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**Sexism Against Women in Workplaces**

**Introduction**

Sexism is a situation where people get to be discriminated based on their sex. Is can also be taken to mean unfair treatment of people of a particular gender. The term sexism originated from the wave of feminism, which broke out in the 1960s to 1980s, and it was mainly based on racism (Lipman, 23). However, it is commonly taken to mean that women are inferior beings as compared to men. Sexism may be presented by a boss, a fellow worker, or even a client. Most women have been subject to oppression because of sexism (Bates, 200). Sexism has been applied to women in workplaces, schools, and even in politics. Thus, there is no gender equality in workplaces.

**Historical perspective**

Sexism is thought to have emerged from different cultures across the globe through what was termed as the socialization of gender roles. In western countries, women are considered to be physically, emotionally nurturing; thus, women being limited to domestic work. On the other hand, men were thought to be superior beings; therefore, they take significant positions in leadership, politics, academics, and business. Children from a young age are taught that men and women have different gender roles in society. For example, there is a difference between toys meant for boys and those intended for girls (Bates, 25). Toys designed for baby boys usually include vehicles and construction equipment, while those that are meant for girls include kitchen equipment and dolls. Baby boys are taught not to behave or act like girls because they are superior beings. Thus, they grow up with a mentality that women are inferior beings (Benatar, 345). Various societies across the globe believe that women should be housewives, and their job should be cleaning, cooking, and taking care of the children while men are encouraged to support their families economically (Benatar,25). However, in modern societies, ' things have considerably changed women aged sixteen years and above work away from their homes while single parents have also increased. The contemporary woman works away from home and comes back in the evening to take care of the family. Research has shown that economically independent men do not do housework while women who are working can still get married and become good mothers to their children. Even though the mother of a child may be working, she will always be in a position to instill gender roles on her children. Thus children become gender-biased, which is later witnessed in society, especially in schools and workplaces.

**How sexism against women is witnessed in workplaces**

Sexism in workplaces can be termed as a complex phenomenon witnessed in a company's practices, processes, and structures. Sexism, which brings about gender inequality, is usually seen in human resource practices inform of hiring, promotions, training, and pay. An organization that subjects women to this kind of discrimination is hostile for women to work in. HR practices are usually meant to manage employees and ensure that they achieve organizational goals, while sexism can either be intended or exhaustive. Sexism, especially in terms of gender inequality, can significantly affect women as compared to men. Human resources practices that are biased on women regardless of their knowledge, ability, and skills are generally termed as institutional discrimination. Institutional discrimination is likely to be present in every HR policy right from recruitment, training, and payment of an employee. For example, in many situations, you will find that most women are not well represented in a particular program or job type. For example, during selection, different tests may be used based on gender. Therefore, institution discrimination is present in various HR policy and negatively affect women.

Thus, sexism may be presented in the form of institutional discrimination against women in the form of performance evaluation, which is used to reward employees. They include competition, Opportunities, promotions, and punishments. This kind of discrimination can be made formal and incorporated into HR policy if the organization decision-makers usually favor men as compared to women. Employees that work in the office tend to be more favored that those who work away from the office. Given that working women are also care givers at home, they might not always be present at work. Women also need to have flexible work schedules as compared to men. This earns them little favor as compared to their male counterparts. Human resource policies that surround opportunities and promotions tend to be another area of concern. In organizations that have formal ways in which employees rise to top positions, women are less likely to advance. This is because most leadership and senior positions may be defined by gender. On the other hand, women may be asked to give some sexual advances before getting a top job. As men move up on the ladder, skills and experiences are strengthened; thus, when women are left behind, they may lack the knowledge needed to rise to the top.

Sexism is also present in workplaces that inform of personal discrimination. Personal discrimination can occur in each stage of HR practices, which include recruitment, pay, selection, promotions role assignment, and termination. While selecting employees for a job which is thought to be for male candidates, females are always viewed negatively, and they might end up not getting the job as compared to their male counterparts. They hardly get a callback or a chance to be interviewed. Women are thought to face significant discrimination when applying for those jobs that are thought to belong to men. Women also receive a very low-performance evaluation as compared to their male counterparts. In such situations, women must start behaving in masculine ways. In cases that call for problem-solving, women are rated lowly as compared to men. Managers and supervisors may become skeptical about woman's expertise; thus, they take their opinions lightly but take in the advice given by their male counterparts. There is also high discrimination for pregnant women who apply to get specific jobs; most of them end up not having it. In general, women get very few opportunities to work as compared to men. This makes women be underrepresented in leadership positions and in managing roles (Williams, 89). Moreover, managers do not give women problem-solving issues or hard tasks, as they are thought to be weaker beings. Thus, they end up not having the experience and knowledge to take up some of the top positions in the organization. This is also evident even in female-dominated jobs where men take up leadership positions as compared to women (Williams, 78). Moreover, most women receive fewer salaries as compared to their male counterparts. Employers tend to think that women get a lot of their financial support from men, especially in a family set up. In most companies, you might find that women are paid less as compared to men. It is also thought that a man works harder than a woman. Poor salaries for women might be a formal practice in a company's HR practices. However, this might be a force notion to have towards women. Most women may be single parents, thus relied upon by their children. In modern society, women are also relied upon economically, just like men (Lipman, 90). This might also be contributed by the fact that women are not involved in leadership positions and decision making in an origination, while men engaged in decision making may be gender-biased (Lipman, 110). In most countries, HR practices and processes significantly affect women negatively; thus, most companies are encouraged to reevaluate their policies and offer women better employment terms.

Sexism can also be presented to women in the form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment in workplaces has become a significant issue in recent years (Williams, 124). However, if sexual harassment is not handled in a company, it can cost a company huge sums of money. For example, in 1980, the court ruled that sexual harassment is a violation of civil rights. Sexual harassment has costed companies about $189 million each. It can also affect a company's revenues, image, customers, and reputation. Sexual harassment can happen to anyone not based on their race, sex, or gender. But women are mostly affected. Statistics show that many incidences of sexual harassment are being reported daily. Media is also known to cover various high-profile sexual harassment cases. It has become an important topic in radio and TV shows. Thus, the various laws of sexual harassment need to be strengthened in an organization and a country at large. Multiple issues of sexual harassment get to go unnoticed while those harassed do not report the incidences because they usually feel threatened.

In various organizations, some women believe that for one to get along or get top positions, she must give sexual advances. Victims of sexual harassment have become too afraid to report any sexual harassment issues. Most female workers have been asked to provide sexual favors to their employers for them to advance in their careers. This kind of harassment is usually caused by disrespectful men who are in top positions. They forget that employees asked for jobs top perform and not sexual advances. Many people are becoming victims of sexual harassment daily. Some men in top positions use their powers to take advantage of other people's weaknesses. In sexual harassment, there must be a victim always. The law needs to come up with a procedure of reporting sexual harassment claims. This plan should contain penalties for those that violate it and protection for all victims of sexual harassment. Employers should also take part in preventing sexual harassment by educating employees on their rights and expressing strong disapproval towards sexual harassment. Companies should also come up with campaigns that sensitize sexual harassment. However, policies against sexual harassment cannot be efficient if they are not enforced aggressively quickly and consistently. Sexual harassment needs to be taken seriously by management. Once an employee presents an issue of sexual harassment, the management of the company should do the investigation and look into the matter. The incidence also needs to be documented. The team doing investigation should keep the information obtained confidential (Benatar, 78). This should be done privately so that the victim and the harasser may not feel humiliated in the company. However, it is difficult to report cases of sexual harassment in a male-dominated environment. Sexual harassment can also be presented in the form of some sexual jokes towards a female workmate. This can be annoying to the woman involved, but it can easily go unnoticed because very few such cases are reported.

**How sexism against women in workplaces can be handled**

Even though defining workplace sexism is difficult, there are various ways in which to deal with sexism. Women don t need to settle for double standards. Thus, they need to speak up if a boss discriminates against them with a male co-worker. In cases where a woman feels discriminated, she should ask the reason behind it. Sometimes it is challenging and scary to do this, but it is worth it. Asking the reasons makes the offender feel guilty, thus considering his actions publicly (Cooper, 15). In other cases, sexism can be presented as being insensitive, therefore asking the person why it helps him reconsider his sensitive acts or words. For example, in institutions where women are discriminated against in payments and not being given challenging roles, they should seek to know the reason behind (Cooper, 118). If a good reason is not presented to them, then they should state why they should equalize with men. This should apply to HR practices and policies. In terms of payments, women need to call for equalization, especially if they are assigned the same roles with their male counterparts that get higher payments. However, for those clients that are thought to be sexist, one should stand to correct their behaviors. If they might have given you a task to handle, complete it, and choose not to work with them if they don't change their sexist behavior. Moreover, those women in top positions are in better positions of dealing with sexist behavior (Bates, 117). They should confront by speaking about it. This will help in protecting other women in the workplace. Sometimes sexism in a company could be cultural, so you have to come up with a proper way to address it. This could be in the form of one lousy comment or joke, which can affect employees' morale and dynamics.

The other way in which one can deal with sexism is by making allies in the workplace. Speak to other women in the office about your own experiences. You should seek to know how other women feel in a company. Do they have a feeling of alienation or resigned? Most companies have a culture that promotes sexism. In such companies raise your issues with the HR Department. Even though you may not have experienced such problems in the company, you get a chance to known what is going on and come up with different strategies on how to avoid it, especially if you are new in a company. Sensitive issues like sexism in company culture cannot be dealt with by one individual in one day (Bates, 178). It needs people to come together and raise their voices. Thus, women in such companies need to come together and build power in numbers. HR departments are usually there to cater for employee's needs. Therefore, in such cases, you also need to consult them. Learn to raise such issues when having a company's meeting, which pertains to performance review. It becomes effortless to come up with solutions, especially when people are in a meeting. In such meetings, women need to suggest to have their organization and mentorship program to address their issues.

**Conclusion**

However, they are various sexism issues that one should learn to put up with, for example, if one is not invited for lunch by a co-worker. For the cases, for sexual harassment, one should report them to the HR department (Cooper, 99). However, in such cases, ensure that you preserve your anonymity. This can be through having a private conversation with HR or giving an anonymous report. However, this approach is not recommended unless someone chooses to go that way. This is because anonymity does not expose the culprit effectively. Levels of sexism vary widely and in different forms. Managers and people in top positions should learn and come up with strategies of putting sexism into an end. On the other hand, women in organizations where the culture of sexism is promoted must unite and raise their voices. Women in top positions also must talk on behave of other women who hold very lesser positions in the company.

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