

Abstract

We found it appropriate to tackle the concept of **gender** in this paper for its usefulness in shedding light on woman's reality and status in the world in general as well as in the Arab societies in particular. In order to dismantle, comprehend and explore this concept, we deemed it proper to direct this research in three main directions. First, we sought to track the history of this concept, the whereabouts of its inception as well as the range of its influence. Second, we highlighted the significance and content of this concept. Third, we explored its boundaries and the scientific and methodological issues that may arise from tackling the gender issue.

Research showed that this concept emerged in countries that witnessed enormous political, industrial, scientific and cultural revolutions since the end of the eighteenth century. This had gradually led to the achievement of a comprehensive development that helped those societies construct the individual and create the state of law and institutions, as well as establish democracy and citizenship.

The gender concept was not a result of the political development only, but also the academic momentum and a product of the divergence between the sociological and anthropological fields in the American, Canadian, and European universities, in addition to the feminist movements and voices rebellious against domination. Gender, then, is a concept that encompasses an integrated research project represented in the establishment of what is called woman's

anthropology, or an integrated science that is known as the gender science.

This project is brought about to explain the mechanisms, techniques and tools that were utilized in the manufacturing of women across history. To talk about gender is partially to talk about woman's body as being formed and created in the social conflict arena. To talk about gender is also to explore woman as a product of the sexual division of labor, wealth, and power among women and men. To talk about gender, is to examine the various forms of the material and symbolic violence that were used to make woman a means of exchange among men. To talk about gender, is on the other hand, to explore the dual language and logic that enable the male to define him as well as woman

Research on this topic cannot be viewed as objective unless it addresses the interlocking relations between the gender concept and the sex concept on one level, and between the gender concept and the concept of the social class on the second, as well as with the ethnic dimension on a third level.