

To what extent does fecundity hinder women's potential development in the modern society and is fecundity inherently a concept separated from women

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Abstract:

This essay investigates how women's potential for development in modern society has been hindered by associations with fecundity, arguing that fertility should be conceptualized separately from womanhood. It addresses the current challenges women face in the realms of economic value, family roles, and artistic representation, highlighting how patriarchal and capitalist structures confine women's value primarily to their reproductive capacity. Despite the introduction of policies aimed at preventing discriminatory employment practices based on marital or reproductive status, women continue to face implicit marginalization in the workplace. The essay identifies a positive correlation between the frequency of childbirth and the incidence of domestic violence, suggesting a devaluation of women's roles within households that stems from reducing their worth to fertility alone. Furthermore, a review of ancient artworks reveals a historical emphasis on women's reproductive function, often at the cost of diminishing their individuality. Through a metaphysical perspective, the essay argues that fecundity is not inherently linked to womanhood and calls for broader social awareness and transformative changes to dismantle patriarchal structures that sustain this misconception.

Keywords: fecundity hinder, women's potential development, modern society, fecundity inherently

Introduction

Dissecting the reason behind the widely-held belief that women are underrepresented in today's society, we can see three primary facets illustrating the signif-

icance of a community, women in this case, in contemporary society: artistic portrayal, financial worth, and interpersonal connections. This essay's primary focus will be on the discriminatory representation of women in the arts, the workforce, and family rela-

tionships. It will also examine the extent to which women's conception of fecundity is the source of these discriminatory practices or subtly oppressive practices, and it will address the question of how much fecundity is or should be fundamentally tied to the women's community when taking into account women as members of society. In conclusion, this essay will offer a few potential fixes to the gender discrimination-related imbalance in society today.

Since ancient times, labor has been a result of social necessity and is the fundamental productive force that maintains human society. Women now have the legal right to an education and the ability to work in the job. In modern China, gender norms and workplace policies are closely related. Women are viewed as the primary subjects and carriers of reproductive behaviors in the workplace, and their marital and childbearing status is one of the screening criteria used. This leads to issues for women both at work and at home.

The family is the smallest social unit in Chinese society, and the traditional Chinese marriage contract is based on the primary goal of passing down the family name to the next generation. Having children also contributes to the stability and orderliness of the family and society, and it has the most recent influence on the individual.

Since childbirth is one of the most primal human actions, art has always documented the information of human society's ideology from ancient times. Given that childbirth is among the most primal human experiences, it has long played a significant role in artistic production. Venus of Willendorf is not the only work of art depicting childbirth; early Turkish carpets, Iranian Kurdish carpets, Qashqai, Lori, and Shah Savan carpets, as well as Turkoman and Balusch carpets from Central Asia, are among the best examples. All of them have a motif known as a "fertility/fertility symbol," which is a graphic representation of a pregnant lady simplified to represent the religion of life and fertility. Additionally, there was a brief fashion in 17th-century England for pregnant woman portraits, such as (1620) by Marcus Gheeraerts II.

In general, work, family and the arts, which radiate to the maximum extent possible into the material and spiritual life of the individual, materialize gender inequality in society.

Workplace

Women must be empowered in the workplace, one of the most important and defining aspects of our modern society, in order to achieve full gender equality within societal power dynamics. The <Report on 2022 Chinese women's situation in workplace investigation> Zhaopin Limited

states that 61.2% of the women who were investigated reported that they were asked about their marital and fecundity status during job interviews. This represents a significant increase of 5.4% from the previous year. In fact, the Chinese Human Resources Department and nine other departments have already developed and implemented <About taking the next step in the regulation of hiring practices to promote women's participation in workplace>, which explicitly prohibits any denials or limitations on the employment of women for reasons related to fecundity (Caixinwang). However, it is evident that there is still implicit prejudice against women because of the physical characteristic of pregnancy.

According to a company manager who was interviewed, the human resources departments of companies continue to give preference to married women with children, even in spite of government regulations. This is because married women are perceived as more "stable" than single women, especially when it comes to potential maternal leave and the potential for fluctuating work status after marriage (Caixinwang).

Furthermore, data from the International Labor Organization indicates that developed nations often have a smaller gender gap in the workplace than developing nations (*The gender gap in employment: What's holding women back?*). Compared to services, agriculture and manufacturing typically demand greater physical power, or "muscle." When it comes to physically demanding employment, men have an advantage over women. Therefore, female labor productivity rises in tandem with economic growth and the proportion of the service sector. Clearly, industrialized nations have more significant sociocultural and economic benefits for gender equality.

As capitalism only considers the value and "cost performance" that labor offers, sexism in the workplace would inevitably arise in the present if deliberate humanitarian policies were not implemented. However, we must acknowledge that this is not due to a natural lack of intellectual vigor or professional aptitude on the part of women; rather, it is a bodily attribute that they are unable to resist - fecundity. The phenomena of the gender gap in the workplace between developed and developing nations can also help to understand why this attribute is distinct from that of females.

Capitalists employ workers of both genders when they achieve the same level of production efficiency through targeting policies, which are more frequently observed and implemented in developed nations. However, this is not always the case, as some physical requirements of the position may favor one gender over another.

In order to address gender imbalance, the private sector must be resolute and adopt adaptable policies. Some of

these policies include promoting the hiring and retention of female employees, increasing perks for women, assisting women in returning to work after giving birth, and placing women in positions of decision-making.

Women's access to childcare and suitable maternity leave arrangements have been another set of very positive actions. It is noteworthy that some companies offer maternity leave opportunities for both women and fathers, which can be a constraint on women when they need to pause their careers to raise their children.

Family

It's interesting to note that CADTM stated that women are "overworked" in comparison to males "if both their paid professional work and their housework are taken into account." (Comanne) However, this excessive work women put into their family hasn't paid them a commensurate benefit ---- China Public Health has revealed the rate of postpartum female enduring domestic violence reached 16.8%. (Ye, Z et al.)

Additionally, the U.S. National Institute of Health reported that an astounding 45% of postpartum prolonged intimate partner abuse cases occur (Wedajo et al.). It is unquestionable that a primary and essential factor contributing to women's disproportionately elevated risk of experiencing domestic abuse compared to men is their strong bond with fecundity. The majority of traditional families view children as the noble continuation of their bloodline; in contrast, the woman who successfully underwent the process of conception and childbearing is not regarded with any dignity. Men have a conflicting need for women in this carefully constructed patriarchal society. While they depend on women's fecundity to pass on their inherited "noble" genes, they also need to prevent fecundity from being viewed as the most admirable and desirable quality in society, which would cause the patriarchal structure they work so hard to uphold to gradually crumble.

Patriarchy and capitalism are impeding the perception of women as unique individuals capable of producing value that surpasses their physical capabilities. Therefore, males can continue to enjoy their privilege of being the exclusive providers for their families and society as long as capital remains one of its essential productive forces.

Of the domestic violence parties that China Public Health documented, 23.4% were found to be engaging in acts of spiritual violence, such as shouting or breaking things. Seeing things this way, we can also identify another reason why men purposefully limited women's physical potential: to provide them a valid means of expressing their emotions.

Men carry a heavy duty of providing for their families

due to their social privileges, but they are also under tremendous strain from the workplace and societal expectations. As a result, they carved women into a subordinate community that is dependent on them. This dependent relationship, which they purposefully created between the sexes, gives them the justification to vent their frustrations on women in any way they choose, as well as a sense of accomplishment that feeds their conceit.

Therefore, it is evident that women are placed in this hazardous and inferior role within the family as a result of fecundity—not because they are inherently linked to this idea, but rather because of men's need for an inferior role and a desire for children, which women happen to fill—in order to satisfy their spiritual needs. Men would create additional conventions that prevented women from reaching their full potential in society, effectively attempting to defend men's privilege in the patriarchal society, even after fecundity became a capability owned by men during the course of one night.

Patriarchy not only limits women's potential, but also attempts to exclude women from key social roles. The Dutch academic Mineke Schipper writes in on her results, stating that the fact that males must rely on women to bear the heirs they so desperately want upsets the natural balance between the sexes. This clearly has an impact on relationships and increases men's need for compensation since they seek authority, want to limit women's capacity to procreate, and want to keep women out of some key roles.

According to British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor and Swiss anthropologist Johann Jakob Bachofen, the occurrence of *couvade* is a male struggle for patrilineal reproductive rights and a sign of a culture moving from matrilineal to patriarchal systems. The invention of *couvade* allowed men to partake in the benefits of female fertility, including rights and status, and even to take control of it. Men realized that they could control the family and society if they dominated reproduction. Men were able to masterfully reproduce under the patriarchal system by, among other intricate means, meddling in and controlling women's sexuality, relationships, conception and contraceptive behavior, reproductive autonomy (the choice to have a child or not), and child heirship/inheritance (family name, title, and family tree).

The severity of the control over female fecundity and the violation of women's physical autonomy increases with the absolute power that men hold in a culture. A notion from traditional society that purposefully emphasizes motherhood and female love has been carried over into modern society. The importance of elevating women has practically become a textbook truth. But in actuality, women's labor has long been exploited by an ideological

process. They can be compared to pointless labor since parenting is “patience and sacrifice” and love is “unconditional giving.” These women may have been exalted, but in reality, they were still subjugated and exploited.

Women’s reproductive rights and accomplishments are tightly regulated by the patriarchal family, and men stigmatize and perpetuate women’s sexual ignorance and shame. The violent character of marriage and the family lays at the root of this extreme distortion of ideals.

Art

Cultural construction was influenced by the Paleolithic era, when women were thought to have taken care of child-rearing and collecting while men were thought to have hunted. However, recent research by anthropologists has backed up the opposing claim that female hunters existed as well.

The sculptures of women in human civilization are full of prejudice, and the objectification of women’s role in reproduction; the absence of limbs, which is a significant symbol of their ability to hunt for food, and the features of their faces, which symbolize their unique social identities, signify that women’s only (or primary) worth is as reproductive carriers. The next issue is whether or not fertility was valued more highly than hunting; are the missing pieces a result of the objectification of women for the sake of reproduction or the societal climate that undermines individuality?

Since the dawn of time, women’s worth has fluctuated according to the emphasis society places on their bodies, particularly on fecundity. Because reproduction was seen as the ultimate purpose of human civilization during the matriarchal age, women’s fecundity earned them a place in society. During this period, women are also discreetly associated with the idea that their bodily function and reproduction are the only and most valuable attributes bestowed upon them. With the advancement of human civilization, material existence has grown increasingly sufficient for human needs. As a result, individuals began seeking spiritual fulfillment, which sparked the beginning of socialization.

Fecundity gradually loses its advantage as it increases women’s working efficiency relative to males, as society gradually shifts to one that prioritizes production efficiency.

Conclusion

Female fecundity changed from “absolute power” to “absolute powerlessness” after the establishment of patriarchal power (Mineke Schipper). The activities of

the female body that were and are considered taboo and “shameful,” such as breastfeeding, menstruation, and menopause, are precisely those that are closely related to female fertility. The parts of the female body that were and are feared or denigrated are precisely the parts that differ most from the male body. A woman in a patriarchal society is reduced to the status of her body; she is her body. In contrast, a man’s value is not primarily derived from his physical form; rather, it is derived from his transcendent nature.(Ke, Q)

Another proof on the metaphysics level that there is no gender indication in sexual behavior or fecundity between men and women is: The theory of love in Plato’s Symposium, which holds that the pursuit of love by men and women, men and men, or women and women is all merely due to Zeus’s separation of their original entity, is another example of metaphysical evidence that there is no gender-indication in sexual behavior or fecundity between men and women per se. This behavior of searching for their other half can be interpreted as the search of one’s completeness.

Women are created; they are not born. Because fecundity itself is not necessarily tied to motherhood/femininity, it is the unseen oppression at the level of the social and humanistic system, which is extremely antithetical to humanism, that disenfranchises the women who happen to bear it.

There is a causal synchronization between the historical process of female disempowerment and the collective masculine triumph. An oppressive system of creation and maintenance of hierarchies is the fundamental structure of a patriarchal society.

The roles of men and women in reproductive decision-making and the conception process will become more equal if males are able to reproduce or if the idea of procreation is separated from women and is no longer seen to be the only responsibility of women. Male pregnancies have the potential to create novel family structures and even change how society views the roles of “mother” and “father.” Opportunity equality promotes gender equality from an economic standpoint. It should be noted that while equality of opportunity is crucial, it does not always imply equality of outcome.

In conclusion, this article discusses how fecundity hinders women’s advancement in modern society. However, given how quickly society is changing, people should be aware of the inherent differences between fecundity and women’s groups. They should also work to break down the barriers that patriarchal power has purposefully put in place to prevent women from advancing and should develop policies that support women’s advancement in society. It is in everyone’s best interests to reconsider this

matter, not just that of women.

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