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**Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future**

**GENDER ASPECTS OF TRAINING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
SPECIALISTS**

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***Abstract***

This article considers the features of the impact of gender on the training of students in international relations and international regionalistics. The relevance of the study results from, first of all, the modern feminization of university education, and the growing professional interest of women in the sphere of international relations. The scientific and educational activities of modern universities are extremely important in the context of the development of "knowledge society", which functioning is effective when the intellectual capital of both men and women is actively involved. Therefore, universities should become not only "knowledge factories" but they also should create students' gender culture. The issue of gender characteristics of scientific and educational environment of universities is utterly significant. The authors explore the subject on the basis of, on the one hand, modern gender studies in the field of international relations, of both Russian and Western scholars, and on the other hand, the analysis of specific data on the feminization of educational programmes on international themes in Russian universities in the context of the prospects for building a gender parity in the practice of international relations and world politics.

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**Keywords:** Gender studies, feminization of university education, international relations, knowledge society, intellectual capital, gender culture.



## 1. Introduction

In terms of the "knowledge society" formation (Towards knowledge societies: UNESCO world report, 2005; Aladyshkin, Kulik, Michurin, & Anosova, 2017), one of the first places goes to the sphere of education. It should be emphasized that qualitative characteristics of university education are largely determined by the gender factor, namely the changing status of women in modern educational process. Firstly, the number of female students increases significantly, both in the world as a whole and in Russian universities. Secondly, the number of female teachers has increased significantly, and therefore the interest has emerged in the range of problems that are defined as gender problems in the university training system, particularly in the sphere of international relations. The cornerstones of gender issues are socially and culturally determined differences in the behavior and status positions of women and men, as well as the ways of achieving gender parity in the political and socio-economic life of modern society. Along with the term "gender", the notion of "feminism" is widespread, but the term "feminism" defines strictly female social and economic problems of society.

Gender topics cover both socio-political and economic roles of women and men, focusing on the analysis of power structures, the organization of social and cultural institutions, models of ideological control in modern societies. In modern international practice, the term "gender" has become one of the most commonly used terms practically in all international legal documents of the United Nations and other international organizations. Since the mid-1970s, the United Nations and other international institutions have started giving increased attention to the issues of gender equality. In 1975, the first UN World Conference on Women was held, which gave impact to the development of research themes on gender and feminist-related topics. For example, the International Studies Association (ISA) has introduced a special award for those covering gender themes in the context of international relations.

Gender studies conducted by Russian social scientists in recent decades have contributed to the adjustment of the legislative, managerial, information and educational policies of the state. Gender studies are significant as they give a holistic view of the world through interdisciplinary analysis, which allows a comprehensive approach to the practical implementation of the gender parity principle in modern society. Regarding the sphere of university education, it should be noted that the formation of the foundations of gender culture promotes the development of students' skills necessary for a tolerant and mutually beneficial professional growth after graduation and entering the first steps of their career ladder (Agamova & Allakhverdyan, 2000).

## 2. Problem Statement

The authors of this article see the need to form gender culture as one of the most important tasks in the Russian educational process, as an integral part of the humanization of the university educational environment. The relevance of the topic is largely related to the role played by women in modern university education. In addition, it is necessary to analyze the career opportunities of female students in professions involving international relations. It is important to investigate it as, on the one hand, there is a feminization of the higher education in the sphere of international relations, and on the other hand, conservative gender approach is maintained in Russian foreign policy institutions and international organizations. However, maintaining the privileged position of men in these areas of activity may negatively affect the ambitious

plans of the Russian authorities for a breakthrough into the "digital economy", and in general, for the applications of the achievements of the fourth scientific and technological revolution. For example, in the USA, women are seen as an "additional resource" to accelerate the development of scientific and technological progress, and as the reserve of managerial personnel in the areas of science, public administration and international relations. Traditionally, the USA representation in the UN is headed by women, which is still unattainable for Russian foreign policy. It is obvious that the development of democracy and humanism in public relations is impossible without gender equality, which means taking into account the rights of both men and women. Therefore, gender issues should become an important part of education process in Russian universities. Modern requirements to future specialists training are reflected in the Education Law of the Russian Federation (The Federal Law On Education, 2018). It is especially necessary to emphasize that the emerging "knowledge society" requires modern specialists to be a "creative class", which means to be capable of generating and implementing innovations in all spheres of public life. Therefore, the demands of universities as "factories of knowledge" are increasing, and special attention should be paid to training specialists who can acquire new professionally significant competences, taking into account gender ratio changes in the structure of manpower resources. Thus, this article aims to determine the role of gender factors in university education, particularly in training international relations specialists.

### **3. Research Questions**

In recent years many Western and Russian scientists have turned to gender issues. For example, the American researcher Julie Mertus writes about the importance of training in gender analysis as a pedagogical tool in teaching the theory of international relations (Mertus, 2007). The Russian researcher of international relations Shestopal focuses on the issues of women's leadership (Shestopal, 2002). Zdravomyslova and Tyomkina (1999), in their turn, write about the adaptation of Western gender studies to the Russian issues. The Western political scientist Joan Scott paid much attention to the problem of using the notion of "gender" in historical cognition (Scott, 1986). The analysis of such important issues as gender problems in international relations and political culture was covered in the works of Vinogradova & Vasilyeva (2013) and Skorniakova & Safonova (2017). The Western researcher of feminism Jill Steans devoted many of her works to the issues of international relations (Steans, 1998). A prominent theorist in the field of feminism and international relations, J. Ann Tickner and her colleague Jacqui True, who deals with women's rights and gender issues in their joint work consider gender issues in a historical retrospective over the past 100 years, focusing on the impact of the gender factor on contemporary international relations and world politics (Tickner & True, 2018).

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Developing gender culture skills should become an integral part of the total process of international specialists training because such important parameters of the graduate's activity as interpersonal interaction in the workplace, pragmatic construction of the scheme of successful career advancement, etc. will depend on this component. One cannot but agree with Lysova, that sex-role approach in vocational education,

which takes into account only the features of the biological sex, and declares sexual differentiation, is now considered not only obsolete, but also inhumane (Lysova, 2009).

However, there are a number of discussion points in this issue. Some authors believe that gender differences can also have an important socio-cultural significance. For example, in Western feminist literature, the theory of Ruddick is often in use, according to which one can talk about the so-called "maternity thinking". The main characteristic of this type of thinking is the negative attitude of mothers to violence and wars, and therefore women are more capable of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. According to Ruddick, "maternal thinking" is based on the instinct of life preservation, which results in developing the basic concepts of violence denial and peace preservation (Ruddick, 1995).

In 2015, during the Round Table of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on the theme "Responsibility for achieving de facto equality of women and girls", discussion topics emerged that formed the basis for the new UN tasks by 2030 on gender issues (Responsibility for achieving de facto equality of women and girls, 2015). For instance, the necessity was noted of a better understanding of the concepts of "difference", "inequality", "behavioral difference", "sex-related behavior", "sex discrimination", "sexism", etc. It is obvious that in gender studies, equally both men and women are scientific objects, so it is necessary to recognize the existence of the gender factor in all social processes. Unfortunately, gender composition of international organizations, and the principles of international economic management show the priority of the male principle, which does not contribute to the effectiveness of their functioning. Positive changes in this issue have been outlined in the UN. In accordance with the program "The United Nations' system-wide strategy on gender parity" provides a roadmap to reach parity at the senior levels of leadership in the organization by 2021, and across the board by 2028. In particular, it covers targets and accountability, special measures, an enabling environment, senior appointments, and mission settings (System-wide strategy on gender parity, 2018).

In this regard, it is important to note the initiative of the United Nations to develop global gender indicators. The Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Women's Empowerment Indicator (WEI) were first calculated before the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995. The gender inequality index (IGI) includes: the level of education, participation in economic and political life, health issues with female characteristics, and the multidimensionality of inequality at the national level (Innovative solutions to measuring inequality and poverty, 2010). One of the lowest indicators, unfortunately, was the level of education, which negatively affects women's opportunities to enter the educational space of the information society. Educated women have more chances to get the job satisfying them, to participate in political life, to take care of their health and the health of their families, etc. In fact, education creates a condition for the inclusion of women in the global "masculinity space", but so far the "female segment" of this space is extremely limited, although "women make up more than half of the population of the Earth and the labor force, but they hold less than 29% of leading positions in the global economy (Vinogradova, Dunayeva, & Ziatdinov, 2017).

Unfortunately, in the modern knowledge economy, many women are confronted with the problem of promotion, called the "glass ceiling". Very few women manage to reach the top of the corporate world; only 32 women are part of the management elite of the 500 largest industrial companies in the US (The initiative concerning female workers: The impetus for equality, 2018).

"A serious obstacle to a woman's career progression is the fact of inter-group competition. It is particularly acute in those places of social space where a social group of women penetrates the territory of traditional life of a social group of men, and there is a mechanism to restrain women's competition. Women name it "male solidarity" or "male chauvinism" (Uvarova & Myasina, 2007). This situation does not meet the prospects of modern world development, especially since, according to the World Bank, the elimination of discrimination against women in executive and managerial positions can increase labor productivity by 25% and up to 40% per employee (The Summit "Women and the economy"). It should be emphasized that the position of women in modern politics and economy is still far from a harmonious balance with the position of men, so it is necessary to give real content to the concept of equal rights and opportunities of men and women in the public world, and create the conditions for changing the gender contract towards the "equal status". As noted by the Western researcher Christina Fattore, even within the international organizations of international relations researchers, the situation is far from gender parity. Thus, during the polls it was found that over the 10-year span since 2006 the situation has improved, but there are problems. For example, the study in 2015 revealed the continued concern about the tension between family responsibilities and academic environment, structural discrimination, as well as the situation of the "reverse discrimination" against men (Fattore, 2018).

Hence, the following set of emerging problems can be distinguished. Firstly, there is the mismatch in demand and supply of jobs because foreign ministries and international organizations actively employ young male graduates, but not female ones. International relations and foreign policy in general represent one of the most conservative spheres, since it is about preserving the stability of the international system as a whole. The key concepts of international relations such as power, sovereignty, autonomy, anarchy, security, and the basic analysis units such as men, the state and the international system are inseparable from the patriarchal public-private division. They are identified as male experience and forms of knowledge in the public sphere dominated by men, as opposed to the private sphere, historically designated for women (Tickner, 1992). However, it should be noted that the Russian leadership formally encourages the expansion of women's participation in diplomacy. Addressing the Russian diplomats, Vladimir Putin said: "As before, when selecting diplomatic personnel, unfairly little attention is paid to women. [...] Meanwhile, not the nomenclature selection "in an old-fashioned way," but the modern reality itself has managed to grow in Russia a considerable number of qualified female state officials. And we must understand that the absence (in contrast to many other countries) of the so-called "the weaker sex" in Russian diplomacy can become a weak point of our foreign policy service " (The speech of the President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin, 2002). Today, girls make up about a third of university graduates participating in the competition, annually conducted by the personnel department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, the share of women among diplomats has risen up to 15% in recent years. However, many girls who have come to work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs note a distrustful attitude towards them, and a clear preference for the promotion of male personnel.

Secondly, professional preferences for male students create tense interpersonal relationships in student groups. Therefore, it is necessary for universities to develop appropriate long-term plans of expanding the range of potential jobs for university graduates; and to achieve gender tolerance among

students, it is necessary to reform many established approaches in the training system of international specialists particularly.

In the conditions of the "digital revolution", and the modern "breakthrough" ideology of the development of the Russian state, the innovative component of personal and professional development of future professionals is essential. As the Russian researcher Abdalina (2013) notes, it is necessary to develop students' desire for transformation, change in the world of things, people, and phenomena. It is important to guide and focus on personal activity in mastering new forms of learning: developing author's projects, preparing independent research projects, participating in competitive programs, etc. Today, as never before, increases the importance of such qualities of graduates as self-discipline, ability to work in a team, research activities, compliance of professional standards, etc.

As noted by the Western expert in education, Somerville, the current generation of students in their research projects and graduate qualification works should not only be guided by narrow professional problems, but also should cultivate gender culture, which means understanding the cultural, political, historical and economic significance of gender parity in the perspective of achieving the goals of sustainable development until 2030 (the UN) (Somerville, 2017).

The activity in the public sphere – participation in debating clubs, youth associations, volunteer groups - is very important for future specialists in international relations. For example, holding major international forums and sports events in our country involves solving complex logistics tasks, where student volunteers provide professionally-oriented assistance (knowledge of languages, gender culture of communication, etc.). This practice of student political activity can also contribute to the development of a political career, as evidenced by numerous examples of biographies of Western politicians and diplomats (Pogodin, 2013).

Improving professional training of international relations specialists and ensuring its cardinal new qualitative level is a relevant and socially needed scientific, educational and practical task facing the higher education system in the country. To study the impact of various factors on training specialists in the field of international relations and their professional development, it seems appropriate to consider the issue of higher education strategies for men and women. As noted in the Report of the UN Working Group, in recent years there have been marked differences in the strategy for obtaining general education and training for men and women. Thus, women are inclined to acquire a complete general education within general education schools, and in vocational training they are increasingly oriented toward higher education. A different strategy for obtaining education increasingly characterizes men. It is the acquisition of incomplete general education in general education school, and then studying in the system of primary and secondary vocational education (Gender equality and extension of women's rights in Russia, 2005). It is possible that this trend in obtaining education is also observed in the Russian Federation, as young men more often go to get vocational secondary education with subsequent employment, and girls tend to enter university after finishing a full cycle of education at school.

Let us consider how this trend is specifically manifested at the Department of International Relations of the Humanitarian Institute of Peter the Great Polytechnic University (St. Petersburg, Russia), where specialists in international relations and international regional studies are trained. Students gain knowledge in diplomacy, regional studies, world politics, the world economy, international trade and cooperation;

international public, private and financial law, political science, state and municipal management, journalism, public relations. In the year 2018 the proportion of female graduates is 85%, that is, girls outnumber young men by four times. Similar tendencies are observed practically in all higher education institutions of Russia. According to Kodzharova (2011), value orientations of students to various spheres of activity are deeply determined by gender characteristics of students, due to this, gender asymmetry of various spheres of activity and branches of economy is already being laid in universities. A qualitative transformation of the system of international relations, and it's entering a globalization phase of development, require the development of a fundamentally new vision and understanding of the processes happening in it. The prevalence of "male" view point, both in science and in the practice of international relations, is the main obstacle to the development of new concepts and tools for regulating the processes taking place in world politics (Kodzharova, 2011).

In recent years, in the international scientific community, disputes on the effectiveness of the mechanisms of preventive diplomacy of the United Nations do not cease. It is known that diplomatic methods include multifactor complex and lengthy negotiations in order to avoid the use of force to solve international problems. As the Russian researcher Zonova (2004) notes, in psychological literature we often see the assertion that it is women who possess the qualities that help prevent conflicts, eliminate tension, and settle disputes. However, as Zonova further writes, specific examples of women holding high positions in diplomacy show the opposite, because rigorism, intransigence, refusal to compromise of women in politics are explained by the fact that, being in obvious minority, women are forced to constantly prove their "masculinity", and the right to diplomatic service (Zonova, 2004). Thus, it is difficult for women in the sphere of international relations to overcome the stereotypes of political realism that have developed for centuries, where the force factor comes to the forefront. Therefore, the notion of gender parity, which is upheld by the UN leadership, needs to be filled with real content, when the values in international relations will be determined not by the struggle for domination of any of the big powers but by a unanimous movement towards peaceful coexistence and sustainable development.

## **5. Research Methods**

Gender studies are methodologically related to the development of postmodernism in the late twentieth century. The idea of "acentrism" is proclaimed, which means the fundamental denial of any privileged "centers" of domination, in particular, of the human race in the living and inanimate worlds, of Western countries in world politics, of males over females.

Especially deeply, these topics began to be developed in post-positivist studies of socio-cultural relations, in particular, within the framework of feminist and gender theories of international relations (Egboh & Aniche, 2011). Gender studies were initially methodologically associated with the main lines in philosophy, sociology, psychology and pedagogy, which determined their interdisciplinary nature. It was within the framework of gender studies that the division was methodologically carried out between the biological (the concept of "sex"), which implies the study of anatomical and biological characteristics, and the social (gender), which includes the socio-cultural context in the subject of study. Thus, the process of university education gradually began to include a component associated with a new methodological approach when considering interpersonal relations of students, where the emphasis is on the formation of

gender culture. As J. Scott notes, unlike the term "sex" the term "gender", without removing or denying gender differences, emphasizes the social characteristics of women and men, which ultimately determine the peculiarity of their behavior (Scott, 1986). In fact, the introduction of the concept of "gender" into the scientific activities not only supplemented, but also, to a greater extent, changed the theoretical and methodological basis for the study of international relations, as it significantly expanded the range of problems analyzed and the set of approaches to investigate these problems. According to Mertus (2007), the theory of international relations was significantly enriched by incorporating a gender approach in the analysis of international relations and world politics. Therefore, the author rightly concludes that both feminism and gender studies contribute to the study of international relations, both in methodology and in critical analysis of the prospects for the development of the global society. Thus, it is so important to include these studies in university education (Mertus, 2007).

In terms of methodology, gender approach to the study of international relations made it possible to take a fresh look at the changing status and role positions of women and men in the developing "knowledge society", taking into account the scientific, technological and socioeconomic conditions that have changed in the twenty-first century, and brought to the forefront the value of intellectual capital without sexual characteristics. In this context, the idea of Western researcher Jacqui True that the practice of international relations, traditionally focused on the male principle ("masculine theory"), under the influence of gender approaches can acquire new forms (True, 2001). In modern conditions, women master those kinds of professional activity, which were considered purely masculine, and this is already a stable trend. The organizer of the global company producing chips for electronic devices, Dai, an American woman, thinks that the inability of women to be as successful as men in science, technology, mathematics, etc. is just a myth (Dai, 2012).

## **6. Findings**

The authors concluded that, firstly, gender problems are the problems of the relationship between men and women in social, economic and political spheres, and therefore gender studies should not be replaced by feminist theories, because these are different subject areas. Secondly, the feminization of the university students' environment, especially in the field of international specialization, requires active work of teachers and the heads of universities in the search for new areas of application of knowledge of young professionals. Thirdly, the students themselves, in their quest for career growth, should not confine themselves exclusively to state service structures, but find professional application in a diverse international life (nongovernmental organizations, sports organizations, people's diplomacy, etc.). Fourthly, the development of gender culture in students' environment should contribute to the formation of objective prerequisites for the intellectual breakthrough of Russian science in the conditions of the fourth scientific and technological revolution.

## **7. Conclusion**

Thus, the given gender studies show that in the system of international organizations for women, the problem of gender inequality in the sphere of employment and career advancement remains. At the same time, it became obvious that in the system of university education there has been a steady trend towards



feminization, particularly in those areas where specialists for international organizations and diplomacy are being trained. It has become a characteristic phenomenon in Russian universities, where international experts are trained.

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