

The emancipation of women in russia

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Women emancipation in Russia has for a long time been an issue of concern, raising more questions than answers. Women have been looked down upon for longer and deprived of the various opportunities available such as employment and education. This has denied the women opportunities to participate in building the economy. Efforts to curb this has resulted into various significant changes, with additional revolutionary movements being established to convict and contest for the rights of women.

However, the various anti-feminine in Russian for instance Kollontai has become forth to actively reject the way of perceiving women in the state. This study, therefore, inspect the subject of revolutionary ways for women in Russia and critically evaluate their efforts as well as the achievements certifying that women are more valued, respected and are granted equal chances and privileges as per the International Human Rights Commission rulings.

The women question has raised eyebrows of many. Unfortunately, the Russian Marxist has remained unwilling in resolving the issue. Kollontai chiefly believed that women could only achieve their liberation through socialism. She became a member of the Russian revolution party in 1898 and played a vital role in struggling for women emancipation.

The revolutionary era is believed to have initiated in 1905, officially known as Bolshevik revolution. Concerns of women status in the country started gaining some sense of perception. Certainly, it is regrettable that in Russia, women have been greatly undermined. Indeed, this has led to calls for more revolutionary movements in the state such Bolshevism and emergence of

feminine activists such as Alexander Kollontai, to fight for reforms and bring revolutions on the woman question in Russia.

Background of the Study

The question for women in the Russian State has raised many concerns for individuals and sensitive state organs. Majority of the Tsari, Russian population living in the rural areas before the 1917 revolution were peasants. Among them, women were treated as property for men. The women were regarded as nothing other than slaves for men according to the Tsari law. It was lawful for men to beat their wives more often.

Due to high illiteracy rate of the Russian women, their oppression increased especially in the backward countryside of the state where cultural traditions were very strong. A more recent report reveals that only 13. 1% of Russian women were literate by 1897. Few job opportunities were available for women, with extremely harsh working conditions. Moreover, girls were also not exempted.

They suffered from early school drop-out at an average age of 12. They were then expected to help in home chores duty and work in the factories for long hours at miserable wages. This study largely dwells on the question of women oppression in Russia. Majorly, the study lays much focus on the revolutions that aimed at bringing the women oppressions to an end.

Notably, Women have always demanded change on the manner in which they are being treated. Among their plea is opportunities, education and to be perceived as an asset rather than just as a mere tool for men but for the

whole nation. Women should be empowered and granted healthy conditions to participate in building the Russian economy as well.

The Significance of the Study

The study aims at exploring the Russian women revolutions in a wider perspective. This study is significant in a number of ways. First, it aims at pursuing ways in which the revolution movements emerged revolutionary to the Russian Women. Secondly, it explores the ruthless manner in which women were being treated in Russia.

With a closer reference to the Bolshevik revolution which explores the women question, this study further reveals the various women rebellions that spurned their oppression in the state. Russia was one of the leading states in mistreating women and girls by denying them job and education opportunities. This move attracted the attention of many sensitive organs in the world in an unpleasant manner, thus resulted into calls for necessary revolutions.

Moreover, this study is relevant and examines how women struggled for their liberation. They demanded their freedom from oppression in workstations. Indeed, the revolutions based on women question changed the way in which women were being perceived in the society and today, they are highly valued, respected and are entitled with equal economic rights and opportunities just as men.

Russian Revolutions for Women

The Russian Women Revolution, begun on an International women's Day of February 23, 1917, with an unclear understanding by the working class women of how to go about it. Women were perceived as the most traditional layer of the working class before the revolution. They were directly responsible for the family care and were therefore barred from participating in strikes. Their living conditions became intolerable, with no bread, hiking inflation rates with majority getting involved in violent with their husbands publicly.

The situation worsened and women workers from the textile industries resolved to take an action. Even though the revolutionary movement was a reality, it was evident that more preparations including sourcing for soldiers needed to be done. According to the Utopian socialist, women emancipation was believed to be the best measure of the moral level of the Russian culture. The Bolshevik movement, one of the leading revolution by Alexandra Kollontai played a vital revolutionary role in women socialism's movement and fought persistently for the socialist progress.

Women have undergone serious oppressions that even risked their lives especially for the few working class who demanded their economic freedom. Kollontai is regarded as significant figure in fighting for the revolutionary movement for women despite being opposed by the socialist's Democratic Party. Her revolutionary attempts at first faced serious hitches as the police launched a manhunt for her following her allegations on the women question.

She later flew into exile in 1906-1908 following the increased tension and fear of the police wrath. Bolshevik revolution was the first revolutionary movement that attained its peak in 1917. Kollontai officially joined the Bolshevik revolution in 1915 and was then elected a member of the Sixth Party Congress where she established the women's bureau. The major role of women's bureau was to mobilize the groups of women workers, bourgeois and the peasants so as to bring them under one-party umbrella. Special women newspaper was then published in Petersburg to spread widely the propaganda among the women workers.

Alongside Alexandria, Lenin and Krupskaya also played a significant revolutionary role for the women in question. Lenin through the party organization mobilized the social parties and mass of women workers resulting to join the First Party Congress which was then held in 1898 with women workers emancipation as the subject. Krupskaya joined the Brushnyev group where she met his spouse Lenin and together took part in the union struggle regarding the women question.

In 1898, Krupskaya officially joined the Social Democratic Party movement and emerged as the leading female Bolshevik. Notably, the following years after 1903 congress were characterized by massive strikes that ended into 1905 Revolution. Women workers fully participated in the strikes and began forming the worker's councils in Russian soviets. The first Soviet Union movement was set up as a series of local strikes in the city which resulted to the election of 151 delegates to represent the factory striking workers with more women as opposed to men.

The number of women representatives was a remarkable achievement and the elected women were termed as revolutionary women in Russia. The 1905 revolution ended in a defeat tracked by a counter-revolution forcing the Bolsheviks back to the underground works. Although it was problematic to organize women following their defeat, the Bolshevik was believed to be excellent at organizing women for the revolutionary struggle. However, no women were allowed to attend the fifth social democratic party congress held in 1912.

Women got into the Russia capital streets and organized mass rallies and strikes on The International Working Women's day in 1917 appealing for support from the male workers. They held massive demonstrations demanding for their daily bread, lower prices, free from harassments from their employees and equal economic freedom. This strike lasted for five days with uncontrollable demonstrations and strikes that increased tension and fear in the Russian city, thus attracting the attention of many. They later overthrew the Tsar, clinched power and became forefront with anger and frustrations of several years of struggle for their liberation.

The February Revolution

The February revolution women workers movement was set in motion by the working class women that condemned the ever-worsening economic situations. Demands for bread, children starvation, long working hours and ending the war stirred up mass protests and demonstrations which increased tension and fear on their leaders. More than 197, 000 angry men and women

joined the street protests and seized the police guns without any counter-attacks from the soldiers.

The working class formed a council of workers and Soviet unions as their organs of power. The Bolsheviks failed to cooperate with the Provisional government and instead urged for "All Power" soviets which were believed to be the only way to fulfill the demands of peace, bread, land and economic freedom. The women workers significantly participated in the strikes and demonstrations. Moreover, they also organized an armed defense of the revolutionary works.

They vividly took an integral part in revolutionary events, both locally and nationally by organizing talks in public meetings, circulation of posters encouraging women to remain in solidarity for the war, transporting weapons and ammunition as well as caring for the wounded during the combat. The situation dramatically changed the condition for women in the countryside. The February Revolutionary Movement springs to the rural areas insight the peasants too.

In May 1917, Kollontai and other Bolsheviks revived a revolutionary newspaper, including a training school for working-class women, the art of public speaking aiming at equipping them with skills of inspiring and educating other women when they get back to work. By September 1917, all Russian political strips could feel the taste of the revolution practically. Peasants continued apprising their volts as most soldiers join the Bolshevik movement to form the Red Army.

The October revolution ended with a Women's Congress led by Bolshevik leaders Kollontai, Konkordia Samoiloova and Klavdia Nikolaevna. During the Congress discussion, women were encouraged to reassess their personal interests and actively demand their rights to paid maternity leaves and child care, education, minimal working hours and better working conditions. Kollontai presented the women demands to Bolshevik leaders who transformed most proposals into the law.

Most women were granted political leadership and formed the Soviet Union that shunned down all the women emancipation, a major question on women. Most revolutionary women turned to their normal lives having successfully fought for their victory. Women education attained greater heights of up to the university level. Other benefits include provisions of maternity leaves and benefits, access to more employment opportunities and proper child care services.

In the late 1930s, the end result became impressing and women who fought for the revolutions exemplary enjoyed the benefits of their struggle. The Soviet equality policy demanded public jobs for the people. Women who initially worked in their local gardens and as home and family caretakers joined the working class women.

However, the implementation of Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) restored the country's crumbling post-civil war economy. The implementation of the new easy divorce laws imposed more burden on women as men could take the advantage of the law to recklessly dump their wives and children. This

further worsened the situations in the marriage hence increased domestic violence.

To conclude, the Russian revolution for women took series of dimensions and an extra-long journey to be achieved. Women emancipation raised a lot of question in the Russian state since the working class women were seriously underrated and exploited. Women struggled for their liberation by forming and participating in women group movements to demand their rights and condemning their oppression.

Kollontai, Lien, and Krupskaya among other Bolshevik leaders fought tirelessly for revolutions by forming revolutionary movements groups and mobilizing the women to join and participate. Among their demand were the equal economic rights, increase in their wages, better working conditions and equal job opportunities as well as maternity leaves alongside other benefits. The Bolsheviks tremendously fought for their desired victory from 1905 up to the late 1936s.

The Russian revolution terminated the suffering endured by women. After the revolutions, women started to enjoy their economic freedom at the work place, equal job opportunities, and increased wages as well as improved working conditions. They were also granted with high education opportunities to access the needed education which they demanded for. The living conditions of the working class women were also improved as a result of the women revolutions.