

# Research paper on factory labour and slavery perspective and prejudice

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



In the early years of the industrial revolution which was before the civil war, women used to be laborers. This happened before the end of slavery.

Women used to work under very poor conditions in the textile mills.

According to this case, the women had been treated as factory laborers and slavery prevailed in this era.

The industrial revolution which attracted a lot of women to go and work in the textile factories started in 1820 in the New England and ended in the year 1850. These factories where the laborers worked on were in between the Merrimack and Charles rivers. The laborers were experiencing traumatizing and bad situations. According to the Voice of the Industry, the workers were not supposed to utter a single word until it was said over and over again, so that means they were denied freedom of expression. The management of the textile mills deprived them their personality, liberty, ownership, socialization, and low wages to them life appeared repugnant. However the slaves were not taken as human beings as they were being traded like cattle, infants taken away from their mother and families separated. The workers only wanted to be treated with respect and be shown humanity. They wanted the management to give them what they earned with honesty and from their sweat. According to Orestes Brownson the poor were being taxed heavily for the benefit of the rich (Brownson 368). They also wanted the management to pay them so as to satisfy their needs and get some money to bring home.

The first reformer was Orestes Brownson who argued that freed labor was almost the same as the slave labor since the mill girls were being treated like slaves. This was because they were not given their dues as it was

originally been agreed by the management. They even went with no food because they didn't have enough to eat. They were not also given freedom of speech.

The laborers felt that they were being treated as slaves and in their reaction they said that they are not the promoter of slavery. The workforces were liberated laborers at remuneration but in their experience in the factory was that of a slave labor. Their sufferings in the factory were more and they were denied their freedom as compared to a slave workforce. Moreover, the free laborer was supposed to receive some wages which they were denied. The denial of their wages led the laborers to even skip meals like breakfast since they didn't have any to provide for their families.

According to Orestes Brownson the laborers went to look for work by they did not get any leading them to starve for some few days. They could not even get breakfast to take to their families. Some of the females were being employed by very respectable men in the society such as clergies to practice infidelity at very poor payment. Brownson continuously says that the church people who were known to donate to the country were the same people who took the slaves for granted. They gave the girls jobs such as to make their shirts and trousers and grew rich with their labor (Brownson 368). They were not even paid for the work they did. These congressmen and clergies would shed tears shouting for the liberation and equality of the southern slaves yet they were as well oppressing the farm girls in the Lowell mills. The wages that these farm girls earned was less as compared to the amount of profit that the owner would make.

In 1836 the women in the Lowell mills got on strikes as there were rumors

that their wages were going to be reduced. This was the first strike to have ever been heard in the factory mills. The girls closed all the mills and went in a demonstration in the entire firm in the factory to listen to the speech of their former reformer. As we have seen the Lowell girls were denied the freedom of speech and hence during this time a woman stood resist the move. Her action left a lot of anxiety and surprise among the listeners. Some of the girls proceeded to the streets protesting that they were not sent to the factory to work and die and they had refused to be nuns (Robbinson 83).

During the strikes, Lowell Girls used different languages and signs to express their complaints. For instance they used poems and songs, these were used in 1834 and 1836 respectively. The ringleaders of the strike were turned away from their boarding houses for lack of controlling the girls who went on strike. The weak ones were pushed to the wall. According to Harriet Hanson, her mother was turned away from the boarding house she was in for not cooling down the girls' strike and was told if she couldn't turn the other girls from the strike she could have turned her daughter.

After the strike seized the manufacturer of the factory did not respond positively to the grievances of the girls. The authorities in the factory mills did not comply with their demands, the discontent of the operations collapsed and the majority of the workers resumed to their work place. The rumination of the workers was cut down and hence the oppression of the worker still went on. As time went by the wages of the workers continued to decrease such that the amount left was only sent to their homes (Robbinson 85). This situation forced the workers to leave the factory and look for employment in other upcoming sectors that created favorable working

conditions for women. This move brought down the factory population to what in is at the recent times.

In conclusion, Lowell girls were denied the freedom of ownership, speech, associations and socialization. Moreover, the Lowell women were not to utter a single word to the southern slaves in the condition of their work places. In Lowell mills, the free wages compared themselves with slave laborer due to the fact that they were being treated more as slaves and not free laborers. The slave laborers were not entitled to wages but the free laborers were but they were denied their wages and freedom. The Lowell girl's mills worked for their oppressor who earned a lot of profit from them yet they were just paid small peanuts (Brownson 369). In addition, the petitions of the Lowell girls were not adhered and the oppressor continued to take advantage of the workers. Their wages was reduced that forced most of the Lowell girl's miller to leave the factory and look for favorable working sites. The situation in the Lowell Mills was not fair due to the oppression they underwent. It was not human too since they were working with almost no pay.

## **Works Cited**

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Brownson Orestes." 1840 Dispute Comparing Slave Labor and Free (Factory) Labor." Boston Quarterly Review 3(1840): 368-370. Print