I Thought that was Just for Western Girls. Global Culture and the Era after Feminism

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Abstract

There has been a substantial amount of academic discourse given to the subject of post-feminism, with the majority of the focus being placed on the "Western" setting and a definition of post-feminism that is in perfect alignment with "Western culture." The current research sheds light on the fact that feminist culture academics have not paid nearly enough attention to the potential effects that post-feminism may have on cultural contexts that are associated with other cultures. During the process of analysing and assessing postfeminism, this study recommends for the utilisation of a strategy that is both complete and methodical. Within the larger framework of transnational feminist cultural studies, this is accomplished by presenting a concise survey of the literature on postfeminism in situations that are not traditionally associated with the Western world. This argument implies that by adopting this method, one might be able to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of postfeminism as a cultural phenomenon that transcends national borders and has an effect on people of all genders all over the world, rather than merely in Western Europe and the United States. In the final section of the paper, a precise definition of the term is presented, and an investigation into the potential benefits that this novel conceptual framework may offer to feminist cultural researchers who are investigating post-feminism on a global scale is carried out.

Introduction

According to the findings of scholars such as Gill (2007, 2008), Tasker and Negra (2007), McRobbie (2009), Gill and Scharff (2011), and Butler (2013), the concept of "freedom" to engage in traditional gender roles typically involves the rejection or dismissal of feminism as being unneeded or unwanted. An increased emphasis on femininity as a physical attribute, increased expectations for women to participate in self-objectification in a (hetero)sexual setting, controlled consumption of beauty and fashion products, and an insistence on portraying women's actions as independent,

knowledgeable, and personally satisfying are all examples of post-feminism, as described by Rosalind Gill (2007, 2008). Post-feminism is a paradoxical way of thinking that manifests itself in a number of ways. Through the utilisation of the concept of "rhetoric of choice," post-feminist discourse promotes the value that is placed on the feminine form. According to Blue (2012), this paradigm demonstrates a never-ending succession of commercial choices that appear to be powerful and beneficial, and they are assessed to be independent for women and girls. Neoliberalism is a philosophy that is usually accepted to be associated with post-feminism. This is due to the fact that post-feminism places a focus on individualising logics that reduce and minimise the persisting gendered injustice that women confront. The inherent connection that it has to consumerist conceptions of "choice"—which have been investigated by scholars such as Gill (2008), Gill and Scharff (2011), and Butler (2013)—only serves to make this situation even more intractable.

Recent feminist study on postfeminism has focused mostly on regions of the world that are commonly referred to as the "Western" globe. This is because these regions are at the centre of the feminist movement. It is commonly believed that post-feminism is mostly Western, both in terms of where it originated and how it was classified as "post-" the largely progressive effects of feminist activism during the Western second wave (Tasker and Negra, 2007; McRobbie, 2009). This is a common misconception. In spite of this, the majority of academic research is in agreement that postfeminism has implications that extend beyond the effects it has on women in Western nations. On the other hand, Tasker and Negra (2007) contend that this strategy is inherently white and middle-class due to the fact that it places an emphasis on consumption as a means of defining oneself and leisure as a physical location. The movement of postfeminism is characterised by an idealised persona that is typically young, heterosexual, physically fit, slim, and adheres to conventional beauty standards. This particular demographic is addressed in a clear and widespread manner by postfeminism.

Two of the most well-known authors in the region are McRobbie (2009) and Butler (2013). Dosekun was published in April 2015, following its third iteration. As an alternative, if one were to inquire about if a specific product or pastime is only accessible to persons of White race, would they also inquire about whether it is exclusively intended for women of White race? According to the findings of Jess Butler's research, contemporary postfeminist researchers typically make the

assumption that women of colour in Western contexts are marginalised or excluded from society. This assumption is based on observations made in academic literature and the media.

Additionally, the author contends that postfeminism ought to be understood in a more comprehensive manner so as to incorporate intersectionality, particularly with regard to its acknowledgment of the existence of racial diversity. In accordance with the author's assertions, the generally held perception that this matter is extremely uncomplicated is not supported by sufficient factual evidence (2013, page 48). As part of the technique that the author employs, a critical analysis of post-feminist media portrayals of women of colour in Western societies is carried out.

This academic paper presents the thesis that postfeminism has a significant impact that extends beyond women in Western nations; hence, considering it from a transnational viewpoint is essential in order to have a complete understanding of it. A significant portion of the essay is based on the observations that Butler (2013) made. The primary contention of this paper is that postfeminism ought to be reexamined as a phenomena that is prevalent across the entire globe of culture. The phrase "non-West," "global South," and "third," in contrast to the phrases "West," "global North," "first," and "developed," will be utilised in order to provide an explanation of my point of view. According to Grewal (2005), the aforementioned titles allude to geographical areas that have been historically characterised by the presence of imaginations, ideologies, and social inequalities that are connected with imperialism. According to Inderpal Grewal (2005, 25), the divisions between "the West" and "the Non-West" were established as a consequence of European colonisation. These divisions have since been repeatedly reinterpreted in order to maintain the differences between wealthy countries and those that are classified as "developing," as well as between different socioeconomic classes. Furthermore, I use the principles that were discussed earlier in a heuristic manner in order to challenge the prevalent perceptions of sharp divisions and binary systems that they both produce and symbolise. According to Grewal and Kaplan's explanations in their papers from 1994 and 2001, the term "transnational" is used to refer to the analytical method that goes beyond the restrictions that were described earlier. There will be additional information regarding this topic provided at a later time. Despite its prevalence in postfeminist writing, the concept of transnationalism is still rather uncommon. A brief review of prior conversations

discussing postfeminism and its reasons concerning or related to the global South is provided in the first section of the paper, which is titled "Simidele Dosekun Final Draft - April 2015 4" This section serves as further support for the argument. I claim that the majority of the material that has been produced about post-feminism in recent times has focused on the movement's roots inside Western culture. This has resulted in the absence of in-depth study, theoretical analysis, and examination of post-feminism's relevance on a global scale.

In the following sections of this dissertation, the theoretical framework of transnational feminist cultural studies will be utilised in order to provide potential options for addressing and reducing the gap. A theoretical investigation of transnational cultural phenomena is presented in the second section of this dissertation. The purpose of this section is to establish postfeminism as a distinct concept. Transnationalization is an essential component of the postfeminist movement. This is due to the fact that postfeminism is, by its very definition, a discourse that is mediated and commercialised, and it is accompanied by a wide range of material activities. To put it another way, as it travels across international borders, its dispersion and transmission do not strictly adhere to a North-South axis. In the second and third portions of the study, the theoretical argument is investigated in great detail. Particular emphasis is paid to the analytical repercussions of the argument, as well as the significance of understanding postfeminism as a cultural phenomenon that occurs simultaneously on a worldwide scale. To assist in making my ideas more clear, I will present a concise summary of the research that I conducted on prominent growing forms of femininity in the Lagos, Nigeria, surrounding area. As a result of the fact that feminist cultural researchers grasp the concept of postfeminism as a worldwide cultural phenomenon, they are in a position to recognise, investigate, and establish new areas of research. The cultural frameworks that are linked to globalisation are more complicated, contentious, and politically delicate, and they have a broader understanding of these frameworks.

civilizations or societies that are not Western A significant amount of attention and analysis from academics has been directed towards the intersection between postfeminism and globalisation. The researchers have investigated the ways in which these two phenomena interact with one another and influence one another.

Several examples of Western actors taking on the roles of "other" women who

undertake acts of heroism can be found, such as in Mohanty Simidele Dosekun's Final Draught - April 2015, which is only one example. The Western world has long been seen as a bastion of "progress" and "modernity" for women, and this phenomenon can be attributed to the persistence of this stereotype. As a result of the fact that Western feminists are characterised by Chandra Mohanty (1988: 61) as considering the "'Third World Woman' as a singular, homogenous entity," it is possible that they are complicit in the continuance of these notions. There are a number of academic papers that investigate the examination of how postfeminism and neoliberalism affect classic feminist themes and interpretations. Some examples of these works include Gonick et al. (2009), Sensoy and Marshall (2010), Wilson (2011), 2012, Koffman and Gill (2013), and Switzer (2013). The writers of this study examine and critique the related, facilitating, and occasionally approving remark that feminism has done its tasks in Western cultures. While acknowledging the discursive transfer of feminism's ongoing importance to non-Western contexts, the authors of this study also investigate and critique the statement that feminism has completed its tasks in Western cultures. According to Koffman and Gill (2013), the concept of "turning to girls" serves to both generate and accentuate the distinctions between girls in the Global North and South in policy and public discourse. They argue that this is the case since the concept is so widely used. From the perspective of these discourses, females are shown not just as victims of patriarchal standards but also as powerful, postfeminist persons. Heather Switzer (2013) and Kalpana Wilson (2012) believe that, contrary to the opinion of post-feminist Western women, there appears to be a better probability of the general public supporting feminism when it is particularly applied to or advocated for girls living in the global South. This is in contrast to the perception of post-feminist Western women. According to Marshall and Sensoy (2010), this phenomenon is referred to as "missionary girl power."

According to the amount of research that is currently accessible, it appears that the post-feminist discourses that surround "girl power," which have achieved a significant amount of traction in the developed world, are transitioning into discourses that emphasise the significance of empowering girls, particularly in the developing world. By actively promoting the repositioning of girls and women from the global South as the selected receivers of development programmes and intervention, the neoliberal development sector, global corporate interests, and states are actively pursuing this

aim. This shift in discourse is supported by a significant number of academics and researchers, including Gonick et al. (2009), Sensoy and Marshall (2010), Wilson (2011, 2012), Koffman and Gill (2013), and Schweizer (2013), amongst others. It is a story that, according to Switzer, is an example of a "(post)feminist development fable" and takes a deep dive into the concept of "young female exceptionalism." The movie does an excellent job of highlighting feminist values such as women's autonomy and gender equality by depicting these ideas as concepts that are commonly accepted. The nation of origin for Dosekun Simidele is Nigeria, which is also the place where she was originally born and nurtured.

The data, which displayed a total of 350 occurrences and was most recently updated on April 6, 2015, revealed that there were six instances of reclaiming them for the purpose of monetary gain in the year 2013. On the other hand, the representation of women from developing countries as "still requiring feminism," regardless of how innovative or contemporary it may be, continues to hide and minimise the complexity of these women. Sensoy and Marshall (2010) and Wilson (2011) have proposed that women in the global South have a historical presence of feminism in their local contexts or have their own feminist agency. On the other hand, these points of view are currently being completely overlooked or ignored.

According to the prevailing discursive frameworks that are now in place, characterising these women as post-feminist is a completely ridiculous assumption. The concept in question has not been given much consideration by academics who research postfeminism from a critical feminist cultural point of view. A few theoretical explanations are provided by McRobbie (2007, 2009) on the possible advantages of postfeminism for women living in the global South.

A new type of female body type, which she refers to as the "global girl," has allegedly emerged in these regions, according to her declaration. According to McRobbie (2007), the term "global girl" is used to refer to women who are not from the Western world and who are employed in the manufacturing sector. These women are gradually becoming integrated into the unequal networks involved in global capitalism. The global girl, much like her Western counterpart, is able to provide for herself financially, possesses a strong work ethic, has aspirations to improve both herself and society, and takes pleasure in some of the conveniences that are made available to women by Western consumer society. According to the source that was cited (2007, 733–734),

these characteristics ultimately have an effect on her sense of identity and their sense of belonging. According to McRobbie (2009, 88–89), individuals who are unable to embrace a cold and sardonic perspective on femininity, as exhibited by their Western postfeminist colleagues, are more likely to appear in international as well as local editions of Cosmopolitan magazine when they are unable to do so. It has been suggested in academic discourse that Western governments and multinational corporations view the global girl as a model of a work force that will come from developing countries. The conviction that she will remain in her home country and make an effort to acquire Western-style clothing and cosmetics, which are associated with Western notions of femininity and sexuality, is the source of this impression. As such, it is projected that the global girl will not travel to the West in pursuit of better economic possibilities (Author, Year, p. 89).

On the other side, Dosekun's preliminary draught was finalised in April 2015. Seven is a numerical number.

It is conceivable to make the theoretical assertion that non-Western countries regard post-feminism as a watered-down form of its original Western roots, largely transmitted via consumer culture, based on McRobbie's (2007, 2009) theory. Compared to the notion of Western women as strong, independent, gorgeous, and seductive, the girls in that specific place tend to be more naive and eager to adorn oneself with few resources. McRobbie's depiction of the global feminine is marked by a great emphasis on hegemonic cultural images, simplicity, and schematic representation. Although I consider this picture to be intriguing, I also think it's problematic since it lacks depth and doesn't sufficiently portray the enormous array of experiences and identities. There are various sections of Mohanty's (1988) study of earlier Western feminist depictions of non-Western women that have made me suspicious. The idea that the global girl typology ignores the cultural differences among non-Western women is at the heart of my current argument. The substantial economic gap that exists between the global North and South is not given enough thought. According to data from the World Bank from 2010, the top decile of Nigerians has about 32.9% of the country's total income, while the bottom decile only has 2.2% of the country's total income. This disparity makes it extremely difficult to draw any comparison, either heuristically or metaphorically (as Ong, 2006 and Sun, 2011 discuss) between the attractive woman on a magazine cover from a developing country and the

situation of an exploited factory worker or a translocal person doing unpaid domestic work, which is commonly referred to as a "maid," in respect to their middle-class employer. McRobbie's 2007 and 2009 analyses fall short in addressing the extent to which global South women from wealthy homes are exposed to post-feminist culture. Moreover, it ignores the multitude of avenues by which these women could potentially obtain this kind of exposure, which go beyond simple dilution or a yearning for Western influences.

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