

Iqbal's Feminist Ideology: Women's Empowerment in Poetry & Philosophy and Its Relevance in Contemporary Discourse

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Abstract

This study delves into the feminist ideals of Allama Iqbal, a prominent 20th-century poet, philosopher, and visionary, and their resonance in modern feminist conversations. The research aims to explore his vision for women's empowerment and liberation from patriarchal constraints. Through an analysis of Iqbal's poetry, letters, and speeches, the study seeks to illuminate his progressive stance on women's rights and societal roles. It further aims to understand his portrayal of women as dynamic contributors to both domestic and public spheres and to assess the relevance of his notions in contemporary feminist discussions. Qualitative research techniques, including textual and critical discourse analysis, are employed to uncover Iqbal's feminist concepts and their applicability today. The research reveals Iqbal's unwavering focus on women's education, autonomy, and agency, challenging the norms of patriarchy prevalent in his era. His feminist ideology is portrayed as a wellspring of motivation for contemporary feminist discourse, particularly within the Muslim world. This study emphasizes how his ideas can enrich ongoing feminist dialogues while considering the cultural, social, and political contexts unique to the Muslim world. The study draws several key conclusions: Iqbal's feminist ideals remain pertinent and can serve as a source of inspiration for advocating gender equity today. The study emphasizes the need for continued exploration of the intersections of Islam, feminism, and gender equity, especially in the context of the global feminist movement.

Keywords: Feminist ideals, empowerment, liberation, progressive, Muslim world, Iqbal

Women's empowerment has received significant attention from scholars and researchers in various disciplines, including philosophy and literature. The writings of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, a renowned poet, philosopher, and politician, have had a profound impact on women's empowerment in the world of Urdu poetry and philosophy. Iqbal's poetry and philosophy offer insightful perspectives on the status, rights, and possibilities of women, emphasizing their active engagement in society. This essay aims to examine the issue of women's empowerment in Iqbal's poetry and philosophy and assess its applicability in modern feminist discourse.

Delving into the profound depths of Iqbal's literary and philosophical tapestry reveals the hidden chambers of his fascination with the realm of women's emancipation. His verses not only echo the resonance of his poetic soul but also stand as monuments to his deep-rooted admiration for the strength, resilience, and untapped reservoirs of intellectual and spiritual growth nestled within women. Amidst the verses of his poetic symphonies, Iqbal delicately

unveils the jewel of "Khudi" (selfhood) in the famed tapestry of "Zarb-i Kalim," where, like a luminary alchemist, he unveils the potent elixir of empowerment residing within women – an elixir potent enough to shape the very tapestry of society's destiny (Khan, 2012). Iqbal believed that women were born with the capacity to make meaningful contributions in various spheres of life. This idea underscores the necessity of women's empowerment and questions the traditional roles that society has imposed upon them.

In his intellectual writings, Iqbal explores the societal and cultural constraints that hinder women from realizing their full potential. He advocates for women's rights and equal opportunities while critiquing the pervasive patriarchal traditions in society. Beyond religion, a multitude of other factors, including but not limited to economic development, influence women's empowerment. Iqbal contended that it is not religion itself that restricts women in the Muslim world; rather, it is culture, social conventions, legislation, and a lack of opportunity resulting from the region's underdeveloped economies (Tauseef, 2020). Iqbal disagreed with several tenets of classical Greek philosophy, including the supposed inferiority of women. Moreover, he rejected the biblical notion that women are inherently sinful. His opposition to monastic conceptions of male piety and his condemnation of medieval literature that portrayed women as evil (Tahir, 2019).

Iqbal argued that women should have the right to receive an education, actively participate in intellectual discourse, and engage in decision-making (Khan, 2018). He believed that women's potential must be realized for society as a whole to progress, as well as for their personal development.

In the modern era, women fought for their independence and advocated for "equality" and "complete freedom." Iqbal recognized the plight of oppressed women in his time and was aware of the complexity of the issue. He expresses in *Zarb-e-Kalim*:

میں بھی مظلومی نسواں سے ہوں غم ناک بہت
نہیں ممکن مگر اس عقدہ مشکل کی کشود

I am also saddened by the oppression of women

Not possible, but to get rid of this difficult contract (Iqbal, 2018, p. 609)

Iqbal's perspectives on women's emancipation remain relevant today and resonate within feminist discourse. His emphasis on the intellectual growth and education of women aligns with the objectives of contemporary feminist movements, which advocate for women's rights and gender equality.

Furthermore, Iqbal's poetry and ideas challenge prevailing views on women, portraying them as strong, self-reliant, and intellectually capable. This challenges cultural norms that often restrict women to specific roles. In her research on Iqbal's poetry, Ali (2019) underscores how his portrayal of women as "warriors" and "leaders" challenges conventional gender boundaries and inspires a reevaluation of women's potential in current feminist thought.

Aspects of the spiritual side of the empowerment of women are also discussed in Iqbal's poetry and philosophy. He stresses women's importance in fostering moral ideals and building peaceful societies while also acknowledging the spiritual strength and intuition they possess.

Bano (2017) asserts that Iqbal's theories on women's empowerment connect spirituality and gender, offering a comprehensive vision that promotes women's agency in the pursuit of both individual and societal well-being.

Exploring Iqbal's views on women's empowerment brings up possibilities for critical evaluation and reinterpretation in modern feminist debate. His writings encourage dialogues on the intersections of gender, culture, and religion, enabling nuanced understandings of women's experiences in many circumstances. Iqbal's emphasis on the agency and empowerment of women can aid in the creation of feminist theories that go beyond Western-centric frameworks and take into account the diversity of women's experiences around the world.

Finally, Iqbal's poetry and philosophy's examination of women's emancipation provides important new perspectives on the status, rights, and possibilities of women. The writings of Iqbal question patriarchal conventions, support women's participation in society and education, and highlight their intellectual and spiritual gifts. These concepts are relevant in today's feminist discourse, as they support continuous discussions about women's rights, gender equality, and the demolition of repressive institutions. Scholars and activists can develop new perspectives and sources of inspiration by researching Iqbal's viewpoint on women's empowerment and how it relates to the difficult issues that women confront in the contemporary world.

Research Question (s)

1. How did Iqbal's intricate tapestry of thoughts on gender roles and women's rights weave into the fabric of the budding feminist movement, and how has this catalytic journey of influence evolved, unraveling new dimensions of impact and resonance?
2. In the contemporary kaleidoscope of societal viewpoints on women's rights and gender roles within the Muslim landscape, to what degree do these perspectives harmonize with or diverge from the tapestry of Iqbal's philosophies? And in this intricate dance of perspectives, what intricate threads of cultural and social context intricately shape these patterns of perception?

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research adopted a qualitative research design, encompassing textual analysis and critical discourse analysis, to delve into Allama Iqbal's feminist ideology and its contemporary significance. This design facilitated an in-depth exploration of Iqbal's poetry and philosophy, as well as their interpretation and implications for modern feminist discourse.

Data Collection

Textual Analysis. A comprehensive selection of Iqbal's poems, letters, and speeches was meticulously examined to extract insights into his feminist perspective and its manifestation. Textual analysis unveil the nuances of his ideology, portraying women's empowerment and their liberation from traditional constraints.

Critical Discourse Analysis. This approach was employed to dissect the cultural, social, and political contexts of Iqbal's writings, unraveling implicit meanings, underlying power dynamics, and the evolution of his feminist thought.

Data Sources. Primary sources has been the cornerstone, involving a diverse range of Iqbal's literary works. Additionally, secondary sources like commentaries, critiques, and analyses of Iqbal's writings supplemented the study.

Data Analysis

Textual Analysis. Thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring themes related to feminist ideals, empowerment, and liberation present in Iqbal's works.

Critical Discourse Analysis. Foucauldian discourse analysis assisted in unveiling how power structures, cultural norms, and historical influences have shaped Iqbal's feminist thought and its resonance.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is rooted in feminist theory, with a specific focus on the concept of patriarchy. Embracing feminist theory provides a lens through which to dissect gender dynamics, challenging entrenched gender norms and emphasizing the significance of women's empowerment. The pervasive influence of patriarchy, an intricate social structure wherein male dominance prevails in realms of politics, ethics, privilege, and property control, has profoundly shaped gender roles in Pakistani society.

This research delves into the writings of Allama Iqbal, a distinguished Muslim philosopher, and poet from the early 20th century, to explore his perspectives on women's societal roles. Iqbal's viewpoints on gender and society were intricately woven with his interpretation of Islamic teachings, intertwined with his vision of a modern Muslim community. Furthermore, the study probes the interpretation and application of Iqbal's ideals within Pakistani society, and how these notions have molded attitudes towards gender roles and women's rights.

Employing qualitative techniques such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, the research aims to glean insights from diverse participants encompassing women, men, scholars, and activists. Data will be meticulously analyzed through a thematic prism, unveiling prevalent motifs and trends concerning women's positions within Pakistani society, and the imprint of Iqbal's ideologies on these facets. This investigation contributes to a nuanced comprehension of the intricate interplay between religion, culture, and gender within Pakistani society, and how this intricate web has orchestrated the trajectory of women's empowerment and rights over time.

Status of Women: An Analysis of Iqbal's View from His Poetry

The woman is the principal depository of the religious idea. In the interests of continuous national life, therefore, it is extremely necessary to give her, in the first place, a sound religious education. That must, however, be supplemented by a general knowledge of Muslim history, domestic economy, and hygiene (Sherwan, 2006, pp. 133-136). Iqbal mourned

over Fatima Bint Abdullah, who got martyrdom in the Battle of *Trablus* in 1912 while supplying water to the battle fighters of Islam. He expressed his feelings for her as;

فاطمہ! تو آبروئے امت مرحوم ہے
ذره ذره تیری مِشت خاک کا معصوم ہے
یہ سعادت، حورِ صحرائی! تری قسمت میں تھی
غازیان دیں کی سقائی تری قسمت میں تھی
یہ جہاد اللہ کے رستے میں بے تیغ و سپر
ہے جسارت آفریں شوقِ شہادت کس قدر
یہ کلی بھی اس گلستانِ نزاں منظر میں تھی
ایسی چنگاری بھی یارب، اپنی خاکستر میں تھی

Fatima! You are the honor of the late Ummah,
Every particle of your fist is innocent,
this happiness was in the wetness of the desert maiden,
and the watering of fighters was in your luck
This jihad is in the way of Allah, How daring is the passion for martyrdom
This blossom was also in this autumn scene,
such a spark existed in this mud (Iqbal, 2018, p. 243)

The poem aims to depict the active involvement of women in various social activities. There are numerous authentic stories in Islamic history that highlight the crucial role of women on the battlefield. Some provided essential first aid treatment to the injured, while others supplied materials like water to the fighters. Through this poem, Iqbal seeks to explore the often-overlooked aspect of women's contributions, emphasizing that they are an indispensable part of society, not a weakness. Fatima, who bravely participated in the battle and ultimately attained martyrdom, serves as an exemplar of such women.

Iqbal notably presents these women as examples to the daughters of the Muslim Ummah. As a literary figure, he laments those writers who have failed to recognize the purity and great virtue of women in their so-called literary works;

چشمِ آدم سے چھپاتے ہیں مقامات بلند
کرتے ہیں رُوح کو خوابیدہ، بدن کو بیدار
ہند کے شاعر و صورت گر و افسانہ نویس
آہ! بیچاروں کے اعصاب پہ عورت ہے سوار

High places are hidden from man's eyes,
Make soul asleep, the body awakens,
Indian poet, artist, and fiction writer,
Ahh! A woman is ruling over their nerves of them (Iqbal, 2018, p. 640).

Iqbal is angry with artistic people who presented women as a piece of ornament. They used the body of women as a tool of attraction but never wrote about her role in society. He emphasizes that these artists should focus on exposing women's societal roles rather than their physical appearance.

He spoke to the 'Daughters of Nation' that beautification is negativism for you; instead, your personality, your revolutionary nature, and vision should turn the tides of spurious, as he said;

بہل اے دخترک این دلبری ہا
مسلمان را نہ زبید کافری ہا
منہ دل بر جمالِ غازہ پرورد
پیاموز از نگہ غارت گری ہا

Oh, daughter! Let go of these delusions
Infidel acts do not appropriate for Muslim
Do not be attracted to the beauty that comes from gauze (make-up)
Learn to loot with a pure eye (Iqbal, 2018, p. 352).

Iqbal requests the daughter of Muslim Ummah that you are not sent by Allah to the earth just for the beautification of your body, Almighty has assigned a very noble task of the beatification of the society. It would be best if you admitted the reality of making nations, nations are born from your womb. Women, according to Iqbal should live with such decency that her positive effects may be vivid in society as the manifestation of Allah is falling on the universe despite the *Hijab*;

ضمیر عصر حاضر بی نقاب است
کشادش در نمودِ رنگ و آب است
جہانتابی ز نور حق پیاموز
کہ او با صد تجلی در حجاب است

The inner of the present age has been exposed
Its splendor is in the display of external radiance
(O daughter of the nation!) Learn to enlighten the world like the Divine light
Despite a hundred luster, He is in the Hijab (Iqbal, 2018, p. 1075).

Iqbal wants women to realize their role in society. He uses a stern tone to implore women to employ their vision to enlighten the darker aspects of the nation. For him, their vision can change the fate of the nation and society. Almighty has endowed women with a visionary quality that enables them to see the reality of life and society's drawbacks despite numerous obstacles. Iqbal's love for his daughter (woman) is vividly evident in his poetry. He frequently expressed his love and affection for daughters, conveying the message that daughters are a blessing from Allah.

Iqbal was such a visionary person who could feel the pain of women. He could feel the women's pain during childbirth, which sometimes became the reason for the death of women.

This death is not in vain, but rather awarded by Allah and had given the status of *Shaheed* (Martyr), as mentioned in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW). According to Imam Tabrani, "In three stages, Pregnancy, Accouchement, and fostering have the same status as Mujahid (Fighter) in battle and death during childbirth as counted of martyrdom" (Ahmad, n.d, p. 411). Iqbal could empathize with this pain because his beloved wife also passed away during childbirth. He composed a few poetic verses to commemorate his wife's demise, acknowledging the sacrifices made by mothers in this regard.

Iqbal was well aware of the various challenges and attacks directed at women's status from various directions, which could potentially hinder their noble role in society. He wrote a poem in *Armaghan-e-Hijaz*, admonishing daughters about the importance of morality.

The following account of Sayyad Asad Gilani can gauge Iqbal's thoughts regarding women's place. Iqbal and Sayyad Amjad Ali were in England. One day, both went to 'Selfridges' (a popular shop in London) and asked a salesgirl to bring socks. When the salesgirl returned, Iqbal was lost in his thoughts and contemplating the role of that salesgirl. On seeing her, Iqbal asked why she was there. Sayyad Amjad Ali was surprised by Iqbal's question, so, he asked Iqbal why he put that question. Iqbal replied that a woman is meant to be the light of someone's home and train her children, not to be the beauty of the bazaar and sell socks (Gilani, 1991). In his interview published in Liverpool Post, Iqbal stated, "It is in Islam that husband is duty-bound to provide for his wife's maintenance, in addition to the payment of dowry" (Ahmad & Eijaz, 2011, p. 191).

Women And Her Role in Society: Iqbal's View

A woman is a sister, daughter, and wife, and above all is a mother. Iqbal regarded the roles of wife, sister, and daughters as metaphorical synonyms for a mother (Sherwani, 2006). She, according to Iqbal is the juxtaposition of revolutions and evaluation of society, and those who neglect this reality will face the slap of nature;

جهان را محکمی از امہات است
نہادِ شاں امین ممکنات است
اگر ایں نکتہ را توے نداند
نظام کاروبارش بے ثبات است

The stability of a nation in this world depends on the mothers of that nation whose nature or existence is faithful to the possibilities.

Furthermore, if individuals understand this secret,

their system or business life will be impermanent and stable (Hassan, n.d., p. 284).

Iqbal noted that the success and failure of the nation (society) depend on the role of women (mothers). If women handled the situation and nurtured the nation with great care, that nation would lead the world. Mother is the protagonist of life on the stage of this world, and those who fail to understand their roles will eventually witness the downfall of their nation or society. In the poem he wrote on the death of his mother, Iqbal expressed his love for his mother intensely, aiming to emphasize the significance of women in society;

تربیت سے تیری میں انجم کا ہم قسمت ہوا
گھر مرے اجداد کا سرمایہ عزت ہوا

Because you brought me up, I shared the fate of the stars;
The house of my forefathers was accorded honour.

عمر بھر تیری محبت میری خدمت گر رہی
میں تری خدمت کے قابل ہوا تو چل بسی

Throughout my life, your love was my servant,
And when I was able to serve you, you departed this world.

کس کو اب ہوگا وطن میں آہ! میرا انتظار
کون میرا خط نہ آنے سے رہے گا بے قرار

Now, who will wait for me, alas! in my homeland?
Who will be anxious when my letter does not arrive? (Iqbal, 2018, p. 257)

According to Iqbal, mothers can calm the storms of time affecting humanity. They represent the hope of all humanity, with the ability to change a nation's destiny;

حیرتی ہوں میں تری تصویر کے اعجاز کا
رُخ بدل ڈالا ہے جس نے وقت کی پرواز کا

I am amazed at the spell your portrait casts,
Which has changed the direction of the flight of time. (Iqbal, 2018, p. 255)

A mother's revolutionary attitude can make society a paradise and change the time. Iqbal is astonished; how can you do that mother? From where can this power come into you? It is the mother who enables the child to show decency, the maturity of knowledge, solemnity, and sapience of adulthood which is, of course, the sign of a developed society;

علم کی سنجیدہ گفتاری، بڑھاپے کا شعور
دنیوی اعزاز کی شوکت، جوانی کا غرور

The seriousness of knowledge in conversation, solemnity,
And worldly pride at a young age (is because of mother) (Iqbal, 2018, p. 256)

In society, adults are expected to behave with maturity, while youngsters are encouraged to be respectful and decent. If mothers nurture and train their children, shaping them into remarkable individuals, society as a whole will become remarkable among all others. Iqbal cherished the time when a mother is with her child, referring to it as the golden era. A child's social success is just because of the mother's support (women).

دفتر ہستی میں تھی زریں ورق تیری حیات
تھی سراپا دین و دنیا کا سبق تیری حیات

In my affairs, your life was a golden age

The lesson of the whole religion and the world was that your life (Iqbal, 2018, p. 257)

The success of a child, who will become tomorrow's father, reflects the success of the entire society, with the threads of this success held in the hands of women (mothers). Iqbal, a great poet, philosopher, and visionary, attributed these qualities to the proper upbringing provided by women (mothers);

مرا داد این خرد پرور جنونے
نگاہِ مادرِ پاک اندرونے
ز مکتب چشم و دل نتوان گرفتن
کہ مکتب نیست جز سحر و فسونے!

It gave me a microcosm,

The eyes of a pure inner mother,

Eyes and hearts cannot be taken from the school

Because school is nothing except melancholy and magic. (Iqbal, 2018, p. 1075)

Iqbal asserted that a nation's fate has already been written on the foreheads of the mothers. Women sometimes decide the script of ongoing in society and sometimes it is already written in which women have assigned grand characters;

خُتک آں ملتے کز وارداتش
قیامت ہا بہ بیند کایناتش
چہ پیش آید، چہ پیش افتاد او را
توان دید از جبین امہاتش

Blessed are those nations from the entrance of whose

(Qiyamat or Doomsday) cosmos shakes.

for those what approaches them or will approach,

You can see it from the foreheads of their mothers (Hassan, n.d. p. 28)

Iqbal's Request to Women To Play Her Role In A Society

Iqbal requested women of Muslim Ummah to play their role as nation builders because nature has given this power only to women to transform the mourning night into the blooming morning. He analogically mentioned the travailed task done by the wife of the second Caliph of the Muslim, Hazrat Umar (R.A.), whose heart was softened to the acceptance of Islam by Quranic verses recitation of his sister, as she recited the verses of the Quran in front of him;

ز شام ما بروں آور سحر را
بہ قرآن باز خواں اہل نظر را

تُو میدانی کہ سوزِ قرأتِ تو
دگرگوں کرد تقدیرِ عمرِ را

O daughter, bring us out of the evening to the morning;
Call the people of insight to the Qur'an.
You know that the fervor of your recitation
Changed the fate of Hazrat Umar (RA) (Hassan, n.d. p. 285).

Iqbal believes that the mother is the cornerstone of society. He emphasized that women (mothers) should be superior to men in family affairs as men have in external affairs. The lap of the mother is the first nursery for the budding flowers of the nation, any scent they adopt there becomes their identity till the end of their days. If she makes them odoriferous, it will make the nation pleasant and aromatic;

یہ فیضانِ نظر تھا یا کہ مکتب کی کرامت تھی
سکھائے کس نے اسمعیلؑ کو آدابِ فرزندگی

It was a blessing or a miracle for the school
Who taught Ishmael (AS) childhood manners? (Iqbal, 2018, p. 352)

Ismael, Ibrahim's son, was very loyal to his father when he asked for sacrifice of his life. He agreed that his unique behavior of Ismael in childhood was just because of the training he got from his mother, Bibi Hajra. Iqbal declared motherhood as a special laureate from Allah, awarded especially to women. Motherhood in society is like a string of the family system joined by the scattered beds of family members. In Iqbal's view, the cause of the failure of Western civilization is the loose family system, in which motherhood has lost its status.

تہذیبِ فرنگی ہے اگر مرگِ امومت
ہے حضرت انساں کے لیے اس کا ثمر موت
جس علم کی تاثیر سے زن ہوتی ہے نا زن
تپتے ہیں اسی علم کو اربابِ نظر موت
بیگانہ رہے دیں سے اگر مدرسہ زن
ہے عشق و محبت کے لیے علم و ہنر موت

If from European civilization is the death of motherhood,
for the presence/dignity of man, the fruit of this is death!
The knowledge through the effect of which woman becomes non-woman
this knowledge, the possessors of insight call death!
If the madrasah of woman would remain a stranger to faith,
then for passion and love, knowledge and skill are death! (Iqbal, 2018, p. 608)

In one of his poems, Iqbal referred to the hadith of the Prophet (SAW);

حُبِّ إِلِي مِنَ الدُّنْيَا ، النساءِ ، والطَّيِّبِ ، وَجُعِلَ قَرَّةٌ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ

“In this world, women and perfume have been made dear to me, and my comfort has been provided in prayer” (Eijaz & Ahmad, 2011, No, 3391).

He likened motherhood to Prophethood in *Rumuz-e-Bekhudi (Mysteries of Selflessness)*: Motherhood is mercy, being linked, by close affinity to Prophethood, and her compassion is the Prophet's own;

آں کیے شمع شبستان حرم
حافظ جمعیت خیر الامم
سیرت فرزند ہا از امہات
جوہر صدق و صفا از امہات
آنکہ نازدبر وجودش کائنات
ذکر او فرمود با طیب و صلوتہ
گفت آں مقصود حرف کن فکاں
زیر پائے امہات آمد جنائ
نیگ اگر بنی امومت رحمت ست
زانکہ او را با نبوت نسبت ست
شفقت او شفقت پیغمبر است
سیرت اقوام راصورنگر است
از امومت پختہ تر تعمیر ما
درخط سیمائے او تقدیر ما
آب بند نخل جمعیت توئی
حافظ سرمایہ ملت توئی
ہوشیار را از دست برد روزگار
گیر فرزندان خودرا درکنار

(Hassan, n.d., p. 291)

Iqbal expressed his gratitude and respect in a very explanatory manner. In Iqbal's view, the role of women in society is indispensable, which cannot be denied, because life on the planet exists because of her, the nourishment which nation got is also because of her;

وجود زن سے ہے تصویر کائنات میں رنگ
اسی کے ساز سے ہے زندگی کا سوز دروں
شرف میں بڑھ کے ثریا سے مشیت خاک اس کی
کہ ہر شرف ہے اسی درج کا در کموں

Color in the portrait of the universe is from Woman
From her warmth is the inner warmth of life

In glory, her dust is greater than stars
Each glory is the hidden pearl of her shell. (Iqbal, 1973, p. 553)

This potential inspired Allama Iqbal to discuss women, their freedom, and their education in *Zarb I Kaleem*. He has not presented the traditional man with power, sovereignty, or princely accomplishment and woman as weak, submissive, and indecisive rather his men and women are a deviation from the prescribed gender roles. His women are educated and possess brilliant minds capable of transforming the world around them into a paradise with their beautiful colors. According to Iqbal, women are the root of all civilizations. Their role in nation-building and the development of society is pivotal and unique. It should not be evaluated solely in comparison to men's roles. Women are the "Creative Functionaries" (Dar, 1981). They bear the sacred responsibility of procreation, which they cannot shirk; otherwise, life would cease to continue. Furthermore, he presented Fatima Bint Muhammad (SAW) and her role as a role model for other women, encouraging them to follow her.;

مزرع تسلیم را حاصل بتول
مادران را اسوه ی کامل بتول

Batool (R.A.) was the harvest of the well-sewn field
She (R.A.) of self-surrender, to all mothers she. (Hashmi, n.d, p. 235)

Iqbal and Feminism

Many movements have emerged over time to address the various facets of women's empowerment. By reducing barriers based on gender, sexual orientation, class, and race and promoting equal resource distribution, socialist feminism seeks to reform the fundamental economic and structural structures of society. According to Marxist feminism, the right to own private property is the root cause of women's exploitation. Because women are primarily involved in producing non-exchangeable commodities and services (such as domestic goods and childcare), capitalism is held accountable for the oppression of women. Therefore, Marxist feminists fight for the abolition and dissolution of women's economic dependence on males. Radical feminism sees patriarchy as a sexual system of power in which the male possesses superior power and economic privilege (Eijaz & Ahmed, 2011). Morality should come first in a healthy community, then the economy. Economics must not dictate morality. Sadly, nevertheless, morality has come to depend on economics in capitalist cultures (Tahir, 2019, p.99). Women's equal rights were supported by Islamic feminism. Cooke (2001, p. 59, as cited by Shahbaz, 2021, p. 108) claims that "Islamic feminism is not a coherent identity, but rather a contingent, contextually determined strategic self-positioning movement." Islam is primarily a cosmopolitan culture that, since its inception, has preached the kind of ethnic and religious tolerance that many Western societies are still working to achieve, even though it has long failed to eradicate certain social and political inequalities based on class, gender, and religion. Due to various reasons, Islam is practiced in the Islamic world in a variety of ways. Therefore, depending on the cultural, social, political, and economic circumstances, Muslim women may experience a variety of issues. Socialist feminists believe that economic dependence is a key factor in the inequality of women.

According to Iqbal feminist movements are planned strategies and traps devised in the name of 'revolution' to serve capitalists' interests. It is a movement that makes two cooperative wheels of the universe as opposing poles;

ہزار بار حکیموں نے اس کو سلجھایا
مگر یہ مسلہ زن رہا وہیں کا وہیں
قصور زن کا نہیں ہے کچھ اس خرابی میں
گواہ اس کی شرافت پہ ہیں مہ و پرویں
فساد کا ہے فرنگی معاشرت میں ظہور
کہ مرد سادہ ہے بیچارہ زن شناس نہیں

The sages solved it a thousand times,
But the problem of woman is still there,
Woman don't have any fault in it
Star and moon are the witness of it,
this vice is a manifestation in Western society
That the man is simple, unaware of woman. (Iqbal, 2018, p. 604)

Islam is primarily a cosmopolitan culture that, since its inception, has preached the ethnic and religious tolerance that many Western societies are still trying to achieve, although it has long failed to eradicate certain social and political inequalities based on class, gender, and religion. In Iqbal's view, women's and men's freedom is just a phantasmal phenomenon. They ought to be cooperative and supportive of each other. Iqbal is convinced that both men and women are equal regarding human beings as a species. In *Ramooz-e-Bekhudee*, Iqbal expresses,

پوشش عریانی مردان زن است
حسن دلجو عشق را پیراہن است

This verse is concerning the Quranic verse that 'the wives are the dress of their husbands, and they are the dress of their wives.' For the sustenance of life, if they do not do this, then a bad consequence is waiting for them as mentioned to him (Ahmad & Eijaz, 2011, pp. 90-97);

مرد و زن وابستہ یکدیگرند
کائنات شوق را صورتگرند
زن نگہدارندہ نار حیات
فطرت او لوح اسرار حیات
آتش ما را بجان خود زند
جوہر او خاک را آدم کند
در ضمیرش ممکنات زندگی
از تب و تابش ثبات زندگی

Men and women are related to each other;
 The universe shapes interest,
 The woman is the protector of human life,
 Its nature is a tablet on which the mysteries of life are money.
 The possibilities of life are hidden in his conscience;
 Its stability makes life stable (Hashmi, n.d. p. 287).

A social question about the "Upper Hand" in the relationship of men and women was sophisticatedly answered by Iqbal who recommended that no one is superior or inferior (Men and women), rather they should enjoy their respective spheres;

اک زندہ حقیقت مرے سینے میں ہے مستور
 کیا سمجھے گا وہ جس کی رگوں میں ہے لہو سرد
 نے پردہ ، نہ تعلیم ، نئی ہو کہ پرانی
 نسوانیت زن کا نگہاں ہے فقط مرد
 جس قوم نے اس زندہ حقیقت کو نہ پایا
 اس قوم کا خورشید بہت جلد ہوا زرد

A living truth/reality is hidden in my breast,
 How would he understand, in whose veins the blood is cold?
 Neither pardah nor education, whether it be new or old
 The guardian of the femininity of women is the only man
 The community that did not realize this living truth/reality
 That nation's sun very quickly became yellow [and faded] (Hassan, n.d. n.d., p. 289)

His poem titled '*Aik Sawal*' (One Question) may be applied on the outcome of feminist movements in the contemporary western societies.

کوئی پوچھے حکیم یورپ سے
 ہند و یوناں ہیں جس کے حلقہ بگوش
 کیا یہی ہے معاشرت کا کمال
 مرد بے کار و زن تہی آغوش

One might ask from Europe's intellect
 Whose intellect inspires India and Greece?
 Is this the height of civilization?
 Men without a job and women without children. (Iqbal, 2018, p. 604)

He further suggests how to resolve this issue in another poem '*Azadi-e-Niswan*' (Women's Liberation). He maintains that only the women's intellect and vision can clarify and explain the pros and cons of the women's liberation debate. Since equality and freedom are relative terms, the interpretation, and operationalization of both terms are associated with the prevailing culture and social milieu in a given society.

اس بحث کا کچھ فیصلہ میں کر نہیں سکتا
گو خوب سمجھتا ہوں کہ یہ زہر ہے ، وہ قند
کیا فائدہ ، کچھ کہہ کے بنوں اور بھی معتوب
پہلے ہی خفا مجھ سے ہیں تہذیب کے فرزند
اس راز کو عورت کی بصیرت ہی کرے فاش
مجبور ہیں ، معذور ہیں ، مردان خرد مند
کیا چیز ہے آرائش و قیمت میں زیادہ
آزادی نسواں کہ زمرہ کا گلوبند

I cannot decide anything about this debate
Although I understand that it is poison, sugar
What good is it if it simply "blends in" with everything else?
The sons of civilization are already angry with me
Only a woman's vision can reveal this secret
Compelled, disabled, wise men
What is more, the decoration is more expensive
Freedom of Women that emerald necklace (Iqbal, 2018, p. 607)

Female Education: A Descriptive Analysis of Iqbal's Views

Both in the East and the West, many women are "unknowingly ensnared in communal indoctrination where the feminine is rendered submissive to masculine, rational ideas. In favor of logical reasoning and ideals that are goal-oriented, the feminine traits of relating, listening, and waiting are suppressed. Although American culture may offer women the impression of granting them independence, there is a general trend that ignores the true nature of the feminine. A wise American woman once observed that in this culture, a woman "can be anything she wants, as long as it is masculine" (Vaughn-Lee, 2013, p. 52, as cited by García, 2022, p. 8). Women have the right to get education; however, Iqbal is against Western teachings because it incites women to contravene their domain.

During the industrial revolution, the Western culture used women as labor and destroyed the basic unit of its society i.e., 'the home' to reach this target. Therefore, their women are facing more psychological and social problems. As a mother, Iqbal declared women as builders and moderators of the nation. Her lap is the first seminary for the budding generation of the nation. Great leaders and readers lead the nation from the lap of the mother. He stresses "Good Education" for women. He is against such kind of education which is bringing distance between two gender poles, as he said in *Zarb-e-Kaleem* under the title "Awrat awar Taleem",

If from European civilization is the death of motherhood,
for human, the fruit of this is death!

The knowledge through the effect of which woman becomes non-woman--
this knowledge, the possessors of insight call death!

If the madrasah of woman would remain a stranger to faith,
then for passion and love, knowledge and skill are death! (Ahmad & Eijaz, 2011, p. 195)

Since Iqbal perceived gender difference as a biological phenomenon and nature's plan, he did not consider women inferior to men. He considers women distinct, different, and discrete creatures; therefore, education should not aim to transform them into men. She should take pride in her being a woman. She is entitled to the important duty to perform but with her own will. This notion of Iqbal supports Mary Wollstonecraft's (1759-1797), the founder of modern feminism. She writes in her book "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792), "I do not wish (women) to have power over men but over themselves"(Kwatra, 2013, p. 39).

Iqbal exposed the stereotypic attack of the West over Islamic culture, which believes that Islam has subjugated the educational right of women, which is a burning debate. In the eyes of many Westerners, Islam is an oppressive religion that deprives women of their rights and treats them with deplorable treatment. However, careful examination reveals that this appears to be more of a projection of Western attitudes toward women than an illustration of Islamic values.

For instance, the proportion of women who become Muslims in the US is four to one compared to men (Giglio, 2005, p. 1). Nobody is pressuring these women to join a faith where they would be "oppressed" and "degraded". Numerous brilliant women with advanced degrees are among these converts. Islam liberates them from the pressures, hypersexualization, and commodification that American society imposes on women.. Islam, according to many female converts, offers women respect, protection, and dignity. Other Quranic verses likewise make clear the pre-Islamic religions' disdain for women: The devil's trickery against Adam was not Eve's fault. Both were misled by the evil one (Quran 2:35). (28:7) The Quran also highlights instances of direct communication with Moses' mother (García, 2022). Jesus' mother Mary was so highly regarded by Allah that He sent her angels to communicate His messages (19:17). Furthermore, the Quran emphasizes that men and women are each other's guardians (2:187). For males, women are the source of love, compassion, and peace (30:21) (Tahir, 2019, p. 102).

Conclusion

From a meticulous examination and adoration of Iqbal's verses, it becomes apparent that while certain aspects of his musings regarding women's societal roles may seem anchored in cultural conservatism, these fragments represent a mere whisper in the symphony of his comprehensive philosophy. By delving deep into his corpus, dissecting the merits and demerits enshrined within, a revelation transpires: Iqbal was an advocate for elevating women's stature in society, directing the spotlight towards their constructive contributions. Amidst the complex tapestry of his ideas, it is Iqbal's universal humanist perspective that fuels his perennial relevance. His conviction in the inherent potential of all individuals, irrespective of gender, as divine stewards tasked with unlocking their fullest capabilities, resonates profoundly.

In his *Khutba* at Aligarh, Iqbal candidly confessed his departure from the absolute equality trope, a testament to his nuanced stance. His legacy extends beyond this nuance, though, as he kindled a fervent zeal within millions of Muslims, both men and women, urging

them to embrace a fervid pursuit of a revitalized world, ablaze with hope and aspiration. Within Iqbal's paradigm, the family reigns as the bedrock of society, with women playing an inescapably pivotal role. Her indomitable position is irrefutable, for she alone possesses the acumen to navigate the societal currents and extract the utmost gains. Society's progress is intrinsically linked to women's sagacious decisions and their wholehearted embrace of responsibility. Iqbal's legacy, as a multifaceted beacon, illuminates the way forward for humanity. While acknowledging the nuances, his grand vision of collective growth, enshrined in his conviction that women are quintessential agents of societal propulsion, endures as an eternal testament to his wisdom.

Recommendations

Reviving Iqbal's Resonance. Initiate initiatives that rekindle the exploration and dissemination of Allama Iqbal's feminist ideals. Organize symposiums, exhibitions, or online campaigns that spotlight his visionary stance on women's empowerment, engaging both scholars and the public. By reigniting discourse around Iqbal's works, his invaluable contributions can inspire new dimensions of contemporary feminist thought.

Interfaith Feminist Dialogues. Foster platforms for cross-cultural and interfaith conversations that bridge Iqbal's feminist ideology with global feminist discourse. Facilitate dialogues between Muslim feminists and those from diverse faiths and backgrounds to identify common threads and shared aspirations. These exchanges can pave the way for nuanced intersections of Islam, feminism, and gender equity on a global scale.

Curricular Integration. Collaborate with educational institutions to infuse Iqbal's feminist ideas into curricula, promoting a wider recognition of his progressive contributions. Develop interdisciplinary courses that delve into his poetry, philosophy, and their feminist implications. By incorporating Iqbal's ideals, educational spaces can nurture critical thinkers attuned to the intricacies of gender and empowerment.

Narrative Reclamation. Encourage artists, writers, and activists to reinterpret Iqbal's feminist vision through contemporary mediums. Commission artworks, literature, or performances that reimagine his concepts in modern contexts, amplifying their relevance. This creative resurgence can provide fresh entry points for individuals to engage with Iqbal's feminism and its transformative potential in today's world.

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