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PHILOSOPHICAL DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF MORALITY AND GENDER CONCEPTS

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the philosophical definitions and classifications of morality and gender concepts. Morality is examined as a system of principles that regulate relationships between individuals and society, while its connection with gender is also explored. Gender is analyzed not only as a biological distinction but also as a socially constructed system of roles and values. The study explores various philosophical perspectives on gender and morality, their historical development, and their significance in contemporary social theories. Additionally, discussions on gender equality, feminist movements, and Uzbekistan's gender policy are included.

KEY WORDS: *Morality, Gender, Philosophy, Social Relations, Gender Roles, Gender Equality, Feminist Theory, Ethical Values, Patriarchal Society, Gender History, Social Structure, Cultural Values, Gender Policy.*

Morality in philosophy is defined as a system of rules and values that regulate human relationships in both personal and social life. Morality plays a fundamental role in the moral framework of society, aiming to establish fairness and order in human interactions. It is a normative system that guides human behavior based on socially accepted principles and functions within the structure of social relations. Philosophical theories of morality seek to explain human actions in alignment with both personal and collective well-being. As a result, morality emerges as a set of principles and values shaped by society's adaptation to its socio-cultural environment.

Gender is a concept that defines the social roles and moral responsibilities of individuals within society. It encompasses both biological distinctions and socially constructed roles influenced by cultural norms. Gender describes the differentiation of individuals based on physiological traits and serves as a framework for understanding the division of responsibilities between men and women. As a socially and culturally shaped system of roles, gender determines expectations for male and female behavior.

Morality and gender serve as fundamental elements that complement each other within the social structure. While morality establishes universal norms in society, gender functions as a mechanism for distributing these norms between the sexes. Gender roles in society are regulated by moral principles, with qualities such as grace and compassion often associated with women, while courage and responsibility are attributed to men. Morality plays a crucial role in shaping social mechanisms that promote gender equality, while cultural interpretations of morality influence gender roles across different societies.

The interconnection between morality and gender in philosophical thought helps clarify social and moral relationships. While morality serves as the primary tool for regulating human interactions, gender ensures that these interactions are organized based on equality and mutual respect between sexes. Together, they contribute to the formation of a just social system. In contemporary discourse, discussions on the roles of men and women in society remain among the most debated topics. The social transformations that occurred due to the mass inclusion of women in the workforce during and after World War II challenged traditional theoretical frameworks regarding gender roles.

Scientific research has increasingly revealed that, from a biological perspective, there are more similarities than differences between men and women. Researchers argue that the only significant and undeniable difference between the sexes lies in their reproductive roles. Traits traditionally associated with gender differences, such as men being taller, heavier, and more muscular, have been shown to be highly variable and less dependent on biological sex than previously assumed.

Factors such as nutrition and lifestyle significantly influence physical attributes, including body composition and strength. Beyond biological differences, distinctions in social roles, activities, and emotional characteristics persist. Anthropologists, ethnographers, and historians have long demonstrated that concepts of what is "typical" for men or women are highly relative. For example, professions, behaviors, and personality traits considered masculine in one society may be regarded as feminine in another [1].

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The vast diversity of social characteristics among men and women, coupled with their biological similarities across cultures, suggests that biological sex alone cannot explain differences in social roles. To better understand the concept of gender, it is necessary to analyze its representation in scientific theory and its role in social programs. This leads to an exploration of feminism, derived from the Latin femina (woman). The term "feminism" gained prominence in the 1980s in Western countries, particularly in England and the United States, to describe the women's movement [2].

Feminism fundamentally opposes gender-based oppression and seeks to dismantle systems of power that perpetuate inequality. It centers on addressing women's social issues and advocating for gender-based justice. However, feminism remains a contested concept. On one hand, it is a political movement striving for equal rights for women, including access to education, suffrage, and professional opportunities. On the other hand, it is an intellectual framework that has contributed to extensive research in history, sociology, political science, linguistics, and philosophy. These two dimensions of feminism are interrelated, making it essential to understand the historical context and objectives of different feminist movements.

The origins of early feminism can be traced back to the 18th century, when European women faced systemic discrimination. The rise of liberal ideology during this period influenced feminist thought, challenging hierarchical structures of class and race. While early feminist movements demanded legislative reforms to recognize women as equal citizens with inherent rights, they did not fully address the cultural roots of discrimination. These early feminists sought to establish legal equality rather than transform social norms.

Early feminists were divided into two camps: one group believed in absolute equality between men and women, while the other advocated for social reforms and legal protections. Their activism was driven by the desire to end centuries of male dominance and gender-based exploitation. At the time, the term "gender" had not yet been introduced [4].

The question of gender equality remains a critical issue in many countries today. Gender disparities in economic and social spheres have led to declines in workforce quality and social inequality. These disparities hinder socio-economic development, reduce the efficiency of human capital, and contribute to deepening social injustice.

Human societies are composed of both men and women, and while biological and physiological differences between the sexes are well established, their societal roles are not static. Historical developments in the women's movement demonstrate that gender roles have undergone significant changes. Technological advancements in the 20th century transformed women's roles in both domestic and professional spheres. By the late 20th century, the concept of "social sex," now referred to as “gender”, emerged as a distinct field of study.

The concept of gender originated within feminist discourse and has been defined in various ways. Broadly speaking, gender refers to the social roles assigned to men and women. Gender equality is understood as the attainment of equal social rights for both sexes [5].

However, gender theory has faced criticism from those who reject the notion of complete social equality between men and women. Critics argue that biological and psychological differences between the sexes shape their roles in society. According to this perspective, some occupations and responsibilities naturally align with either men or women, regardless of technological progress. These critics contend that gender roles should be determined by psychological inclinations rather than imposed social constructs [6].

From this viewpoint, gender issues should be resolved by creating equal opportunities for both sexes while acknowledging their inherent differences. Rather than striving for absolute sameness, critics argue that gender policies should aim to allow men and women to fulfill their natural roles in ways that bring them happiness and fulfillment.

Today, Uzbekistan is actively implementing measures to address gender issues. The establishment of the State Committee on Family, Women, and Children’s Affairs has led to significant progress in resolving gender-related challenges. Legal and institutional reforms are promoting women's empowerment, ensuring greater participation in political, economic, and social life. Efforts to achieve gender equality in Uzbekistan are aligned with global trends, recognizing the importance of balancing traditional values with modern principles of equality and justice. While challenges remain, ongoing initiatives demonstrate the state’s commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable society.

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