Lesson: Feminist Perspectives and International Relations

Paper: Perspectives on International Relations and World History

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Feminist Perspectives and International Relations

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1.0 Introduction

The academic interest of feminism in International Relations started only from the late 1980s despite the fact that it had begun in the various academic disciplines from literature to psychology to history. The traditional IR theory was re-evaluated during the post-Cold War during the 1990s which created the need to study how International Relations have been gendered. This can be explained from the fact that the study of International Relations studies the sovereign states in the public domain and does not have much scope with the interest that women or feminism have as an intellectual inquiry and therefore the study of International Relations has continued without any reference to gender. The study of IR has been largely concerned with the study of relations between sovereign states and it had been assumed that the kind of issues raised by feminist are not in consonance with the process and structures raised by International Relations and the discipline could be studied without any reference to gender. As a consequence of which the discipline of International Relation has become gender blind.

However the scholarships of Feminist in International Relations have made the discipline more open as they have pointed out that the issues of gender are embedded with the discipline. They have linked their intellectual inquiry with the critical issues and seek to problematise the construction of knowledge within the discipline. This has often been done by adopting methods of deconstructivism that has been associated with postmodernism/poststructuralism. That is how the feminist has been able to construct theories using the conceptual tools in building the feminist framework of knowledge about the world and how the social relations in the world are formed.

The feminist theory has critiqued the mainstream theories of International Relations such as Realism and has exposed the gender bias in the key concepts of International Relations. They have shown that the ‘reality’ is constituted by intersubjective understanding of a complex social and political world. The construction of meaning also involves the use of imaginary and symbolism. Power is profoundly implicated in the construction of knowledge and the categories and concepts are employed to construct ‘our reality’.

International Relations post-Cold War and with the increasing interdependence of globalisation due to globalisation has faced critical issues and challenges in their core issues of theoretical concerns as the discipline has been broadened to include beyond the traditional concerns of war and security to the non-traditional concerns such as political economy, socio-economic development, non-state actors, international civil society and human rights issues. It is in these situations that the feminist scholarships have contributed to the discipline of International Relations in its theoretical concepts as well as in its activism and issues.

The conventional concerns of the discipline of IR from Political Identity, conceptions of political Community and citizenships, the nature of power, the state, violence, peace and security, global political economy and development have been addressed and brought in
a gendered perspective which has not only brought a holistic perspective but also contributed in enriching the discipline of International Relations.

The main crux of concern for the feminist IR is not to perceive the influence international politics by the different genders but examine how the core concepts have been employed within the discipline of IR and are highly gendered such as in the concepts of war and security, etc. Their main concern is not only with the traditional focus of IR on states such as the concept of wars, diplomacy and security but to emphasize the gender perspective in the current global political economy. There has been the growing influence of feminist and women-centric approaches now even within the international policy communities such as the World Bank and the United Nations but this has been due emphasis on equality of opportunity for women by the liberal feminist.

The famous Greek political philosopher Plato had advocated for the total political equality of women as he called them to be members of the highest class ...those who rule and fight. Not surprisingly, women had been the ruler as the Queen even in the historical times such as Queen Nefertiti who ruled the Egypt during the 14th century Queen Hatshepsut who assumed the title of Pharaoh, which is the is the common title that the kings belonging to the Ancient Egyptian dynasties practiced till the Graeco-Roman conquest

Source: www.encyclopedia.com, accessed on Dec 10, 2014

1.1 Origin of Feminist theories in International Relations

International Relations have been one of the last academic fields of study to incorporate feminisms in their field of research. The presence of feminist theories in International Relations (IR) has started making inroads since the 1980s, despite the fact that there has been enormous amount of interest in gender in the other areas of social sciences. The traditional IR theory was re-evaluated during the post-Cold War during the 1990s which created the need to study how International Relations have been gendered. This
can be explained from the fact that the study of International Relations studies the sovereign states in the public domain and does not have much scope with the interest that women or feminism have as an intellectual inquiry and therefore the study of International Relations has continued without any reference to gender.

The standard view of tracing the origin of feminism in International Relations to the early 1980s among the feminist in IR and the other scholars of IR is to adopt a myopic view of the early intellectual and activism of feminism in IR. There was a distinct scholarship in IR with its own analysis of the global issues which was feminist in its nature prior to the 1940s that were joined the different points to address the issues of peace and conflict contributing with their own perspective. These analyses formed the feminist perspectives on the different issues of IR such as peace, conflict and war since the early 1960s. The analysis of power was seen as a means to ‘empower’ rather than dominate in the late 1960s. In other words, bring in feminist perspectives of power and security not just against an adversary but rather expand the concept of ‘security’ from ‘want’ and ‘needs’ to include concepts of security of human rights. They had presented gender as an important issue and factor to be accounted in the causes of structural violence in Finland at the International Peace Research Association Conference during 1975.

The main focus of feminism has been on the argument that the boundaries of state have historically excluded women from domestic and international political life and has treated international relations as the exclusive domain of men and masculinity where it thrives on the domination over women.

During the 1980s the feminist scholarships expanded not just on the concept of war and peace but also on analyzing the holistic issues of the society and its influence in the international realm such as ‘patriarchy’ and war. The late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed the focus of feminist scholarships as the momentum was created for a feminist study of IR with several conferences and books being published on the subjects.

There was three main conferences which was held to deliberate and articulate on the issue of feminist thought on IR scene; namely the 1988 Millennium: conference of Journal of International Studies held at the London School of Economics, the 1989 conference at the University of Southern California, and the 1990 conference at Wellesley.

These conferences produced the early scholarships of Feminist in IR as the proceedings of the Millennium Conference were published as a special issue which was titled “Women and International Relations”. Later it formed the major arguments that were published in book of Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland titled as Gender and International Relations. Besides, the main organiser of the conference Peterson edited the collection of the papers which was presented at Wellesley to form a Reader as Gendered States in its 1992 volume.

Many of the early books have become classics in the field of Feminism in IR. They include books by Jean Bethke Elshtain’s Women and War (1987) and Cynthia Enloe’s Bananas, Beaches and Bases (1989). Later on, J. Ann Tickner’s Gender in International Relations: Feminist perspectives on achieving global security (1992), V. Spike Peterson and Anne Runyan’s Global Gender Issues (1993), and Christine Sylvester’s Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era (1994) enriched the scholarship of feminism in IR during the early 1990s.
It has been often argued that the theory of IR such as Realism endorses patriarchy as patriarchy is seen essential in maintaining the state and its social order. That is why women are excluded from many prevailing definitions of state. While the other writers have adopted different approaches in analyzing the issue of IR but they all are united to seek in their effort to rethink IR’s basic parameters. The peace research like the study of IR remains a male-dominated field despite the enduring efforts of the feminist scholars. The study of IR and its theory favours men as it is men who is identified with the state and therefore excludes women.

The study in the nature of IR has evolved during the twentieth century which focused on the world affairs then. It studies the causes of war and conflict, development of international law and diplomacy as well as the global expansion of trade and commerce; which focuses on issues of public domain that excludes women. As women are seen to be in the private realm of domesticity and family which needs to be dominated by men due to the system of patriarchy that endorse male domination, which has remain unchanged, whether from absolute to the modern state, from feudalism to capitalism or from nature-state to global governance.

1.2 Nature and Essence of Feminism in International relations

Feminism is the advocacy of the rights of women as it explains why women have been disadvantaged compared to men. According to feminist the subordination of women is due to the system of patriarchy which is a system of social structures and practices through which men dominate and exploit women. It is from this premises that the feminist seek to build its theory and analyse the conditions that has shape women’s lives and explore the underpinnings of culture and its influence in the essence of a woman’s live. This has led to the woman’s movement with the political aim of understanding woman’s subordination and explains its reason for women’s exclusion as they have been marginalized in both the cultural and social arenas of public life.

Did you know- 2

Popular Concept of Feminism

Feminism has been defined as a belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes. The main aim of feminism is to challenge the systemic inequalities that women face on a daily basis. Unlike the popular perceptions that people have about feminism is used to belittle men, as it does not support sexism against either gender. Feminism works towards equality, not female superiority.

Source: 11 facts about feminism from http://www.dosomething.org accessed on dec 10, 2014

The feminist challenges the inequalities between the genders as natural, therefore it is inevitable. They have questioned the differential treatment given by society. As they insist that the differential treatment is based not on the differences of biological characteristics but rather on social attributes. In other words, the feminism analyses the
equations of masculinity and femininity which has nothing to do with the biological male-female differences but rather on the construction of gender identities. For example, there are many attributes that has been linked with masculinity such as autonomy, sovereignty and the capacity for reason and objectivity whereas femininity has been negated from these same characteristics to define and differentiate between the two genders. Under these premises of gender identities and constructions, military services are viewed as natural domain of masculinity and therefore fighting war an act of bravery.

This in essence defines the unquestioning presence of men in the public affairs and political arena worldwide. That is why most of the politicians are male and the dynamics of international relations are based on essentially male perspectives and their attributes such as competition, power, aggression and dominance.

Feminism on the other hand is based on female perspective of how international relations are formed, thereby encouraging gender equality. In other words, the essence of feminism in the international relations is to study and analyse how politics are determined in the world today, taking cognisance of the role that men and women play in the decision-making process, thereby how females perspectives has influenced the foreign policy in particular and international relations, in general. That is why they have critiqued and question the present social norms as it’s based on the social norms of male hierarchy, which has been manifested in the fields of military and economy.

1.3 Why gender matters in International Relations

The study of International Relations (IR) has often been argued by feminists to be highly gendered. In other words, it is not neutral as reflected in the key concepts of IR. As a
result of which gender relations have been silent because women are seen to be within the purview of private sphere and IR as a field of study is located in the public sphere, which again is a male domain. That is why the key concepts of IR are seen in the prism and lenses of the masculine gender and are patriarchal.

IR as a discipline assumes that relations between states are located within the purview of the public domain and by this very nature involves the historical experiences of man as man are seen in the public arena while woman are seen to be within the context of private sphere. Thereby the key concepts of IR theory has been conceptualised from the perspective of the masculine gender without taking cognisance of the other perspectives of female as the concepts of Man, power, sovereignty, anarchy and security as discussed below:

### 1.3.1 Man

The two main schools of thought in IR- Realism and Liberalism have taken the assumption of 'man' to be rational and self-maximizing actors. However, the premise of this basic assumption has been deeply questioned by the feminist as they see the reflection of men in their theoretical conceptions of the model that they build. As they see that these theoretical models are based on the behavioural assumptions of how some men operate in a particular context of relations between the genders.

### 1.3.2 Power:

In most of the IR theory, the concepts of power has been conceptualised as follows: the ability of A to get B to do something B would not otherwise have done. The feminist IR theorists sees this perspective as highly gendered as it’s based on the male-centered assumption that autonomy equals being free from the direct influence of others. The feminist IR seeks to offer an alternative and a broader view of power where the rules of the game are organized in advance of 'power-over' in their construct of feminist IR theory.

### 1.3.3 The State

The state has been conceptualised by the different theoretical models as a reflection of sovereignty and men are sovereign, while women needs the protection of sovereignty. The feminist IR views these perceptions as being highly problematic as it leads to the natural assumptions of Men being identified with the public realm as the harbinger's of order, while women are identified with private thinking or anarchy. Therefore any feminist power is seen as the main principle the source of threats to the international system in Realist and Liberal thought.

### 1.3.4 Security:

Security is the main conceptual tools used in the study of IR and the ration deter for creating a stable international order. The theories of IR has been enveloped over the issue of security as it has been defined in multidimensional and multilevel terms to relate with not just the individuals but also with the nations and therefore it influences bot the national and international politics. However, the perspectives of feminist IR see beyond the national and international security to include even domestic violence, rape, poverty, gender subordination and ecological destruction. Their concern includes those people who are made insecure by the state’s security policies and are therefore situated at the fringes and margins of state.
Ms Gougee is one of the best known early feminist from France who demanded that French women be given the same rights as French men. She challenged patriarchy and the notion of male-female authority in the Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen (1791). She was executed by guillotine during the Reign of Terror as she was highly critical of the regime of the Revolutionary government. One of her famous and revolutionary speech has been quoted below:

"women are born free and lives equal to man in her rights.
Social distinctions can based only on the common utility”.


1.3.5 Rationality
According to the Realists in IR, rationality is seen as the instrumental reasoning of IR. In other words, the formations of relationships among states are seen as a means to an end and therefore international relations are also means to an end. That is why international cooperation and collaboration is always a means to an end for Realists. While for the Feminist IR theorists this version of rationality is highly gendered. Since it's disembodied and has detached masculine perspectives and their perceptions of the world that has been abstracted from historical context. This is not how the feminist IR perceives the concept of rationality.

1.4 Feminist concept and define gender in International Relations
In the contemporary world of modernity it is not uncommon to see the subordination of women worldwide across cultures not only in the public space but also within the private realm. Women are the majority of the world’s poorest population. Less than 10 % of the world’s heads of state are women and most of the world’s military personnel are men. Yet they bear the brunt of all decisions that their leaders make. In any of the non-conventional conflicts resulting out of ethno-national conflict or communal violence which
leads to civilian casualties it is women who are the most deeply affected and impacted; as they are constitute 90 % of the casualties.

Feminism as an academic discipline of intellectual enquiry investigates how gender is constructed at the social realm. They use gender as an important category of analysis to understand the construct of power in politics. The main analysis of gender difference that define the different sexes is not based on the anatomical or biological differences but rather on how gender are constructed. As gender is a set of social and cultural constructed characteristics that vary across time and place. The characteristic attributes of gender differences are based on socialization on how they are socially constructed. For example the characteristics of a ‘real men’ would be rationality, bravery, chivalrous, strong while the opposite would be said for a woman, i.e emotional, weak, dependent, weak. More positive values have been ascribed to the masculine ones. Gender is seen as a structure that signifies power relationships, as it denote inequality. It has becomes a mechanism for the unequal distribution of social benefits and costs. In other words, gender is a system of social hierarchy where the males are more valued than female ones. Therefore, the perspective of gender has become crucial in analyzing global politics and its economy, particularly with respect to the concept of inequality, insecurity and social justice. The belief of feminism is to make visible the unequal structures in order to remove them.

Test your knowledge 2
(Select true or False)
6. Men are often identified with the public and the public order.
7. Security threats include ecological destruction according to feminists.
8. Women are among the minorities in world's poorest population.
9. Feminism as an intellectual inquiry investigates how gender is constructed in political realm.
10. Gender as a structure signifies equal distribution of power

1.5 Different Approaches of Feminist in studying International Relations

The feminist in International Relations use gender analysis to answer the questions about global politics. The question of why women are subordinated across societies in varying degrees even at the contemporary times. The subordination of women is reflected both in the global politics as well as in the economy. Women do most of the unpaid work, even when they work for wages. The fact that in most of the conflict be it regional or national are created by men but it is women who faces the brunt of all the conflicts and their voices are never reached the hall of power or in the leadership of militaries.

The focus of having intellectual enquiry for a feminist theory is to construct knowledge with practices that would help in achieve political, social and economic equality for women, in order to improve women’s lives. The most important goal for feminist theory is to explain women’s subordination and seek ways to end it.

It is in these issues that the theorist of feminism develops different approaches as they converge on the basic issue of what it seeks to postulate in the dynamics of international
relation, but it diverges in different directions in its approaches of studying IR or what is called as the different feminist strand in the theory of IR. These different strands of feminism lead to an interesting debates within the discourse of feminism.

Rosemary Tong has outlined a useful classification which divided feminist thought or theory of IR in the following six strands or classifications namely liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, psychoanalytic and existential feminist thought and postmodern feminism. Since there is a very small line of difference between Marxist feminism and Socialist feminism, the classification as given below would discussed them as one and each of them are briefly discussed thereafter.

**1.5.1 Liberal feminism**

The Liberal feminism is equally concerned with equal rights for both men and women, for which women need to be empowered and should have an equal role in society and have an equal role in politics as well as at work. They hold the view that human beings are rational and must use their rationality to reason that human beings have innate rights to seek fulfilment in pursuing their interests, provided that they also respect the rights of others as much as they assert their own rights.

The liberal feminist thought was first expressed in the 18th century Europe by the leading feminist thinker Olympe de Gourges and followed by Mary Wollstonecraft from Britain. The French Philosopher Simone de Beauvoir also belongs to the Liberal feminist school of thought.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the Liberal feminists have argued that as a result of different process of socialisation and discriminatory social and cultural practices women were afforded fewer opportunities than men to realise their full potential as human beings. As a result of which, women had been confined to home to pursue domestic services of their husband and children and had little opportunity to exercise their intellectual faculties or develop skills other than those deemed necessary for the performance of domestic duties.

The goal of Liberal feminism is to ensure complete gender equality between men and women without any changing the socialisation of boys and girls in the society. As the Liberals believe that men and women are equal and focus on gender equality at work as well as in politics, promoting policies to insure parity in Parliament or in the Board of Directors. They would like the inclusion of women as the subjects of study such as women as political leaders, as women soldiers, or other women operating outside the traditional roles.

The Liberal feminist also make a seemingly contradictory assumptions; that women should not be excluded from positions of power and yet should not forcibly include them as it would not lead to any change in the nature of international system. They are content to advocate reformist measures to address discrimination against women rather than demand revolutionary social and political changes.

**1.5.2 Marxist and Socialist Feminism**

The Marxist feminist rejects the reformism of liberal feminism but also criticise schools of thought which emphasise on the general oppression of women by men. They sees the
oppression of women as a social group to be the product of the political, social and economic structures associated with capitalism, and not as a result of bias or ignorance or the intentional action of individuals. In other words, the oppression and discrimination of women is a result of the class system.

Mary Wollstonecraft was an English writer, philosopher, and advocate of women's rights who lived from 27 April 1759 till 10 September 1797. During her brief career, she had written novels, treatises, a travel narrative, a history of the French Revolution, a conduct book, and a children's book. She is best known for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), in which she argues that women are not naturally inferior to men, but appear to be only because they lack education.

The origin of Marxist feminism is seen in the work of Frederick Engels' work *The origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* written in 1884, where he claimed that women's oppression originated in the introduction of private property. The introduction of private ownership was by the male members inaugurated a class system which led to a conventional split between the 'public' and the 'private' domain. The advent of industrialisation and capitalism saw production being transferred from home to the work place and work place was equated with the public domain, which was devoid or excluded from women who were seen as members of the 'private' domain. Production came to be seen as constitutive of the world of freedom as it was in the 'public' realm along with what was deemed as valuable; while women came to be regarded as the private property of men and at a later stage denigrated as second class citizens. The coming of industrialisation was a far cry from the pre-industrial era where women's work consist in providing the everyday necessities of life and was considered as important as men's work; even though the society was patriarchal.
The Marxist feminist stressed the role played by women in providing capitalism with a valuable ‘reserve army’ of labour which may be exploited at times of labour shortages or used to keep male labour cheap. In all of these ways women help to maintain and reproduce an exploitative economic and social order. That is why they contest the view that women’s equality can be achieved by campaigning for formal rights in a world which is necessarily hierarchical, exploitative and unequal.

According to Marxist feminist, socio-economic and sexual inequality are inextricably linked and therefore it would be impossible for women to gain equality in class society. That is why they advocate that women’s liberation must be a part of a wider struggle against an exploitative capitalist system.


The Socialist feminism has observed that the oppression of women had occurred from the pre-capitalist societies and has continued to the socialist societies. However, they differed from the Marxist feminism as they introduced a second central material cause for the unequal treatment of women. That is the patriarchal system of male dominance and capitalism is the primary oppressor.

The focus of world politics for the socialist/ Marxist feminist is on the same patterns by which the world capitalist system and the patriarchal system of power has lead women to be systematically disadvantaged compared to men.

### 1.5.3. Radical Feminism

Radical Feminism focussed on the need to develop a ‘women-cantered’ analysis as a means to challenge all male-defined structures and values. They are critical of both the liberal and Marxist feminism as they see both as offering a model of women’s liberation
which is based on male values, thus encouraging them to aspire for what are essentially patriarchal values. This is because the radical feminist sees the root of women’s oppression not as a by-product of capitalism but rather in the social system of patriarchy.

The concept of patriarchy ensures male domination over women as it literally means ‘the rule of fathers’. It is this system that has legitimises the concept of male power which has its dominance in all aspect of lives. That is why it seeks to actively promote a counter culture which valorises female identified roles and values instead of seeking to emulate men.

The radical feminist were the first to articulate what is now generally regarded as the central insight of feminist thought: *the personal is political*. It offers the perspective that what is needed is not only women’s liberation to achieve formal equality, access to public space and means of production but also involves a thorough transformation in the most private and intimate spheres of human relationships.

**1.5.4. Postmodernist feminists**

The approach of Postmodern feminism has incorporated two theoretical traditions, i.e the postmodern and post-structuralist theory, as it moves beyond the polarities of liberal feminism and radical feminism. It has critiqued the values of Enlightenment because it has championed the values of progress and human freedom yet it was accompanied by the widespread oppression of people in the name of ‘advance of civilisation’ of ‘progress’ and of ‘freedom’.

Its main concern is to expose the hidden presupposition and assumption that underlie attempts to theorise or tell ‘one true story’ about human conditions, as they critiqued all-encompassing visions of human freedom and encompassing visions of human freedom and emancipations grounded in ‘universal truth’.

The focus of the postmodern feminism is to produce and reproduce a series of ‘others’ which has been marginalised or silenced when the truth is asserted. The postmodern thinkers have argued that power is so deeply implicated in theorising that one might view the whole process as a form of domination whereby theorist comprehends and appropriate the objects of knowledge. The ‘otherness’ is not just an oppressed or inferior position but a way of being, thinking and speaking that allows for an openness, plurality, diversity and difference.

Feminism in its many forms has been born out of ‘experiences of marginality’ and as such it is attuned to the issues of exclusion and invisibility. It exposes the cultural arrogance and cultural bias of ‘universalist’ theories.

The postmodern feminism sees gender not so much in terms of identity or social structures but rather in terms of discourse. They agree on the fact that gender inequality cannot be understood as ‘natural’ or ‘universal’ and therefore it is outside history. However, gender is seen as a process in which the ‘body’ becomes objectified in discourse which takes for granted the reality of sexual difference and inequality. The idea that the ‘body’ is produced by power and is cultural rather than ‘natural’ avoids the
problems inherent in advancing essentialist accounts of gender—that is accounts which suggests that gender is directly related to biological sex.

Charlotte Hooper’s book *Manly States* (2001) is an example of post-modern textual analysis in which she wrote that international relations cannot be understood unless we understand the implications of the fact that it is conducted mostly by men. As international relation shape men as much as men shape international relation. An analysis of masculinity can be decoded in the daily newspaper regardless of the intentions of its publishers or authors and that is how gender politics pervades our understanding of world politics.

### 1.5.5. Feminist Critical Theory

Feminist Critical Theory has roots in Gramscian Marxism as it explores both the ideational and material manifestations of gendered identities and gendered power in global politics. The Feminist Critical theorists seek to find a way forward that would not only retain gender as a category of analysis but also the historical commitment to the emancipatory projects in feminism. As they felt the need to meet the challenge of changing social arrangements to fight against exclusion and establish a society based on just order. The critical theory is based on the central insight that the activity of ‘theorising’ is intimately connected with social practice. It involves not only in identifying how social perceptions need to be changed, but also, how it needs to be transformed to be capable of redefining social institutions; to contribute for new ways of thinking about the agents of social change.

The Critical theorists agree that there is no immediate knowledge of the world as knowledge is created through a dialectical process. Conceptualisation and conceptual framework are produced by concrete understanding of the significance of social ‘facts’ generated by the process of reflection and thought. By linking the theory of knowledge production to a theory of identity and interests they have shown how ‘theory is always for someone and for some purpose’.

Habermas has argued that all human knowledge is historically rooted and interest bound. In other words, history, social ‘reality’ and ‘nature’ are products of the constituting labour of human species. Knowledge is created in the process of a person’s efforts to produce her or his existence.

Gramsci has also argued that ‘reality’ to a certain extent are independent of the process of knowledge production and the ‘truths’ of social reality are intractable as it involved thoughts, motivations and intersubjective meanings of individuals who had different forms of self-consciousness and awareness as to the social nature of their actions.

Feminist critical theories were until now engaged in thinking how to transformed social institutions, or find new definitions of social agents based in two different and almost irreconcilable strategies: the agonistic model which would helped in creating new ways of defining social agents; and the normative model which helped to redefined justice and autonomy.

The strategies of the normative kind have struggled against old definitions of the self and the critique of cultural and social institutions and practices posing the accent on transformation. The strategies about resistance seek to comprehend the complexity of
power and domination by analyzing the different technologies and practices of subjection that are constitutive of our social order. The first position highlights the role of autonomy and freedom. The second one highlights the role of power and determinism. Both are needed in critical theory but feminists have until now presented these arguments against one another.

Antonio Gramsci


For the Feminist critical theorists linking identity and interests appeal most to them as they argue that it needs a theory of the subject or it would not be able to account for resistance to forms of domination. They seek to move beyond abstract activity of critique and reflections but engage with the world in the service of an emancipatory politics; by making visible the gender inequalities and empower women as subjects of knowledge.

The Feminist Critical Theorists draw upon the work of scholars from the Marxian tradition of critical theory to radical and Marxian feminist thought. They explore the intersections between individual or subjective, experience and institutional structures. Gender is about knowledge and gender relations are sustained by social practices and ideas. Sandra Whitworth argued that gender relations must be seen in the context of inequalities rooted in social class or race and the feminist analyst must be able to demonstrate how institutions and practices embody patriarchal forms of power relations which allow men to exercise power over women. A feminist critical theory must also seek to understand how the hegemonic structures and institutions are deeply embedded with patriarchal ideologies and male dominance.
Sandra Whitworth

Source: http://www.yorku.ca/sandraw/accessed on Nov 10, 2014

Sandra Whitworth's book *Feminism and International Relations* (1994) focused on the different way how gender was being understood overtime as it depend on the material conditions of men and women and their relationship with one another. The change in the meaning of gender had different effects on the public institutions population policies at various times in their history.

1.5.6. Feminist Constructivism

Feminist constructivism as an international relations theory builds upon the theory of constructivism, which is an epistemological approach that generates knowledge and meaning through human interaction and ideas. The central tenet of Constructivism is that international life is social and is a product of social interaction with each other through norms, rules and dialogue etc. While there are similarities the feminist constructivist views relationships of power differently than the traditional constructivists.

Elisabeth Prugl has written from the perspective of feminist constructivist in *The Global Construction of Gender* (1999). In this book, Ms Prugl has argued that gender politics has pervaded world politics which has led to the creation of linguistically-based rules on how states interact with each other and with their own citizens. As a result of which, that most of the home based workers are women and need to regulate this type of engagement as employment.

Prugl has shown how ideas about feminity have contributed to the debate in institutionalising home based work done by women in the international community. The
low wages and poor working conditions are often justified on grounds that home-based work is not ‘real work’ as these work are done within the private reproductive sphere of waged-based production.

Elisabeth Prugl


1.5.7. Post-Colonial feminism

The post-colonialists focus on colonial relations of domination and subordination established under European imperialism in the 18th and 19th centuries. They claim that these dominance relationships still persist and that they are built into the way western knowledge portrays people and countries in the East. During the colonial period many of the colonial powers had often imposed their own concept of norms, in other words the western concept of norms on the colonial countries which the colonised countries had endorsed and internalised them. This had deep and serious consequences in the mental mindset of the people from the colonised countries in their economy, society and politics.

The post-colonial feminism had taken the argument of Post Colonialism in the gender relations and how genders and the gender roles are constructed in the now decolonised countries. During the 1940s-50s after the formation of United Nations (UN) when many of the former colonies became members of these international organisation led to legitimization of the western norms and cultures even among the gender relations as well. It is in these regard that the post-colonial feminist movement was launched.

Many of the post-colonial feminist writers argued on the need to deconstruct women and their role from the prism and perspectives of western socio-cultural norms. All the more so, when international organisation such as UN are monitoring the progress of women and evaluating modernity as developed and traditions as backward; it requires a holistic perspective on the traditions that define gender roles in the developing countries.
Chandra Talpade Mohanty is a post-colonial and transnational feminist, who was born in Mumbai, India but has become an American citizen now. She became known after her essay, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses" was published in which she had made the following statement: The relationship between 'Woman'—a cultural and ideological composite other constructed through diverse representational discourses (scientific, literary, juridical, linguistic, cinematic, etc.)—and 'women'—real, material subjects of their collective histories—is one of the central questions the practice of feminist scholarship seeks to address.

The post-colonial feminist writers such as Chandra Mohanty had suggested that women’s subordination must be addressed within their own cultural context, rather than through some universal understanding of women’s needs. She has criticised western feminist's portrayal of third world women as poor, uneducated, victimized and lacking in agency.

The main argument of the Post-Colonial feminist is that women’s subordination must be understood differentially in the context of the following agents such as race, class and geographical location. According to this school of thought, all women should be seen as the agents rather than victims. For example some of the traditional practices of women such as wearing of scarves by women can be seen by the west as being backward and distasteful while for them it could be their form of cultural rebellion against the western concepts of norms and culture. Therefore imposing western norms could be seen as being desirous but also could lead to conflicts in the society.

Test your knowledge-C

(Fill in the blanks)

11. The two prominent early liberal feminist thinkers were _____ and _______.
   (a) Olympia De Gouges and Mary Wollstonecraft (b) Ann Tickner and Rosemary Tong
   © Sarojini Naidu and Indira Gandhi (d) Nefertiti and Cleopatra

12. _______ outlined the classification of feminist theory of International Relations.
   (a) Rosemary Tong (b) Olympia de Gouges (c) Mary Wollstonecraft (c) Ann Tickner (d) Sarojini Naidu

13. The focus of intellectual enquiry for feminism is to _______ knowledge.
   (a) make (b) deconstruct (c) construct (d) demolish
14. The goal of Liberal feminism is to ensure ______ gender equality with men and women.
(a) incomplete (b) partial (c) complete (d) always

15. Marxist Feminism _______ liberal feminism.
(a) rejects (b) supports (c) ensure (d) demolish

16. According to Radical feminism personal is _______
(a) political (b) economic (c) important (d) international

17. The study of Post Modern feminism is borne out of experiences from ________
(a) others (b) one’s own (c) outside (d) inside

18. Feminist Critical Theory has roots in _______ Marxism.
(a) Gramscian (b) Critical (c) Social (d) New

19. Feminist Constructivism focuses on the study of how gender influences _____
politics.
(a) global (b) national (c) domestic (d) gender

20. Post Colonial Feminism focus on the need to study women’s _____according to their
social and cultural context.
(a) role (b) position (c) subordination (d) issues

1.6 Gendering Security

The concept of security is central to the discipline of International Relation since its
inception in the 20th century. Taking stock of the state’s security leads to the need to
assert power in the system of international relation, which has been the focus of the
classical theories of IR such as Realism. That is why state is seen as an institution to
symbolize power to remove any traces of insecurity and secure its citizens with a feeling
of security and thereby the struggle for power is the essence of politics. It is in these
contexts that the feminist seek to differ and disagree.

The feminist question the realist paradigm of differentiating anarchy and danger with
order and security within the state as they believe that state-centric analysis misses the
inter-relation of insecurity across different levels such as local, national and global. It
has been the general assumption and acceptance of all, that woman’s place is within her
household which is beyond the reach of law in most states.

The feminists argue that women’s insecurity can only be understood in the context of
patriarchal relations which consign women to household or low paying jobs. The creation
of a public/private boundary has put women to unremunerated work at home, which is
deterrent of women’s autonomy and economic security. In other words, the social
expectations of women reinforce economic inequalities between men and women, which
can only be explained by using gender as a category of analysis.
1.6.1 Gendering War

The study of International Relation has focused on power and security of states which emphasizes on the need of building a strong and reliable military power. Military are seen as the protector of state and legitimizes war. War has often been associated with masculinity as they need to be strong and brave, which is traditionally associated with characteristics of masculine gender. Therefore the militaries need to work hard to train men become soldiers who must go and face any combat if necessary.

The training of military denigrates anything that is considered as feminine characteristics as he must be the self-sacrificially protecting women, children and other vulnerable people. The idea that reiterates is that young men need to fight wars to protect the vulnerable groups who cannot and are not expected to protect themselves is used as an important motivating force in the recruitment of military forces. During war the just warrior displays the heroic masculine characteristics which are often contrasted with an enemy who is portrayed as dangerous through the use of feminized and sometimes radicalized characteristics. These rationales has led to legitimize and sustain the rationality for war and thereby genders war.

The images of the masculinity of war depend on rendering women’s role in war as invisible be it as the patriotic, supportive mother, wife or daughter. This has been reiterated as witnessed during the Second World War where women who took over factory jobs that was vacated by men who went off to war were expected to return to traditional roles, when the war got over.

The presence of women in the military instead of ending masculinity of war has rather made it more complicated as in some of the military has been resentful of such a move. Nevertheless the complications arise on the assumption of equality dictates that women should be allowed to serve in militaries while some feminist believe that women should not fight men’s wars.

1.6.2 Feminists definitions of security

The feminist concept of security is different from the traditional and conventional concept of security. Most of the women are marginal in the power structure of a state and take their issue of security as a central concern to their existence, as they see it from the micro level of the individual and the community first than the macro level of state and the international system. They define security in a very broad sense to encompass its various multidimensional and multilevel concepts.

For feminists see security as elimination of all forms of violence including physical, structural and ecological. They conceive security from the bottom up instead of the top down, meaning that the security should start from the individual or community rather than with the state or international system. This view has critiqued the state as an agent of security providers. As in many conflict torn states, the government is more preoccupied with national security and less with the security of its citizens especially with women as they experience physical insecurity.
(Multiple Choice Questions)

21. Feminism sees security as highly
   (a) gendered (b) biased (c) political (d) important

22. The images of war render the role of women as always
   (a) visible (b) invisible (c) important (d) negligible

23. Feminism sees security from the perspectives of
   (a) men (b) women (c) all (d) both men and women

24. The concept of security is ______ to the discipline of International Relations
   (a) central (b) important (c) negligible (d) nothing

25. The feminist concern for security grows out of the centrality of
   (a) Social relations (b) international relations (c) gender relations (d) no relation

Many states even during peace times sustain huge military budgets while they cut on social expenditures which would provide women security comes to the central question of security for whom and why. The security seeking behavior of states is legitimized with certain types of masculinity which narrows the range of permissible ways for states to act and may actually decrease the likelihood of achieving a peaceful solution to a conflict. Conciliatory gestures are seen as weak and not in national interest. This legitimizes the perception that of women’s voices being inauthentic in matters of policy making. It has been noted that the feminist concept of security grows out of the centrality that the social relations play in the context of gender relations. They see structural inequalities as being central to the insecurity of individuals as they are woven into the historical legacy of the construct of the present day modern state, where the international system is a part of it.

1.7 Gender and Development in International Relations

One of the major concerns of the feminist scholars of IR is in women’s role in development. Feminism question the wisdom behind the gender blind multilateral agencies like World Bank who take men as agents and distributors of development without taking cognizance of the potential that women play in meeting the goals of progress and development. Unlike the previous notion that held the belief that development was a vehicle to advance women as new developments suggests that development are made possible by involving women.

Women and work are integral for the development of society as women has often been working in the domestic sphere and are carrier of knowledge and ideas, which are often neglected and not highlighted. The distinctive nature of women’s knowledge, work, goals and responsibilities need to be advocated and recognised.

According to feminist, globalization has intensified social and economic division of the society which has aggravated the inequality between men and women. The two most important manifestation of this polarization is manifested in poverty and in the gendered international division of labour. Moreover, national and international economic policies
have increasingly been governed by global imperatives of export earnings, financial matters and comparative labour costs.

1.8 Gender in the Global Economy

Woman globally are said to be the majority of the world’s poorest population as three-fifths of the world’s one billion poorest people are said to be women and girls according to the United Nations Development Programme Report in 2006. On average women earn two-thirds of men’s earnings even though they work for longer hours, many of which are spent in unremunerated reproductive and caring tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you know -5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Startling facts about Women and Economy in the world</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the world, women earn only 78 cents for every dollar that a man makes. This is true even among the 10 top paying jobs for women. It is only in one career that of speech pathology, where women receive parity in their pay.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There has been great disparity in the political representations of women. In US only 17% of the seats in Congress are held by women, while in the other countries demand for women reservation has been fully implemented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There has been wide disparity in women’s employment and joining the work force. In US, although 48% of law school graduates and 45% of law firm associates are female, women make up only 22% of federal-level and 26% of state-level judgeships</td>
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There are enormous differences in the socioeconomic status of women, depending on their race, class, nationality and geographic location. Nevertheless, women are disproportionately located at the bottom of the socio-economic scale in all societies. Even when women do rise to the top, they almost always earn less than men. Women do not do as well as men even in societies where legal restrictions on employment and earnings have long been removed. These is what the feminists call as the gendered division of labour.

1.8.1 Historical foundations of gendered division of labour

The origin of the contemporary gendered division of labour can be traced back to the seventieth century Europe. It was during this time of early capitalism that led to gendered division of work and labour as work was becoming polarized according to the sexes. The coming of industrialization led to work being shifted away from home to the factory where men’s labour was preferred as they could work for long hours away from home. The term *housewife* which began to be used to describe women’s work in the private domestic sphere reinforced the gender discrimination and divide of work. The gendered constructs of term such as *breadwinner* and *housewife* have become central to modern western definitions of masculinity, femininity and capitalism. Even though many women do work outside the home for wages but women was associated with household work in their domestic roles such as housewife and caregiver which has become institutionalized and even neutralized.
The rationality of women performing household and domestic chores soon was seen as being natural and thereby put the burden of household labour on women that decreased her autonomy and economic security. Over a period of time the division of labour for the gender became the gender roles in the society as well.

The gender roles became stereotyped and therefore when women entered the workforce which would be seen in sync with the perceived and accepted attributes of women in a caring profession such as nursing, social service, primary education or in a light industry where only light machinery are used. That is why are disproportionately represented in the workforce. Occupations that are disproportionately populated by women tend to be most poorly paid, as the work done by women are often characterized as supplemental wage earners to the male head of household. Despite the fact that it has been statistically estimated that one-third of all households worldwide are headed by women, a fact that has been frequently obscured by role expectations that derive from the notion that male are breadwinners and female as housewives.

1.8.2 Consequences of gendered division of labour

The gendered expectations about appropriate roles for women contribute to their low wages and double burdens. There are certain expectations associated with traditional gender roles as it is assumed that women possess ‘nimble fingers’ have patience for tedious jobs and are ‘natural’ good sewers. When women are seen as naturally good at these tasks, it means that these kinds of work are not seen as skilled and are remunerated accordingly. That is why they are hired more in the textile and electronic industry.

The employments of women are based on predominant perceptions where the industries favour hiring young unmarried women who can achieve a high level of productivity at low wages or provide a ‘docile’ labour force who are unlikely to organise their demand for better working conditions. They would frequently fire if they get married or pregnant. Gender expectations about suitable roles for women enter into another global labour issue that of home-based work. Most of the companies have moved towards a more flexible labour force which provides less benefits and job security and therefore is cost-saving as they hire home-based workers who are easily hired and fired in all parts of the world. Since women often out of necessity prefer to work that easily accommodates family responsibilities, home-based workers are predominantly women. The gendered division of labour defines women as housewives, a category with expectations that labour is free, legitimises wages below the subsistence level.

Even when women do enter the workforce, they continue to suffer from a double burden. This means that in addition to their paid work they usually carry most of the responsibility for household labour. It is common perception to assume that women are not ‘working’ when they perform their household duties whereas such tasks are crucial for reproducing and caring for those who perform waged work. These tasks often constrain women’s opportunities for paid work and the narrow definition of work, as work in the waged economy tends to render invisible many of the contributions women do make to the global economy.

The gendered division of labour also affects women’s work in agriculture as women work as unpaid family labour in small units in many parts of the developing countries such as Africa and Asia, even in India. Women are often left behind when the agriculture
production moves into the monetised economy as they are left behind to produce family needs.

Women are disadvantaged in relation to men due to the gendered division of labour. The relative lack of economic opportunities for women are not only caused by market but due to social process which result from gendered expectations about the kind of work which women are believed to be best suited. Nevertheless when women undertake work for wages, it undermines the legitimacy of male’s domination that occurs because of men’s traditional role as family providers. For women having a job can be better than no work at all and extra cash significantly enhances the income of poor families besides increasing women’s financial independence.

1.9 Criticism of Feminist Theories

Much of the hard core theorist of International Relations has not seen the intellectual inquiry of the feminist IR seriously. They see the feminist paradigm of analysing International Relations as addressing issues which are more in the nature of social sciences rather than International Relations through their approach of using hypothetic-deductive methods. The various strands of feminism and what it stands for makes it is a collection of different intellectual traditions and cultures. It represents different historical periods for its analysis and interpretations due to which the Feminist traditions of theories in International Relations are said to be generalised and remains unstated as well as unexamined.

One of the criticism that the feminist theorist of International Relations has received is that human values is more important and holistic than to inculcate female values in the study of International Relations and Global Politics as the discipline is focussed on the interactions of people and the states that they represent rather than on the gender that they belong.

The feminist theories of IR has been accused of being too exclusivist as they focus on their analysis only on women. In their bid to expand on the various social institutions of power they have done what they have criticised that is exclude the masculinity of power in their analysis.

Test your knowledge- E

(Select True or False)

26. The feminist question the development parameters of international institutions such as World Bank and other organization.

27. According to Feminism globalisation has intensified economic division which has led to the inequality of men and women.

28. The origin of contemporary gendered division of labour is seen from the contemporary times only.

29. Women stop suffering when they enter the economic work force.

30. The lack of economic opportunities for women is only due to the market forces.
The feminist theories has also been subjected to be partial to women as they used gender as their means of analysis and therefore lacking in its objectivity which is said to be the main cornerstone for building a sound and reliable theory. This partial view of building a theory is not only lacks in objectivity but is said to be dangerous and can hinder the search for truth.

Robert Keohane, one of the prominent theorists of International Relations has suggested that feminism should try to formulate some verifiable problems where they collect data and do some science to solve the issues, which has not been well taken by many feminist theorist of IR.

Besides, these criticism that has been made as discussed in the above; feminism of International Relations has been critiqued by other feminist themselves, i.e the Third World Feminist, who has analysed the concept of colonialism and how the experiences of women in these countries have had different experiences from what the ‘white’ women has had and have accounted for.

1.10 Feminist challenge to the theorists of International Relations

The concern of feminist theory has been on overall social relations as the key players in IR such as diplomats, policymakers, heads of government, and academic professionals, have been and still are males who come from patriarchal social and political backgrounds. As a result of which the discussions within IR has always been largely constrained by people who lack consideration of women’s roles in world politics since they have not been trained to value and include the perspective of women.

The theory and practice of IR has always remains a prime example of patriarchy. It has often been referred as the “last bastion of the social sciences,” to indicates how rigid it has been and needs reconsideration through ‘gender lenses’. Feminists has also applied the concept of ‘gender’ and ‘patriarchy’ in their analysis of how women has been excluded from the arena of international political. For example, a man’s experiences in the military services are seen as an added qualification when seeking political positions which is not possible for any women candidate. This in a way limits a woman’s chances when it comes to issues of national defense and security.

Test Your Knowledge-F

(Fill in the Blanks)

31. The feminist theories has been criticised on the grounds of being too ________
32. __ has given suggestion how to improve feminist theories
33. Robert Keohane has asked the feminists to formulate_____ problems to make the theories more scientific.
34. Feminism has also been criticised by ________feminism.
35. International Relations will continue to remain prime example of __________
Feminism has started as a movement, which aims at achieving political, social and economic equality for women

a. The core concern of a feminist theory is to give a causal explanation of why women have been subordinated in international politics. The feminist believe that knowledge determines political practice and therefore feminist knowledge should be invoked to help improve women's lives.

b. Feminism defines gender to be distinct from sex. As gender is a set of socially constructed characteristics which has defined masculinity from feminity. It is possible to display masculinity characteristics and vice versa.

c. Gender is a system of social hierarchy where the masculine characteristics are more valued than feminine ones. Besides, being a structure that signifies unequal power relationships between women and men.

d. There are various traditions of feminist theories such as liberal, Marxist, socialist, post-modernism and post-colonialism. Each of them gives different explanations for women's subordination

e. The feminist of International Relations (IR feminists) uses gender sensitive perspectives to give causal explanations of why women play subordinate roles in the global politics.

f. The IR feminists build on other theories such as liberalism Critical theory, constructivism, post-modernism and post-colonialism to introduce gender as a an important category of analysis in International Relation.

g. The main concern of liberal feminists is the marginalisation of women as they believe that by removing legal obstacles that deny women the same opportunities as men, women can attain empowerment in IR.

h. The Marxists/socialist feminist on the other hand focus on the cause of women’s subordination to the two main factors of international capitalist system and patriarchy; therefore its removal is the key for woman’s emancipation.

i. The core concern of Post-modernist feminist are concerned with the social construct of gender as opposed to women. Their perceptions of the social construct of masculinity and feminity has its linkages between knowledge and power. Since knowledge is in the domain of men it has been very easy for them to influence global politics.

j. Post-colonial feminists work at the intersection of gender, race and class on a global scale. They have been critical of western feminists as it’s based on Western women’s lives and for portraying Third World women as lacking in agency. Their main suggestion is to view subordination of women in accordance to their race, class and geographical location. As all women should be seen as agents rather than victims.
k. The crux of Feminist Critical theory is to examine how the ideas and material structures shape people’s lives. That is why the IR feminist critical theorists conceptualise the changes in the meaning of gender through the changes in the practices of international organisations over time.

l. The core concern of Feminist Constructivists how ideas about gender are constructed in the global politics. The prominent Feminist Constructivist thinker, Ms Elisabeth Prugl has explained how these ideas construct in framing of international legal conventions that guide IR.

m. The traditional concepts and stories of war have always portrayed men as the protectors while women and children are protected. The contemporary times of today’s wars challenge the myth of protection as women and children are being killed and injured in large numbers.

n. The concept of masculinity has always been associated with War and the image of a soldier is a heroic male. However, this stereotype perception is increasingly challenged with number of women joining the militaries around the world. These have led to debate among policy-makers and militaries whether woman should fight in military combat.

o. The masculine concepts of Militarised states are preoccupied with threats of national security and have a deep significance in IR. As a result of which, conciliatory options in policy-making tend to get discontinued and makes women’s voices difficult to be seen as legitimate, particularly in matters of security policy.

p. The Feminists concept of security broadly include the diminution of all forms of violence, physical, economic and ecological, which in a way is more broad and encompassing than the male perspective of security. The national security of states defined in masculine terms emphasise military strength which is a trade-off with the physical and economic security of individuals.

q. In the international political economy, women are at the marginalised and its fringes because in every society of the world, women are disadvantaged in relation to men in terms of material well-being. This has led to the need for gender sensitive perspective to see the causal explanation of women’s relative disadvantage is due to the gendered division of labour in the world.

r. The genesis of a gendered division of labour dates can be traced back to seventieth century Europe and its subsequent separation of paid work in the public sphere from unpaid work in the private sphere. The distinction made between workers in the public and private sphere has led to a gendered division of labour where any work done in private sphere is not as valued as the work done in the public sphere.

s. One of the causal explanations of women being at the fringes of economy is because Women are disproportionately clustered in low-paying jobs in garment industries and services. As a result of which they are bereft from working in highly skilled jobs or advanced technologies have bereft them from high paying jobs. The fact that women
are seen as private agents and therefore their natural role as Home based workers have made them more vulnerable than emancipated. Even in agriculture, they often contribute for subsistence agriculture than men and men more often work with advanced agricultural technologies.

t. In addition, most of the works done by women are not remunerative in nature. Women perform most of the reproductive and caring labour in the private sphere which is known as double burden, and since they donot receive any remuneration, these household labour is invisible in economic analyses and make women’s in the fringes of economic activity.

u. The negative effects of gendered division of labour should not be overgeneralised as women have more opportunities for waged work and for empowerment. However, they do not know how to negotiate and often perform the same tasks for lower wages than men, which voluntarily encompasses them within the fringes and its marginality of economic activity.
### 1.12 Glossary

**Feminity:** It is a set of characteristics associated with being a woman and is defined in opposition to the qualities of masculinity. The typical characteristics associated are weakness, dependence/connection, emotional and private sphere.

**Feminisation of labour:** It recognises the increasing global demand for women as ‘cheap labour’ in the global assembly line as well as in the provision of paid as well as unpaid reproductive labour and care.

**Feminism:** a political project to understand so as to change women’s inequality, liberation or oppression. For some it aims to move beyond gender so that it no longer matters while for others it validates women’s interests, experiences and choices, for others it work for more equal and inclusive social relations overall.

**Gender:** it is the social construction of sexual difference and means whether male or female in a particular place or time.

**Gender relations:** It is the relational construction of masculinity and feminity through power relations, in which the masculine is usually privileged and which are contested and changing

**Gendered division of labour:** the notion of ‘women work which includes women’s primary responsibility for childcare and housework as it designates many public and paid forms of work as ‘women’s or ‘men’s’ too.

**Gendering globalisation:** It means to be gender sensitive in the process of globalisation to reveal that women are differently positioned in relation to globalisation process and differently impacted upon by them, and that women become global players in response to these gendered effects.

### 1.13 Exercises

1. Trace the origin of Feminist Theories in International Relations?
2. Discuss the nature and the essence of feminism in International Relations?
3. Why gender is an important tool for analysis in International Relations?
4. What is the feminist concept of gender and how is it central to the study in International Relations?
5. How is gender related to security and war in International Relations?
6. How is gender and development related in International Relations?
7. Trace the historical foundations of gendered division of labour in the world economy?
8. What are the consequences of gendered division of labour?
9. Discuss the criticism of feminist theories in International Relations?
10. Write short notes on:
    a. Liberal Feminism
    b. Marxist and Socialist Feminism
Feminist Perspectives and International Relations

c. Radical Feminism
d. Post modernist Feminism
e. Feminist Critical Theory
f. Feminist Constructivism
g. Post Colonial Feminism

1.14 Answer and explanations to Test your knowledge

1. (b) 1980s
   Explanations: Feminist theories started making inroads in International Relations since 1980s

2. (a) Cold War
   Explanations: It was during Cold War that Feminism was started in International Relations

3. (b) rights of women
   Explanations: Feminism in International Relations advocates for the rights of women

4. (a) gendered
   Explanations: The concepts in International Relations are highly gendered as they are based on the experiences of men rather than both men and women.

5. (a) War and Peace
   Explanations: Feminist scholarships are based on the core issue of International Relation such as conflict i.e war and diplomacy and its peace building exercises i.e peace.

6. True
   Explanations: Men are often identified with the public realm of creating order in the society while women are identified with the private realm.

7. True
   Explanations: According to feminists, security threats include beyond the conventional concept of security but also the ecological destruction on which all lives are based here.

8. False
   Explanations: Contrary to popular perceptions, women are among the majority in the world’s poor population.

9. True
   Explanations: Feminism as an intellectual inquiry investigates how gender is constructed in political realm.

10. True
    Explanations: Gender as a structure signifies equal distribution of power between men and women.
11. (a) Olympia de Gouges and Mary Wollstonecraft
**Explanations:** Olympia de Gouges and Mary Wollstonecraft were the two prominent early liberal feminist thinkers.

12. (a) Rosemary Tong
**Explanations:** It was Rosemary Tong who outlined the classification of feminist theory of International Relations.

13. (c) construct
**Explanations:** The focus of intellectual enquiry for feminism is to construct knowledge.

14. (c) complete
**Explanations:** The goal of Liberal feminism is to ensure complete gender equality with men and women.

15. (a) rejects
**Explanations:** Marxist Feminism has rejected liberal feminism.

16. (a) political
**Explanations:** According to Radical feminism personal is political.

17. (a) others
**Explanations:** The study of Post Modern feminism is borne out of experiences from others.

18. (a) Gramscian
**Explanations:** Feminist Critical Theory has roots in Gramscian Marxism.

19. (d) global
**Explanations:** Feminist Constructivism focuses on the study of how gender influences global politics.

20. subordination
**Explanations:** Post-Colonial Feminism focus on the need to study women’s subordination according to their social and cultural context.

21. (a) gendered
**Explanations:** Feminism sees security as highly

22. (b) invisible
**Explanations**: The images of war render the role of women as always invisible as wars are fought by men and therefore women’s role are highly neglected and ignored.

23. (b) women  
**Explanations**: Feminism sees security from the perspectives of women unlike the traditional perspective which sees it only from men.

24. (a) central  
**Explanations**: The concept of security is central and core foundation to the discipline of International Relations.

25. (c) gender relations  
**Explanations**: The feminist concern for security grows out of the centrality of gender relations as it defines the role of women.

26. True  
**Explanations**: The feminist question the development parameters of international institutions such as World Bank and other organization.

27. True  
**Explanations**: According to Feminism globalisation has intensified economic division which has led to the inequality of men and women.

28. False  
**Explanations**: The origin of contemporary gendered division of labour is seen not from the contemporary times only but from the time Industrialisation was started.

29. False  
**Explanations**: Contrary to popular belief Women donot stop suffering when they enter the economic work force but are more vulnerable at the work place.

30. False  
**Explanations**: The lack of economic opportunities for women is only due to the market forces but also due to the structure of the society.

31. Exclusivist  
**Explanations**: The feminist theories has been criticised on the grounds of being too exclusivist.

32. Robert Keohane  
**Explanations**: He has given suggestion how to improve feminist theories.

33. verifiable
Explanations: Robert Keohane has asked the feminists to formulate verifiable problems to make the theories more scientific.

34. Third World
Explanations: Feminism has also been criticised by Third world feminism.

35. Gender inequality
Explanations: International Relations will continue to remain prime example of gender inequality.

1.15 References


1.16 Suggested Readings
1.17 Online Resources

1. [http://docs.rwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1357&context=rwu_LR](http://docs.rwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1357&context=rwu_LR)

2. [http://adamjones.freeservers.com/does.htm](http://adamjones.freeservers.com/does.htm)


4. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism_%28international_relations%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism_%28international_relations%29)

5. [https://www.csustain.edu/sites/default/files/honors/documents/journals/soundings/ Ruiz.pdf](https://www.csustain.edu/sites/default/files/honors/documents/journals/soundings/ Ruiz.pdf)

6. [https://www.academia.edu/2367553/What_is_the_Feminist_Theory_in_the_International_Relations](https://www.academia.edu/2367553/What_is_the_Feminist_Theory_in_the_International_Relations)


8. [http://www.e-ir.info/2013/03/17/how-significant-is-the-contribution-of-feminism-to-ir/](http://www.e-ir.info/2013/03/17/how-significant-is-the-contribution-of-feminism-to-ir/)


13. [http://webcurso.uc.cl/access/content/group/icp0301-1-21-2012/Parte%20B.%20Teor%C3%ADas%20de%20Relaciones%20Internacionales/Blanchard,%20E%202012.pdf](http://webcurso.uc.cl/access/content/group/icp0301-1-21-2012/Parte%20B.%20Teor%C3%ADas%20de%20Relaciones%20Internacionales/Blanchard,%20E%202012.pdf)

14. [https://www.academia.edu/9560704/What_is_gender_Is_International_Relations_a_gendered_discipline](https://www.academia.edu/9560704/What_is_gender_Is_International_Relations_a_gendered_discipline)

15. [http://www.ic.ucsc.edu/~rlipsch/Pol272/Youngs.pdf](http://www.ic.ucsc.edu/~rlipsch/Pol272/Youngs.pdf)