

Feminist and Realist Debate on Question of Security in International Politics: Negligence of Inclusion of Women Approach

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Abstract: *This paper is focusing on how the feminist view of International relations marginalized by realist theory. Realist adopts a masculine framework for analyzing various aspects of international relation. In this paper, the feminist critiques of the core principles of realist theory present a different view to the IR issues framed traditionally. Although feminist theory addresses the shortcomings of every core principle of realism, this paper focuses more on the security issue. It will explain the definition and effect of security in realist views and how the feminists critique that view. It also explain the feminist critique of the mainstream realist theory of International Relation. To explain the security notion with a feminist, approach it examines the feminist perspectives and adds value to the definition of security, and extends the security concerns from national security to the security of human civilization. To assess and explain the women's security condition in the conflict zone, it underlined some examples, such as the Tamil war in Sri Lanka, the conflict situation in Syria.*

Keywords: *Feminism, security, conflict zone, Carol Cohan, Susan MeKey, Masculinity.*

I. Introduction:

This paper firstly deals with the feminist critique of the realist. Feminist challenges realist in defining what security is and who's secure by whom? In international relations security is totally based on state-centric. The state presents male dominant hierarchy and women are ignored in whole concept. Feminists argue and obey this masculine idea. Security should be with women and men, and it should be for men-women both. This is an Endeavour focus on the critique provided by the feminist of the realism by the mainstream, predominant theory of understanding IR i.e Realism. This paper focuses on international relation noting security as conceptualized in realistic understanding and tries to problematize this hierarchical essentialized understanding by providing term insight. In International relations, not only security is important, even war, power politics and national interests all are interrelated and important aspects. Feminists argue about everything, but here the prime discussion mainly concerns security questions. Specific area counters represent an actual issue and challenge of that area.

Realist Theory

Realist generally views the state as the principal actor in international politics, behavior, and action of states in the international arena. Most realists share some common premise. Four aspects that realists highlighted about the States. They put states in the center point. States' all behavior is for power and politics. Groupism, egoism, anarchy, and power politics these four agreements are the basic notion of every state (Whollforth, 2008). Groupism means here within and between groups. These groups mean states or nations are the main actors, and actors' primary motivation is self-interest. Anarchy and power politics are considered absences of government and store power according to others. The state acquires this power for its own security. Security for the state with the military, somilitary and hard politics is very important for the state. Security is acquired for the balance of power in the international arena. To maintain the balance of power state needs to gather power against other competing actors. The central idea of a realist understanding of International relations revolves around some key issues of State centric, Power politics, National interest, and Security of the nation-states.

Feminist Theory

Feminists argue that all these aspects of realists' views are male-dominant and women's questions are excluded from this discussion. If feminists are also included in realist discussions about defining State, Power, National interest, and Security, then there definitions would be described differently.

The concept of the state itself, considered as a key actor in international politics in realist theory is male-centric. Feminists argue that the state not represent the voices of all its individuals. The internal social and political structure of the state predefines its nature. The nature of the state has an impact over domestic and

international policies. The emergence of nation-state marginalized the needs and participation of the weaker section of the society i.e of women in the formation of the state. Their limited views were left unheard in the process of state building. As the formation of the state is predominantly a male exercise, the whole idea of conceptualizing international relation by realist is being questioned by feminists.

Realists defined the power meaning in international relations, that power is the control of men over men (H. Morgenthau). In the realist view, power is associated with dominance and physical force, such as military power and economic strength. Feminist argues that the definition of power as domination and physical force is a masculine approach. Feminists, in their writings, termed power as energy, capacity, potential, act in concert, and mutual enablement. Redefining power in wider perspective helps to deal with the various issues of third world in the international arena. Power can be seen as an instrument to develop international cooperation. The balance of power will be more likely toward the ability to achieve transnational cooperation.

Realist justifies power politics in international relation for the sake of national interest without explaining the interest(s) of the nation. Feminists raise objections about the limited realist version of national interest defined in terms of power only. In the contemporary world national interests have many objectives such as economic well-being, food security, environmental degradation, ethnic conflict, global terrorism etc.

Before entering into the elaboration of security, we must examine the various facets in the feminist narration of international relations. Are they echo a singular voice or are internal debates within the premises of feminists about international relation theory?

Liberal feminist

Liberal feminists consider men and women are at an equal level. They are not different by nature. This social inequality is a symbol of masculinity. Realists avoid an individual's role in international politics. Security of men and security for women according to realists is an important aspect and here women do not given roles where they can raise their own thoughts. Feminists disagree with this statement and they thought women have to give up right to exchange the phenomena of security.

Marxist feminist

Marxist feminists critique the upper-lower type of classification which is extensively present in the labor force. They critique class structure and sexual division of labor. Where women are treated like the lower class and men is standing upper class (piratical society). (Chimni B.S 2012). Eve Michell argued and denied the identity who given by others. (I am a woman and human a Marxist feminist critique of inter-secondary theory) .This classification prevails in the realist approach to the international relation theory. According to realist theory, in International politics men are at the center and women are at the periphery. women are treated as an object. Radical feminists consider that without women experience and inclusion no policies are meaningful. (Chimni B.S 2012)

The role of the state without internal inclusion means all's participation is not successful, and these participations should all way –distributions of power, participation in security and other things. Security to equate with the military as defined by male force and no role for women than how can uses the state as a main actor denying the role of the individual. Women as an actor have a role in the domestic field but due to this type of approach women are treated like property, and they are also economically not secure. In this condition, the state should play a big role to raise the voice of women.

Though feminist views produce a wide range of debates and have diversify approaches to the IR theory but they lay stress on a gendered account of international relation theory. The issue of Security which is central to the realist analysis has to be redefined in a broader concept.

Debate

In the realist view security is mainly concerned with the security of the states from external threats thus military strengths is prior to the empowerment of the state. The feminist view of security is not only tied to the security of the states but it extends from the security of an individual, to the security of the community and further to the security of human beings. Gunhild Hoogensen makes a serious point that security should be defined by those who are least secure. Feminist offer powerful arguments articulating the voices of the insecure, and deserves to be heard and responded to by mainstream sources. The feminist concept of security also includes insecurities arising from economic deprivation, environmental degradation and sexual violence.

Feminists argue that the way insecurity is experienced by women and girls is quite different from male counterparts. Masculine views only consider physical harm. But female experiences physical as well as mental insecurity. The feeling of insecurity develops in their mind. They find themselves insecure everywhere. Rape, domestic violence, and discrimination prevail in the period of so-called peace situation also. Realist defines security in terms of threat from the outside only but feminist includes threat from the inside also. Here the social and political structure of state also plays a role. As the state is generally male dominating. So the state doesn't

consider these security threats at all. The position of women is secondary in the state system so they are more vulnerable to these security threats.

Realist argues that due to security reasons state acquire power. Here also Females are at loss because from the beginning they are deprived of power. War and conflicts are considered to be manly affairs. Females hardly take part in it. They are discouraged in society to show their fighting ability. So in the war and in the peace situation, they are not the actors, but they emerge as Victims only. Due to their lower status in society, females are less able to develop the capacities needed for their security needs as compared to men. According to the UNDP report 1994, “ the equality between men and women is a utopia in almost all society and there are no societies where women secure or treated equally like men. Personal insecurity of women were highlighted and it underlined that personal insecurity shadows them (women) from cradle to grave...and from childhood through adulthood females are abused because of their gender.”

Women Security

Whose security needs to be given priority? This a burning question and it drew the attention of the world community from a very earlier time. Realists and feminists have different views on this According to realists' opinion, state security is the priority. This opinion were challenged by the feminists and stated that security aspects can be changed according to situation. Feminists explained the war situations and highlighted that in war and conflict zone women and children are the prime victims. In war situations, women are more affected but the security of boys and men is prioritized over that of girls and women due to the gender discrimination practices or beliefs. In war and conflict zone, women are exposed to many forms of violence like rape, sexual violence, migration, domestic violence, loss of work and wages, loss of family members and other many things which affect women. In these types of conditions, women are more vulnerable as many aspects they exploited by their own country's people as well. State and non-state actors were used war situations to use women as sexual objects. In the refugee camps, with peacekeeping forces, and military men, in all of these situations, women are the first targets and prime victims. War not only happens on the battlefield but the body of a female becomes another battlefield. So the state should first thought about women's security. According to Recent news, in Syria, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Somalia and many other conflict zones across the world many adolescent girls are exploited by internal and external people. LTTE (Sri Lanka), Maoist (Nepal) and rebel groups target mostly women and girls and these groups are vulnerable groups. In these areas, most effected women lost faith in the government. In wartime sexual violence against women is a common instrument of the enemy. According to report of UNHCR in whole refugee percentage, women, and child refugees, percentage are more than the male refugee population. Women are neglected in post-conflict DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) processes also as they are considered as simply camp followers or wives of rebellion, they are not recognized as combatants. Women are excluded in peace building process also. UNESCO charter notes that war is made in the mind of men so peace is also should be in the mind of men (Chimni, 2012).

Tickner critique Morgenthau's human nature definition as male-centric. And women's voice is not included, state is always with men and women not with men or women. The traditional definition is outdated now its need to define national security in a new way and in this definition women's views about security should be included. Economic and environmental security also needs a new definition (Tickner). How women think about security and insecurity should be needed when we talked about national and state security. The ways girls and women experience insecurity than the condition that must be met them or convince to be secure (Mckay Susan, 2004)

The feminist perspective on human security is based on the experiences of women. Erin Baines observes that feminists offer not only important data on the security of the individual need to be included even it also required fresh new perspectives. It also emphasizes by Erin Baines that data and information are very important to address this issue. It states that into the nexus of the individual and structures of violence at the local, national, and global levels. Baines acknowledged that there are three central themes emerging from feminist scholarship on human security and all are very important. Such as how armed conflicts affect women, gender relations, and gender roles. The ways that how international humanitarian interventions and peacekeeping operations widen or diminish unequal gender relations and this inequality creates a rift between the ground reality and policy framework. It also underlined how women's absence from decision-making positions is central to peacebuilding and leads to discrimination against women at many forums of policy framework and implementation.

The absence of 'women' from the whole discourse of the realist approaches to international relations is a unilateral approach. Women need a central role in the development of programs and policies of international relations. Feminist critique of realist theory not only add value to the theoretical aspect of international relation but it also accounts for the real solution of contemporary conflicts and post-conflict peace-building processes. Though the participation and initiative of women in peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding measures are marginalized but women work at the grassroots level to bring normalcy in the post-war affected areas. They believe in building human relationship and reconciliation that initiates peace. Masculine view stresses on

institutions and organizations but feminist emphasized on work in communities at regional level. Their mode of operation may be unconventional i.e forming SHG, demonstrations, and Awareness programs. Although these activities are always under attack from rebel groups. Recent attacks on Malala by the Taliban group, the Killing of Sushmita Banerjee, and acid attacks on school girls in Afghanistan are hindrances to peace-making efforts. In the current world situation war can't be a solution for establishing peace because nations have acquired such devastating weapons which can equally harm winners and looser alike. The feminist idea of security thus becomes more relevant because it is not only adhered to protection from attacks rather it has a different view of reconciliation and cooperation. Economic and Environmental security is also on the top agenda of feminists. Feminists argue that satisfying basic human needs is more important rather than strengthening military resources. Feminist elaborate on the concept of security and include Environmental concerns which is a global threat to the security of mankind. Carolyn merchant in her book *The Death of nature* explains that " Women and Nature have an age-old association- an affiliation that has persisted through culture, language, and history." Hence instead of domination over nature feminist advocates sustainable development. Feminists stress that military, economic, and environmental securities are interdependent and they should be addressed in a more accumulative way.

II. Conclusion

In understanding, International relation Realist theory provided key arguments to the discipline of international politics. But in the process feminist view is marginalized. In this paper, an attempt has been made to highlight those issues. Feminist critique presents a different approach to the understanding of international relations. It is not only a gendered account of realist theory. But it uses different tools and raises new questions and provides solutions to contemporary world politics. In the contemporary world, there are some common threats to national security such as Terrorism, Food insecurity, Global warming, and many more. Feminist interpretation of Security is able to address all these issues in comparison to traditional theory. The state could not be secure till it provides security to every individual. So the feminist idea of security keeps the individual in the center. Instead of finding a tactical solution for security concerns, it stresses on strategic action for the removal of structural problems which causes insecurity to an individual, especially to the marginalized one. Wars and conflicts have the worst affect on women than men so women must be included in the policymaking and peace processes. However realist theory is not completely discarded by the feminist, it only adds value to the former concept in a more comprehensive and inclusive way.

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