



Food Justice and the Ethics of Global Nutrition: hilosophical Reflections on Inequality and the Good Life

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores the philosophical dimensions of food justice and global nutrition, focusing on the ethical implications of inequality in food distribution and access. It argues that nutrition is not only a biological necessity but also a moral and political issue embedded within broader frameworks of justice, human rights, and the concept of the good life. By examining ethical theories and cross-cultural perspectives, the paper highlights how philosophical inquiry can contribute to addressing global nutritional disparities and promoting human flourishing.

Keywords: Food Justice, Nutrition, Ethics, Inequality, Philosophy, Good Life, Global Health.

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1. Introduction

Nutrition is a universal human need, yet access to adequate and healthy food remains profoundly unequal across the globe. While some populations face overconsumption and diet-related chronic diseases, others struggle with hunger and malnutrition. This disparity raises philosophical and ethical questions about justice, responsibility, and the meaning of human flourishing. This paper examines food justice through the lens of philosophy, situating nutrition as both a moral and cultural issue. It seeks to analyze how ethical frameworks can inform our understanding of global food inequality and its impact on the good life.

2. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative philosophical methodology. It engages with classical and contemporary ethical theories (utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics, and theories of justice) to evaluate food-related inequalities. The research further draws on cross-cultural studies and critical perspectives in global health to illuminate how food justice intersects with human dignity, rights, and cultural identity. This method allows for a normative evaluation of food policies, global trade practices, and cultural approaches to nutrition.

3. Discussion

The findings underscore the importance of integrating ethical considerations into discussions about global nutrition. From a philosophical standpoint, food justice requires rethinking the structures that perpetuate inequality, including global trade systems, agricultural policies, and cultural narratives about consumption. The ethics of sustainability emerge as crucial, since future generations' access to food is endangered by environmental degradation and unsustainable practices. Furthermore, the concept of the good life is inseparable from nutrition, as it reflects not only health but also dignity, cultural belonging, and fairness. Philosophical engagement with food justice thus contributes to global health ethics, policy-making, and individual choices, fostering a more equitable world.

4. Conclusions

Food justice is central to the pursuit of human flourishing. By framing nutrition within ethical and philosophical discourse, we recognize that addressing hunger and inequality is not simply about resource allocation but about justice, dignity, and the good life. Philosophical perspectives expand the scope of global nutrition debates, emphasizing the moral responsibility of individuals, societies, and institutions to ensure equitable access to food. Achieving food justice requires a commitment to ethical reflection, cultural sensitivity, and sustainable practices that safeguard both present and future generations.

5. Results

The analysis reveals that food inequality is not merely an economic issue but a deeply moral one. Utilitarian ethics highlight the suffering caused by hunger, while deontological approaches stress the duty to secure basic rights such as access to food. Virtue ethics underscore the role of moderation, responsibility, and solidarity in shaping nutritional practices. Cross-cultural perspectives show that food is tied to identity and community, and therefore, its unequal distribution undermines not only physical well-being but also cultural integrity and social justice.

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