

**ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES AND ANALYSIS:  
A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper is a critique of organization theories and their failure to come to terms with the fact of the reproduction of labour power within a particular form of the division of labour. It examines feminist theory and its aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender, power relations and sexuality part of the task of feminists which organizational theories have neglected is to offer an account of how the different treatments of the sexes operate in our culture. The paper concludes that gender has been completely neglected within the organizational theory which result in a rhetorical reproduction of males as norms and women as others. It is recommended that only radical form of organization theory can account for the situation of women in organisational setting.*

## **ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES AND ANALYSIS: A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE**

- Introduction
- Organizational Theories
- Feminist Theories
- Criticism of Organizational Theories
- Conclusion and Recommendation

## **INTRODUCTION**

Organizational theories have been pre-occupied with the creation of general concepts and methods that are applicable to any organization regardless of its cultural, personality and geographical environment (Perrow and Etzioni 1969). Early/most organizational theories treat organization as if only men are involved. Issues concerning gender are treated as mere statistics. Employees are without gender identity devoid of sexuality, and are a bundle of specific functions and skills. It is the purpose of the paper to argue that organization theory is inadequate, primarily because it fails to give due attention to the problem of women in organizations.

Organizational phenomena bordering on gender issues are almost regarded as taboo areas in the study of organization by conventional organizational theorists. This problem was first noticed by the European Groups for Organizational Studies. The Groups declared the issues of gender as critical in organization because it is absent in organizational literature. Certain areas have been relatively unexplored mainly because they were not considered important in terms of prevailing critical opinion. One such neglected area has been the role of gender in organizations. There is need to recognize the legitimate connection between gender and organization.

This paper will start by pointing out the problematic nature of “taken for granted” assumptions about the relations of men and women in organization and the blindness to behaviour pattern and informal social structures that follow them by taking the view point of males. It will also point to the failure of organizational theories to come to terms with the fact of the reproduction of labour power within a particular form of the division of labour and to integrate these into a theory of organization.

Arguments have been made asserting that organizations theories are not gender neutral (Aaltio and Mills 2002). Organization gender scholars pointed out that organization theory which ignores and negates gender result in ‘gender absent’ assumptions about organizational phenomena, thus producing mainstream organizational theory (Hearn and Parking 1993). However, before going further, it is necessary to first examine a general view of organization.

## **Organization**

An organization is a continuing system, able to distinguish and integrate human activities. An organization utilizes, transforms and joins together a set of human, material and other resources for problem solving (Bakke 1959). It is a setting in which one level of social relations occurs (conflicting classes and fractions of classes negotiating and compromising, thereby forming the “rules of games”).

Organization today are seen as systems, that is a collection of interdependent parts. Move one part and you somehow influence all the other parts. Look at one or two parts and you ignore the fact that they have being influenced in simple and complex way by a host of other parts. This leads to a distorted understanding of organization.

### **Organization Theory**

A theory is a statement in general terms about the likely relationship between two or more phenomena (Silverman 1970). It suggests hypotheses that are possible to test and where necessary, refute. A theory of organization would explain why organizations are as they are and examine the factors that make them change. It would set out to offer an explanation on both structure and dynamics. In the same way as there is not a theory of society so there is not of course a theory of organization. If there is not a theory, then there are many theories of organizations which deal with the macro issues.

Organization theory is the systematic study and careful application of knowledge about how people-as individuals and as group-act within organization. According to Tsoukas and Knudsen (2003), the term “*organizational theory*” refers to the academic discipline specializing in the study of organizational phenomena (at both micro and macro levels). Organization theory “which is composed of a multiplicity of largely incommensurable theoretical framework and schools of thought also describes a systematic set of Organizational theories focus mainly on how organizations are structured and designed. Most of the perspectives offer suggestions about how organizations can be constructed to improve their effectives.

To have an overall perspectives on this paper, it is useful to make a distinction between prescriptive and descriptive theory. Prescriptive theory is concerned with how things should be, whereas descriptive theory focuses on how things are; classical theory is for the most part, prescriptive; structuralism is descriptive; and human relations has elements of both prescriptive and descriptive. Both types of theory can be empirically based, but for this paper, prescriptive theory is adopted.

This is because this paper is concerned with how things are; prescriptive theory is a kind of advice to the practitioner, such as manager, whereas descriptive? Explain to the interested

observer what the situation looks like. Most organizational theories based their assumption on what is happening in organization but in actual fact the situation in organization is not how things should be in the organization. That is why one of the first claims of feminist scholars that most organization theories are male theories and that male theories about women were biased. This is one of the hazards of generalizing a “ruling” of organization to all organization.

Organizational theories can be broadly classified as classical, neo-classical and modern theories. Classical organizational theories deal with the formal organization and concepts to increase management efficiency (Taylor 1970; Weber 1947; Fayol 1947). They were of the view of that there is only one best way for organization to be structured.

Modern theories on the other hand comprise of systems approach, socio-technical approach, (the contingency or situational approach). What is important is that there be a fit between the organization’s structure. Its size, its technology, and the requirement of the environment. This perspective is known as “contingency theory” and contrast with the perspectives of classical theory like Weber 1947; Taylor 1970; Fayol 1947, etc who thought that there probably was one way to run organizations that was the best. System theories is based on the concept that the organization is a system which has to adapt to changes in its environment. The systems approach views organizations as a system composed of interconnected and thus mutually subsystem (Albrecht, 1983). The contingency approach is based on the belief that there cannot be universal guidelines which are suitable for all situations (Lawrence and Lorsch 1967).

Contingency theory appears to be the dominant perspective and that is why this paper will review the contingency perspective. This theory has been the most widely used approach in organization. It argues that there cannot be universal guidelines which are suitable for all situations. Structure depends on certain characteristics of the organizations called “Contingency Factors” like size, task, strategy, technology which are influenced by elements that are located outside the organization. These elements are government, competitors and society. According to this theory, organizations can only be effective if they can fit their structure to the contingency factors and then to the environment (Donaldson 1996).

According to the structural contingency theory, if the tasks are certain and repetitive with high degree of centralization and formalization, decision making and planning by the top management would be suitable. These features are supposed to make the task to be accomplished in most efficient way. However, if tasks are uncertain then, there will be a need for 'rich' information. In this case it will not be easy to make strict plans or job descriptions.

Contingency theory also argues that the level of production and operation technology influence the choice of structure. When primitive production technology is used there is no need for detailed information and tasks are not affected very much by environmental changes. This type of organization is characterized by organizational structure.

Organizational studies were formerly dominated by classical management school. This school has searched for an organizational structure that could be suitable and effective for all kinds of organization. This structure involves a high degree of centralization, formalization and strict authority of the top manager. The idea was that this type of structure which includes formal rationality, technical capability and legitimate authority would result in organizational success. Bureaucracy was considered the best alternative in reaching the highest effectiveness.

Human relations school started to challenge the classical understanding and organizational studies began to shift towards understanding the human aspects of organization. Human relation as a school of thought has its roots in research initiated in the late 1920's by Elton Mayo and was followed in 1940 by a research of Kurt Lewin. The human relations model sees man as only superficially controllable and that there is only one best way to organize relationship. Organizations should permit individual autonomy, in order to maximize task involvement and motivation within.

Taylor developed scientific management concepts; Weber gave the bureaucratic approach while Fayol developed the administrative theory of organizations. The scientific management approach developed by Taylor is based on the concept of planning of work to achieve efficiency, standardization, specialization and simplification. Taylor was the first person who attempted to study human behaviour at work using systematic approach. Max Weber considered the organization as a segment of broader society. He looked at the structure of organization and

the control of member behaviour. Weber's bureaucracy is probably the most cited statements of what an organization is. For many it has an intuitive feeling of correctness and his explanation makes what we have all experienced clearer. Yet it is clear that his model is shaggily limited. The elements of administrative structure by Fayol (1949) relate to accomplishment of tasks, and include principles of management, the concept of line and staff, committees and function of management.

In a situation whereby specialized machineries are used. Concepts of classical theory apply in the choice of the structure. Classical theory can therefore be said to concern itself with "organizations without people", whereas Human relations theory has revolve around people without organization. The solution may be a union between the two.

## **FEMINISM**

"Feminism" is an umbrella term for a range of views about injustices against women. There are disagreements among feminist scholars about the nature of injustice in general and the nature of sexism, in particular, as well as the specific kinds of injustice women suffer. Feminists are committed to bringing about social change to end injustice against women.

The claim here is not to survey the history of feminism as a set of ideas, but rather it is to sketch some of the central uses of the term that are most relevant to this paper.

In the mid 1800's the term feminism was used to refer to "the qualities of females" and it was not until after the first international women's conference in Paris in 1892 that the term was used regularly in English for a belief in and advocacy of equal rights for women. Some writers have found it useful to think of the women's movement in U.S as occurring in "waves". The "first wave" occurred in mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and it was a struggle for basic political rights. The second wave feminism occurred in the late 1960's and early 1970. In the second wave, was the feminist quest for greater equality across the board e.g. in education, the work place, and at home. The "third wave" feminism was a critique of the second wave feminism for its lack of attention to the differences among women due to race, ethnicity, class, nationality.

Feminism involves at least two groups of claims, one normative and the other descriptive. The normative concerns how women ought or ought not to be viewed and treated, the descriptive on the other hand concerns how women are, as a matter of fact, viewed and treated. This alleges that they are not being treated in accordance with the standards of justice or morality invoked in the normative claim that women and men ought to have equal rights.

Disagreement with the feminist movement can occur with respect to either the descriptive or normative claims. For instance, feminists differ on what would count as justice or injustice do women suffer from? What aspects of women in current situation are harmful or unjust?

Disagreement may also lie in the explanation of injustices; two feminists may agree that women are being denied proper rights and respect and yet differ in their account of how and why and what is required to end the injustice.

## **FEMINIST APPROACHES TO ORGANIZATIONS**

Feminism is a sociological approach that views inequality in gender as central to all behaviour in organization. Sociologists began embracing the feminist perspectives in the 1970s, although it has long tradition in many other disciplines. Because it clearly focuses on one aspect of inequality it is often allied with conflict perspectives. Proponent of feminist perspectives focus on the macro level of society just as conflict theories do. Drawing on the work of Marx and Engels, contemporary feminist theories often viewed women subordination as inherent in capitalist societies. Some radical feminist theories however, view the oppression of women as inevitable in all male dominated societies whether in capitalist, socialist or communist system. Feminist scholars have not only challenged stereotyping of women, they have argued for a gender-balanced study of society in which women's experiences and contributions are as visible as those of men (England 1999; Tuchman 1992). Feminist perspective has given sociologists new view of familiar social behaviour. For example past researches on crime rarely considered women and when it did the studies tended to focus on "Traditional" crimes by women. Such a view tended to ignore the role that women play in all types of crime.

Up until 1980's Organizational Studies and feminist theories were detached due to their distinctive areas. Organizational literature has been dominated by male academics to solve problems of male managers while feminist studies dealt mostly with women and the nature of patriarchal relations. The theories and researches on sex segregation or other gender inequalities in organizations are very recent. Rapid development of women liberative movement has increased the awareness of women to their subordination both in private and public spheres. This has increased the consciousness to the "gender blind" nature of organizational studies which eventually led to the gendered analysis of organizational structure. Since traditional approaches to the organizations do not take into account gender differences, considerable errors have been made in interpreting how organizations operate (Mills, Peta Tancred, 1992).

The division of feminist theories in social theory appears in the field of organization studies. Liberal, Radical, Psychoanalytical, Socialist, Marxist, Post-Modern, and Post-Colonial feminist have different claims about the structure of organization. However, they all agree on the male dominance and existing inequality in the work place. Their differences derived from the ways through which this situation may be changed.

Feminist writers have had a significant impact on social theory, promoting critique of liberal and socialist theory, developing a conception of patriarchy, challenging the heritage of Freud and raising question about the connection between masculinity, hierarchy. Some feminists believe that women can only be free under socialism; others see the sexual struggle as more basic than the class struggle and look for a new vision of society.

## **FEMINIST THEORY**

The alliance between the feminist and other theories have been uneasy. There is not a feminist theory but feminist theories, and if one inspects this closely one finds not so much feminist theories as various theories which feminism makes use of or "borrowed", for example, Liberalism, Marxism, and psychoanalysis etc. These experts in other areas apply feminist techniques and principles to their own fields.

The feminist theories may be viewed as a kind of patch work quilt, taking bits and pieces from here and there in an attempt to offer an account of women social and political being that would be adequate to basic feminist principle.

It encompasses work done in a broad variety of disciplines, prominently including the approaches to women's roles and lives and feminist politics in Anthropology and Sociology, Economics, women and gender studies. It aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender, politics, power relations and sexuality. Much of feminist theory also focuses on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights, interests and issues. Themes explored in feminism include discrimination, stereotyping, sexual objectification oppression and patriarchy (Rosser, 2005).

A fundamental premise of feminist theory is that socio-political life and traditional accounts of social political life are prejudicial to women. Part of the task of feminists which organizational theories have neglected is to offer and account of how the different treatments of the sexes operate in our culture and how the prejudices against women are maintained by economic, social, and political arrangements.

To this end feminists have attempted to apply Marxism and other theories of oppression or exploitation to the situation of women. That task has not been easy because of the fact that these theories were not specifically developed for the situation of women and are often marked by what has been termed sex blindness. Feminist theories rework these social and political theories in order to remove the sexual biases introduced by male theories. The feminist approach assumes that these theories are essentially sex-neutral tools that become sexist in their application in the hand of a Marxist or Freud.

## **STRANDS OF FEMINIST THEORY**

A thorough examination of all recent feminist theories beyond the scope of this paper, but it is relevant to sketch in few of these theories.

Radical feminism maintains that women's oppression is the most widespread and deepest oppression. They reject most scientific theories, data and experiment, not because they exclude

women but also because they are not women centered. They suggest that because men, masculinity and patriarchy have become completely intertwined with technology and computer systems in our society, no truly feminist alternative to technology exists.

Radical feminist may or may not be anti-capitalism. They see the basic division in all societies as between men and women and clearly state that men are the oppressors of women. They often use the term patriarchy to describe this systematic and universal oppression. While some radical feminists see women's role in production as both motivating and enabling men to take power over them, others emphasize the wish of men to control women's sexual availability or to use their unpaid domestic labour in marriage.

They disagree with the liberal feminists, because they believe that sex is one of the instruments for stratification of society and gender. Nature of them is not the single cause of men's domination rather, the exclusion of women from public realm for long years. This caused differences in the socialization of women. When women entered into male dominated organizations, they found themselves marginalized. For this reason radical feminists argue that women's socialization makes them better equipped than men to perform the skills necessary for the creation of democratic, participatory, non-hierarchical organization. (Savage, Ann Witz 1992).

They came out with more radical suggestions such as women centered, leaderless, structure-less organizations that may eliminate masculine values advocating competition, leadership hierarchy etc.

## **LIBERAL FEMINISM**

Liberalism is the body of ideas that feminists all over the world might most naturally turn to when developing a theory to justify women's right, since it is the dominant ideology of most society. Moreover, liberal values are inherently compatible with feminist claims to equal rights with men; since liberalism stresses the rights of all individuals to freedom.

Indeed, historically, liberalism is the first social theory that offered the possibility of equality to women. Since it developed in opposition to theories stressing a political, social hierarchical based on 'nature' and the order ordained by God in the scripture and the Quaran.

Liberal feminism seeks no special privileges for women and simply demands that every one receives equal consideration without discriminating on the basis of sex. The emphasis of liberal feminism is inequality between men and women in the public sphere of life-employment, education and politics. Here sex is thought of as a biological issue and socialization of sexes for appropriate behaviour is considered to be constitutive of gender. Many liberal feminists explain women exclusion or inequality with reference to ideas of female inferiority or incapacity that inform the upbringing and education of both men and women. They seek to challenge ideas and practices that treat women as second class citizen while leaving relatively unchallenged other areas such as sexuality, reproduction and domestic labour. They perceive organizations as composed of rational individuals seeking for autonomy and efficiency in line with liberal political theory.

Liberalism is seen as the dominant ethos of contemporary society and so it indicates that liberal feminists are not challenging capitalism or patriarchy but rather looking for the removal of barriers that prevent women operating effectively in the public sphere on equal terms with men.

Their desire is to free women from the oppressive, patriarchal gender roles. Liberal feminism encompasses two genres of political thought; classical liberalism and welfare-liberalism. Classical liberals believe that, ideally, the state should protect civil liberties, but also give individuals the opportunities to determine their own wealth within the market and gender discriminatory laws and policies should be erased from the book enabling women to compete equally with men.

Welfare liberals, on the other hand believe the state should focus on economic justice rather than simply on civil liberties, women should also be compensated for past injustices, as well as eliminating socio-economic and legal barriers.

Liberals in general are critical of the existing sex segregation in both vertical and horizontal dimensions leading to wage inequalities and barriers to higher status jobs for upward mobility at the expense of women. They believe that some minor changes within the existing system like equal pay for equal work, sex-blind performance appraisals, equal opportunity for training and gaining higher status work, increase in the number of working women are enough to eliminate inequality in the work-places.

Liberal feminist has been criticized by other feminist because they did not question the power relations. They are also not critical of hierarchical division of labour and the separation of private and public. They have individualistic orientations towards personal accomplishment and lastly, their demands only reflect middle-class, white, western women's interest excluding race and economic class differences.

## **PSYCHOANALYTICAL FEMINISM**

Psychoanalytical feminism attempts to explain patriarchy by reformatting the theories of Freud and his intellectual heirs. According to these theories of personality, emotions are often deeply buried in the subconscious or conscious areas of the psyche and they also highlight the importance of infancy and early childhood in the patterning of these emotions. Their view is different from that of liberals and radical. It examines the psycho-sexual development of both sexes in patriarchal structure. They rejected the traditional view of psychoanalytic theory which justifies women oppression but instead try to find out the effects of separate social arrangement on different psycho-sexual development of women. As a result of patriarchal structure of the society, women are socialized in more passive ways, achievement and leadership seem irrelevant concepts for women. This has led to the inferiority of women in organization.

## **MARXIST FEMINISM**

Marxist feminists perceive gender as similar to class relations that constitute and maintain the system of oppression. The double burden of women due to their sex and class are the central themes of Marxist feminism. They criticize liberals for accepting given hierarchical and

capitalist relations and mainstreams. Marxists for their devaluation of patriarchy and for ignoring women unpaid labour as an important factor in social reproduction (Marshall, 1994). According to them, the capitalist economy should be analyzed in terms of power relation. It is then that gender inequality can be well understood, and without gender structural changes in political realm, we cannot talk about equality both in public and private spheres.

They tend themselves most directly to examine why women tend to be at the bottom in the job market. Feminists have explored the concept of a 'reserve army of labour' to explain women's economic roles under capitalism. Marx argued that that the capitalist system needed a potential work-force of workers who could be drawn into new branches of production, easily switched between different jobs and easily laid off when no longer wanted. In some ways women seem to be an ideal reserve army.

Although Marxism has suggested ways of analyzing women's position under capitalism it has not met feminist requirements. True in principle Marxism espouses the equality of women and Marx himself once wrote that the level of civilization could be measured by the position of women within it; but the emancipation of women is subsumed to be simply a by-product of creating socialism.

### **Post Modern Feminism**

Post modern feminists question concepts of 'positive knowledge' and identity. They criticize ontological and epistemological claims of modernist theories, foundationalism, essentialism and universalism including the claims of many feminist theories (Calas, 1996). They blame feminist theory for focusing only on gender in their analysis. Post-modern feminists engage in intersections of complex social relations. Their argument is that knowledge forms the power relations in organizations and this naturalizes the exclusion of certain groups from organizations such as women, the minorities and the elderly. .

### **POST-COLONIAL OR THIRD WORLD THEORY**

This is the most recent approach to feminist theory. It emerged from the criticisms of the third world feminists to western feminists. Western feminist theory is blamed for reflecting the interests of white, middle class, heterosexual women only. They used post modern consequences in their analysis of feminist theory and challenge popular theory of gender and gender relations for being based on images and social experiences of mostly privileged women in the first world (Calias, 1996). Post-colonial feminists also draw some of their critiques from socialist feminism such as capitalism, colonialism, stratification of gender; and try to explain these complex relations between the first and the third world.

## **SOCIALIST FEMINIST THEORY**

Socialist feminists are those feminists who are concerned with challenging capitalism as well as male supremacy or “patriarchy”. They make analytical connections between class relations and gender relations in society and relate changes in the role of women to changes in the economic system and patterns of ownership of the means of production. This approach recognizes that while women are divided by class, colour and political beliefs, they do experience a common oppression as women. This oppression needs to be understood, in terms of the requirement of capitalism and the role of state institutions in a capitalist society. They tended to concentrate on issues such as employment, domestic labour and state policy.

They criticize Marxism for being gender blind, by primarily focusing on economic class, employer-labour relations as a consequences, including gender and race differences into the analysis, socialist feminism re-conceptualize Marxist and socialist theories as well as feminist theory. They draw some of their concepts from the radicals, while being critical of them for having separatist solutions under capitalism and patriarchy. Despite their agreement on exploitation and domination by men, socialist feminists criticize other approaches for omitting historical and cultural condition. Socialist feminist relies on the idea that male dominance is a consequence of social practices rather than biological differences. Unequal relationships between the sexes are systematically reproduced to meet material need.

Different researches and studies have been done by social feminists about organizations that are different from other feminists, public realm in which organization are located is not separated from the private where domestic relations takes place. This is because relations within organizations and within families are assumed to be mutually interdependent. That means, if the husband dominates the wife in the private as a result of “patriarchy”, the capitalist man dominates working-class women as a result of “capitalism”.

Individual revolution is the starting point for the analysis of the unequal relationship. Feudal relations characterized the women’s place in the industrial societies, father had strict authority over his wife and children, and women were both doing domestic and non-domestic work. Even though they were working much harder than men, their contributions to the economy were not counted.

By the industrial revolution capitalist work place and wage employment appeared causing separation of home from work. This lead to separation of public and private as well as sexual division of labour. These developments caused replacement of women by men and marginalization of women in the public sphere. After that point in history, social feminists examine occupational sex-segregation, sexual division of labour, wage inequality and power relation, symbols, images within the organization.

## **GENDER**

Fundamental to feminist theory is the idea of gender. Before going further in this paper, it may be useful to discuss briefly what is meant by gender. Gender is understood as the socially constructed patterning of masculinity and femininity and of the relationship between men and women. This is to say that it is the product of collective acts of definition by human beings not the natural out growth of biological imperatives. It is the expectation held about the characteristics and likely behaviours of both men and women. These roles and expectations are learned, changeable over time, and variable within and between cultures. Gender analysis has increasingly revealed how women subordination is socially constructed, and therefore able to change. It identifies the various roles played by women and men, girls and boys in the

household, workplace. It is a routine part of our everyday activities that we typically take notice only when somebody deviates from conventional behaviour and expectations.

Gender and gendered power relations are major defining features of most organization. Organizations are not just structured by gender but pervaded and constituted by and through gender; at the same time, organizational realities construct and sometimes subvert dominant gender relations. When gender is referred to it is usual to think of men and women and relations between them; these are certainly part of gender but only a part.

The first form of greater subtext deals with the exclusion or neglect of women and creates the absence of women within organization theory. The exclusion of women is not a deliberate act. This neglect takes place unconsciously and therefore important original organizational text do not actively take women or gender aspect into consideration. (e.g. Blauner 1967, Crozier 1964).

An excellent example of how women have been neglected from organizational research is shown in Oakley's (1974), consideration of Robert Blauner's (1964) book (Alienation and freedom). In his analysis of working conditions in four factories, Blauner (1964) dismisses the women, who made up almost half of the work force in the textile business, as a major safety value against the consequences of alienating work conditions, Oakley (1974) emphasizes two points which explain the invisibility of women in organizational research design. First the choice of predominately masculine jobs (e.g. the automobile industries) guarantees the concealment of women; second, whatever the specific features of the studied occupations are the selected samples tend to be all male or mostly male. However, these facts are hidden through the use of titles that purport to be describing work and worker in general irrespective of gender. This apparent gender-neutrality meets the so called gender neutral construction of the "ideal worker" which is not gender neutral at all, but represent a male work; a male manual worker who conveys typically male stereotypes irrespective of time, location and work place.

Gender equity – Is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantage that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on the same level . Equity leads to equality.

Gender equality means that women and men enjoy the same status. It also means that women and men have equal condition for realizing their full human rights and potential and to benefit from it.

Gender role and gender division of labour. In studying gender sociologists are interested in the gender-role socialization that leads females and males to behave differently. A gender role has been defined as expectations regarding the proper behaviour, attitudes and activities of male and females. The application of traditional gender roles leads to many forms of differentiation between women and men.

Gender roles are evident not only in our work and behaviour but in how we react to others; we are constantly “doing gender” without realizing it. For example men and women come in a variety of heights, sizes and ages, yet traditional norms tell us that in heterosexual couples, the man should be older, taller and wiser than the women. We socially construct our behaviour so as to create or exaggerate male-female differences. Such social norms help to reinforce and legitimize patterns of male dominance. In recent decades, woman have increasingly entered occupations and professions previously dominated by men. Yet our society still focuses on “masculine and feminine” qualities as if men and women must be evaluated in those terms. We continue to do “gender” and our construction of gender continues to define significantly differently expectations for female and males (Rosenbaum, 1996).

### **Female Gender Roles**

Society defines men’s identifies by their economic success. And even though many women today fully expect to have careers and achieve recognition in the labour force, success at work is not as important to their identity as it is for men. Traditional gender roles have restricted females more severely than males.

### **Male Gender Role**

Men’s roles are socially constructed in much the same way as women roles are. Robert (Branno, 1976) identifies five aspects of the male gender role.

1. Anti Feminine Element – Show no “sissy” stuff including nay expression of openness or vulnerability.
2. Success Element – Proves ones masculinity at work and sports.
3. Aggressive Element – Use force in dealing with others.
4. Sexual Element – Initiate and control sexual relationship.
5. Self Reliant Element – Keep cool and unflappable.

### **Gender Division of Labour**

This refers to the different work that women and men generally do within the community or inside the home. By examining the gender division of labour it becomes evident that women and men tasks are independent and that women generally carry the greater burden of unpaid work.

Gender role differentiation on its own is not bad, the problem arises when differentiation turns into stereotype. That is when for no good cause women are barred from playing certain roles for reasons of their sex and not for lack of skill to execute the task. Stereotyping may run counter to our development efforts especially when women after acquiring a rare skill are nevertheless barred from performing tasks which require the acquisition of that skills. In order to understand the complex nature of this inquiry, it will be necessary to look at the subject of women's status. The subject in the past was complex, but today there is greater need to dispassionately understand the problem.

Even when both men and women have access to similar jobs, they are confronted by different set of obstacles. This is for no other reason than for sex. A women frequently faces competing demands from her boss at the work place and at home from her husband. The husband expects her to carry out all the household chores including taking the young ones to the school and hospital, the boss expects her to be punctual at work, otherwise, she is penalized. This conflicting demand may be worse for women whose husbands never help at home.

Culture is another issue that can not be pushed aside because it is responsible for the widespread belief that makes it possible for women and their roles to be glossed over, under-

analyzed. The result is that what women do is perceived as house hold work and what they talk about is called gossip, while men's work is viewed as the economic base of society and their information is seen as important social communication.

The reason for this is not only cultural but economic. Cultural because it is what is handed down through the agencies of socialization. It is also economic because men have benefited more materially from their domination over women. Through the school system, women are taught to accept that this is the nature of things. A girl is not expected to be dynamic or have competitive nature. Boys on the other hand are encouraged to be more dynamic and to take to the difficult science and engineering disciplines while women are tailored after teaching and domestic oriented courses.

At the work place, women and men are drawn into competition. In order to maintain certain privileges, men may be stressing certain stereotyped notions of the female gender.

## **CRITIQUE OF ORGANIZATION THEORIES**

Organizational theories are often criticized for focusing on male as top level managers, because of the fact that men occupy the leadership position and possess power. Even when women are included in the research, their behavioural differences are explained by gendered stereotypes or distinctive socialization processes. Other processes like pattern of selective recruitment that have been used to suppress women in the organization are usually overlooked. Thus important studies that are called "classics" of the organization theory show their ignorance on gender differences. For example, the Hawthorne studies claim that positive treatment of employees increase motivation and productivity (Daft 1996), but when re-examined show different conclusions for males and females. Females are subjected to closer and more personalized control mechanisms, while males are subjected to impersonal rules and given some degree of autonomy. Also the rewards given men are not sex linked unlike women that receive more stereotyped benefits, such as maternity leave etc.

Another criticism is sex segregation that is women work in the public is the same in home. Even when women are employed in the same industry as men, they still get less pay,

prestige, fringe benefits because of the horizontal sex segregation. Although it is obvious that in most of the occupations, sex segregation is decreasing by the employment of women into traditional male jobs.

Another issue is the distribution of power among sub groups within organization. Socialist feminists perceive the direct relation between the subordination of women and unequal distribution of power. On this point they rejected the main claim of structural contingency theory that size and technology are the determining factors of organizational complexity. Instead the degree of complexity depends on actions and decisions taken by power groups. .

Materialistic – Feminist determination used four points to explain the existing structure of organizations. First, there is a dialectical relationship between organizational life and “broader societal system”. These simultaneously reshape each other, secondly, the owners of means of production have crucial role for the perception of organizational and society reality. Thirdly, although sexual division of labour is determined by class structure, it has a degree of autonomy and determines the class as well and finally, material conditions are reflected by perception of reality. Through these four assumptions, socialist feminists try to answer some questions like how “social perception of gender affect the structure of the organization and how this structure affects gender identifies”? or “since organizational leaders are males, to what extent do their masculine values affects the understanding of organizational structure”? As a consequence of their analysis socialist feminist suggested re-evaluation of feminine values and skills to construct classless and genderless organization structure. This it is hoped will eliminate gendered division of labour. Female dominated jobs would also receive comparable worth as male dominated professional works. Also wages for male and female labour would be readjusted accordingly. Also included in their demand are child care places for every work place, flexible time jobs, equal and extended time for maternity leaves. According to them, elimination of gender dualism does not mean the elimination of gender, rather it means eliminations of institutional constraints that attribute certain stereotype to each sex. By this model, it would be impossible for one individual to exclude other gender, or perceive himself or her as primary gender.

Socialist feminists do not reject emotional roles by individual in sexual love, parenting or house hold relationships. This is because such roles will no longer be tied to gender or even to all aspects of individuals interaction, they will not support such hierarchal relationships between individual as male dominance or compulsory heterosexual (Ferguson 1991). In short, this model tries to satisfy goals of both individual, autonomy and community as well democracy and social material equality of people.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper outlines the deficiencies of organization theories and the implications for organizational practice. It also displays that gender has been completely neglected within the organizational text that is there is displacement of sexuality from organizational theory which result in a rhetorical reproduction of males as norms and women as others. Organization theory can not account for the differential treatment and experience of the sexes unless its traditional assumptions about the existence, rationale and functioning of organization are critically reassess. Feminist theories have examined why women and women's needs are persistently marginalized. They have concluded that it is hierarchical organizing strategies which are a key barrier to women's full participation. This paper has been able to show that excluding women from the theory of organization therefore excludes a host of variables that may be the key to understanding organizations. I do not believe that it is possible to make adhoc explanations without including the nature of human beings in one's theory. If one excludes individuals and group one may develop generalization that is invalid. If one excludes women their credible performance and support in organization will be underestimated.

Finally, this paper is of the "expose" variety. In keeping with a general sociological tradition, it shows that things are not as they seem in organization.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the issues raised in this paper the following recommendations may be considered; it is very clear that organization theories accounting for the phenomena of

discrimination against women is inadequate, and this has contributed to the persistent discrimination. Therefore, only, radically revised form of organization theory can account for the situation of women in organizational setting. In other words, the understanding of the place of women is beyond the contemporary organization theory.

Also there is need for ideological revolution, a revolution in the ideology of gender roles in our culture, a revolution in concept of gender identity. In other words men and women must be seen as people not as gender.

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