

Patriarchy, Capitalism and the Cycle of Labor Exploitation in Third World Societies: Breaking the Chain of Causation

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Abstract

The intersection between capitalism and patriarchy has long been a subject of scholarly debate. These two systems operate in a mutually reinforcing manner, each bolstering the existence and dominance of the other. This paper examines how patriarchy provides a structural foundation for capitalism by sustaining economic inequality and gender-based labor disparities. Similarly, capitalism upholds patriarchy by ensuring economic dependence and social stratification that disadvantages women. Drawing on existing research, this paper reviews the work of Silva Federici and other scholars and explores how capitalist and patriarchal systems work together to create an exploitative socio-economic order. This descriptive research relied on secondary academic literature while analysing their relevant contents and debates drawn from these literatures. The conclusions arrived in this research were argumentatively built with simple polemics from preponderance of academic opinion from several scholars. Additionally, this paper highlights contemporary feminist movements that challenge the entanglement of these systems, advocating for effective socialisation, social engineering, economic and gender justice as strategic measures that will attenuate the chain of causation that are sustained by patriarchy and capitalism within the third world societies.

Keywords: Capitalism, Patriarchy, Third World, Labour Exploitation, Labour Union

Introduction

The entanglement of capitalism and patriarchy has long been a subject of discourse in feminist and economic theories (Nguyen, 2019; Gilmore, 2020; Jamal, 2022). Both systems operate in ways that reinforce each other, creating a structure that perpetuates gendered oppression (Federici, 2021). Capitalism, characterized by private ownership, competition, and profit maximization, relies on patriarchy to sustain its exploitative nature, particularly in the division of labor, wage disparities, and the undervaluation of reproductive labor; while leveraging on the structural support from the state (Shebbs, Ekwuribe & Iheonu, 2018). Conversely, patriarchy thrives under capitalism because economic dependency ensures male dominance in social, political, and economic spheres. Together, they form a cyclical system that perpetuates gender inequality, making it difficult to dismantle one without addressing the other. This research explores the interconnectedness of capitalism and patriarchy, their implications for women's welfare, and strategies for breaking the cycle, using contemporary feminist movements such as the 4B Movement in South Korea as a case study.

Patriarchy does not exist in isolation; rather, it is embedded within economic structures that sustain male dominance. Similarly, capitalism, if left unchecked, risks self-destruction due to its inherent contradictions, such as wealth concentration and labor exploitation. However, patriarchy provides capitalism with the necessary support systems to maintain its control over labor, particularly through gendered economic roles (Federici, 2021). Through institutionalizing the division between paid and unpaid labor, capitalism ensures that women remain economically dependent on men, thereby reinforcing patriarchal structures. Nworgu and Shebbs, (2016) had

noted that there is an intrinsic link between economic development and women development in every society and so patriarchy potentially deconstructs these structural compositions.

Historically, capitalism has relied on gendered labor divisions to maximize profits. The exploitation of women's unpaid domestic labor reduces the cost of reproducing the workforce, thereby allowing capitalists to extract greater surplus value from paid labor (Fraser, 2022). Moreover, women's employment in low-wage and precarious jobs under neoliberal capitalism further entrenches economic disparities, making it difficult for them to achieve financial independence (Nworgu & Shebbs, 2016). Thus, patriarchy and capitalism operate symbiotically, ensuring that wealth and power remain concentrated in the hands of a privileged few, while women bear the burden of economic precarity. The cyclical reinforcement of capitalism and patriarchy is evident in several societal structures, including the workplace, family, and media representations. In the workplace, women are often subjected to a "double burden," where they must balance paid employment with unpaid domestic labor (Bhattacharya, 2020). This arrangement benefits capitalist enterprises, as it minimizes labor costs while ensuring that workers are maintained through unpaid reproductive labor.

Additionally, capitalist markets exploit gendered stereotypes to drive consumerism. Women are targeted as consumers through advertisements that reinforce patriarchal beauty standards and domestic roles (Banet-Weiser, 2021). These marketing strategies not only commodify femininity but also create an illusion of empowerment that, paradoxically, deepens patriarchal control. Political and legal institutions further maintain the capitalist-patriarchal structure by implementing policies that prioritize economic growth over gender equality (Shebbs, et al, 2019). Wage gaps, lack of paid parental leave, and inadequate childcare services disproportionately affect women, limiting their participation in the labor market and reinforcing their economic dependence on men (McRobbie, 2009). Consequently, the entrenchment of these systems ensures that any challenge to one inadvertently threatens the other, making dismantling them a complex and daunting task.

This research explains how patriarchy helps to build up the operation of a capitalist society in the Third World. This happens when patriarchal existence sets up a system that survives on the labor of women by undermining the rights of women and placing their labor in a secondary position. In this way, capitalists will have unhindered access to cheap labor offered by women, as they have very few options available and are ready to offer their labor for as little as anyone can pay just to survive. This transaction will allow capitalists to access cheap labor and continue to expropriate the gap in labor between men and women, to the detriment of women. The capitalists will use this cheap labor to complement the labor needs of women, sustaining the existence of capitalist institutions, which will continue to control the means of production.

Another point this research notes is that patriarchy reduces the wage offered to women for their labor. This will affect their ability to challenge the political system, which is controlled by patriarchy. When women lack the power to challenge the political system, they are unable to initiate social change and remain victims of the patriarchal social order. Federici (2004), in her book, was clear on the position that witch hunting aims to create a system that will dominate women. This happens when women are separated from one another. A witch, practically, is always made to be ostracized and live apart from others. Thus, the feminization of witchcraft is meant to create a paradigm that will facilitate division among women laborers and workers. This is because when women unite, they are able to collectively challenge the patriarchal system.

This research demonstrates how patriarchy and capitalism work together. On one hand, patriarchy is used to control the social structure of women in society, determine access to labor, and establish the distinction between extractive labor and productive labor. On the other hand, capitalism is designed to operate as a means of accumulation of wealth by the owners of the means of production. This wealth created by capitalists is used to sustain the patriarchal system across hierarchies, further reinforcing patriarchy. Ferguson (2016) argued that the academic debates along these lines are most productive when one considers the causal relationship, which helps to drive home the point.

Thus, the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism is causal, with both systems focusing on advancing mutual benefits. Additionally, both systems advance inequality among genders and set barriers to the equal distribution of resources, in which case, women are at the receiving end.

Patriarchy and Capitalism: Conceptual Review

Patriarchy and capitalism are two dominant structures that have shaped societies across the world. While patriarchy refers to a system of social organization in which men hold power and dominate key spheres of life, capitalism is an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production and the pursuit of profit. Many scholars argue that these two systems are not only compatible but also mutually reinforcing. Patriarchy, as defined by Walby (1990), is a system of social structures and practices that encourage the dominance of men, and creates an oppressive system that exploits women. This dominance manifests in multiple forms, including political, economic, and cultural subjugation. On the other hand, capitalism is an economic system characterized by wage labor, capital accumulation, and market competition (Marx, 1867). It emphasizes profit maximization, often at the expense of social equality.

Feminist scholars argue that patriarchy predates capitalism but has adapted to capitalist structures in ways that perpetuate gender-based oppression (Federici, 2004). As capitalism evolved, it absorbed and transformed patriarchal relations rather than eliminating them. Thus, understanding the intricate relationship between the two requires an exploration of their historical development and their impact on gender relations. Engels, (1884) argued that patriarchy emerged alongside private property. Engels claimed that the rise of class society, where wealth became concentrated in the hands of a few, necessitated the subjugation of women to ensure inheritance lines remained within the male lineage. This view forms the basis of Marxist feminist critiques, which assert that patriarchy is not an independent system but one that is deeply enmeshed with economic structures.

Hartmann, (1979) argued that traditional Marxist analysis overlooked the role of patriarchy in sustaining capitalist economies. According to Hartmann, patriarchy and capitalism operate together, ensuring that women's unpaid labor in the domestic sphere subsidizes capitalist production by sustaining the workforce at minimal cost. One of the most compelling critiques of capitalism's reliance on patriarchy comes from Federici (2004) who explores the historical transition from feudalism to capitalism and its impact on women. She highlights how the witch hunts of the 16th and 17th centuries were instrumental in establishing the modern capitalist economy by suppressing women's economic independence and reinforcing their role as unpaid domestic laborers.

Fraser, (2013) further critiques capitalism's dependency on women's reproductive labor, arguing that capitalism externalizes the cost of social reproduction onto women. By devaluing care work, capitalism ensures a steady supply of labor while keeping costs low. This phenomenon, referred to as "the feminization of labor," sees women increasingly drawn into paid employment while still shouldering the bulk of unpaid domestic responsibilities (Hochschild & Machung, 1989: 34). Despite increased female participation in the labor market, wage disparities and workplace discrimination persist (Shebbs, & Nworgu, 2016). The gender pay gap remains a stark example of how patriarchy operates within capitalist frameworks. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020), women globally earn approximately 20% less than men for the same work. MacKinnon, (1987) argues that this wage disparity is not incidental but systemic, reflecting a broader devaluation of women's labor. In Feminism Unmodified, she critiques liberal feminist approaches that focus solely on legal equality without addressing deeper structural inequalities embedded in capitalism and patriarchy.

Patriarchy and capitalism also intersect in the realm of consumer culture. Feminist scholars like McRobbie, (2009) analyze how capitalism commodifies gender norms, reinforcing patriarchal ideals through advertising and media representations. Women are targeted as primary

consumers in beauty, fashion, and domestic products, perpetuating unrealistic gender norms while sustaining capitalist profit motives. Moreover, the global supply chain reflects gendered exploitation, with women constituting the majority of low-wage workers in industries such as garment production and domestic work (Bhattacharya, 2017). The exploitation of women's labor in the Global South, particularly in sweatshops, demonstrates how capitalism perpetuates patriarchal labor structures on a global scale.

Neoliberalism, the dominant economic model since the late 20th century, claims to promote gender equality through individual empowerment and market participation. However, Fraser (2009) critiques neoliberal feminism for co-opting feminist ideals while ignoring systemic oppression. She argues that neoliberalism exploits feminist rhetoric to promote labor market participation without addressing issues such as wage inequality, work-life balance, and structural discrimination. Similarly, Eisenstein (2009) describes how neoliberal capitalism instrumentalizes feminism to further its own ends, portraying economic participation as the ultimate marker of female liberation while ignoring the persistent inequalities embedded in capitalist structures.

Patriarchy and Capitalism: The Reinforcing Cycle of Labour Exploitation

The intersection between patriarchy and capitalism has long been a subject of scholarly inquiry, with theorists such as Federici (2004) highlighting how these two systems reinforce each other to sustain labor exploitation. Federici examines the historical processes of witch-hunting and primitive accumulation, demonstrating their centrality to capitalist expansion and labor control. She argues that witch-hunting was not merely a socio-religious phenomenon but a critical strategy used to subjugate women, dismantle communal ties, and enforce new forms of labor discipline necessary for capitalism's growth.

Beyond Federici, other scholars have examined how capitalism thrives by leveraging patriarchal structures to exploit gendered and class-based labor divisions. Marx (1867), while not explicitly addressing gender, laid the foundation for understanding capitalist labor exploitation. Later feminist scholars, such as Fraser (2013), Mies (1986), and Davis (1981), extended Marxist critiques by highlighting how gender oppression and unpaid domestic labor are essential to capitalism's functioning. This article explores the historical and contemporary implications of the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism, illustrating how this reinforcing cycle continues to shape global labor exploitation.

Witch-Hunting and Primitive Accumulation

Federici (2004) provides a historical analysis of how witch-hunting functioned as a tool for primitive accumulation, a process first described by Marx as the violent expropriation of communal lands and the coercion of workers into wage labor. However, Federici extends this analysis to show that women were disproportionately targeted, as their traditional roles in subsistence economies and collective social structures posed a threat to emerging capitalist relations.

The witch-hunts of the 16th and 17th centuries were instrumental in reshaping labor relations. By persecuting women who engaged in communal land use, midwifery, and traditional healing, these campaigns eroded women's autonomy and reinforced patriarchal control. Federici argues that this was not incidental but a deliberate strategy to weaken collective resistance and integrate women into a new capitalist order where their labor was either unpaid (domestic labor) or undervalued (low-wage work). Mies (1986) similarly contends that the enclosure of commons and the subjugation of women's labor were two sides of the same coin, both serving to establish capitalist hegemony.

The Capitalist Division of Labour and Gender Hierarchies

Capitalism sustains itself by structuring labor hierarchies that divide workers along gender, racial, and class lines. The gendered division of labor, as theorized by scholars like Hartmann, (1979), ensures that women are disproportionately relegated to unpaid reproductive labor and low-wage service industries, reinforcing both capitalist and patriarchal control. This labor division creates a dual burden for women: performing unpaid domestic labor while also participating in waged labor under exploitative conditions. Fraser (2013) expands on this analysis by arguing that capitalism is fundamentally dependent on the “hidden” labor of social reproduction-tasks such as caregiving, child-rearing, and domestic work. These activities, though essential for the functioning of capitalist economies, remain unpaid or undervalued because they are feminized. This devaluation of reproductive labor allows capitalists to maintain a cheap labor force without bearing the costs of social reproduction, shifting these burdens onto women within households.

The Role of Colonialism and Globalization

The link between patriarchy and capitalism extends beyond Europe and North America, as colonialism and globalization have further entrenched gendered labor exploitation on a global scale. Mies (1986) and Davis (1981) highlight how colonial capitalist expansion relied on the violent subjugation of Indigenous, African, and Asian populations, imposing gendered labor roles that persist today. For example, Mies discusses how colonial economies systematically devalued women’s labor in subsistence agriculture, pushing them into poorly paid wage labor or unpaid domestic work. Similarly, Davis (1981) examines how the transatlantic slave trade and post-emancipation economies in the U.S. disproportionately exploited Black women’s labor, forcing them into domestic servitude and factory work under brutal conditions. These historical processes laid the foundation for contemporary global labor inequalities, where women in the Global South continue to be overrepresented in precarious, low-wage industries such as garment manufacturing, domestic work, and agriculture.

With the advent of neoliberal globalization, multinational corporations have intensified the exploitation of women’s labor in sweatshops and informal economies (Shebbs, 2015). As Sassen (1998) argues, global economic restructuring has led to the feminization of labor, where women’s work is increasingly precarious, low-paid, and unprotected by labor laws. This structural arrangement benefits capitalists by maintaining a flexible, exploitable workforce that maximizes profit while minimizing labor costs.

The Intersection of Race, Gender, and Class in Labour Exploitation

An intersectional analysis reveals that the exploitation of labor under capitalism is not uniform but varies across different social identities. Crenshaw (1989) introduced the concept of intersectionality to describe how overlapping systems of oppression such as race, gender, and class-create unique forms of marginalization. In the context of capitalism and patriarchy, racialized women experience compounded forms of exploitation. For instance, in the U.S., the legacy of slavery and racial capitalism continues to shape labor markets, disproportionately pushing Black and Latina women into low-wage service jobs with limited protections. In Europe, migrant women from Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe often find themselves in domestic and care work sectors, where they are vulnerable to exploitation due to their precarious immigration status (Anderson, 2000). This intersectional perspective underscores how capitalism does not merely exploit labor in a generic sense but strategically leverages existing social hierarchies to extract maximum surplus value. Patriarchy and racism serve as ideological tools that justify these exploitative labor arrangements, ensuring that certain groups remain at the bottom of the economic hierarchy.

Federici, (2004) presents a clearer picture of the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism when she discussed witch-hunting and primitive accumulation processes and how these are integral to capitalists' quests for continued reproduction of labor. She emphasized the economic and political significance of the institution of witch-hunting and how this is used to persecute the freedom of women by abolishing every form of communal life and activities that will promote collective social movements. In addition to the above, this practice goes further to explain why the labor force is being divided and prorated across the entire working-class categories. This is an attempt to create labor divisions and hierarchies among the workers which contribute to facilitating the dominance of capitalists over the labor system and encourage them to have effective control over the labor system. In this research, the argument is that the interaction between patriarchal tendencies and capitalism is focused on sustaining the existence of each other. This is in line with the arguments of Federici, (2004). The implication is that when patriarchy is threatened and patriarchal institutions are destroyed, capitalism will come to an end.

Patriarchy is the tendency to prefer the male over the female in economic power, property rights, and inheritance and in social relations. It operates by sponsoring an ideology which attributes certain rights and privileges to the men alone or a collection of men or a power bloc of masculine-oriented institutions. This in most instances will encourage favoritism against women (Van, 2015), discrimination against women (Dessler, 2017), and the inhibition of women from rising beyond the subsistence responsibility assigned to them at the patrilocal levels (Kandiyoti, 1998).

Capitalism is an economic system which believes in private ownership of the means of production with emphasis on profit maximization. It is an economic system controlled by private owners for profit-making ventures (Sarwat & Ahmed, 2020). The capitalist economy is characterized by oligarchy, private ownership, big firms, and entrepreneurship which climaxes on the accumulation of wealth through cheap labor (Pattenden, 2023).

Federici (2004) shows how patriarchy is a means of social control. The laws of social control focus on the diversion of women's collective social formations, isolation of women from among themselves, and forcing them to always consider being family-oriented, which imposes unsalaried reproductive labor on women. Loomba Foundation (2015) discussed how capitalism has succeeded in driving massive reforms in the activities of patriarchy in such a way that has suppressed feminism, movements for gender equality, gender consciousness, gender sensitivity, gender empowerment, and other projects that seem to uphold the rights of women in modern societies (Hsiao et al, 2021; Sulumba-Kapuma, 2018; Tembo, 2022).

Federici (2004) also identified how negative characterization of women as witches has helped to facilitate their oppression in society. She observed that this drive was made easier by Pentecostal evangelical systems which are institutions set up to promote patriarchal ideologies such as witch-hunting narratives that characterize women as witches in their local communities. This gave birth to demonologists, a branch of the Pentecostals, who preach how women are more vulnerable to being possessed by evil spirits and turning witches very quickly, therefore, than men. Federici (2004) believes that this characterization was together created by the bourgeoisie capitalists to help perpetuate the culture of systemic oppression of women down to the local communities and restrict their freedoms at the grassroots level. Witchcraft characterization in the grassroots hopes to achieve two things. First is to break down the collectivity of women, by singling each woman out and tagging her as a witch so as to pass her down for punishment for being a witch in the local community. This is aimed at providing checks against the excesses of women by extending attacks against women's freedom to the grassroots.

While discussing the capitalists' iconography of witchcraft, Federici (2004) noted that capitalism bedevils the night and makes those who go out at night suspects of witchcraft. This is a way of restricting the labor market and making it difficult for women to use their labor at night to generate extra income. The implications of this are that the capitalists will want to ensure absolute control of women's labor and will not allow women to use their private labor at night to make additional profit therefrom. This is in addition to the fact that the capitalists fear that the

cover of the night would be used as a potential cover to plan rebellion. The first stage of accumulation is to disconnect workers from any resource or means that allow for their reproduction such as land or the fruits of the earth, so they have nothing to live by and therefore have absolute dependence on the expectations of the capitalist systems. This disconnects women from performing any natural task that would make them productive by way of their health, wealth, and generational offspring.

Patriarchy and Capitalism: Breaking the Chain of Causation in Third World Societies

The interconnection between patriarchy and capitalism has been analysed extensively in feminist and economic literature. Scholars such as Federici (2004) and Mies (1986) have demonstrated how patriarchy functions as a tool for capitalism by ensuring a supply of unpaid or underpaid female labor. Patriarchy systematically devalues women's labor, particularly reproductive labor, which encompasses childbearing, caregiving, and domestic work—functions essential for sustaining the workforce but not compensated within capitalist economies.

In many developing societies, patriarchal structures reinforce gender roles that confine women to the domestic sphere while men dominate public and economic spaces (Shebbs & Nworgu, 2016). This setup benefits capitalism in multiple ways. Firstly, it provides a reserve army of labor, wherein women can be incorporated into the workforce as cheap labor when needed and relegated back to unpaid domestic work when economic conditions demand it. Secondly, by framing women's labor as natural and expected rather than as productive economic activity, capitalism evades the cost of compensating this labor. The 4B Movement in Korea provides a case study of how women can resist patriarchal expectations and, consequently, disrupt the capitalist structures that rely on gendered exploitation. The movement, as analyzed by Jieun Lee and Euisol Jeong (2021), challenged the societal expectation that women must engage in heterosexual relationships, marriage, and childbirth. This resistance directly undermined both the patriarchal norms that enforce female subservience and the capitalist structures that rely on a continual supply of reproductive labor.

The Potency of Socialization, Patriarchy, and Structured Resistance

Jieun Lee and Euisol Jeong (2021) observed that socialization plays a critical role in shaping the extent to which patriarchal control can be dismantled within the society. Societies where women have strong social networks and collective consciousness tend to exhibit higher levels of resistance to patriarchal oppression. This is because collective bargaining and social justice movements create a space for women to demand systemic change. However, patriarchy actively seeks to fragment women's solidarity by instigating divisions along class, ethnicity, and socio-economic lines, thereby weakening collective action. So, socialisation creates a forum to forge and harmonize political energies (Shebbs, et al, 2019) to build hierarchies that will potentially defeat patriarchy.

This dynamic is particularly visible in African societies, where patriarchal capitalism operates through the extraction of women's labor without adequate compensation. For example, agrarian economies in sub-Saharan Africa rely heavily on women for subsistence farming, yet land ownership and financial control remain largely in the hands of men, (Kabeer, 2015; Shebbs & Njoku, 2016). This structural division ensures that women remain economically dependent, limiting their ability to challenge systemic oppression.

Furthermore, in these societies, reproductive labor is systematically undervalued and underfunded. Governments and capitalist enterprises alike avoid investing in childcare, maternity benefits, or healthcare, thereby shifting the financial burden onto women. As observed by Fraser (2016), capitalist economies externalize the cost of social reproduction, making women bear the brunt of ensuring the continued existence of the labor force without any formal recognition or remuneration. This features in the investment interests of states, subnational governments and

even international organisations which are formed within patriarchal hierarchies (Shebbs, Agbor & Uduma, 2022). The 4B Movement's core strategy was to break the cycle between patriarchy and capitalism by encouraging women to disengage from patriarchally structured systems. This included rejecting marriage, heterosexual relationships, and reproduction-key pillars that sustain both patriarchy and capitalism. This form of radical resistance draws parallels with Silvia Federici's (2004) arguments on the need for women to reclaim control over their reproductive labor as a means of challenging capitalist exploitation.

In the case study of the 4B Movement in Korea (Lee & Jeong, 2021), we saw how women stood for the eradication of heterosexual intercourses leading to childbirth, such as romance, sexual relationships, and marriage. The movement prompted a renegotiation of the relationships between women and men in society, including the social stratification and role assignment sentiments of Korean society. These are patriarchal biases that set up a framework for the suppression of women. From the Korean case study, as noted by Lee and Jeong (2021), it could be observed that socialization elements determine the extent to which patriarchal control can be deconstructed in a society. This means that in societies where women have the social identity of uniting, socializing, and identifying among themselves, there tends to be a higher level of collective bargaining and social justice mobility systems, which increase their ability to make demands from the system. So, what patriarchy does is to attenuate the cohesion among women within a society and bring structural divisions among them in a way that reduces their abilities to come together.

In most African societies, what patriarchy does is to use women's labor power without adequate renumeration (Shebbs & Nworgu, 2016) and this is justifiable within the industrial statuesque. Patriarchal societies also do not recognize reproductive labor, as it is expensive to finance reproductive labor. So, they defund reproductive labor and exploit it to create more labor for women while discouraging every form of social relations that will discourage women from reproducing. This transactional relationship between women and capitalists became more intense following the rise of multiple factors such as expanded economic demands, the industrial revolution, competitive business enterprises, globalization, among many others. In modern societies, what patriarchy does is to ensure that capitalism survives by setting up the base for its existence by manipulating the labor system to make capitalists the most significant factor in the chain of production. This undermines the labor force and gives capitalists the privilege to determine how much the worker has to be paid.

What the 4B movement sought to achieve was to break the chain of causation between patriarchy and capitalism by making women get more and more disconnected from patriarchally structured systems. This can be achieved when women willingly refuse to comply with patriarchal norms and practices in society, as these will help to promote the dominance of patriarchy. This highlights the reinvocation of collective action among women to resist the patriarchal status quo and the motivations behind it. The 4B movement was followed by a subsequent revolution that climaxed with strategic structural reforms in Korea, because negotiating with patriarchy will not successfully wane its powers over the labor system (Kandiyoti, 1998). In summary, patriarchal biases are set up to undermine the value of women's labor, create cheap labor out of them, and make more profits for capitalism. Thus, the relationship creates a cycle that continues without end until women rise up to resist it.

Moreover, feminist scholars such as Kandiyoti, (1998) have argued that merely negotiating with patriarchy is insufficient for systemic change. Instead, structural transformation is necessary, including policy reforms that recognize and compensate reproductive labor, ensure economic independence for women, and dismantle gendered labor divisions. Korea's feminist movement demonstrated that sustained collective action, coupled with policy advocacy, can lead to tangible changes, such as increased gender-sensitive policies and labor protections.

Developing societies must consider multiple strategies to dismantle the patriarchal-capitalist nexus, such as implementing policies that recognize and compensate domestic and care work, ensuring maternity benefits, and enforcing equal pay legislation (Shebbs & Uduma, 2019).

Supporting women's access to land, credit, and entrepreneurial opportunities through local mobilization and the local government systems (Shebbs, Agbor & Uduma, 2022) is crucial to reducing economic dependency on patriarchal structures. Raising awareness about gender equality and creating safe spaces for women's collective mobilization will create a less toxic environment for female labor development. Encouraging women's participation in labor unions and cooperatives will help them collectively strengthen their bargaining power, which will potentially challenge and checkmate capitalist structures.

Conclusion

Patriarchy and capitalism function as mutually reinforcing systems that exploit gendered labor divisions to maintain economic and social hierarchies. The case study of the 4B Movement in Korea illustrates how women's resistance can disrupt this relationship by challenging the foundational structures of both patriarchy and capitalism. As Kandiyoti (1998) and Fraser (2016) argue, systemic transformation-not mere negotiation-is necessary to dismantle these oppressive frameworks. For developing societies, breaking the chain of causation between patriarchy and capitalism requires a multipronged approach that combines legislative action, economic reforms, and grassroots mobilization. Only through such strategies can genuine gender equity and economic justice be achieved.

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