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Contribution of females in India's Freedom Struggle

Mohammad Rafi¹

¹Assistant Professor Department of Political Science SCS GDC Mendhar

Email:- khatanarafi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The contribution of women in the struggle for an Independent India cannot be overlooked. A lot of courageous women raised their voice against the British rule. Many women took to the streets, led processions and held lectures and demonstrations. These women possessed a lot of courage and intense patriotism.

Key words:- Fight, Struggle Oppression, Presence, Opposition

Introduction

Scholars evaluated India's freedom struggle in a variety of ways soon after the country gained independence. Academic leaders such as A.C. Majumdar and Patabhi Sitaramaya were well-known during this period in colonial India. More authors, such as Surender Nath Banarjee and C.F. Andrews as well as others like Bisheswar Prasad, R. C. Majumdar⁶, Amlash Tripathi, Tara Chand⁵, and others, have been brought into the fold. They've contributed significantly to the study of Indian nationalist history. They came up with an effective theory that the current conflict in India stems from a broad and unifying opposition to British colonial rule based on national sentiments. "Nationalist history was formed by an educated class that arose in the late nineteenth century as a result of new educational institutions. A number of nationalist organizations were founded as a result of the efforts of India's educated middle class. The nationalist school, on the other hand, has been criticized for emphasizing the past in an uncritical manner. In addition, it ignores the role played by diverse social groups in the liberation struggle.. In addition, the unavoidable presence of women in the movement has gone unmentioned. George Hamilton, Secretary of State for India, and the colonial administrators Dufferin, Curzon, Minto, and Minto were among the first to propose a theoretical framework for this event History's "Cambridge Schools," which included historians such as JH Broomfield and Anil Seal, as well as historians like David Washbrook and B.R. Tamilson, were active in the 1960s and 1970s. Regarding nationalist movements, they disapproved of the fight as a liberation battle from the yoke of colonialism, but they also rejected the emergence of nationalism as a concept in and of itself. They saw colonialism as nothing more than an invading force. Indian nationalism was not even a thought in their minds. Religion, caste, and community all came together in India, and that was all it was to these people. They said that the British Raj was being resisted by a disillusioned middle class invoking the concept of nationalism. A mass 2 movement, according to the colonial elites, was not perceived by those who taught the local population about parliamentary democracy before gradually transferring power to them. Instead, they saw it as national politics based on the desires and interests of those elites. Some of them, like Anil Seal and J. Gallagher, later identified with the "new" Cambridge School. A colonial politics focused at protecting the interests of organized groupings of the educated elites was all that the national movement was to them. They are portrayed as 'middle men' by national leaders. At the very least, the Cambridge and nationalist schools have comparable views on two things. That India's ruling class acted as a rallying point for its people's uprising is one thing; the role of women in this long-term uprising has been virtually ignored in history. Women's involvement in nationalist politics in the second half of the nineteenth century appears to have been more peripheral. Otherwise, such a comprehensive list of women's groups that dealt with women's issues would have been studied in their discourse about women's participation. From their passive roles as mothers and sisters to their active participation in Gandhi's Constructive Program or overt revolutionary/military activities against colonial rule, women's involvement in national movements can be seen in various forms. The Subaltern School, which emerged in the 1980s, is a third style of historiography whose framework is inaccessible to Marxist analysis. S. Henningham, Shahid Amin and David Hardiman are among the historians who reject past historical studies as elitist or mechanical and who instead focus on "marginal" and non elite organizations, as well as their "independent" opposition to Indian nationalist politics at various points in its history. To put it another way: Their research resulted in nothing like the Indian people or the Indian national movement. This school of thought sees the battle as being between the wealthy and the poor. When it comes to elites, there are both foreign and domestic (feudal princes/aristocracies, Congress members, and other leaders) elite groups to choose from. Additionally, it highlights the true antic merialist struggle conducted by the Indian masses and contrasts it with what is known as a "false" struggle led by the top class in the country. So it has been correctly 3 remarked that this institution appears to be tying up with the new bridge school, which has a far more expansive perspective. The Indian national movement has also been studied by Marxist historians. Bipan Chandra and his pupils further developed this framework, which began with A.R.

Desai and Rajni Palm Dutt's discussions. To put it another way, they see the long-term battle as an Indian people's struggle for liberation and the rise of Indian nationalism as a part of that struggle. Peasant protests and trade unions representing industrial workers have become a major focus of working-class politics in recent decades. Apart from the other three paradigms, women's contributions to India's independence struggle have been largely overlooked. This research mainly focused on the role of women in India's independence struggle from a nationalist standpoint. Given the available research information, this study is a modest effort to investigate how women and students, as pioneers, played a significant role in the same environment. No matter how ignorant, tradition-bound, or patriarchy-bound these rural women were or belonged to an urban elite, every aspect of these women's multifarious activities has been thoroughly explored. Peasant and landless women, as well as factory workers, have all been subjected to a thorough investigation of their willingness to sacrifice and participate in the struggle for liberation. When it came to social and political change in the United States, there wasn't much of it until the early 1800s. Another problem that had begun to emerge in all its ugliness was the practice of female infanticide (purdah), as well as other socially harmful practices such as widow remarriage restrictions and indignities (sati dowry). It didn't help that women's lack of education was a deliberate strategy to reinforce traditional views of feminism.

General Study

Women had a wonderful opportunity to exhibit their interest and aptitude in public affairs during the American Civil War, which resulted in the rise of some female political leaders. The Women's Association's public operations were divided into four 4 periods: Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-1934), Non-Cooperation Movement (1918-1920), and the Quit India Movement (1930-1934) (1934-1935). As a result of the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, women became involved in nationalist activities. Women across India were drawn to the anti-Bengal agitation and the Swadeshi Movement, which was a response to the partition of Bengal. Revivalism, social mobilization, and propaganda helped to strengthen the role of women in public affairs during this period (1905-11). Banned imports, increased literacy, and a focus on local culture were all hallmarks of the Swadeshi Movement. Several women's groups were founded during this time period. As a result, "Swaraj and Swadeshi" became the nationalists' catchphrase. Indian National Congress' deliberations were being shared through the media by women who had previously participated in these discussions. During this time, Kumudini Mitter, the daughter of prominent nationalist KristoMitter, was quite active. With the help of a Bengali magazine, Suprabhat, she spread radical views. Rabindranath Tagore's niece, Sarala Devi, was an accomplished poet. She was a key figure in the movement because she served as a bridge between the revolutionaries in Punjab and Bengal. Sarla Devi composed a song for the Indian National Congress's seventeenth session urging the people of the country's many provinces to unite in the cause of freedom. Sorabji Francina Patel was the father of Madam Cama. The Indian revolutionary Shyamji Krishna Verma employed her and persuaded her to join him. Negotiations with nationalists in Ireland, Russia, Egypt and Germany began immediately. This year's ISC in Stuttgart (Germany) offered her the opportunity to tell a global audience about her experiences in India, and she seized it. As she put it, the "dumb millions" of Hindustan are "subjected to awful tyrannies under English capitalism and British rule." It was at the end of her speech that she unveiled the Indian flag, which had the words "Bande Mataram" emblazoned on the central band. As a result, BhikajiCama made history as the first Indian to raise the Indian flag in front of an international audience. After Annine Besant entered Indian politics in 1914, women became more involved in the movement for Indian independence. In the early 1900s, Annine Besant's movement had two goals: women's liberation and the expansion of women's political 5 rights. Women all around the country felt empowered, encouraged, and inspired as a result of her leadership to become more involved in the country's national life and movement. In 1847, Anne Besant, Charles Bradlaugh's national reformer, gave her first speech in support of women's political standing and equality in all sectors of life at the Cooperative Institute in London's Castle Street. Annine Besant was her name. She joined the Theosophical Society as a result of her affection for Madam Blavatsky. W.O. Judge and Annine Besant took over as leaders of the society's Esoteric Section after Madame Blavatsky died in 1892. This country became home for three women who had come from abroad: Annine Besant, Margaret Cousins, and Margaret Noble Bhagini Nivedita. Annine Besant had a big impact on the Home Rule Movement in 1916. Her two publications were titled 'New India' and 'Common Will.' She was transported to prison after her arrest. Women from India like Margaret Cousins and Annine Besant did everything they could to secure franchise rights for themselves. Her role in the movement for women's political equality as the first president of Indian Women's Association was significant. Her Home Rule League was open to anyone over the age of eighteen who wanted to join. During the Indian National Congress in 1917, Annine Besant became the first female president. Sarojini Naidu became known as the "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity" after attending and addressing the Muslim League Session in 1913. Three years later, in 1916, Sarojini Naidu spoke from a position of self-rule and independence. After that, he became a significant figure in the country's political life. For Sarojini Naidu, self governance and women's rights were two of the greatest joys of her life, and she battled tirelessly for both. It was in 1917 when Sarojini Naidu presided over a delegation of prominent women in the social and political arenas. It was hoped that Montague would grant women the right to vote in this deputation. In September 1918, Congress met a special session in Bombay to discuss the issue of women's suffrage, and a resolution was passed stating that no one would be excluded from voting because of their gender. When Sarojini Naidu travelled to England in 1919 to testify before the Joint Parliamentary Committee, she was a part of the Home Rule League Delegation. She took advantage of the opportunity to push for women's equality. 6 The firing at Jallinwala Bagh in Amritsar was the culmination of this movement. On April 13, 1919, General Dyer ordered the firing of twenty thousand persons at a peaceful demonstration in this city. Four hundred persons were killed and twelve hundred were injured, according to the Hunter Enquiry Committee's report. The entire country, including the All India Congress Committee, demanded an investigation following the atrocities in Panjab.

Role of women in India's freedom struggle

Included as part of the Indian Independence Act Women who played an important role in history would be harmed if they were omitted from history textbooks. It will be emphasised the importance of Indian women in the growth of their country. They battled for our liberation with unwavering spirit and courage in the face of numerous hardships and abuses. Female liberation warriors rose to the occasion while their male counterparts were confined. It's hard to keep track of all the outstanding women who have made history through their unwavering service to India. As early as 1817, women began to play a role in India's independence movement. The British colonel Malcolm was beaten by Bhima Bai Holkar of India in guerrilla warfare. When Rani Channama of Kittur and Rani Begam Hazrat Mahal of Avadh fought against the British East India Company, 30 years before "the First War of Independence 1857," many women were involved. In 1857's War of Independence (also known as the Great Revolt), women played an important role that was lauded by the Revolt's commanders as well as the general public. There were a number of women who led their armies into war with courage and tenacity, among them the Ranis of Ramgarh, Jindankaur, TaceBais, Baiza Bais, Chauhan Ranis, and Tapasvinis. It takes a true patriot to stand up for your country like Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi. It was a diverse group of Indian women who joined the national movement, including those who were well-educated and liberal. Many women from the twentieth century are still remembered for their extraordinary achievements on the battlefield and in politics, including Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Vijayalakshmi Pundit, and Annie Besant. The contributions of a group of Indian women who fought against the British East India Company and British imperialism should be recognised for their role in history.

The First War of Independence (1857-58)

For the first time, India fought back against the British East India Company's reign of terror. Indian soldiers were given cow and pork fat-coated bullets at Meerut, which "ignited the fire," says the author. Indians were outraged by British education and social changes, which swiftly became a broad movement and constituted a significant threat to British dominance. As a result of this insurrection, the British Crown took control of the East India Company. When British authority came to an end within one year of this popular uprising, Indians viewed it as their First War of Independence because it was so vigorously fought by the Indian aristocracy, commoners, and militia. During the First Indian Independence War, Rani Lakshmbai was a hero to all of us. Patriotism, dignity, and heroism were all on display in her actions. Her kingdom was little, but her empire was vast in terms of glory. 12 1.4.1 **Jalianwalabagh Massacre.**

Ten thousand unarmed people were slaughtered by General Dyer in the Jalianwala Bagh massacre after the first wave of attacks. But Gandhi's call for British assistance remained till December of 1919, despite the steadfast hostility of the Indian people. Over 1.5 million workers participated in 200 strikes in the first six months of 1920, resulting in an even larger level of widespread opposition. The growing revolutionary momentum in the country forced Congress' conservative leadership to confront its conservatism and adopt a more militant image over time. Mahatma Gandhi, Lajpat Rai, and Motilal Nehru's nonviolent resistance movements were born as a result.

Non-Cooperation Movement launched (1920)

Mahatma Gandhi revived the non-cooperation and self-determination movement as soon as he returned to India in 1915. Nonviolent movement leaders Sarla Devi and Muthulaxmi Reddy have also been prominent women, as have Susheela Nair and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. Her husband Mahatma Gandhi's wife, Kasturba Gandhi, was also a prominent political figure in India throughout her husband's lifetime. As Lado Rani Zutshi and her three children, Manmohini, Shyama, and Janak, were in charge of the city of Lahore.

Civil Disobedience the Dandi Salt March (1930)

During the Dandi Salt March Gandhiji sparked the Civil Disobedience Movement by breaking British salt laws. Gandhi and other ashram inmates walked from Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram to the Arabian Sea village of Dandi, a distance of 200 miles. A clutch of salt that washed up on the shore of the Indian Ocean was picked up by Gandhi and satyagrahis on April 6, 1930, and they broke the Salt Law. The Indian Independence Movement's Civil Disobedience Movement was a watershed moment. The goal of this movement was to defy the dictates of the British government in totality. The 26th of January was designated as India's Independence Day as a result of this uprising. Meetings were conducted across the country on January 26, 1930, and the tri-colored flag of the Congress was flown. Hundreds of people were killed when the British government used deadly force to quell the uprising. Along with Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru, tens of thousands of others were detained for their political views. However, the movement spread throughout the country.

Literature Review

It is possible to trace women's involvement in the history of independence movement all the way back to 1817, when Bhima Bai Holkar fought against the British Colonial Malcolm and defeated him in a guerrilla humanitarian campaign. The First War of Independence (1857-1858) was fought by many other women, including Rani Channama of Kittur and Rani Brgam Hazrat Mahal, who played a prominent role and fought against the East Indian Company in the 19th century, 30 years before the War of Independence of 1857. The British were successful in ending the war in a year. As a result of the widespread participation of Indian rulers, women, and the armed forces, it was an extraordinary and spectacular

insurrection. She was the very first freedom warrior in India's campaign for independence, and she was known as Rani Lakshmi Bai. She inspired individuals to see the importance of patriotism, heroism, and self-respect in their lives.

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