

Date ~~02/10/21~~

Q: Write a comprehensive essay on 'sex versus Gender Debate' in feminist philosophy and social sciences, reflecting nature/nurture argument.

INTRODUCTION

The debate on Sex versus Gender has been ~~the~~ in talks for quite a long time now, with sex being defined as ~~the~~ the biological characteristics - ~~physical~~ ~~features~~ genitals, gonads & secondary sex characters - categorising the person into male & female. Meanwhile, Gender being ~~the~~ a social construct - a set of characteristics that define how a person should behave in order to become a "man" or a "woman". Gender is ~~not~~ something that one is born with, rather it is acquired by learning the behaviours of those around us.

"Gender is something we perform"
(Judith Butler, 1990).

The debate has been on this difference between sex & gender being ~~inherent~~ hereditary or cultural, whether this difference is present since the birth of a child or ~~the~~ is adopted from the environment as the child grows. ~~is the~~
There have been many controversies regarding the "nature versus culture" argument.

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In order to understand the nature versus nurture argument, we must first consider what nature and nurture mean.

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NATURE: Nature means the "Nature" in this whole argument supports the idea that we are born with the ability to be "gendered". The supporters of "nature" in this argument consider genetic, hormonal and evolutionary differences between male & female to be critical determinants of gendered behaviour.

1) BABY

NURTURE: The supporters of "nurture", however, say that it is the environment that shapes up how a person behaves and a person is born with a blank slate. Gendered behaviours come into play at a later stage as the brain develops and children start to observe their surroundings.

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HOW GENDERED BEHAVIOURS COME INTO ACTION :-

Social factors play a critical role in boys acting as boys and girls acting as girls. Ever since a child is born, he or she is assigned a gender and is treated accordingly throughout. It is no brainer that the child is going to act just as he or she is treated. Let us see how parent have a key role in shaping their child's attitude.

1) BABY TALK :-

From birth, parents treat their child differently. Studies show that adults refer to a girl child as "sweet" and "cute" as a newborn and when the same baby is in a different outfit - say a "boyish" outfit, they refer use a word like "strong", "energetic".

2) CHILDREN'S TOYS :-

There is even a difference between the toys that are marketed for little kids. The toys are typically "boy-oriented" or "girl-oriented" with differences in colors such as "pink" for girls and "blue" for boys.

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Research has found that a child as young as 18 months can associate cars with boys and dolls with girls.

The effects of these choices can be very long lasting with children developing a fairly traditional idea about typical gender roles.

~~3) PRINCESS DRESSES AND FOOTBALL KICKS.~~

3) MEDIA STEREOTYPES:-

With 21st century being the age of media, television shows, movies, cartoons and computer games, all are filled with gender-oriented content. Media plays a greater role in inculcating gender roles in children, and discourages a child from developing his or her own view of the world.

4) NICHE CONSTRUCTION:-

According to a new research, ~~the~~ in ~~idea~~ of evolutionary biology, there is a concept called "niche construction" that says that inheritance can work through the construction of environments by parents. For example, a bird develops in a certain way because ~~its~~ ^{its} parents build nests, and this includes a tendency to build ~~&~~ nests.

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Humans take this process to a ~~state~~ whole new level, with schools, hospitals etc. being the complex institutions that scaffold the development of a young mind.

Mixing this evolutionary process with neurobiology, researchers found that it is actually the environment that determines the gendered behaviours, while biology providing "plasticity" - that is, for those behaviours to change across generations.

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CONCLUSION:-

With "nature versus nurture" debates being prevalent in today's society and new researches being found, I would conclude my analysis ~~is~~ in support of culture being the main driver of development of gendered behaviours, as a child does not know what ~~he is~~ or she is born as. It is one's own idea and belief and experience that can construct a better understanding of who they are, reinforced by society ~~to that~~ and culture.