physically stronger than men. Therefore, some women are physically stronger than men.

c) If some women have proven to be physically stronger than men; then, not all men are physically stronger than women. Certainly, some women have proven to be physically stronger than men. Therefore, some men are less physically stronger than women.

The argument of physical strength is one of popular arguments which have always been presented to advocate for males' rule over females. A common argument for male supremacy over female sex that appeared during the querelle is the claim that women are less physically stronger than men, and are therefore inferior (Wilkinson, 2021). However, in the above arguments (b and c), it is validly argued that some women have proven to be physically stronger than men. From this premise, the only valid conclusion is that "some men are less physically stronger than women".

From this, the argument of males' supremacy over females based on physical strength loses validity as Wilkinson (2021) eloquently argues that given this controversy, grounding claims of superiority on the unclear notion of strength is foolish. Due to lack of universally admitted evidence, the only viable strategy in argumentation of physical strength is to deny that physical strength was/is sig-

nificant to the question of superiority of one sex over another.

The second strategy was the more effective counter to the misogynistic argument that women were/are inferior because of their alleged physical weakness compared to men (*ibid.*). According to Wilkinson the existence of this difference in physical strength is unlikely to persuade a contemporary reader that men are “superior” to women, in no small part because most people are implicitly committed now. It is currently obvious that all or nearly all physical activities done by men can also be done by women. This prompts feminists to claim the equality of both sexes:

If women are really capable of acting like rational creatures, let them not be treated like slaves, or like lower animals who depend on the reason of man when they associate with him. Instead, develop their minds, give them the salutary, sublime curb of principle, and let them attain conscious dignity by feeling that they depend only on God (Wollstonecraft, 1891).

2) Argument of Intelligence

a) A person more qualified to rule is not the physically stronger person (Adichie, 2014). A more intelligent, more knowledgeable, more creative, and more innovative person is the best for ruling (*ibid.*). Some women have proven to be more intelligent, more knowledgeable, more creative, and more innovative than men. Therefore, some women best suit ruling positions than men. (“*Superiority*”)

b) Women are as intelligent, knowledgeable, innovative, and creative as men for ruling. Therefore, women are as competent as men for ruling. (“*Equality*”)

c) But I still insist that not only the virtue but also the knowledge of the two sexes should be the same in nature, if not in degree; and that women, considered not only as moral but as rational creatures, should try to acquire human virtues (or perfections) by the same means as men (Wollstonecraft, 1891)... (“*Equality*”)

To refute the argument of physical strength, feminists rely on the argument of intelligence to support their agenda. At the family level, the real feminist will convince other members of the family that she works hard for the well-being of the family; that’s to say, she provides for the family. But, why should one sex claim to be more intelligent than the other? Are the ones claiming to be more intelligent not the most ridiculous? Aren’t mutual respect and recognition better than arrogance in woman-man interactions?

Another subject which has gained momentum in today’s structures of feminism is the issue of the patriarchal mode of production (Prasad et al., 2021; Adichie, 2014; Walby, 1989). In their argument, feminists consider household chores performed by women as labour from which women as housewives should be paid; not as an altruistic duty of a parent or a marriage partner. The work performed by the woman may range from cooking and cleaning for the husband to caring for *their children* (Walby, 1989). If they are men’s children, why then do you (feminists) claim equal right with men from the children after your energy and beauty has faded?

3.2.2. Argument of Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a system of social structures, and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women (Walby, 1989). According to Beechey (1979), the concept of patriarchy has been used within women's movements to analyse principles underlying women's oppression. Power and status are seen to be the underlying factors in patriarchy and anti-patriarchy movements; whether political, economic, or some other kind of power.

But, why the view that males dominate, oppress, and exploit females? Walby (1989) confesses that critics of the (patriarchal) approach have suggested that the flaws are irredeemable. To Walby, while existing accounts have weaknesses, they are not intrinsic to the concept of patriarchy (*ibid.*). Various issues which gain recognition with regard to anti-patriarchy include, reproduction, expropriation of women's labour in the domestic mode of production, compulsory heterosexuality, and men's violence (Prasad et al., 2021; Ifechelobi, 2014; Walby, 1989; Delphy, 1984; Rich, 1980; Brownmiller, 1976).

The oppression of women is manifested in particular institutions... among these are marriage, motherhood, love, sexual intercourse (psychiatry and consumerism). Through these institutions a woman is taught to confuse her biological sexual differences with her total human potential...—(Radical) feminists' view of man-woman relationship.

1) Production at the Family level

While it is admitted that patriarchy is a multifaceted concept (Walby, 1989), this part analyses the validity of the concept as it is understood at the family level; the family being the most initial unit of socio-political and economic interactions. The expropriation of women's labour in the domestic mode of production theory of patriarchy posits that employers seek to employ women, when they are seeking cheap labour, because they are cheaper than men; whereas, husbands have historically resisted this process because it undermines their control over and exploitation of women in the household (Prasad et al., 2021).

In his work entitled "The unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism: Towards a more progressive union", Hartmann (1979) explains the three main forms of the Marxist analysis of the "woman question" where according to him, all the three forms see women's oppression in our connection to production. The discussion under this subtopic focusses on the third form of Marxist-feminists analysis which, according to Hartman, emphasises more housework and its relation to capital:

"Housework produces surplus value and that house workers work directly for capitalists (*Marxist-feminists view*).

So, house workers should be rewarded with money for their work."

Walby (1989) eloquently argues that while divorce frees women from marriages which are especially oppressive they still remain responsible for childcare after divorce, thus continuing the demands upon their labour started in marriage. This is where one of the nodes of feminism resides: instead of seeing di-

orce as a bad omen in life, especially marriage which is “*a holy union*”, the feminist sees divorce as a revolution... a stage worthy of attaining. In African philosophy, both divorce and death of a partner at an early age are bad omens in marriage because of the challenges they bring about to healthy development of the family; hence, they are unwelcome.

Although it is argued that the “woman question” is not a feminist question (Hartmann, 1979), feminists use it to explain sexual inequality in division of labour in the domestic mode of production. In the above example, the woman is represented as a house worker who cares for the capitalist (husband) and his children. According to Marxist-feminists, capital and private property are the causes of women’s particular oppression. Now, if paid for their work in the family, will the money earned by feminists belong to the family or it will be their own?

Most aspects of women’s oppression by men have been taken as the basis of patriarchy by some writers or others (Walby, 1989: p. 218). What is surprising today is that people are starting to raise voices against female violence and men’s exploitation. Still, feminists believe that the death of patriarchy will bring freedom and liberation to women. Female violence and men’s exploitation theory posits that women seek to subject men to the cunning of female sex while exploiting their wealth and investing elsewhere in private accounts or settings.

But, what is hurting in all, patriarchal mode of production in which women’s labour is expropriated by their male partners, patriarchal relations within waged labour, patriarchal state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal culture (Walby, 1989)? The anti-patriarchy considers all men the same; hence, the birth of a more radical view of feminism: feminist radicalism.

Although noticed flows in patriarchy seem absolute, it is obvious that many individual men have remained faithful and responsible to their families and communities throughout their entire lives. Only that history has not yet fully opened the other page to expose matriarchal evils:

My wife and I act together so as to negate the gendered inequalities found outside of the home. This materializes in what we consider to be a fair distribution of labour: both of us spend quality time with our son, share cooking responsibilities, clean the house, coordinate household activities, and maintain personal space and time (Prasad et al., 2021).

“Yet, feminists argue,

Our culture/cultural institutions increasingly allow women’s active participation, but usually in a subordinated way (Adichie, 2014; Walby, 1989). Therefore, male sex hegemony over female sex is promoted by our culture/cultural institutions.”

This is simply a pretext against the reality: the open truth is that, while encouraging active participation of both sexes as a moral virtue, our culture and cultural institutions strive to maintain order and harmony at all encounters by

assigning each member with special duty in order for them to deserve some rights. Where there is no order, members' life is in complete chaos like in the state of nature. Unfortunately, the contemporary human society paints the chaos to make them appear like good.

So to speak, in the quest for power and/or status, the real feminist will never hesitate to reject men's proposals for marriage, avoid to conceiving, stop breastfeeding her baby before the recommended time, dump or kill her baby, abandon her family or divorce her partner, exploit men's wealth (see husband's wealth for married women), and even kill her man like Beatrice in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. No reason, no humanity, no wisdom in her. The only end to her struggle is power and status.

While women normally see their victory in marriage and mothering, the feminist sees victory in freedom and divorce. According to studies, reasons for not breastfeeding include work-related issues, personal preferences, having an un-supportive partner, feeling embarrassed, concerns about pain, and physical/medical problems (Ahluwalia et al., 2005; American Dietetic Association, 2005; Bentley, Dee, & Jensen, 2003; Brownell, Hutton, Hartman, & Dabrow, 2002; Khoury et al., 2005; Kimbro, 2006; Taylor, Risica, & Cabral, 2003 as cited in (Ogbuanu et al., 2009)). If you look at all the reasons advanced by the respondents in the above mentioned studies, you will find that they are externally influenced not intrinsic which explains their being unreasonable.

Feminism has thus taken a painted form and it currently looks like a virtue which is not the case. Feminism is actually accompanied with so many evils as posited earlier; and I am surely convinced that a lot is yet to unveil itself because so many men are starting to gain strength and expose the evils of female sex. In black African families like Adichie's, children are more attached to their mothers and believe that only their mothers provide for the families. This turns even worse when the man of the house faces an economic crisis, the feminist shows restlessness and uses this chance to subdue the man to the cunning of feminism. For the integrity of the family, responsible men work and give time to each member to witness for themselves:

You are a man my son; one day, you will see (Responsible man's advice to his son). You are still young my daughter/son, wait for your family (Responsible man's advice to his children).

2) Feminists as Humans

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights (Assembly, 1948).

Women are human beings just like men.

Therefore, women are born free and equal in dignity and rights just like men.

From the above argument, one can deduce that feminists' themes like "equality", "rights", "empowerment", and the "movements against domestic violence",

“movements against gender-based violence” presuppose that man always react without consciousness; which binary and heteronormative forms of gender, often fought most vociferously by feminist organisations whose *raison d’être* of standing up for “women” has straight jacketed them into binary thinking while remaining adamant push them to seek equality with the male sex:

Ongoing debates over gender recognition and trans-rights uphold against changing the harmful imposition of the status quo (Purewal & Ung Loh, 2021).

It should be clearly underlined that the ultimate goal of the real feminist is the complete subjugation of the status quo. With fear of the effects of unethical feminists’ struggle, Purewal and Ung Loh (ibid.) identify three necessary frames of thought in shaping feminist strategy in reconstituting an ethical “feminist” project. Goldner (1985) advises that in a conflict, men and women need to be provided with an opportunity to look over the edge of the cliff before jumping... each one would have the chance to decide whether change is possible, whether compromise is tolerable, and whether separation can be borne.

4. Summary

The view that one sex is superior to the other is more egocentric than empathetic. Sabourin (2017) admits that women’s apparent inferiority is thus the result of regrettable customs, not the consequence of natural sexual difference. However, instead of upholding altruism, the real feminist upholds egoism. Accordingly, arguing that the two sexes are equal proves a certain kind of *ignorance* within the arguer where this (the arguer) fails to appreciate the existence of the other (sex); and seeks to establish equality between the two sexes, which is an evil attempt and a threat to ethical and moral well-being of a community.

“A man cannot prove to be superior to a woman. Therefore, a man is equal to a woman (Ignorance).”

Although feminist movements seemingly advocate for the rights of women in particular, and generally all marginalised and oppressed individual people in the contemporary view, this study found that feminism is an evil attitude of mind; it can be identified with insubordination, arrogance, indocility, and irresponsibility. The real feminist is very arrogant, and will never submit herself to the orders of her man, her community, or the authority; and remains unapologetic about her acts (Adichie, 2014: p. 21); she will always challenge the status quo and will never observe the rules and customs of her community. Finally, the real feminist is not responsible for anyone including her own family. However, Gertrude Mongella, a prominent Tanzanian politician and activist, has an opposing view as she argues, “Women who want to be icons of being free from violence and oppression should not oppress men (Mongella, 2022).”

The evil manners of the feminist prompt the responsible man to react against him despite his flaws; but because the feminist sees herself as equal or superior

to the responsible man, the feminist seeks an alternative means to liberate herself from the commands (so called oppressions/aggressions/exploitations) of the responsible man. If the man will remain rigid instead of agreeing to submit himself to the orders of the real feminist, then his only fate will be death (Adichie, 2012).

Although, no moral reason whatsoever justifies the act of taking one's life by a moral agent, the ending of the life of the responsible man is the only best decision ever for the real feminist as this act leads to her ultimate goal which is power and/or status. Unlike old feminists, contemporary real feminists are not ready to fulfil their duties in the family and remain passive in all or nearly all matters related to caring for the family including breastfeeding their newly born babies. This newly developed ill-manner is very dangerous to the growth and development of families in particular, and the society at large.

5. Conclusion

Whether advocated by a man or a woman, feminism is an ill attitude of mind identified with egoism and libertarianism in our settings. The most basic characteristics of a real feminist include failure to appreciate the existence of the other, insubordination, arrogance, indocility, and irresponsibility. Both, male and female genders are called for mutual respect and appreciation. Commenting about moral efficiency or inefficiency of the other would be an insensible manner aimed at spoiling their life and also the lives of other people in the family in particular, and the community at large.

Mutual trust and respect between men and women help to overcome evil attitudes; this leads to strengthening bonds in male-female interactions. Both men and women have a special responsibility in ensuring the sustainability of their community and each one's existence and contribution should be appreciated and valued by the other. Neither of the two sexes is superior to the other, nor are they equal. Feminism and feminist movements' campaign induce arrogance in women and increase their thirst of becoming more and more autonomous; hence giving chance to the evil spirit.

Man's position at family level and in the community is incomparable to any other for one's own well-being and transcendence and for the well-being and transcendence of the woman; and vice-versa. Therefore, the real man should learn to appreciate the presence of the real woman; and so should the real woman. Ferree (1990) asserts that feminists agree that male dominance within families is part of a wider system of male power, is neither natural nor inevitable, and occurs at women's cost. A claim of this sort, at its most general, is the claim that one or the other sex has a given quality to a greater or lesser extent than the other (Wilkinson, 2021). However, balancing power and status is neither the responsibility of the male sex, nor is it the responsibility of the female sex; rather, it is the responsibility of the author of creation.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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