

FEMINIST ETHICS: A FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER JUSTICE

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Abstract:

Every day and in every country in the world, women are being discriminated on based on their sex. They confront violence, abuse and unequal treatment at home, at work and in their wider communities on a daily basis. They are also denied opportunities to learn, to earn and to lead in some countries of the world especially in Africa. Feminist ethics offers a valuable framework for analyzing and addressing the issues women face on a daily basis with the intent to achieve gender justice. This article using the method of hermeneutics which has to do with interpretation of concepts, explores the core principles and key concepts of feminist ethics and examines their application in promoting gender justice. It discusses how feminist ethics challenges traditional ethical theories and provides insights into understanding and rectifying the inequalities and injustices experienced by women and marginalized genders. By emphasizing the importance of relationships, care, autonomy, and intersectionality, feminist ethics offers a comprehensive and nuanced approach to advancing gender equality and justice. The article also highlights some practical implications of feminist ethics in various spheres of life, including personal relationships, workplace dynamics, and social institutions.

Keywords: Feminist Ethics, Gender Justice, Autonomy, Intersectionality, Gender Equality

Introduction

Feminist ethics is a branch of ethical theory that emerged in response to the limitations of traditional ethical frameworks in addressing gender inequalities and biases. It provides a unique perspective that centers women's experiences, perspectives, and concerns, aiming to rectify the historical exclusion of women from ethical discourse. Feminist ethics challenges the andocentric biases embedded in traditional ethical theories and offers a comprehensive framework for understanding and promoting gender justice.

Historically, ethical theories have largely been developed and formulated from a male perspective, often neglecting the specific moral experiences and concerns of women. Feminist ethics seeks to rectify this imbalance by centering the experiences and perspectives of women, as well as other marginalized genders, and addressing the ethical implications of gendered power dynamics and inequalities. One of the influential works in feminist ethics is "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792) by Mary Wollstonecraft. Wollstonecraft argued for women's equality and challenged the exclusion of women from the realms of reason and morality. Her work laid the foundation for feminist critiques of traditional ethical theories and highlighted the need for a more inclusive and gender-conscious ethical framework. Another significant contribution to feminist ethics is Carol Gilligan's book "In a Different Voice" (1982). Gilligan introduced the concept of care ethics, which emphasizes the moral significance of relationships, empathy, and care work. Care ethics critiques the dominant moral theories that prioritize abstract principles and universal rules, and instead focuses on the ethics of care and the interdependence of individuals.

Feminist ethics incorporates various core principles that distinguish it as a distinct ethical framework. Feminist ethics recognizes the importance of relationships and interconnectedness. It emphasizes the ethical significance of caring relationships, empathy, and the recognition of interdependency among individuals. Feminist ethics values care work traditionally associated with women and challenges the devaluation of care in ethical discourse. It highlights the moral

importance of nurturing, empathy, and responsibilities towards others. Feminist ethics recognizes the agency and self-determination of individuals, particularly women, in making their own ethical decisions. It aims to empower individuals to act autonomously and make choices that align with their own values and aspirations. Feminist ethics acknowledges that gender intersects with other social identities, such as race, class, sexuality, and ability. It recognizes the complexity of individuals' experiences and the need to address multiple forms of oppression and privilege. Feminist ethics provides a critical lens for analyzing and addressing a wide range of ethical issues, including gender-based violence, reproductive rights, workplace inequalities, and social justice. By centering women's experiences and perspectives, feminist ethics contributes to a more inclusive and just understanding of morality and offers insights into creating a more equitable society.

Conceptual Framework

Feminist Ethics

Feminist ethics is a branch of ethics that focuses on understanding and addressing the ethical issues and concerns related to gender. It explores how gender, power, and social inequality intersect with ethical decision-making, moral values, and the formation of ethical theories. More scholarly opinions have emerged. Example: Lindemann (2005, 11) said that "*Feminist Ethics* aims "to understand, criticize, and correct" how gender operates within our moral beliefs and practices and our methodological approaches to ethical theory". We live in a world where male superiority is emphasized and as such, feminist ethics emerged as a "response to the traditional ethical theories that often neglected or marginalized the experiences and perspectives of women". It seeks to challenge and critique the androcentric biases and assumptions present in many ethical frameworks, aiming for a more inclusive and equitable approach to ethical analysis. Standard encyclopedia of philosophy (2019) has it that:

feminist ethicists aim to understand, criticize, and correct :the binary view of gender, the privilege historically available to men, and/or the ways that views about gender maintain oppressive social orders or practices that harm others, especially girls and women who historically have been subordinated, along gendered dimensions including sexuality and gender -identity. Since oppression often involves ignoring the perspectives of the marginalized, different approaches to feminist ethics have in common a commitment to better understand the experiences of persons oppressed in gendered ways. That commitment results in a tendency, in feminist ethics, to take into account empirical information and material actualities

Feminist ethicist has argued against this gender norms that tend to favor men more than women. This is what has led to the increase at an alarming rate recently gender based violence. Simone de Beauvoir [1949] 2015) seminal work was focused on looking into the overall state of women in the French societies. She noted with disdain how women are treated differently because of their sex. There is a lot of social and political differences based on biological differences between male and female. ". Tong and Williams(201862-84:) noted that:

eighteenth and nineteenth century feminist writers like Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), Sojourner Truth (1797-1883), and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-

1902), addressed topics related to the political, economic, and educational status of women, and “women’s morality. This was partly motivated by a growing awareness of the real inequalities between men and women, including legal and social restrictions and prohibitions. These author argued that disparities in educational opportunities, and the restrictions across race and gender of roles and responsibilities open to women, prevented women from fully developing as people and citizens (Wollstonecraft [1792] 2004). This was First Wave feminism, and it accomplished significant progress on emancipation and enfranchisement for women and visible minorities in the West.

Meyers (1989 and 2000) noted that “A feminist view opens the space for considering autonomy an ongoing and improvisational process of self-discovery, self-definition, and self-direction, rather than endorsing a set of desires and goals chosen exclusively by the individual”. Feminist ethics acknowledges that gender shapes our experiences, identities, and relationships in profound ways. It recognizes the unique challenges and opportunities faced by individuals based on their gender and aims to address ethical issues through this lens.

Feminist ethics also recognizes that gender intersects with other social categories such as race, class, sexuality, and disability. Intersectionality highlights the interconnected nature of various forms of oppression and privileges, emphasizing the need for an inclusive and comprehensive ethical analysis. Feminist ethics recognizes care ethics. Care ethics is a prominent approach within feminist ethics that emphasizes the importance of relationships, empathy, and interdependence. It challenges the dominant emphasis on abstract principles or rules in ethical theories and instead focuses on the specific contexts and relationships where care is central.

Feminist ethics also emphasizes the importance of justice and equality. It critiques traditional notions of justice that often neglect the experiences and perspectives of women and marginalized groups. Feminist ethics seeks to develop alternative conceptions of justice that consider and address social inequalities. Feminist ethics highlights the need to include diverse voices and perspectives in ethical decision-making processes. It recognizes that individuals with different experiences and backgrounds may have unique insights and knowledge to contribute to ethical discussions.

Overall, feminist ethics aims to challenge and transform traditional ethical theories to be more inclusive, responsive, and accountable to the experiences and concerns of women and marginalized groups. It seeks to create a more just and equitable society by critically examining and addressing the ethical dimensions of gender and power and also ensure that justice prevails in every situation.

Gender justice,

For the GFW (Global Fund for Women) the term “gender justice” best signifies “our intersectional approach that centers the diverse needs, experiences, and leadership of people most impacted by discrimination and oppression”. This approach helps achieve both equity (equal distribution of resources, access, and opportunities) and equality (equal outcomes for all). Gender justice refers to the pursuit of equality, fairness, and respect for all genders within society. It involves addressing the structural and systemic inequalities that arise from gender-based discrimination and oppression. Gender justice recognizes that individuals should have

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equal opportunities, rights, and access to resources regardless of their gender identity or expression. Goetz, (2007) noted that:

“Gender justice entails ending the inequalities between women and men that are produced and reproduced in the family, the community, the market and the state. It also requires that mainstream institutions — from justice to economic policymaking — are accountable for tackling the injustice and discrimination that keep too many women poor and excluded

United nation organization (2010) noted that: "Discrimination is a blight that holds back progress towards social justice in developed and developing countries alike". What brought about the emergence of gender based oppression that brought about gender justice. The people grossly affected are women. Ban Ki-moon (2010) said that: "Social, political and economic equality for women is integral to the achievement of all Millennium Development Goals. Until women and girls are liberated from poverty and injustice, all our goals peace, security, sustainable development stand in jeopardy." Gender justice is a topic that has been explored and discussed by many philosophers throughout history. Here are a few notable philosophers who have made significant contributions to the discourse on gender justice, along with references to their works:

Simone de Beauvoir: Simone de Beauvoir was a French philosopher and feminist existentialist who played a crucial role in the development of feminist theory. Her seminal work, "The Second Sex" (1949), is considered a foundational text in the field of gender studies. In this book, de Beauvoir examines the social construction of gender and argues for the liberation of women from oppressive societal norms. **Judith Butler:** Judith Butler is an American philosopher and gender theorist known for her influential work on gender performativity. In her book "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity" (1990), Butler challenges the notion of fixed gender identities and argues that gender is a social construct that is continually performed and reproduced through repeated actions.

Martha Nussbaum an American philosopher and political theorist who has written extensively on the capabilities approach and human development. In her book "Sex and Social Justice" (1999), Nussbaum explores the intersection of gender and justice, arguing for: "the inclusion of gender-related concerns in a theory of justice and advocating for equal rights and opportunities for all genders". **Iris Marion Young:** Iris Marion Young was an American political theorist and feminist philosopher. Her book "Justice and the Politics of Difference" (1990) discusses the concept of the "politics of difference" and highlights the importance of recognizing and addressing social inequalities based on various dimensions of difference, including gender. Young argues for a vision of justice that takes into account the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups.

bell hooks an American author, feminist theorist, and cultural critic who has written extensively on issues of race, gender, and social justice. Her book "Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center" (1984) discusses the intersectionality of gender, race, and class, emphasizing the need for a feminist movement that is inclusive and addresses the experiences of all women, particularly those marginalized by intersecting forms of oppression. Gender justice calls for the recognition and protection of the equal rights of all genders. This includes ensuring equal access to education, employment, healthcare, political participation, and legal protection. Gender

justice aims to eradicate all forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, and trafficking. It involves creating a safe and supportive environment for individuals of all genders.

Gender justice challenges and dismantles societal norms and stereotypes that limit individuals' opportunities based on their gender. It seeks to create a more inclusive society that values and respects the diversity of gender identities and expressions. Gender justice recognizes the intersecting forms of oppression and discrimination that individuals may face based on their gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, and other social identities. It seeks to address these intersecting inequalities and ensure that no one is left behind. Gender justice promotes the empowerment and active participation of all genders in decision-making processes, both at the individual and societal levels. It recognizes that diverse perspectives and experiences are essential for achieving gender equality. Gender justice addresses economic inequalities that disproportionately affect individuals based on their gender. It seeks to close the gender wage gap, promote equal opportunities for career advancement, and challenge discriminatory practices in the workplace. Gender justice emphasizes the importance of education and awareness-raising to challenge gender biases, promote gender equality, and prevent gender-based discrimination. It involves educating individuals about gender issues, fostering empathy, and promoting respectful and inclusive attitudes. The recommendations of United Nations organization (2010) that will ensure the promotion of gender justice in any country are:

- Expanding women-friendly public services: to meet women and girls' rights to education, health and food;
- Guaranteeing land and jobs for women: ensuring the right to a decent livelihood, through access to economic assets;
- Increasing women's voice in decision-making: full participation of women in society, starting from autonomy in the household, to voice in all political processes at community, national and international levels
- Ending violence against women and girls: a scourge that too many women and girls face in daily life, stunting their opportunities, curtailing their mobility and denying them rights

Achieving gender justice requires ongoing efforts from individuals, communities, organizations, and governments. It involves challenging and transforming the systems and structures that perpetuate gender-based inequalities and working towards a society where all genders can thrive and enjoy equal rights and opportunities. Individuals should be allowed to make independent choices they feel will benefit them.

Autonomy

Autonomy refers to the ability and freedom of individuals to make independent choices and decisions based on their own values, beliefs, and preferences. It is a fundamental principle in ethics and is closely tied to the concept of personal freedom and self-determination. Several philosophers have discussed the concept of autonomy throughout history. Here are a few notable philosophers and their perspectives on autonomy.

Immanuel Kant's moral philosophy places a significant emphasis on autonomy. He argues that autonomy is the foundation of morality and that moral principles must be self-imposed by rational individuals. According to Kant, autonomy involves acting in accordance with rational principles that one has given oneself.

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John Stuart Mill: Mill, a utilitarian philosopher, also discusses autonomy in his work. He argues for individual freedom and the importance of personal autonomy as a means to promote human flourishing. Mill advocates for a concept known as the "harm principle," which states that individuals should be free to act as they wish as long as their actions do not harm others. His ideas on autonomy can be found in his influential work "On Liberty" (1859). His ideas on autonomy could be seen in his major work "Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals" (1785) and "Critique of Practical Reason" (1788). Jean-Paul Sartre, an existentialist philosopher, provides an existential perspective on autonomy. He argues that human beings are fundamentally free and responsible for their actions, which requires making choices without relying on external authority or pre-determined values. Sartre's concept of "radical freedom" emphasizes the individual's autonomy and the necessity of taking responsibility for one's own existence. His ideas on autonomy can be explored in his major work "Being and Nothingness" (1943).

Simone de Beauvoir, an existentialist philosopher and feminist theorist, de Beauvoir explores autonomy from a gendered perspective. She argues that women, historically marginalized and oppressed, must assert their autonomy by challenging societal norms and expectations. De Beauvoir's book "The Second Sex" (1949) examines the concept of autonomy in relation to women's liberation and the struggle for equality. Harry Frankfurt, a contemporary philosopher, presents a distinctive view on autonomy and free will. He suggests that autonomy is not simply the ability to act according to one's desires, but rather the ability to have desires that reflect one's true self. In his influential essay "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person" (1971), Frankfurt discusses the importance of second-order desires in the exercise of autonomy.

Autonomy involves the capacity to govern oneself and make decisions without undue external interference or coercion. It recognizes that individuals have the right to exercise control over their own lives and choices. Autonomy requires that individuals have access to relevant information and are able to make informed decisions based on that information. In contexts such as healthcare, informed consent is a crucial aspect of respecting autonomy, ensuring that individuals have the necessary information to make choices about their own medical treatment. Autonomy recognizes and respects the diversity of values, beliefs, and perspectives among individuals. It acknowledges that different people may have different priorities and preferences, and that autonomy allows for the expression and pursuit of those differences.

While autonomy is highly valued, it is not absolute. There are ethical limits to autonomy when it conflicts with the rights, well-being, or safety of others. In such cases, considerations of justice, beneficence, and non-maleficence may come into play to balance competing interests and protect the greater good. Autonomy is seen as essential for personal growth and development. It enables individuals to explore their own identities, make choices aligned with their values, and take responsibility for their actions and consequences. Autonomy is not solely an individual concept but also extends to the collective level. It encompasses the ability of communities and groups to exercise self-governance, determine their own cultural practices, and participate in decision-making processes that affect them. Promoting autonomy requires creating an environment that supports and empowers individuals. This includes providing access to education, resources, and opportunities that enable individuals to exercise their autonomy effectively.

Autonomy is considered a fundamental human right and a key aspect of ethical decision-making. Respecting and promoting autonomy is essential for upholding individual freedom, dignity, and the pursuit of one's own values and goals. However, it is important to recognize that autonomy should be balanced with considerations of justice, empathy, and the well-being of others in order to foster a harmonious and equitable society.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a concept that recognizes and explores the ways in which different forms of social identity and oppression intersect and interact with each other. Coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality highlights the interconnected nature of systems of power, privilege, and oppression. Intersectionality is a concept that originated in critical race theory and has since been applied to various fields, including philosophy. Here are some philosophers who have contributed to the discourse on intersectionality:

Kimberlé Crenshaw, a legal scholar and critical race theorist, coined the term "intersectionality" in her influential article "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" (1989). She highlights how social categories such as race and gender intersect and mutually reinforce each other, leading to unique experiences of discrimination and oppression for individuals who belong to multiple marginalized groups. Patricia Hill Collins, a sociologist and philosopher, has written extensively on intersectionality and its implications for social justice. In her book "Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment" (1990), she explores how intersecting systems of power shape the experiences of Black women and emphasizes the importance of including multiple perspectives in feminist theory.

bell hooks, a feminist author and cultural critic, incorporates intersectional perspectives into her work. In books like "Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism" (1981) and "Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center" (1984), she examines the intersections of race, gender, and class, and calls for a more inclusive feminism that addresses the experiences of marginalized women. Audre Lorde, a poet, writer, and activist, provides insights into intersectionality through her writings. In her collection of essays titled "Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches" (1984), she discusses the interconnections between racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression, and emphasizes the importance of recognizing and embracing differences while working towards collective liberation. María Lugones, a philosopher and feminist theorist, explores intersectionality and its implications for understanding power dynamics. In her essay "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System" (2008), she examines how systems of colonialism, racism, and gender oppression intersect and shape individuals' identities and experiences.

These philosophers have made significant contributions to the understanding of intersectionality and its relevance to social and political issues. Their works offer valuable insights into the complex interactions between various forms of oppression and the importance of inclusive and intersectional approaches to social justice.

Intersectionality acknowledges that individuals possess multiple social identities, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, and religion. These identities intersect and interact with one another, shaping an individual's experiences, perspectives, and opportunities. Intersectionality

recognizes that individuals may experience privilege and oppression simultaneously, depending on the intersection of their social identities. For example, a woman of color may face both racism and sexism, which create unique challenges and forms of discrimination that differ from those experienced by a white woman or a man of color.

Intersectionality emphasizes the interconnected nature of systems of power and oppression, including racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and classism. It highlights how these systems intersect and reinforce each other, leading to complex and compounded forms of disadvantage or advantage. Intersectionality gives voice to the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups who are often overlooked or underrepresented in dominant narratives. It recognizes that the experiences of individuals are shaped by the specific social, political, and historical contexts in which they exist.

Intersectionality informs social justice movements and activism by highlighting the importance of addressing multiple forms of oppression. It emphasizes the need for inclusive and intersectional approaches to advocacy and policy-making that recognize the unique needs and experiences of different marginalized groups. Intersectionality provides a framework for analyzing and understanding social issues and inequalities in a comprehensive manner. It encourages researchers, policymakers, and activists to consider the overlapping and intersecting dimensions of identity and power in their analysis and actions. Intersectionality as a critical tool aids in understanding and challenging systemic oppression and promoting inclusivity and equity. By recognizing the complexity and interconnectedness of different social identities and forms of discrimination, intersectionality enables a more nuanced and inclusive approach to social justice that aims to address the diverse experiences and needs of individuals and communities.

Gender equality

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, opportunities, and treatment of all genders, without any form of discrimination or bias based on gender. It is a fundamental principle that promotes fairness, justice, and the recognition of the equal worth and dignity of all individuals, irrespective of their gender identity or expression. Numerous philosophers have written about gender equality throughout history. Some notable philosophers who have contributed to the discourse on gender equality, along with references to their works:

Mary Wollstonecraft is considered a foundational figure in feminist philosophy. In her book "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792), she argued for gender equality, advocating for women's education and emphasizing the importance of reason and autonomy for both men and women. John Stuart Mill: Mill, known for his utilitarian philosophy, was an advocate for gender equality. In his work "The Subjection of Women" (1869), Mill argues against the subordination of women and advocates for equal rights and opportunities for women in both the public and private spheres.

Simone de Beauvoir, a French existentialist philosopher, addressed the issue of gender equality in her groundbreaking book "The Second Sex" (1949). She examined the social and cultural factors that contribute to the oppression of women and called for the liberation of women from traditional gender roles. Judith Butler: Butler, a prominent philosopher and gender theorist, has made significant contributions to the understanding of gender equality and identity. In her book "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity" (1990), she challenges traditional

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notions of gender and argues that gender is a performative and socially constructed phenomenon.

Martha Nussbaum, a contemporary philosopher, has written extensively on gender equality and justice. In her book "Sex and Social Justice" (1999), she explores the capabilities approach and argues for the importance of ensuring that women have equal access to resources, opportunities, and freedoms. Iris Marion Young, a feminist philosopher, discusses gender equality within the broader framework of social justice. In her book "Justice and the Politics of Difference" (1990), she examines the concept of structural injustice and highlights the importance of recognizing and addressing the ways in which gender inequality is embedded in social, economic, and political structures. These philosophers and their works provide a diverse range of perspectives on gender equality, addressing issues such as women's rights, social norms, cultural expectations, and the structures of power that perpetuate gender inequality. Exploring their writings will give you a deeper understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of the struggle for gender equality.

Gender equality entails ensuring that all individuals have equal rights under the law, including the right to vote, access to education, employment opportunities, healthcare, and participation in political and public life. It involves eliminating discriminatory laws and policies and promoting legislation that upholds gender equality. Gender equality addresses economic disparities between genders by promoting equal opportunities and pay for equal work. It involves eliminating gender-based occupational segregation, promoting women's entrepreneurship and leadership, and ensuring fair and equal access to economic resources and opportunities.

Gender equality emphasizes equal access to quality education and training for all genders. It seeks to eliminate barriers that prevent individuals from accessing education, such as gender stereotypes, early marriages, and lack of resources. It also promotes education and awareness about gender equality to challenge discriminatory attitudes and behaviors. Gender equality requires addressing and preventing all forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, assault, and trafficking. It involves promoting a culture of consent, supporting survivors, and holding perpetrators accountable.

Gender equality aims to challenge and dismantle harmful gender stereotypes and norms that reinforce inequality and restrict individual freedom and potential. It involves promoting positive and diverse representations of all genders in media, education, and society, and encouraging individuals to defy traditional gender roles and expectations. Gender equality recognizes the importance of engaging men and boys as allies and advocates for gender equality. It involves promoting positive masculinities, addressing harmful notions of masculinity, and encouraging men's active participation in dismantling gender inequality.

Gender equality acknowledges that individuals' experiences of gender inequality are influenced by other intersecting social identities, such as race, class, sexuality, and ability. It seeks to address the unique challenges faced by individuals at the intersections of multiple forms of discrimination and privilege. Achieving gender equality requires collective efforts from individuals, communities, organizations, and governments. It involves challenging and changing social norms, attitudes, and structures that perpetuate gender-based discrimination

and bias. Promoting gender equality benefits society as a whole by fostering social justice, empowering individuals, and creating a more inclusive and equitable world.

Recommendation

Feminist ethics, as a branch of ethics that focuses on gender issues, can play a crucial role in promoting gender justice. By examining power dynamics, social norms, and systemic inequalities, feminist ethics provides a framework for understanding and addressing gender-based injustices. Here are some ways in which feminist ethics can contribute to improving gender justice:

- Jaggard, A. M. (1989) noted that :Feminist ethics emphasizes the moral agency of women and marginalized genders. It challenges traditional ethical theories that have often excluded or marginalized women's perspectives and experiences. By recognizing and valuing the diverse experiences and moral voices of different genders, feminist ethics can provide a more inclusive foundation for discussions of justice.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989) said that: Feminist ethics recognizes that gender intersects with other social categories such as race, class, sexuality, and ability, resulting in unique forms of oppression and injustice. This intersectional approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of gender justice and the ways in which different systems of oppression intersect and reinforce one another.
- Gilligan, C. (1982) was of the opinion: Care Ethics and Ethic of Care: Feminist ethics often emphasizes care and relationships as central ethical concerns. It challenges the traditional focus on abstract principles and rights-based frameworks by highlighting the importance of interconnectedness, empathy, and care in ethical decision-making. This perspective can enhance gender justice by foregrounding the importance of valuing and promoting caring relationships, challenging gender stereotypes, and recognizing the burden of care disproportionately placed on women.
- Young, I. M. (1990) noted that: Ethical Analysis of Gendered Institutions: Feminist ethics critically examines the societal structures, norms, and institutions that perpetuate gender inequalities. It explores how social, economic, and political systems contribute to gender injustices and proposes alternative frameworks that promote equality and justice. By analyzing and challenging gendered institutions, feminist ethics aims to transform systems and policies to create a more just society.
- hooks, b. (2000) noted that agency ethics emphasizes the importance of agency and empowerment for women and marginalized genders. It seeks to challenge and dismantle patriarchal structures that limit opportunities and self-determination. By promoting the agency of individuals and advocating for their rights and equal opportunities, feminist ethics can contribute to gender justice.

Conclusion

Feminist ethics offers a framework that recognizes the moral agency and experiences of women and marginalized genders, challenging the historical exclusion of their perspectives in ethical discourse. It takes an intersectional approach, understanding how gender intersects with other forms of oppression such as race, class, and sexuality. This intersectional lens helps identify and address the unique ways in which individuals experience multiple forms of discrimination.

A central aspect of feminist ethics is the ethics of care, which emphasizes the importance of relationships, empathy, and interconnectedness. It challenges the traditional emphasis on abstract principles and highlights the significance of caring practices in ethical decision-making. By recognizing the burden of care disproportionately placed on women, feminist ethics aims to address and rectify the resulting inequalities.

Feminist ethics critically examines and critiques gendered institutions and societal structures that perpetuate gender inequalities. By analyzing the underlying power dynamics and norms, it seeks to transform these structures to promote gender justice. This includes advocating for policies that dismantle systemic barriers and promote equal opportunities for all genders.

The framework of feminist ethics also emphasizes the agency and empowerment of women and marginalized genders. It aims to challenge patriarchal structures that limit their opportunities and self-determination. By advocating for their rights, promoting inclusive policies, and amplifying marginalized voices, feminist ethics seeks to create a more just society where all genders can thrive.

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