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## WHAT IS SEXISM?

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### Словська І.Є. Що таке сексизм?

Стаття присвячена дослідженню поняття та класифікації сексизму. Підкреслено, що слово «сексизм» стало широко відомим під час жіночого визвольного руху 1960-х років. На той час дослідники феміністичного руху зазначали, що пригнічення жінок було поширене майже в усьому людському суспільстві і вони почали говорити про сексизм замість чоловічого шовінізму. Тоді як чоловіки-шовіністи, зазвичай, були окремими особами, які висловлювали переконання у своїй виключності над жінками, сексизм посилався на колективну поведінку, яка відображає суспільну модель в цілому. Підкреслено, що сьогодні сексизм означає дискримінацію за статтю чи гендером, або переконання, що, оскільки чоловіки перевершують жінок, дискримінація є виправданою.

У статті наголошується, що сексизм включає погляди, ідеологію, переконання, теорії та ідеї, які обґрунтовують перевагу однієї групи (зазвичай чоловіків) над іншою (зазвичай жінками) і які виправдовують пригнічення членів цієї групи на основі статі чи гендеру. Крім того, сексизм охоплює практичну діяльність, інституції, які його провадять, а також способи пригнічення.

Підсумовано, що існує кілька різних видів сексизму, і кожен з них може мати шкідливі наслідки. Шість основних типів сексизму включають: доброзичливий сексизм і ворожий сексизм (доброзичливий сексизм зазвичай виникає з бажання захистити жінок через переконання, що жінки за своєю природою слабкіші, чутливіші чи невинніші, ніж чоловіки. Тоді як ворожий сексизм карає жінок через призму насильницьких традиційних гендерних норм, доброзичливий сексизм заохочує ці традиційні ролі); амбівалентний сексизм (цей тип сексизму поєднує як ворожі, так і доброзичливі форми. Він є симбіозом суперечливих переконань, що жінки одночасно тендітні й беззахисні, а також маніпулятивні й поблажливі); міжособистісний сексизм (цей вид сексизму виникає у повсякденних взаємодіях з партнерами); інтерналізований сексизм (самосприйняття сексизму); інституційний сексизм (цей тип сексизму виникає, коли такі установи, як ЗМІ, охорона

здоров'я, правоохоронні органи, освіта, релігія та банківська справа, посилюють сексистську ідеологію).

Причини сексизму: завчені переконання про традиційні гендерні ролі; закони, які заохочують різне ставлення до чоловіків і жінок; сексистські образи та мова в поп-культурі та ЗМІ; відсутність політики реагування або покарання за сексизм на робочому місці, у школах та інших секторах.

**Ключові слова:** сексизм, сексистська ідеологія, захист жінок, визволення жінок, чоловічий шовінізм, фемінізм, сексистське ставлення, стать, гендер.

### Slovska I. What is sexism?

The article is devoted to the study of the definition and classification of sexism. Stressed that the word «sexism» became widely known during the women's liberation movement of the 1960s. At that time, feminist theorists explained that the oppression of women was widespread in nearly all human society, and they began to speak of sexism instead of male chauvinism. Whereas male chauvinists were usually individual men who expressed the belief that they were superior to women, sexism referred to collective behavior that reflected society as a whole. Highlighted that today sexism means discrimination based on sex or gender, or the belief that because men are superior to women, discrimination is justified.

The article emphasizes that sexism includes attitudes or ideology, including beliefs, theories, and ideas that hold one group (usually male) as deservedly superior to the other (usually female), and that justify oppressing members of the other group on the basis of their sex or gender. Besides, sexism involves practices and institutions and the ways in which oppression is carried out.

Summarized that several different types of sexism exist, and each of them can have harmful consequences. The six main types of sexism include: benevolent sexism and hostile sexism (benevolent sexism usually stems from a desire to protect women due to a belief that women are inherently weaker, more sensitive, or more innocent

than men. Whereas hostile sexism punishes women for violating traditional gender norms, benevolent sexism encourages those traditional roles); ambivalent sexism (this type of sexism combines both hostile and benevolent forms. It fuses the seemingly contradictory beliefs that women are both fragile and pure as well as manipulative and conniving); interpersonal sexism (this type of sexism occurs in everyday interactions with partners); internalized sexism (self-adoption of sexism); institutional sexism (this type of sexism occurs when institutions like the media, healthcare, law enforcement, education, religion, and banking reinforce sexist ideology).

Sexism can come from a wide range of sources: beliefs about traditional gender roles inherited from caregivers and educators; laws that promote different treatment of men and women; sexist imagery and language in pop culture and the media; lack of policies for responding to or penalizing sexism in the workplace, schools, and other sectors.

**Key words:** sexism, sexist ideology, to protect women, women's liberation, male chauvinism, feminism, sexist attitude, sex, gender.

#### **Formulation of the problem.**

The view that women are somehow inferior to men is not restricted to one religion or belief. Women are prevented from playing a full and equal role in many faiths. Nor, tragically, does its influence stop at the walls of the church, mosque, synagogue or temple. This discrimination, unjustifiably attributed to a Higher Authority, has provided a reason or excuse for the deprivation of women's equal rights across the world for centuries.

At its most repugnant, the belief that women must be subjugated to the wishes of men excuses slavery, violence, forced prostitution, genital mutilation and national laws that omit rape as a crime. But it also costs many millions of girls and women control over their own bodies and lives, and continues to deny them fair access to education, health, employment and influence within their own communities [1].

In any struggle there is a risk of going into radicalism. Therefore, fighting for the perception of oneself as a person, and not just a representative of one sex or another, it is important not to cross the line of adequacy. That is, if you are forced to wash dishes in the office, appealing to the fact that it is your duty as a woman, then this is sexism. But if you objectively did a bad job with your work, and you were, say, fined for this, then it is not at all necessary because you are a woman. An impartial analysis of the situation has not yet been canceled [2].

That is why, given the extreme importance of the issue of sexism, the proposed article explores it.

**Analysis of recent publications.** In writing this article the author used scientific developments of such authors as: J. Carter, D. Kruglova,

J. Leonard, R. Strong. Studied materials are taken from internet sources.

**Formulation of goals.** The purpose of the proposed manuscript is to study the concepts, types of sexism that occur in human society.

#### **Presenting main material.**

The word «sexism» became widely known during the women's liberation movement of the 1960s. At that time, feminist theorists explained that the oppression of women was widespread in nearly all human society, and they began to speak of sexism instead of male chauvinism. Whereas male chauvinists were usually individual men who expressed the belief that they were superior to women, sexism referred to collective behavior that reflected society as a whole.

Today sexism means discrimination based on sex or gender, or the belief that because men are superior to women, discrimination is justified. Such a belief can be conscious or unconscious. In sexism, as in racism, the differences between two (or more) groups are viewed as indications that one group is superior or inferior [1]. Sexist discrimination against girls and women is a means of maintaining male domination and power. The oppression or discrimination can be economic, political, social, or cultural.

#### **Elements of Sexism**

- Sexism includes attitudes or ideology, including beliefs, theories, and ideas that hold one group (usually male) as deservedly superior to the other (usually female), and that justify oppressing members of the other group on the basis of their sex or gender.

- Sexism involves practices and institutions and the ways in which oppression is carried out. These need not be done with a conscious sexist attitude but may be unconscious cooperation in a system that has been in place already in which one sex (usually female) has less power and fewer goods in the society [3].

Several different types of sexism exist, and each of them can have harmful consequences.

The six main types of sexism include:

#### **Hostile sexism**

This more overt form of sexism is generally underpinned by one primary goal: maintaining male dominance.

People who exercise this kind of sexism may:

- consider men superior to women
- suspect women of trying to control men through seduction or manipulation

believe women, transgender, and nonbinary people who reject traditional gender roles are attacking traditional values and threatening the status and position of men.

According to a 2019 study, this form of sexism can sometimes lead to sexual harassment and violence toward women.

Since hostile sexism, true to its name, is more openly antagonistic, it's generally a little easier to recognize. Examples include:

- Victim blaming, or saying a sexual assault happened because the person assaulted dressed a certain way or acted like a «tease».
- Belittling or criticizing girls and women who pursue careers in traditionally male-dominated fields like sports, science, or technology.
- Harassing someone who doesn't comply with gender norms.
- Teasing or reprimanding a girl who plays with trucks or a boy who plays with dolls.
- Calling women who become upset or angry «hysterical».
- Calling assertive women «bossy» [4].

### **Benevolent sexism**

Benevolent sexism includes views and behaviors that frame women as:

- innocent
- pure
- caring and nurturing
- fragile and in need of protection
- beautiful.

A 2020 study involving participants in the United States and United Kingdom found that people who believed in humanity's dominance over nature and who saw women as being more closely connected with nature than men were more likely to exhibit benevolent sexism.

In comparison to hostile sexism, benevolent sexism can be less obvious. It is a more socially accepted form and is much more likely to be endorsed by men and women. However, despite its name, this type of sexism is not truly benevolent.

While benevolent sexism applies some positive traits to women and femininity, it still frames one sex or gender as weaker than another. These ideas can lead to policies and behaviors that limit a person's agency, or the ability of someone to make their own choices.

For example, the 2020 study found that men who endorsed benevolent sexism were more likely to support policies that limit the freedoms of pregnant women. Benevolent sexism also undermines girls' confidence in themselves and their abilities.

Some examples of benevolent sexism include:

- basing a woman's value on her role as a mother, wife, or girlfriend
- focusing attention and praise on someone's appearance rather than their other attributes
- believing that people should not do things for themselves, such as manage money or drive a car, because of their gender
- assuming that a person is a nurse, assistant, or secretary — not a doctor, executive, or manager — based on their gender
- supporting policies that make it difficult for women to work, have independence, or deviate from traditional gender roles [5].

Therefore benevolent form of sexism is shrouded in romantic flair: when affectionately sing of female weakness and fragility or say that a woman is an airy creature who lives solely on the energy of male gaze [1].

### **Ambivalent sexism**

This type of sexism combines both hostile and benevolent forms. It fuses the seemingly contradictory beliefs that women are both fragile and pure as well as manipulative and conniving. In other words, this attitude toward women could be described as «can't live with them, can't live without them».

Some examples of ambivalent sexism include the following:

- Upholding unrealistic or oppressive beauty ideals and expectations for women.
- Expressing judgment of a woman's character based on how she dresses.
- Hanging out with or hiring someone because of how they look and then lashing out when they don't reciprocate sexual advances.
- Vilifying behavior that's not traditionally feminine, calling it «unladylike».

### **Interpersonal sexism**

This type of sexism occurs in everyday interactions with:

- partners
- friends
- family member
- co-workers
- strangers.

If someone directly judges you for not aligning with gender stereotypes or talks down to you based on assumptions about your sex or gender, that's considered interpersonal sexism. Keep in mind, too, that people often use humor to disguise sexism in these interactions.

Examples of interpersonal sexism include:

- Accusing you of not being or acting «ladylike»
- Making a joke based on sexist beliefs
- Justifying sexism by saying «boys will be boys»
- Blatantly ignoring, minimizing, or invalidating your thoughts, ideas, and feelings because you're a woman [4].

### **Internalized sexism**

When you're repeatedly exposed to sexist behavior and language, you may begin to internalize, or adopt sexist beliefs about yourself.

One particularly detrimental result of internalized sexism? Once you begin to internalize these negative messages, you're less likely to push back against your oppressors. You may even start to join in when someone else engages in sexism. But this isn't your fault: Participating in sexism often stems from a desire to feel safe and «fit in» to a patriarchal society.

Some examples of internalized sexism include:

- Feelings of incompetence based purely on your sex or gender.
- Telling a joke that puts down people of your gender.
- Saying something that fuels gender-based stereotypes.
- Viewing and treating yourself as an object for others' visual pleasure and only deriving self-worth from your physical appearance.
- Suggesting to other women that it's their «duty» to cook dinner, care for children, or perform other responsibilities associated with stereotypical gender roles.
- Making an effort to conform to gender ideals that don't feel authentic, even in self-destructive ways like restricting your eating.

#### **Institutional sexism**

This type of sexism occurs when institutions like the media, healthcare, law enforcement, education, religion, and banking reinforce sexist ideology.

Sexism is often embedded into laws, company policies, hiring practices, media representation, and other aspects of society. Institutional sexism can be hostile, benevolent, or ambivalent. It might range from disadvantaging certain groups financially to blatantly punishing people for expressing their gender.

Institutional sexism can also contribute to internalized sexism. In short, the more a particular group experiences the consequences of systemic prejudice and discrimination, the more easily they may come to subconsciously adopt the sexist beliefs driving it.

One major example of institutional sexism? The gender pay gap. According to a Pew Research study, women earned 84% of what men earned in 2020.

Other examples include:

- the lack of women in business leadership positions and politics
- lower medical reimbursement rates for female-specific surgical procedures versus male-specific procedures
- female entrepreneurs receiving fewer loan approvals than male entrepreneurs
- entertainment media shaming female celebrities or other public figures with children for focusing on their careers

Sexism can come from a wide range of sources. A few of the most common issues underlying sexism include:

- beliefs about traditional gender roles inherited from caregivers and educators
- laws that promote different treatment of men and women
- sexist imagery and language in pop culture and the media

normalization of sexual harassment and sexist jokes in movies, television shows, and other media, which can lead to desensitization

lack of policies for responding to or penalizing sexism in the workplace, schools, and other sectors [4].

The word «sexism» is often used in the same context as the phrase «sexual objectification». These concepts are interrelated, more precisely, objectification is considered a consequence of sexism. Sexual objectification is, simply put, when a person is perceived solely as an object of desire, he is, as it were, objectified. It is not the personality that is considered, but the attractive parts of the body. The most common example of sexual objectification is the use of the female body. This technique is actively used in advertising or, for example, computer games [2].

**References.** The conclusions of the proposed article are confirmed by theses found in numerous works of researchers on sexism. Sexism is inextricably and profoundly connected to homophobia through gender-based discrimination, with insidious consequences for the way people learn to behave and to identify as girls and boys, women and men. A strict polarization between what is considered «masculine» and what is considered «feminine» (behaviour, attributes, appearance, activity, etc.) is manufactured and enforced through rigid gender norms. Women and men are expected to adhere to gender norms and are punished when they stray from those expectations.

Women and girls who step outside of proscribed gender rules risk rejection, judgment and violence. Rigid gender roles also cause serious and far-reaching consequences for men and boys, such as negative impacts upon their self-perception and ability to form healthy, egalitarian relationships. While boys and men gain social status, power and privileges when they follow gender rules, they are severely punished through gender-based discrimination for breaking them.

Our society's rules around gender have loosened to the extent that it is now more acceptable for women to play some non-traditional roles, particularly in the workforce. However, the rules have remained fixed for men, who may be mocked for pursuing roles and activities that are still considered «feminine». It is interesting to note that girls who are considered «tom boys» are generally more accepted and acceptable than boys who are considered «effeminate», and that telling a boy he does something «like a girl» is still a common insult [6].

Several different types of sexism exist, and each of them can have harmful consequences. The six main types of sexism include: benevolent sexism and hostile sexism (benevolent sexism usually stems from a desire to protect women due to a belief that

women are inherently weaker, more sensitive, or more innocent than men. Whereas hostile sexism punishes women for violating traditional gender norms, benevolent sexism encourages those traditional roles); ambivalent sexism (this type of sexism combines both hostile and benevolent forms. It fuses the seemingly contradictory beliefs that women are both fragile and pure as well as manipulative and conniving); interpersonal sexism (this type of sexism occurs in everyday interactions with partners); internalized sexism (self-adoption of sexism); institutional sexism (this type of sexism occurs when institutions like the media, healthcare, law enforcement, education, religion, and banking reinforce sexist ideology).

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