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Review article

FEMINISM AS AN IDEOLOGY THROUGH THE PRACTICES OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT MACEDONIAN CONTEXT**Abstract:**

This study primarily focuses on feminism and the women's movement and how they manifest in Macedonian society. The feminist ideology reflects various forms of activism, with the common goal of overcoming the subordinate status of women in society and achieving equality between men and women. Hence, this study explores the following questions: does feminist activism in Macedonian society contribute to the advancement of women's rights, and can every women's movement be situated within the framework of feminist theory? Consequently, through the analysis of specific activities, actions, and movements in public discourse, the relationships of the women's movement with feminism will be explored, with an emphasis on their identification with the feminist movement. At the same time, this study will address questions of gender as a central analytical category in feminist discourse, as well as the discrepancy between equality as a universal value, on the one hand, and entrenched patterns of domination regarding gender and sexual orientation, on the other hand.

Keywords: *feminism; ideology; women's movement; gender equality; legislation.*

Aspects into the Basic Concepts of Ideology and Feminism–Theory/Practice

The most suitable definition for ideology in this work is that of Terry Eagleton, who states that *“ideology is what occasionally leads men and women to mistakenly consider others as devils or gods. We can easily understand why someone would fight and kill for material reasons—for example, reasons related to their physical survival. It is much more difficult to understand why someone would do it in the name of something as abstract as ideas. Yet, men and women live, and sometimes die, guided by ideas”* (цит. според: Скаловски, 2010: 151) (Иглтон, 2005). Political action ideology always represents a mental framework (ideological consciousness) for interpreting events, attitudes, and behavior. Finally, each societal epoch has had multiple ideologies, expressed through organized societal groups and political actions. Each individual is involved in some form of a group and is motivated by values, interests, ideals, satisfaction, etc. It is difficult to imagine an individual cultural life outside of the group (Аврамовић, 2008).

Regarding the conceptual definition of the term feminism, it was first used in 1880 in its variant in the French language - *féminisme*. According to etymology, the term is derived from the Latin word *famina* (woman) and the contemporary concept of linguistic construction, more precisely, the suffix *-ism*, which denotes various social doctrines, discourses, ideologies, and movements. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that until the widespread use of the term *“feminism,”* terms such as *“advancement of women’s rights,” “women’s cause,” “women’s rights,” “suffragettes,”* but also *“women’s movement”* were used (Астрева, 2009).

Simultaneously, the definition of feminism includes two points: a doctrine for equal rights for women (an organized movement to gain women’s rights) and, the other point is: an ideology of social transformation aiming to create a world for women, which is more than simple social equality. Mainly, feminism is an ideology of women’s liberation, as all its approaches inherently believe that women suffer injustice due to their biological sex. Hence, the goal of different feminist theories is to offer various analyses and reasons for women’s subjugation. According to this, feminist theory includes various methodologies and theoretical abstractions from the perspective of women, a subjective approach to scientific concepts, or the *“new light”* needed for science to explain the relationship between method and theory differently (Ивановска & Бадаревски, 2012).

The feminist movement has a unique goal - to gain the rights and freedoms unjustly denied to women. Therefore, feminism is primarily a collection of ideas and definitions aimed at analyzing and changing societal stereotypes that define gender relations, and then other differences through a binary and hierarchical relationship, which find support for such definitions in biology, *“God’s will,”* or simply in the *“common-sense”* gender difference between women and men, and these same differences manifest themselves in the overall societal life of individuals. The first deconstructions of patriarchal cultural

paradigms and ideological stereotypes, theoretical guidelines, and political orientations began precisely from women based on their theoretical reflections on the nature and mechanism of oppressive practices, and in their centuries-long struggle for recognition of equality. Ultimately, feminism laid the foundations for a significantly different perspective on thinking and changing societal reality (Treanor, 2002). It is of essential importance to mention that the feminist idea (ideology) acts as resistance to patriarchy. In that sense, the ability to recognize these ideas is of great importance because, in a way, ironically, feminism can replicate the hierarchical pattern on which the patriarchal order is based, and which has denied equal status to one-half of humanity for centuries. Although the movement has achieved the primary political goals it primarily sought, it still failed to deconstruct the deep matrix of repression of the patriarchal system and thus did not recognize the identical matrix it produced within its ranks (bell hooks, 1984).

Patriarchy and Critique of Patriarchy as an Ideology

Patriarchy can be defined as *“a social system that distributes power, status, and rights to men and male interests at the expense of women and female interests”* (Кошка -Хот & Србиновска & Бојадиевска, 2010: 75). For Mary Duvro, the ideology of feminism has a political dimension, as well as a political goal, which is the abolition of patriarchy (ibid.). It is evident that with liberation from the constraints of patriarchy, women, but also men, will gain new forms of freedom. Namely, feminist theory argues that men are also under the constraints of patriarchy, which exerts pressure through rigid gender socialization and suppresses the free human spirit. Furthermore, patriarchy represents the rule of men through institutions that legalize and encourage their power and aggression, with not only political but also economic, social, and ideological dimensions (ibid.).

According to Bell Hooks, patriarchy is a socio-political system that insists that men are inherently dominant and superior to everything and that everyone is considered weak (especially women). Hence, the man is *“biologically predisposed”* to dominate and rule over the weak, as well as to maintain that domination through various forms. For Bell Hooks, the patriarchal ideology is based on the teaching that *“God created man to rule the world and everything in it, and that the task of women is to help men in carrying out these tasks, to be obedient and always take on their subordinate role in relation to the powerful, furthermore, these teachings were reinforced in every institution people encountered - schools, courts, sports arenas, as well as churches”* (Bell Hooks, 1984: 12). Hence, by accepting patriarchal thinking, as well as all other forms of patriarchal social hierarchy, according to Bell Hooks, we are taught to regard such forms of organizing life as entirely *“natural”* or *“commonsensical”* (ibid.).

Simone de Beauvoir argues that the triumph of patriarchy is neither accidental nor the result of any revolution, but a pure expression of male dominance supported by biological superiority. According to her, men have never renounced these privileges. Hence, in feminist theory, it is important to emphasize seeing women as subjects, not just as female objects of male desires and fantasies. Therefore, it is necessary to deconstruct and decipher the patriarchal visual field for women as Otherness. In that sense, we can discover the position of gender reversal from object to subject, i.e., through feminist subjective approaches, we will gain “new” objective theories about women and the female experience (Бовоар, 1989).

Sylvia Walby in her work “Patriarchy at Work: Patriarchal and Capitalist Relations in Employment” argues that “patriarchy” is a very complex phenomenon composed of many intersecting forces. According to Walby, the concept of patriarchy must remain at the center of feminist understanding in every society. The central point in reconsidering patriarchy is its insistence that patriarchy should not be seen as purely structural, nor as social action, but as a fundamental structure, which sees women as passive actors in social relations (Walby, 1986). For Kate Millett, male domination in public discourse is also manifested through sexual power, which may be proclaimed as an ideology and which is most pronounced in our culture and embodies the most fundamental concepts of power. The undermining of this sexual power (masculinist and heteronormative) actually lies in resisting the full pressure of patriarchal ideology, becoming aware of one’s own suppression, and expressing opposition to male power. Only the concept of ideology as a “contradictory” construct, marked by shifts, falls, and inconsistencies, could enable feminism to explain the other most severe ideological pressures generated by its own views and ideas (Мои, 2002). It is evident that an essential part of feminist ideology is aimed at critiquing patriarchy in order to expose patriarchal structures and ideas in the system that surround us, which are indigenous to various cultures and societies, and the goal of feminism is to depict them as anachronistic and to challenge the structure of patriarchy. Throughout human history, cultural misogynistic and sexist disparagements of women by men have developed for many years, both in science and in all social systems. The sole reason for such conditions is the power of patriarchy (Кошка -Хот & Србиновска & Бојаџиевска, 2010).

The Role and Scope of Feminist Activism in Macedonian Society

In this section, we will briefly examine the chronology of changes in Macedonian legislation and current perspectives of the women’s movement within the framework of the NGO sector, as well as how feminist activism is shaping within the civil sector.

In the context of contemporary women’s (feminist) activism in Macedonian society, from independence to the present day, North Macedonia has made significant efforts to develop a framework for policies on non-discrimina-

tion and the promotion of gender equality. Throughout the process of democratization of Macedonian society, like all modern democracies, North Macedonia implements the neoliberal paradigm in an orthodox manner, whereby de jure, a vast normative body of laws, strategies, conventions, and decrees is produced, which may significantly differ in de facto implementation and actual societal and democratic progress.

Since 2005, as a candidate country for the EU¹, North Macedonia has been committed to harmonizing with European legislation regarding gender equality and ensuring the comprehensive development and advancement of women's rights. Hence, the chronology of progress in women's rights in Macedonian society can be observed through several important legislative advancements in terms of women's rights. Immediately after independence in 1991, North Macedonia began implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and signed the Optional Protocol (which entered into force in 2003)². Later, in 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were signed, and adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. As a result of progress in women's issues in Macedonian society and the affirmation of feminism, in 1997, within the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, a department for the advancement of gender equality was established, which was reorganized and transformed into the Sector for Equal Opportunities within the Ministry in 2007³. In 1999, the first National Action Plan for Gender Equality was adopted, followed by the second National Plan for Gender Equality in 2007, valid until 2012⁴.

At the same time, in the period following independence, the first women's non-governmental organizations were established, but most of them were often ethnically identified, lacking specific awareness and explicit ideological legitimization within the framework of feminist activism. They mostly represented multi-ethnic networks aimed at uniting a large number of women based on ethnic characteristics, with a special focus on social and health care. However, it cannot be ignored that in the 1990s, women's organizations emerged that were directed towards direct ideological, programmatic, and structural feminist action, or focused on women's rights and gender equality. Additional-

¹ In relation to gender equality, the EU has developed extensive legislation, as equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the European Union from its very inception.

² <https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/priracnik.pdf> [accessed on 4/23/2024]

³ With the transformation into the Sector for Equal Opportunities in the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP), its status is significantly enhanced, giving it overall responsibility for advancing the status of women and men in all spheres of social life. Through this functioning model and in accordance with legal regulations, coordinators for equal opportunities for women and men have been envisaged and appointed in all institutions at both central and local levels.

⁴ State Statistical Office: <https://rodovistatistiki.stat.gov.mk/> [accessed on 4/23/2024]

ly, it is important to note the contribution to advancing gender equality made by numerous international non-governmental organizations and embassies in the Republic of North Macedonia through support for various projects. Thus, a significant part of the project activities of these organizations was aimed at strengthening and supporting women's activism in Macedonian society, informing and educating members about women's rights in various areas of discrimination, and taking pioneering steps in public advocacy for the introduction of legal solutions, policies, and mechanisms to advance the status and position of women (Докамновиќ и др., 2019). As a result of such pioneering steps and commitments by women from the NGO sector, as part of feminist efforts for greater women's participation in political decision-making, a gender quota was introduced in 2001, whereby through legal obligations, 30% of candidates on electoral lists of political parties at the national and local levels were required to be from the underrepresented gender⁵. In 2006, the gender quota was expanded to require every third candidate on candidate lists to be from the underrepresented gender⁶.

It is important to note that the quota system has favorable effects on the plan for the political participation of women in parliamentary assemblies. However, in developed democratic societies, it should represent only a temporary framework for advancing rights, but in Macedonian society, it can be observed that without the quota system, women would again be outside the legislative body or would be very poorly represented, as confirmed by the analysis of women's participation in executive power and local self-government, especially mayors, where the quota system is not mandatory⁷.

⁵ In the Macedonian Assembly, women as bearers of legislative power in Macedonia were extremely underrepresented before the introduction of the quota system. For example, in the parliamentary composition from 1991-1994, there were only 6 women out of a total of 120 representatives, accounting for only 5%. The first female parliamentarians were: Ratka Dimitrova, Dosta Dimovska, Biljana Lazarevska, Slavjanka Stojanova, and Gjulistana Jumerovska. In the second parliamentary composition from 1994-1998, the situation did not change, but rather worsened, with only 4 female parliamentarians, or 3.3%. In the third parliamentary composition from 1998-2002, there were 7 female parliamentarians. At the same time, it is important to mention that even in the parliamentary composition from 2002, there was the first Albanian woman in the assembly, which is a direct result of the quota system in the Macedonian Assembly.

⁶ In 2015, the quota system was increased from 30% to 40% for the underrepresented gender on electoral lists.

⁷ Regarding the executive branch, in the first expert government (a technical government) from March 1991 to September 1992 under Prime Minister Nikola Kljusev, there were no women holding ministerial positions. In the second Macedonian government under Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski from September 1992, only two women held ministerial positions - Sofia Todorova as Minister for Development and Gordana Siljanovska as a minister without portfolio. In subsequent governments under Prime Minister Crvenkovski, there was only one woman in the education sector (Sofia Todorova and Emilija Simoska). It is evident that the situation has not changed to this day, but most strikingly, in terms of numbers, is the situation in local units, specifically mayors.

In 2003, the Parliamentary Club was founded as an informal and cross-party group of members of the Macedonian Assembly. In 2005, the Labor Relations Act was passed, with special provisions for protection against discrimination and equal opportunities for women and men, while the following year (2006) saw the adoption of the first Law on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women, and the establishment of the Commission for Equal Opportunities for Men and Women in the Macedonian Assembly. Furthermore, it is significant to mention several important strategies adopted to improve gender equality in Macedonian society: the Maternal Safety Strategy (2010-2015) and the Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (2011-2020) with National Action Plans for their implementation, as well as the Gender-Responsive Budgeting Strategies (2012-2017) and the first Gender Equality Strategy 2013-2020⁸. In 2012, the first National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (2013-2015) was adopted, while in 2020, the second NAP for the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2020-2025)⁹ was adopted. Evidently, when summarizing the results of women's organized action on gender equality policies, it can be concluded that the greatest breakthrough occurred in the early years of the new decade, from 2000 onwards.

Regarding feminist theory itself, pioneering efforts began with the establishment of the Research Center for Gender Studies (RCGS) within the Euro-Balkan Institute in 1999, initiated by the Women's Program. Hence, non-governmental organizations played a significant role in stimulating gender sensitivity in science in Macedonian society. The mission of the RCGS was directed towards disseminating academic and scientific knowledge in the field and linking theory, i.e., knowledge, with activism. One of the center's first projects was the International Conference on Institutionalizing Gender Studies, and in 2001, it launched the scientific journal on politics, gender, and culture "Identities", where numerous feminist authors from around the world were published and translated (Докамновиќ и др., 2019)¹⁰.

The analysis of the gender perspective in higher education revealed a lack of gender sensitivity in textbooks and teaching methods, thus, from academic interest and the need to keep pace with modern theoretical and educational trends worldwide, the initiative for the establishment of the Institute for

For example, in the local elections in 2005, out of a total of 84 municipalities, only one was led by a woman (Violeta Alarova in the Center municipality), while in the local elections in 2009, there were no female mayors.

⁸ In 2022, a new Gender Equality Strategy (2022-2027) was adopted, which contains clearly stated general and specific goals, expected results, and indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

⁹ State Statistical Office: <https://rodovistatistiki.stat.gov.mk/> [accessed on 4/23/2024]

¹⁰ Regarding feminist literature, the majority of translated literary works and feminist literature were published by the publishing houses "Sigmam Press" - Skopje and "Euro-Balkan Press" - Skopje.

Gender Studies emerged as the first organized undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. The Institute began its activities in the academic year 2008-2009, aiming to train professionals who will work to advance gender equality in all sectors of social life.

Despite significant progress in advancing legislation for gender equality, in 2013, with the new Law on Termination of Pregnancy (Abortion Law), which restricted women's access to abortion, there was a significant decline in the gender equality index in Macedonian society. Six years later, in 2019, under public pressure and feminist advocacy, administrative barriers to exercising the right to abortion were abolished. A large number of women were actively involved in the fight against restrictions on abortion access. The feminist movement was clearly proclaimed through the slogan "My Body, My Choice." As emphasized by Miškovska-Kajevska „critics also opposed the Government's permission for the Macedonian Orthodox Church to encroach on constitutionally guaranteed secularism and the right to freedom of choice regarding childbirth" (Кајевска -Мишковска, 2016: 2). She also criticizes the natalist policies and the intensified campaigns with extremely intimidating and moralistic discourses about the consequences of abortion (Кајевска -Мишковска, 2016).

In most European countries, even today, within the framework of feminist activism, the right to abortion is a central point of interest. According to feminists, rigid social control over abortion, despite being defined as an "anti-feminist" policy threatening the concept of civil liberties, also reveals the ideology of patriarchal power hierarchy, which defines the meanings of motherhood and family. Such ideology focuses on the "rights of the fetus," using a fierce iconography depicting it as a person (human being) whose life must be preserved, thus erasing the perspective of women's bodies and individual choice for their own bodies. Many patriarchal societies still highlight actions related to reproduction, often involving childbirth and child-rearing by women-mothers, as the most positive (elevated) moral qualities (Кошка -Хот & Србиновска & Бојаџиевска, 2010).

After long efforts by women's organizations in Macedonia, in 2017, the Law on Ratification of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) was adopted.¹¹ In 2018, changes to the Methodology for Strategic Planning and Preparation of the Annual Government Work Program were adopted, contributing to the establishment of a mechanism for integrating the gender perspective into strategic

¹¹ The Istanbul Convention was signed in 2011, entered into force in 2018, and in the same year, the National Action Plan 2018-2023 for its implementation was adopted. Macedonian legislation is obligated to be in line with the provisions of the Convention, including the obligation to prevent gender-based violence and ensure effective protection of victims and prosecution and punishment of perpetrators. Already in 2021, the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was adopted - in line with the requirements of the Istanbul Convention.

plans and annual programs and monitoring their implementation¹². In 2020, the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination was adopted, recognizing gender identity and sexual orientation as discriminatory grounds and introducing the concept of intersectional discrimination. With this legal decision, discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity was prohibited for the first time, and legal protection for LGBTI individuals was provided. In order to raise public awareness and promote the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, the Discrimination Protection Network conducted the campaign “Discrimination Ends with Me!”¹³.

It is notable that contemporary feminist movements include the concept of “marginalization” in spreading their ideology. They emphasize how patriarchy marginalizes women’s experiences, creating a dominant norm that promotes exclusively male (masculinist) experiences. Gender equality as a concept also refers to protecting the rights and responsibilities of all people, regardless of their affiliation based on gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, etc. Therefore, gender serves as an analytical category that can be a point of connection between feminist and LGBTQ+ movements, but it may not be a decisive category for all activists and theorists (Кошка -Хот & Србиновска & Бојадиевска, 2010).

In feminist theory, gender is used to describe the socio-cultural characteristics attributed to biological sex, or the societal definitions of what it means for an individual to be male or female. On the other hand, the LGBTQ+ movement focuses on protecting and promoting the rights of individuals with different sexual orientations and gender identities. In this movement, the concept of gender also refers to a range of socially constructed roles and relationships, personal characteristics, attitudes, values, and the relative power and influence society assigns to male and female genders on various grounds (*ibid.*).

Hence, feminist activism is directed toward gender rights with a special focus on social change and the legalization of all forms of sexual orientation. The main goal is to ensure objectivity in the societal acceptance of various sexual orientations, not just the normative heterosexual relationship as the solely approved/accepted institution. Otherwise, it would mean there is a so-called gender elimination, or oppression of certain individuals/groups due to “locking” their identity and stereotyping it according to established gender norms, mainly in accordance with male and female biological sex, without the right to choose an alternative, “(ab)normal” behavior (*ibid.*).

¹² State Statistical Office: <https://rodovistatistiki.stat.gov.mk/> [accessed on 4/26/2024]

¹³ In defining “what is discrimination?” the following slogans were included in this campaign: Discrimination is when you cannot advance in the workplace just because you are a woman!; Discrimination is when you have a homosexual orientation, and society does not recognize your relationship!; Discrimination is when you cannot report violence just because you are a sexual worker!; Discrimination is when you cannot find a home just because you are a transgender person!; etc.

As an example, in 2022, a proposal for the Law on Gender Equality was submitted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) in North Macedonia, which sparked heated reactions in Macedonian society. The goal of the law was to take a step forward in achieving gender equality by strengthening the position and status of women in society. This means equal access to resources and equal participation in decision-making in all spheres of social life, overcoming obstacles, and creating conditions for realizing the potential of all people, regardless of gender, gender identity, or expression. However, in the public discourse in Macedonian society, there was a basis for anti-gender movements, hostile attitudes, and attacks on the so-called “gender ideology.”¹⁴ The following year, a mass protest was organized by the Macedonian Orthodox Church and other religious organizations, citing “concerns about the future and safety of believers, particularly women, and children. We considered the legal recognition of gender identity in these laws unacceptable, as well as the confusing differentiation between: sex, gender, and gender identity¹⁵”. Consequently, it is important to note that dualism (antinomy) emerged within the women’s movement and the NGO sector. This is partly due to generational disparities in the women’s movement and the development of theoretical interpretations in feminist theory. According to Cvetković and Veličkovska, as highlighted in the study “Who’s Afraid of Gender?” (2022), challenging divisions within feminist movements are the result of gender-critical feminism, or more widely known as “trans-exclusive/radical exclusionary feminism.” In fact, it is about causing moral panic about breaking traditional understandings of gender and sex, especially within public discourse in societies, with the aim of ignoring or erasing issues related to “gender” from laws and policies, and instead defining women and men solely based on “assigned sex” – biologically acquired sex (Цветковиќ & Величковска, 2022). In their research, Cvetković and Veličkovska also address the mobilization against legal recognition of gender in North Macedonia, suggesting that such anti-gender movements in public discourse propagate the existence of a certain “gender ideology” with its “hidden agenda” directly detrimental to society and the state. They conclude that in the public discourse in Macedonian society, the idea of the so-called “gender ideology” has gained traction outside explicit anti-gender circles (ibid.)

It is evident that there are certain European trends towards the increase of anti-gender movements, much like a decade ago throughout Europe and the USA, when the anti-gender movement began to gain increasing support and visibility. There was then a massive conservative mobilization of anti-gender movements that emerged from France, through Slovenia, to Poland, against campaigns for same-sex marriage rights and against the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

¹⁴ See more: Butler, J. (2021). “Why is the idea of ‘gender’ provoking backlash the world over?” URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/commentisfree/2021/oct/23/judith-butler-gender-ideology-backlash> [accessed on: 4/29/2024]

¹⁵ http://emc.mk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023.5.05_reakcija_rodova_ednakvost1.jpg [accessed on 4/25/2024]

According to Bobičić and Stojčić, this “fight” against “gender ideology” began much earlier and was led by the Vatican in the mid-1990s, attempting to launch a counterattack on the recognition of sexual and reproductive rights in the UN. Such movements make a constructive attack on the very concept of “gender” and proclaim views on “family values,” “patriarchal values,” “biological sex,” and “equality between men and women.” (Bobičić & Stojčić, 2023).

Regarding recent events within the feminist (women’s) movement in Macedonian society, divisions can be observed regarding positions and attitudes towards transgender issues and the LGBTQ+ movement, as well as the terminological understanding of “gender.” Hence, according to Cvetković and Veličkovska, the alignment of some feminists with anti-gender movements, which, according to their ideological position, are opposed to the key values of feminism, is a novelty in this division. Therefore, some feminist circles maintain an essentialist position regarding the question of what it means to be a woman (Цветковиќ & Величковска, 2022).

It is evident that there are generational differences within the feminist movement in Macedonia, including various activities, commitments, actions, and programmatic ideologies, which vary depending on historical, political, and cultural contexts. Consequently, although the terminological understanding of “gender” can be a point of connection between the feminist and LGBTQ+ movements, there are also differences in focus and strategies between these two communities. Some feminists may exclusively focus on women’s issues and gender equality policies, while others may include LGBTQ+ community issues in their agenda. At the same time, not all activists in the LGBTQ+ movement may identify with feminism or use gender as the primary category for their fight for rights and recognition.

Conclusion

The feminist movement in Macedonia is diverse and dynamic, comprising various organizations, activists, and intellectuals dedicated to advancing women’s rights and achieving gender equality. They employ diverse methods such as scientific research, activism, campaigns, lobbying, and participation in public debates to promote their goals and improve the status of women in Macedonian society.

In the Macedonian socio-cultural and political context, there are other women’s movements with different goals and focuses. Some advocate for specific rights or interests of women in certain communities and cultural contexts, while others focus on different aspects of identity and the fight against various forms of discrimination. Each of these aspects contributes to shaping diverse and dynamic space for the struggle for women’s rights and emancipation. These are just some of the characteristics of feminist ideology in Macedonia following independence, and the process of feminism’s development and its goals continue to evolve and adapt to new social, cultural, political, and economic contexts.

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