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Б.М. Ибраева, А.Н. Калижанова**СЕКСИЗМ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ АМЕРИКАНСКОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ**

***Аннотация:** авторы статьи утверждают, что современная жизнь все еще полна различных стереотипов. В данной работе рассмотрен один из самых противоречивых вопросов – это проблема дискриминации женщин в современном американском обществе, хотя в это сложно поверить, так как страна претендует на роль главного гаранта прав и свобод человека.*

***Ключевые слова:** американское общество, стереотипы, сексизм, дискриминация по половому признаку, предвзвешенность, мужской сексизм, женский сексизм.*

B.M. Ibraeva, A.N. Kalizhanova**SEXISM IN MODERN AMERICAN SOCIETY**

***Abstract:** the authors of the article consider that modern life is still full of various stereotypes. One of the most controversial questions in this article is the issue of discrimination against women in contemporary American society, and it is hard to believe, because this country claims to be a main guarantor of the human rights and freedoms.*

***Keywords:** American society, stereotypes, sexism, gender discrimination, bias, female sexism, male sexism.*

Sexism, or sexual discrimination, is present in every culture and every country. The term appeared in the U.S. in the 1960s together with the rise of Western feminist movement. Historically, sexism is considered as an issue provoked by patriarchy, where men have advantages over women. For instance, it perpetuates misconceptions about women's poor driving skills and limits their social roles to those of a housewife and a mother. Conversely, the stereotype of men as breadwinners is widely spread in

the contemporary society despite a significant proportion of female employees. However, it does not matter how many women have succeeded in business or science if men keep considering women as weak, helpless, and unable to maintain good performance at the same level with men in all spheres of life. American society is still full of biases and prejudices against both genders that should be resolved as soon as possible. Otherwise, the U.S. can discredit its image of a guarantor of justice and freedom for all regardless of gender, race, age, or ethnicity.

There are several reasons why gender discrimination entered human lives. Firstly, religion is still one of the several key factors oppressing the interests of women. America is one of the most religious nations with the prevailed number of male ministers who teach girls to be faithful wives and recognize husbands as family heads. Also, the traditional prejudices are rooted in the long history of gender discrimination. In fact, the role of women was confined to their fertility and housework before the World War Second. Furthermore, Western educational institutes did not admit women until the middle of the twentieth century. In particular, the participants of the Solvay Conference in Brussels were mainly men except for Marie Curie.

From childhood, boys are restricted to offend girls and forbidden to cry, whereas girls are instructed how to clean, cook and sew. However, the most significant reason for sexism in the U.S. is a warped understanding of the problem of diversity [2, p. 405]. Alternatively, more accurately, equal opportunities for all employees cannot solve the problem of gender inequality at work. For instance, even if a woman is a leader in a company, the corporate culture does not provide the professional growth for her. Moreover, women do not believe in their initiatives that could help work their way [2, p. 405]. Furthermore, female employees have learned to get satisfaction from their work and even turn sexism at work into the weapon against men [2, p. 405].

Many people fail to notice that sexism is a two-edged sword and that gender discrimination against men is rampant too. In his book *The Second Sexism: Discrimination against Men and Boys*, Benatar states that more men drop out of educational institutes compared to women. The author declares that fewer men earn the recognition of achievement, diplomas of higher education, and scholar degrees. At the

same time, according to Benatar, the male mortality rate is higher than the female one. The writer summarizes that the discrimination against men is a poorly understood issue due to the modern society's fear to speak about it [1, p. 2]. Furthermore, according to Warren Farrell, an American fighter for the rights of men, «the glass cellar» is the phenomenon of the second sexism existence [3]. Farrell does not deny the possibility of «the glass cellar» in the first sexism. However, he names 24 out of 25 of the least prestigious professions, such as sanitation worker, a sewage worker, a welder, and a roofer, that involve male persons but not otherwise.

Another argument for anti-male sexism is a number of working hours. Statistically, male employees spend at work 39 hours a week against 34 hours of female participation in business [3]. Moreover, boys' reading skills are poorer than girls' ones in all developed countries, according to the statistical data of 2009 [3]. Furthermore, men suffer from heart diseases ten times more than women. At the same time, a likelihood of suicide among men is about three times higher than among their female peers. Last but not least, men often become the objects for mocking in various advertisements. For example, the clip about cleaning ovens uses a slogan «So easy that even a man manages to do it!» [3].

Benatar admits the difficulty to reveal the degree of male discrimination. However, more tolerant attitude to any violence toward men is evident. In fact, men more often become victims of murder or robbery entailing physical injuries. However, criminal cases with male victims are never highlighted in the mass media as broadly as when the victim is a woman. In 1997, 2, 460 boys and 1, 672 girls died being hit by a car while crossing the road. The ratio is higher male youngsters were explained as a tendency of men to take risks and trust to luck. However, feminists were not satisfied by such explanation and immediately initiated the debates about gender stereotypes in mass media.

Not only mass media but all social, educational and political institutes publicly indulge biases against male and female sexism. As for gender discrimination in science, it starts when children go to separate schools. Scientists think that segregated education legalizes sexism at the constitutional level. Statistically, men are recognized as more

respected and credible scholars, whereas women's researches and studies are often called superficial. Moreover, articles authored by men are cited more frequently compared to women's ones [4, p. 603]. A majority of scientific journals and science-oriented TV programs prefer to deal with male scholars and ignore female ones. As for business, any female CEO is often recognized as a person who worked her way, having received adequate support from a wealthy male benefactor. Speaking about politics, the ratio of men to women in supreme courts and other legal bodies speaks for itself.

At the same time, women have more opportunities to defend their rights and point out the fact of sexual discrimination, whereas men should rely only on their knowledge and experience. Also, a female career path can be boosted after the complaints about gender discrimination at work, and, consequently, men will be the first candidates to be fired. Furthermore, in modern politics, women have more chances to gain popularity thanks to belonging to a minority. For instance, Hillary Clinton has one distinct advantage over Donald Trump: the U.S. has never had a female president, and it provides an additional merit to Clinton's presidential campaign. No matter, if Clinton wins, she has already won millions of hearts as the first American female candidate for the U.S. presidency.

Unfortunately, modern life is penetrated with various prejudices and stereotypes. Promoting the principles of liberalization and democratic freedoms, the U.S. is struggling with asymmetry and inequality of personal social issues. I believe that awareness of intercultural and interpersonal communication will deal with intolerance and non-acceptance of outsiders and unique people. I think that the contemporary society should get rid of any biases and prejudices against both women and men due to the global tendencies of different forms of equality. It is entirely unacceptable to believe in stereotypes, especially if they can be used as a weapon against any opponents in all spheres of life.

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