Women in Indian Philosophy

Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

Editors

Dr. I. Parvin Banu
Dr. R. Kavithamani
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EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION: WOMEN'S PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT, MODERN INDIAN SOCIETY, AND THE RISE OF AI

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Abstract---The intersection of women's philosophical thought, modern Indian society, and the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) presents a critical area of study, highlighting the impact of gender, ethics, and technological advancements on social structures. This paper explores the contributions of women philosophers in shaping Indian thought, analyzing their role in social justice movements, nationalism, and cultural transformations. Drawing from historical and contemporary feminist scholarship, the study examines how feminist philosophy influences debates on gender equality, policy reforms, and ethical considerations in AI. The paper further delves into the gendered dimensions of AI in India, addressing concerns about algorithmic bias, digital exclusion, and the ethical implications of AI-driven decision-making. Feminist critiques of AI ethics underscore the need for diverse representation in technology development and the application of intersectional feminist principles to AI governance. Through an analysis of key feminist philosophical perspectives, this study proposes ethical frameworks for AI that promote inclusivity, equity, and social justice. By integrating insights from feminist theory and technological ethics, this paper emphasizes the necessity of an intersectional feminist lens in shaping the future of AI. It argues that AI, when developed with awareness of gender, caste, and socio-economic disparities, has the potential to empower marginalized groups rather than reinforce existing inequalities. Ultimately, this research advocates for a more inclusive approach to AI ethics, ensuring that technological advancements align with principles of justice, dignity, and human flourishing in modern Indian society.

Keywords---Feminist Philosophy, Artificial Intelligence Ethics, Gender and Technology, Modern Indian Society, Intersectionalit.

I. Introduction

The ongoing evolution of technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), is reshaping various aspects of society, from economic practices to personal interactions. However, the development of AI often fails to account for the intersectional issues

surrounding gender, race, class, and ethnicity, leading to perpetuation of biases and inequalities. In India, where the legacy of patriarchy still influences societal structures, the integration of women's philosophical thought could provide important insights into making AI more inclusive, ethical, and socially just.

Women philosophers in India have long been at the forefront of challenging societal norms, advocating for gender equality, and promoting social justice. By examining the philosophical thought of women in modern India and its potential connection to AI, this article seeks to explore how these intellectual contributions can inform the development of more ethical, unbiased, and equitable AI systems that benefit all sections of society.

II. Statement of the Problem

In modern India, philosophical discourse has often been dominated by male voices, overshadowing the significant contributions made by women thinkers. Historically, the philosophical traditions of India have been shaped by male-dominated perspectives that reinforce the patriarchal social order, marginalizing women's intellectual contributions. As India transitions into the modern era, women's philosophical thoughts have begun to challenge these gendered structures, urging a reevaluation of the nation's social and cultural dynamics.

At the same time, the rapid rise of artificial intelligence (AI) brings about new opportunities and challenges. AI has the potential to transform society, but it also risks perpetuating the biases and inequalities that are embedded in its design. The underrepresentation of women in AI development, coupled with the absence of feminist perspectives in AI ethics, poses significant concerns about the future of AI and its societal implications.

The problem lies at the intersection of these two domains: the historically neglected contributions of women philosophers in modern Indian society and the growing influence of AI technology. How the philosophical can thought of women in India—particularly their contributions to gender equality, social justice, and ethical development—shape the way we approach AI in the modern world? Is there a need to integrate feminist philosophical frameworks into the development and ethical considerations of AI, especially in a society like India, where gender, class, and caste continue to intersect and influence social realities?

III. Objectives

1. To examine the contributions of women philosophers in modern Indian thought
2. To assess the impact of women's philosophical thought on Indian society
3. To analyze the gendered dimensions of AI in modern India
4. To develop ethical frameworks for AI based on feminist philosophy
5. To explore the future of AI through an intersectional feminist lens

IV. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach to explore the intersection of women's philosophical thought, modern Indian society, and artificial intelligence (AI). The research is primarily based on secondary sources, including books, journal articles, and policy reports, to analyze historical and contemporary feminist perspectives and their relevance to AI ethics. The methodology consists of the following key components:

V. Research Design

The study adopts an interpretative and analytical research design to examine the contributions of women philosophers in Indian thought and their impact on social justice movements, gender equality, and AI ethics. Through a multidisciplinary approach, the study integrates insights from feminist philosophy, AI ethics, and socio-political studies.

VI. Data Collection

The study relies on a systematic review of scholarly works on women philosophers in India, feminist philosophy, and AI ethics. Key texts by Radhakrishnan (1948), Omvedt (1994), Chakravarti (2003), and Butler (1990) provide a foundation for understanding the intellectual contributions of women philosophers. AI-related studies by Benjamin (2019), Crawford (2016), and D'Ignazio & Klein (2020) help in analyzing the gendered dimensions of AI. Data is collected from historical and contemporary sources to identify recurring themes in feminist philosophy, gender biases in AI, and ethical considerations for technology development. Policy documents, reports on AI and gender inequality, and case studies on biased AI systems are reviewed to support theoretical arguments. The contributions of Indian women philosophers are examined in their historical and cultural contexts. The study evaluates their influence on modern feminist thought and its relevance to AI ethics.

VII. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

1. Women's Philosophical Thought in Modern India:

The contributions of women philosophers in Indian thought have long been overshadowed by male-dominated narratives. However, scholars have increasingly recognized their role in shaping philosophical discourse. While Radhakrishnan (1948) and Tagore (1919) acknowledged women's societal contributions, they largely overlooked their intellectual agency. More recent works, such as those by Gail Omvedt (1994), highlight the influence of women philosophers, particularly in Dalit and Buddhist traditions. The rediscovery of early women philosophers like Vidyādhara and Kantimati has been further explored by Kumkum Roy (2005), who examines their impact on early Indian Buddhist philosophy. The development of modern feminist thought in India has been significantly influenced by Uma Chakravarti (2003) and Sharmila Rege (2006), who critique both colonial and traditional gender norms. Their analyses, informed by Western feminist theorists such as Simone de Beauvoir (1949) and Judith Butler (1990), have led to the adaptation of feminist ideas to the Indian socio-political context, as seen in the works of Meena Kandasamy (2012). The integration of Eastern and Western thought has been explored by Lata Mani (1990), who examines the intersection of Advaita Vedanta and feminist movements, and Radhakrishnan (1948), who highlights Bhakti philosophy's role in shaping gender roles.

2. The Influence of Women's Philosophical Thought on Indian Society:

Women philosophers have played a vital role in shaping social justice movements and cultural shifts in India. The contributions of thinkers like Savitribai Phule (1854) and Sarojini Naidu (1912) have been foundational in advancing gender equality in education and politics. Savitribai Phule's advocacy for women's education has been analyzed by Sharmila Rege (2006), who situates her within the broader feminist movement in India. Kamini Roy (1910), a poet and social reformer, used literature to argue for women's rights, and her work has influenced contemporary feminist discourse. In modern times, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003) has critiqued mainstream feminism for failing to account for caste, religion, and regional disparities in India. The role of feminist thought in nationalism and modernity has been examined by Rita Kothari (2011), who explores how women's intellectual contributions have been perceived in the 21st century.

3. Gendered Dimensions of AI in Modern India:

The rise of AI has introduced new challenges and exacerbated existing gender inequalities. Scholars like Ruha Benjamin (2019) have examined how AI systems inherit biases embedded in societal structures, particularly regarding race and gender. Kate Crawford (2016) and Tressie McMillan Cottom (2019) have analyzed the gendered dimensions of AI, arguing that algorithmic decision-making often reinforces existing disparities. Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein (2020) in Data Feminism advocate for the application of feminist analysis to AI development to prevent systemic discrimination. Within the Indian context, concerns about AI-driven hiring processes, biased facial recognition, and digital exclusion disproportionately affecting women have been highlighted by feminist scholars.

4. Developing Ethical Frameworks for AI Based on Feminist Philosophy:

Feminist philosophical thought provides essential ethical frameworks for AI development. Scholars such as Nell Watson (2021) argue for the need for greater representation of women in AI research and development to ensure inclusivity. Shannon Vallor (2018) in Technology and the Virtues emphasizes the ethical responsibility of AI developers to consider gender equity in technological design. Michaela Shmied (2020) and Kate Crawford (2016) have been vocal about the ethical implications of AI, stressing the importance of feminist principles in preventing algorithmic bias. Helen Longino (2002) in Science as Social Knowledge contends that scientific and technological advancements must be informed by social and political contexts to ensure inclusivity and equity.

5. Exploring the Future of AI Through an Intersectional Feminist Lens:

The future of AI must be guided by intersectional feminist principles to prevent the marginalization of vulnerable groups. Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) introduced the concept of intersectionality, which has become foundational in feminist theory and AI ethics. Scholars like Kirsten Martin (2020) and Sasha Costanza-Chock (2020) argue that AI systems must account for race, gender, class, and disability to avoid reinforcing social hierarchies. Alondra Nelson (2021) critiques how gender and technology intersect to shape access to AI-driven opportunities. Donna Haraway (1991) in A Cyborg Manifesto discusses how women's liberation can intersect with technology, advocating for the empowerment of marginalized communities through inclusive technological development. Yasemin J. Erden (2018) explores whether AI can be designed to promote

social justice or if it will continue to reinforce historical inequities, emphasizing the need for ethical, feminist-driven AI policies.

This review underscores the critical role of women's philosophical thought in shaping Indian society and influencing ethical AI development. By integrating feminist ethics into AI governance, we can work toward a future that prioritizes inclusivity, equity, and justice.

VIII. Ethical Considerations

Since this study is based on secondary research, ethical considerations involve ensuring the accurate representation of sources, avoiding misinterpretation, and acknowledging diverse perspectives in feminist and AI ethics discourse.

IX. Scope and Limitations

The study focuses on philosophical perspectives and theoretical debates rather than empirical AI testing. While it provides an in-depth analysis of feminist contributions to AI ethics, further empirical research is needed to examine AI applications in real-world contexts.

By integrating feminist philosophy with AI ethics, this methodology provides a framework for understanding how gendered perspectives can contribute to more equitable technological developments in modern Indian society.

X. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the intersection between **women's philosophical thought, modern Indian society, and AI** represents a rich and vital area for investigation. While AI holds great promise, its development must be guided by ethical considerations that ensure gender equality and inclusivity. By integrating feminist philosophical perspectives into the discourse surrounding AI, we can ensure that the future of technology serves all individuals, regardless of gender, caste, or class. This article aims to contribute to this essential dialogue by examining the past and present philosophical contributions of women thinkers in India and exploring their relevance to the future of AI in modern society.

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