

Feminist Criminology: An Emergence of New Branch

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Abstract – The advancement of feminism in criminology and its possibilities are discussed in this article. The emphasis is on feminist and thinking regarding female offenders, victims, and employees in the criminal justice system during the previous 25 years. A brief outline of the direction of this research is offered, as well as important conflicts between mainstream and feminist viewpoints. The article also considers feminist activists' contributions to tangible social change for female victims and offenders, both inside and beyond the profession. The paper concludes with a consideration of current feminist criminology developments. The basic categories and domains of mainstream criminology are being challenged and subverted by thinking concerning women's experiences with crime.

Theories on how a crime was committed should ideally begin with an open mind about the perpetrators, the weapon(s), the nature of the crime, and the criminal's purpose. Until the evidence eliminates the suspect, everybody associated to the "scene of the crime" or possibly a suspect must be evaluated. Suspects arise as a result of this process of elimination, and they may be probed further until they are charged.

Keywords – Criminal Justice System, Women Victims, Criminology, Female Offenders.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Female crime is a huge problem that is often seen as posing a severe danger to society. In today's culture, both crime and criminals have received a lot of attention. The rate of crime is steadily rising. In India, crime has long been seen as a male-dominated activity. This notion of male-centric conduct has recently been disproved. Tensions, anger, envy, hostility, and hate drive men and people to conduct criminal acts. They are engaged in a number of heinous activities. This transition is mostly due to evolving society norms and standards, which result in increased individual and communal complexity.

Women's crime is a severe social issue with the potential to become a major catastrophe because of its effects on the family, children's upbringing, and society as a whole. In recent years, women and crime have been a hot issue in the fields of social work, sociology, criminology, and law. For a long time, women's criminal conduct has been a neglected area of research. According to history, the woman has always been the bedrock of the family and society as a whole. Since the birth of civilization, women have been considered as protectors of societal norms, customs, conventions, morality, and family harmony.

Women have been raised to a position of esteem in every faith. The author's initial concern was that the woman, who has long been regarded as the cornerstone of every family and spiritual faith, and without whose blessings the process of pumping new life into humanity cannot be completed, had gone awry and entered the crime scene, and it was this that piqued the researcher's interest in the topic of "Criminality among Women." Dacoit, robbery, theft, kidnapping, abduction, pickpocketing, chain or watch snatching, cheating, counterfeiting, and drug trafficking are all crimes committed by women. Women who commit such crimes are more prone to take advantage of the laws intended to protect them.

Because of women's marginal status, the frequency of crimes perpetrated by them has grown in recent years.

- Discrimination in the job and in the home;
- Lives that are complicated;
- The influence of popular media

Feminist criminology was regarded to be a male-dominated field of study until the late 1960s, with males analysing and researching male crime. Only a passing mention of female criminality was made,

but since the rise in female criminality in the late 1950s and 1960s, the focus has shifted to biological determinants rather than social and mental distinctions between males and females. At the same time, female criminology was on the rise, coinciding with the entrance of the second phase of feminist and feminism viewpoints, which have significantly added to our understanding of crime and deviance in recent years.

Informal and official societal limitations were one of the ways utilised to minimise crime before the establishment of second-wave feminism. This was owing to women's societal expectations to stay at home and serve as a wife and mother, as well as provide emotional support to their families and do domestic activities like housekeeping. As a consequence of these limitations, women would have insufficient genuine possibilities to obtain employment, make money, and build a career. Engaging in unlawful and deviant behaviour is one of the illegitimate aspects of this. Many social changes happened after the conclusion of World War II. Women grew more outspoken about their difficulties and displeasure with being pushed into the conventional position of housewife. Women started working outside the house, motivating more women to do the same, and a societal transformation was inevitable. This provided them with autonomy, which is also known as liberalisation. Every coin has two sides, and this provided women with several opportunity to participate in illicit acts such as crime.

To apply the notion of emancipation in a more current context, consider the impact of third-wave feminism on female crime in the 1990s. Moral panics regarding female gangs and their engagement in gang culture arose in the early twentieth century as a consequence of brainwashing of girls to become more assertive and even violent. Due to a fabrication by a young professional female mixing and acting like young males, showing unladylike conduct such as drinking and physical connections caused a moral and cultural crisis in the mid-1990s. The term "freedom" may also relate to how female crime is portrayed in the media and how public perceptions of female criminality are changing. Women were no longer seen as bad decision-makers. Their acts have been widely condemned in the media, both for the crime itself and because the perpetrators were female. According to sociologists, these types of representations are an effort to control female conduct since male and female offenders are assessed using different criteria.

Female crime has a lot to do with feminism. Female criminality used to be limited to prostitution and theft, but as time went on, women got progressively engaged in more severe and dreadful crimes such as violent assaults, fraud, and even white-collar and corporate crimes. As a consequence, the proportion of women who commit crimes has risen from one in seven in the 1950s to one in four now, and this rise

in female criminality has corresponded with a decline in conventional feminine stereotypes. There has been a lot of exaggeration of feminism as a mistake since the beginning of the increase in female crime, which happened immediately before the second wave of feminism. According to new study, female gang roles are more conventional than most people believe, with females taking on submissive responsibilities within society. Working-class women and girls were first pressured to address their traditional obligations by middle-class and traditional families in places where conventional gender roles were prominent.

Women's rates of crime for both property and violent offences are rising as a consequence of their masculinization. In every facet of masculinity: biological, psychological, and societal, masculine qualities are considered as a driving factor behind women's crime.

Dr. Rita J. Simon has established a "Opportunity Theory" of female crime. She stressed the definitions of distinct characteristics of female criminality: type, nature, the corrective function of prison, and the role of the court in the book *Women and Crime* (1975).

Women who commit crimes such as dacoity, robbery, theft, kidnapping, abduction, pickpocketing, chain or watch snatching, cheating, counterfeiting, and drug trafficking increasingly work with crime syndicates in larger cities. Women who engage in illegal conduct have a proclivity to abuse the laws that are in place to protect them. The majority of women arrested are first-time offenders. Females do not recidivist as often as guys. It is a widely held belief that jails are just for males. However, the number and percentage of women jailed has increased dramatically in the recent decade. Despite making up a tiny fraction of the entire jail population, they are the fastest increasing group.

2. WOMEN AND CRIMINALITY

Women were also criminals in the past, but not to the same extent as males, but it cannot be argued that they did not commit any crimes. Women's crimes were not given much attention in the past, but according to study, they are rising at greater rates than they were before. Women have always engaged in numerous elements of social life, such as academic, scientific, cultural, and other productive and non-productive activities, in modern times. As women's involvement in all professions grows, it's possible that this is one of the contributing elements to the rise in female crime rates.

Female criminality causes huge problems and is often considered as a serious threat to the broader society. In today's culture, both crime and

criminals have become the centre of attention. The rate of crime is rapidly growing. In India, crime has always been seen as a male-dominated activity. Today, however, this assumption of male-centric conduct has been disproved. Tensions, irritation, jealousy, animosity, and hate lead both men and women to do criminal acts. They are involved in a wide range of criminal activities. This shift is mostly due to changing societal norms and ideals culminating or collectively in the complexity of existence.

Women's criminality is a severe societal problem that may be regarded a critical issue because to its influence on the family, children's upbringing, and the whole fabric of society. Women and crime has lately become a wide subject of study in the fields of social work, sociology, criminology, and law. Women's criminal conduct has been a neglected topic of inquiry for ages. The woman has always been the cornerstone of the family as well as society in general, according to history. Women have been seen as keepers of societal standards, traditions, customs, morality, and family cohesion since the dawn of civilization. Every religion has elevated women to a position of honour. The researchers' immediate concern is why the woman, who has long been regarded as the cornerstone of family and spiritual faith, and without whose blessings the work of infusing new life into humanity cannot be accomplished, has gone astray, entering the crime scene, and this is what has encouraged the researcher on the topic of "Criminality amongst Women."

The majority of women arrested are first-time offenders. Females do not recidivist as often as guys. It is a widely held belief that jails are just for males. However, the number and percentage of women jailed has increased dramatically in the recent decade. Despite making up a tiny fraction of the entire jail population, they are the fastest increasing group. Women who commit crimes such as dacoity, robbery, theft, kidnapping, abduction, pickpocketing, chain or watch snatching, cheating, counterfeiting, and drug trafficking increasingly work with crime syndicates in larger cities. Women who engage in illegal conduct have a proclivity to abuse the laws that are in place to protect them.

Women's crime has long been a neglected academic topic. Criminology has long been a male-dominated field, with male scholars examining mostly male criminals. It has been pointed out that those who convey and interpret these occurrences for us in the media are mostly male. Women inmates have been overlooked, maybe because to their small number, mainly non-militant stance, and the seeming infrequency of undue harshness by their guardians.

Women have recently begun to participate in a variety of social activities, including academic, scientific, cultural, and other productive and non-productive endeavours. One of the contributing

elements to the rise in female crime rates might be the rising engagement of women in these specific sectors.

3. INDIAN WOMEN'S CRIMINALITY

In India, the social environment also plays a role in the development of female offenders. Discrimination occurs throughout India's society, and it may be found from birth to death. Women are progressively entering the mainstream of society, and their percentage of crime is growing in India and worldwide, as shown by the available data. As a consequence of increased westernization and urbanization, female crime has resulted in a variety of socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental causes. This might be taken into account these days since the female crime rate is on the rise, attracting the attention of sociologists and criminologists on a national and worldwide level. It not only strikes at our social and cultural history, but it also has an impact on Indian society's social structure. Women are even seen to be resorting to crime as a result of the pervasiveness of the feminine role, regardless of whether the reasons are biological or psychological. From a biological standpoint, Caesar Lombroso's work is regarded as the cornerstone of scientific research on female criminality. Feminine criminals are said to be more heinous than male criminals because female cruelty is more polished and diabolic than masculine cruelty. Lombroso believed that they had many characteristics with children, were morally defective, and that their lack of intellect was the explanation for their low involvement in crime. Ferrero and Lombroso proposed a hypothesis based on the assumption that all people who engage in antisocial behavior are biological throwbacks.

The born female was said to have the criminal traits of a man and the worst attributes of a woman. As a result, it is believed that Indian women are more likely to commit crimes as a result of societal or economic hardship than because they are biological relics. Women who are not submissive and contradict their conventional roles as mothers and spouses are now considered maladjusted from a psychiatric standpoint. Maladjusted women are unable or unwilling to internalize the ideals linked with their social roles. Emotional instability, insecurity, rejection, and frustration are all present among the female inmates. They had to deal with a variety of difficulties, including hard living conditions, heartbreak in love, and a slew of other bad events that made it tough for them to confront life's truths. When a woman's stress level is greater than a man's, it is mostly because to perceived opportunities and the contradictory message of parenting vs. employment. Women who have a bad social position and are under a lot of stress. Women are often scared to express their anger for fear of alienating others around them. As a result,

they assumed wrath, and the majority of the women coped by transforming their anger into shame, failure, and despair.

Women who are not passive and comfortable with their conventional duties as mothers and spouses, according to the Psychological Viewpoint, are maladjusted. Women who are socially maladjusted reject or are unable to absorb the ideals related with their function in society. Emotional instability, uncertainty, rejection, or dissatisfaction are common among female convicts. They would have had to deal with hard living circumstances, romantic disappointments, and a slew of other bad events, all of which made it difficult for them to accept life's truths. Women experience more stress than males on average, owing to limited possibilities and the competing message of parenting vs employment. On average, women with lower social position are more stressed than women with greater social standing. Women are fearful of alienating others around them if they express their displeasure. As a result, they hide their anger, and most women cope by channelling it into feelings of shame, failure, and melancholy. Women "stuff" their emotions until they burst in murderous violence. Women who are under a lot of stress are more prone than males to have outbursts of intense uncontrollable aggression.

Caesar Lombroso's work is regarded as the cornerstone of scientific research on female criminality from a biological standpoint. He said that female criminals are worse than male criminals because feminine cruelty is more "refined" and diabolic than male cruelty. Lombroso believed that women had many characteristics with children, that they were morally defective, and that their lack of intellect was the cause for their low involvement in crime. Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) proposed a hypothesis based on the assumption that all people who engage in antisocial conduct are biological throwbacks. Born female criminals were thought to have the criminal attributes of males and the worst characteristics of women. However, we believe that Indian women are more likely to commit crimes as a result of social or economic hardship than because they are biological relics.

According to Bajpai, as women become more integrated into society, their percentage of crime is growing, as shown by accessible statistics in India and worldwide. They make the following statement: "Rights are first requested, then ordered, and last grabbed." Female crime is the outcome of a variety of socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental problems that have arisen as a result of fast industrialization, westernisation, and urbanisation. However, the present rising prevalence of female criminality has drew the attention of psychologists, sociologists, and criminologists on both a global and national scale. As a result, it has harmed not only our social and cultural legacy but also the social framework of Indian society. Whether the reasons

are biological or psychological, women are seen as resorting to crime as a distortion of the feminine role.

4. IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGY

The funding has been a huge endeavour in terms of raising awareness of feminist criminology across the board. Given the overabundance of scholars in the area of criminology who are more committed to traditional theories and study, initiatives to challenging the standard point of view have been treated with scorn or, at the very least, a lack of interest. This has resulted in major difficulties in having feminist grants disbursed, as well as a reduction in the amount of work that has been delivered. Certainly, before 1975, there was no segment on females and misconduct at the annual American Criminology Society meetings.

Production in criminology journals has also been difficult, and most feminist funding has been relegated to smaller, less well-known criminology journals. The journal *Women and Criminal Justice* was founded in 1989 with the goal of producing meaningful research on all aspects of women's and young women's involvement in the criminal justice context. In 1995, *Violence Against Women* was prompted to disseminate peer-reviewed research on sex-based violence and female fatalities. Since the mid-to-late 1990s, a wide range of works regarding women, misbehaviour, and criminal justice have been published. In 2006, Sage Publications published the first issue of *Feminist Criminology*, the official publication of the American Society of Criminology's Division on Women and Crime.

This journal has a broad focus on feminist grant, publishing peer-reviewed papers on feminist criminological ideas, female culpability, female exploitation, and the treatment of women and young women in equitable frameworks. Despite progress in the development of the feminist grant, it continues to be marginalized in the general train to some extent. Not only do conventional diaries disseminate only limited feminist grants, but also course texts provide insufficient consideration of feminist criminological hypotheses. In this approach, new generations of criminologists are educated yet given little, if any, information on feminist criminology. This is apparent in their research as well as their training and mentoring of future researchers. The cycle continues in this direction, with new criminologists accepting poor feminist criminology training (Renzetti, 1993).

5. FEMALE VIOLENCE HAS BEEN ON THE INCREASE ACROSS THE WORLD

Males even dominate crime statistics as offenders and inmates, according to a body of worldwide

and national trend data from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. According to statistics from the United States, from 2000 to 2009, there was an 18 percent rise in arrests, compared to a 0.2 percent increase for similar-aged males (which was the data protected by US. Department of justice of 2010.) It was also discovered that females under the age of 18 were arrested for disorderly conduct at a lower rate of 8%, while men in this age group were arrested at a lower rate of 8% over the same time period.

The instance of a feminist who has experienced female assault Feminism was mistakenly blamed for the growth in female criminality and violence in popular culture at the time, and it is being wrongly blamed now. As a result, feminist researchers have tended to be receptive to arguments about increased rates of female criminality and violence. Even female violence defies feminists', attorneys', criminologists', media concentrators', policymakers', and parents' preconceptions. And criminologists' thought has a long history of seeing violence as mainly a capability connected with male sex, with no potential for female sex to engage in the infliction of violence. Gendered components to the setting in which violence happens may be overlooked by essentialist thinkers.

6. FEMINISM'S SCOPE AND EMERGENCE

It is immediately clear that men commit many more offenses, especially those considered crucial to criminology, than women. The link between criminology and administrative and amendments structures has contributed to this emphasis. To a limited degree, the area was formed to aid in improving understanding of why people do wrongdoings so that ways may be sanctioned to reduce such violations.

Do women commit fewer transgressions and perpetuate wrongdoings that are less appealing to individuals concerned about public health? As a result, until the 1970s, females were mostly disregarded. Women did get lesser punishments, according to Farrington and Morris (1983), but female offenders were more likely to be first-time offenders who committed less severe offenses. They used less aggression, stole fewer stuff, and so forth. The primary criteria that determine the severity of the sentence for each criminal are the a priori history of the crime and the severity of the offense.

Feminist Criminology is a branch of criminology that focuses on women Furthermore, the Weberian esteem-free approach to criminological study has failed to recognise that the analysts' own experiences shape and form their own methods of dealing with their research. This has led to the uncritical assumption that facts and hypotheses about young boys and men may be applied to young girls and women.

Specialists and academics have agreed that the examination of male misbehaviour was the standard investigation of wrongdoing, and that women who engaged in wrongdoing were more of an anomaly than a separate issue to be investigated. Finally, the analysis of this training resulted in the feminist approach to criminology.

Feminist criminology has just recently emerged as a recognized criminological stance in the last 30 years. Regardless, the term feminist criminology is a little misleading; it would be better to discuss about feminist criminology. Feminist criminology encompasses a wide range of theoretical perspectives and methods that put the ways in which sex determines engagement at the center of in-depth inquiry.

It focuses on a broad range of themes related to women and wrongdoing, such as possible definitions of wrongdoing, attitudes to female culpability, programming in women's prisons, women as remedy workers, and the special requirements of female prisoners. The feminist idea isn't a monolithic approach; it combines the liberal feminist focus on equal opportunity, the Marxist feminist focus on class relations and private enterprise as the source of women's abuse, communist women's activists' mixing of male mastery with political and financial structures in the public arena as the source of imbalance, and the radical feminist focus on man-centric control of women, to name a few.

In any event, by the latter few decades of the twentieth century, female incarceration rates were skyrocketing, spurring a rise in research on young women, women, misbehavior, and the criminal justice system. The "war on drugs" and government policy changes in the 1980s are cited by several scholars as key explanations for the significant increase of female incarceration as well as the growth of feminist criminological ideas.

Clearly, the war on drugs and government policies are the driving forces behind the massive increase in female detention. Regardless, the essential underpinnings of feminist criminology date well before these developments. They're more common in second-wave feminist movements, as well as radical criminology in the 1960s and 1970s.

7. CONCLUSION

The concerned authorities should, on the other hand, serve to stimulate a continuing effort to overcome practical obstacles in the implementation of the rules and regulations, which would lead to the shared objective of improved outcomes for women inmates, their children, and their communities. When evaluating cases, the courts

should consider the reasons and compelling aspects that prompted a woman to commit that specific crime. Purdah, sati, juvenile marriage, and restrictions on dowager marriage have all contributed to women being treated unfairly. With the exception of marriage, Lady was not eligible to investigate the Vedas or to use mantras in completing religious observances. Expansion in the capture of women may reflect governmental concerns with law enforcement, the changing perception of female criminals by the criminal justice system, and the changing nature of women's financial situations. For elucidating female crime, the economic and ecological factors are given importance. Insights into female crime reveal that female offenders contribute to the criminal justice system in a quantitatively smaller way than male offenders. Regardless, there seems to be an increased trend in the number of crimes committed by women.

In addition, women cite defenses like prenatal depression as justifications for infanticide and other crimes in criminal proceedings. Using biological grounds to jail women improves how biologically criminal women are seen in society. As a result, society overlooks other factors that contribute to female criminal behavior, such as social and economic factors. Women, being symbols of compassion and care, are always portrayed as loving figures who lack masculinity, and hence cannot be considered criminals in the same sense as their male counterparts. However, as times change, courts and jurists are redefining the paradigm of female crime and treating female criminals identically to male offenders, keeping them on level with male offenders. Nonetheless, feminism is a matter of dispute that may be carried to the limit depending on one's intelligence.

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