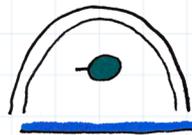
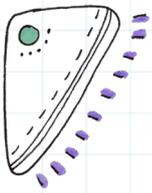


FEMINISM

Designed by Society



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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses how feminism is viewed and emotionalized by society and how this influences and affects individuals on a daily basis. The authors conducted 24 qualitative interviews. The interviewees answered twelve questions concerning their personal views and opinions on feminism and sexism, as well as their exposure to stereotypes and discrimination.

The collected data showed that the term feminism is highly stigmatized and associated with views that are completely contrary to its actual definition. Furthermore, the research demonstrated that gender equality has not yet been reached, neither on a global nor on a personal level. A majority of female interviewees have experienced discrimination solely due to their gender and a considerable number of interviewees have been confronted with gender stereotypes. Most interviewees thought that education and upbringing shape the way people view this topic.

With regard to these results and extensive literature research the authors conclude, that this topic is still highly relevant and that the power to change the negative connotation of feminism lies with the people.

CONTENT

Abstract	2
1. Introduction	4
2. Literature Research	5
2.1. Definition of Feminism	5
2.2 Types of Feminism	5
2.2.1. Radical Feminism	5
2.2.2. Intersectional Feminism	6
2.2.3. Liberal Feminism	6
2.2.4. Left Feminism	6
2.2.5. Human Rights Feminism	6
2.3. History of Feminism	7
2.4. Common Misconceptions	8
2.5. Current Issues	8
2.5.1. Social Issues	9
2.5.2. Economic and Political Issues	9
3. Qualitative Interviews	10
3.1. Questions and Interviewees	10
3.2. Results	10
3.2.1. Are you a feminist?	11
3.2.2. Discrimination due to gender?	11
3.2.3. Are there gender-based characteristics?	12
3.2.4. Interesting correlations	12
4. Conclusion	13
5. References	14
Appendix	15

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays feminism is a topic, which is highly stigmatized and emotionalized within societies. The goal of this paper is to find out what people know about the controversial subject matter and how they are affected by gender stereotypes and gender-based discrimination stemming from inequalities with society.

The first part of this paper will define the term feminism, give an overview of feminist history, important events as well as different types of the movement. The following chapters specifically deal with common stereotypes around feminism and current feminist issues. Furthermore, the results of 24 qualitative interviews concerning personal views and opinions on feminism and sexism will be discussed.

This paper investigates how feminism and correlating issues are viewed and talked about by individuals. Further, it enquires into how the current stigmatization came to be and how it could change in the future.

2. LITERATURE RESEARCH

Nowadays, the term feminism is highly stigmatized and associated with views that are contrary to its definition. Feminism encompasses many currents, theories and approaches. However, these have one central theme: equality. In order to provide clarity amongst the controversy around the topic, extensive literature research was conducted.

2.1. DEFINITION OF FEMINISM

Feminism is defined as a movement that advocates equality, human dignity and women's self-determination. The aim is to bring about a change in gender relations and thus create a social structure in which women are equal to men. Johanna Dohnal, Austria's first minister for women, described the movement's concerns as follows: „The vision of feminism is not a female future. It is a human future. Without role constraints and power relations.“ By this definition anyone who is in favor of gender equality is a feminist. (Feminism 2019)

2.2. TYPES OF FEMINISM

When talking about feminism most people think of one united movement and project their ideas and experiences with the topic onto the term. It is important to know, that there are several different types of feminism. Even though these forms differ, they all aim to achieve the equality of men and women. (Lewis, Core Ideas and Beliefs of Feminism)

2.2.1 RADICAL FEMINISM

It was radical feminism that substantiated the theory of patriarchy, the systemic oppression of women by men. Radical feminists consider women's experiences as unifying and believe that the causes of oppression are deeper than just "legal" or "class" ones and are based on how intergender relations are organized. They are distinguished by their attitude to the issues of pornography and prostitution: categorically against both the first and second, because they consider them as objectification and exploitation of women. (Lewis, Radical Feminism)

2.2.2 INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

Intersectional feminism shows how different types of identities and the discrimination associated with them intersect on one person and how this affects their experience. For example, a woman from Uzbekistan in Russia is discriminated against both as a woman (sexism) and as a representative of another nationality (xenophobia). In intersectional feminism, the struggle for the rights of women is inseparable from the struggle for the rights of the LGBT community, the fight against racism, ableism (discrimination based on physical and mental health) and ageism (age discrimination). (Guide to modern feminism)

2.2.3 LIBERAL FEMINISM

Liberal feminism is a very broad area with many characteristics. This is due to the fact that historically liberal feminism is associated with the struggle of women of the 19th century for equalization of rights and opportunities (suffrage). Liberal feminism tries to influence the legal field of the state. Its main objective is to reform laws so prevent discrimination. Liberal feminism does not include, for example, issues concerning the female body and sexuality. It is more likely to be interested in politics in the narrow sense of the word, and it also does not work much with the more complex variants of female identity. Liberal feminism is often criticized for only supporting white heterosexual middle-class women. (Guide to modern feminism)

2.2.4. LEFT FEMINISM

Marxist feminism is based on the work of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx. This type of feminism considers the oppression of women as capitalist and distinguishes men as a class that exploits women. Left feminism connects this oppression with private property institutions, and considers the struggle for equality to be part of the class struggle. It states that gender inequality cannot disappear without the disappearance of capitalism. Furthermore it raises questions about the control of women through control over female sexuality, issues of free domestic female labor as well as issues of childhood and motherhood. (Guide to modern feminism)

2.2.5. HUMAN RIGHTS FEMINISM

Human rights feminism works with violations of women's rights and freedom. In the absence of laws (for example, the law on domestic violence), feminist human rights defenders independently provide assistance to victims: they create crisis centers, protect women in court or look for lawyers, help find shelter, disseminate information about violations, draft bills and seek their consideration. (Guide to modern feminism)

2.3. HISTORY OF FEMINISM

Feminism has roots in the earliest eras of human civilization. Women of ancient Rome protested against the Oppian law, which restricted women's access to gold and other goods. The first feminist book was already written in the 15th-century by Christine de Pizan. It was called "City of Ladies" and protested misogyny and the role of women in the Middle Ages. The female writers of Enlightenment continued to discuss these issues. (Stepp 2003)

The history of feminism as a worldview goes back over 200 years. The first wave (1860 - 1905) began with the Seneca Falls convention, where the equality of men and women was proclaimed. During this time feminists around the world sought fundamental rights for women in four areas of life: education, work, freedom of the heart as well as socio-economic and political rights. They were fighting for women to have a say when it comes to their places of training, jobs, partners and politics. Abigail Adams, the first lady of the US President John Adams, was an important figure at that time. She believed that access to education, property, and voting was critical to women's equality. For more than half a century suffragists would march and protest, face arrests and violence as they fought for the right to vote. In 1893 New Zealand became the first sovereign state giving women the right to vote. In 1909 the German socialists and the notorious communist Klara Zetkin together with Rosa Luxemburg agreed that a holiday that would promote equal rights for women was needed. This day was the 8th of March, which still today is women's day. The main promoter of the date today is the UN. In 1916 Margaret Sanger opened the first birth control clinic in the US, in defiance of a New York state law that forbade the distribution of contraception. However, after the world wars the traditional gender roles were restored. Women who were on their own during the war and were forced to take on "male" jobs had to go back to the stove. (Feminism 2019)

The second wave of feminism began in the sixties with Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). The book criticized the sexist idea that women could only find fulfillment through child-bearing and being a housewife. It was spread among well-educated middle-class white women and it gave them permission to be angry. This resulted in some major legislative and legal victories occurred in the US. The gender pay gap was theoretically outlawed in the "Equal Pay Act" of 1963. Furthermore, women got the right to use birth control and to choose an abortion. In 1968 women protested the Miss America pageant and its demeaning, patriarchal treatment of women by throwing away objects that they considered to be symbols of women's objectification, as bras and copies of the "Playboy". In 1991, Anita Hill testified that she had been sexually harassed at work, which sparked an avalanche of sexual harassment complaints. The following year, 1992, became "the Year of the Woman" after 27 women won seats in the government. During the second wave female sexuality and the emancipation from prescribed CVs and role models became central issues. (Feminism 2019)

The third wave embraces the fight for trans rights and builds the basis for intersectional feminism. It was deeply influenced by the rise of the “riot grrrls”. These feminists were calling themselves girls in order to embrace the girliness to respond to the stereotypes about hairy and unfeminine feminists. In 2017 the #MeToo movement appeared after the New York Times published an investigation about sexual harassment by the influential film producer Harvey Weinstein. On the first day of Donald Trump’s presidency, hundreds of thousands of people joined the Women’s March on Washington in D.C. Over 3 million people in cities around the world held simultaneous demonstrations on behalf of full rights for all women worldwide. (Stepp 2003)

2.4. COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Due to stigma and common societal stereotypes, the term feminism is currently not a popular one. There is, for example, a widespread opinion that feminists are unattractive single women who hate men or simply did not find the “right man”. These denigrating myths probably stem from their reluctance to the current attitude to a woman as a second-class citizen, property and sexual object. Feminists do not dislike men, but the way women are treated by them. Feminism is not about hatred, it is a movement of love and care, which defends human dignity. In fact, feminism also advocates men’s rights. (Shameful questions about feminism)

Another common misconception is that feminists aim to overpower men. Feminism cannot be confused with matriarchy. It is a movement for women’s rights, against gender discrimination. This means that women should not have less political, economic and civil rights simply because they are women. The essence of the movement is well reflected in the famous quote of the journalist Mary Shear: “Feminism is a radical opinion that a woman is a man.” Feminists do not want to exterminate or subjugate men. They merely fight against patriarchy, a system where power is concentrated at all levels in men’s hands. (Lewis, Core Ideas and Beliefs of Feminism)

2.5. CURRENT ISSUES

In many states feminists already achieved suffrage, higher education for women, the ability to control childbearing, the right to work and own real estate, to engage in politics and to occupy leadership positions. The employment and education positively affected not only the well-being of women, but also the growth of the economy. Moreover the better the education of women, the lower the percentage of child mortality. However, there is still not one country in the world where men and women are equal in every aspect of life. The word “feminist” is often used as an insult or perceived as a label. Thousands of women die at the hands of their husbands. There is a significant difference in the salaries of men and women. There is still a myriad of highly relevant issues concerning feminism. (Klugman 2016)

2.5.1. SOCIAL ISSUES

Women are discriminated against on a daily basis. Every woman will experience everyday sexism, unrealistic beauty standards or body shaming at one point in her life. In some cultures women are considered second class citizens and are treated accordingly. Domestic violence, sexual abuse and harrassment are very common. Even genital mutilation is still very present in some societies. Another social issue is reproductive violence, the attempt to ban abortion and to impose the role of the mother onto women. A feminist issue that concerns both sexes is the omnipresence of gender stereotypes. Women are asked to be gentle and kind, men are asked to be brave and strong. These stereotypes negatively affect all aspects of life and lead to discrimination. Not only women, men too are expected and asked to look and behave in a certain way. The role of a father is less valued than the role of a mother and men who struggle with mental health issues feel unable to ask for help. (Klugman 2016)

2.5.2. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES

Women are still not equally represented in governments and not taken seriously in many fields of work. They are not paid the same amount of money as men when doing the same amount of work. Often women bump into the so-called “glass ceiling”, an invisible barrier keeping them from reaching leading positions. If an Austrian woman does manage to get into a managerial position, she earns an average of 23.4 percent less than her male colleagues. If things continue as they are, it will take 170 years for women in Germany to have the same opportunities as men. This leads to female poverty. Single mothers have to work two jobs to make ends meet. (Guide to modern feminism)

Further, in most cultures most of the unpaid housework like cooking or cleaning and caring for children or elderly relatives is performed by women. This not only affects women personally. The World Bank estimated that the damage to the global economy due to stereotypes for which 130 million girls are denied access to education amounts to up to \$ 30 trillion a year. Women are less likely to see themselves represented in certain fields of work. That means they're less likely to pursue a degree or career, because they don't feel like they belong. In some countries there are even lists of prohibited professions for women. (Klugman 2016)

3. QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

In order to find out more about how the topic of feminism is viewed by society, 24 qualitative interviews were conducted. The female and male interviewees answered twelve questions concerning their personal views and opinions on feminism and sexism, as well as their exposure to stereotypes and discrimination.

3.1. QUESTIONS AND INTERVIEWEES

The interviewees, aged 17 - 50, live in Austria, Germany and Belarus. They have different economic and social backgrounds as well as diverse levels of knowledge and experience concerning the topic. All of the participants were questioned personally via phone or video calls and could answer the questions in their mother tongue. This created an informal atmosphere. No leading questions were posed and the interviewees were encouraged to answer in a detail and elaborate on their thoughts and opinions.

1. Are you a feminist? Why? What does this word mean to you?
2. What do you associate with feminism?
3. Have you ever had to use phrases like "I am not overreacting" or "I am not on my period" ?
4. Have people ever told you "But you are a woman/man..." in regard to your actions/hobbies?
5. Do you think that there is such a thing as a casual sexist joke?
6. Do you think catcalling is a compliment?
7. Do you think maternity leave is a duty or a right?
8. Have you ever experienced any kind of discrimination based on your gender?
9. Do you think that men must earn more (in relationships)?
10. Do you think that stereotypes about women are "friendly" sexism?
11. Do you think there are gender based characteristics? Is there a typical woman/man?
12. What do you think needs to change/can be done about sexism and inequality?

3.2. RESULTS

The collected data showed that the term feminism is stigmatized and associated with views that are contrary to its actual definition. Furthermore, the research demonstrated that gender equality has not yet been reached, neither on a global nor on a personal level. The following examples demonstrate the most interesting findings.

3.2.1. ARE YOU A FEMINIST?

When answering this question, ten interviewees answered with “no”. That is almost 50% of the participants. When they were asked to name their reasons, a very common answer was that they felt like they could not claim this label, as they are not actively fighting for feminist issues by going on demonstrations or being involved in other activities. Others associated aggression and radical behaviour with the term and said they do not want to be feminists because they do not believe in feminist values. Some claimed they do not like the term as it has a negative connotation. Several participants were educated on the definition of the term after the interviews and considered calling themselves feminists in the future.

“I can't say I am a feminist, since I am not involved in any activities.”

“I think I don't want to call myself a feminist, it is often defined in a radical way”

“Depends on how you define feminism. I think it means for women and men to have the same chances and rights - and I stand behind that. So yes, I guess I am?”

3.2.2 DISCRIMINATION DUE TO GENDER?

Out of all participants 14 said that they have experienced discrimination based solely on their gender. Seven of the ten people who answered with “no” were men. Those who had been discriminated against experienced said discrimination at work, university and even at home. People made assumptions about their characters or know-how, commented on their bodies and asked them to behave a certain way. 20 participants have been told “But you are a woman/man” at some point in their lives, in regard to their hobbies, actions or choices.

“At work I had to bring coffee and dress beautifully so that the boss liked it.”

“The mechanics didn't want to talk to me. They said “ we will talk about that to your husband”. They simply assumed I wouldn't understand anything, due to my gender.”

“Yes, at work, partners and clients did not take me seriously when I was taking a high position.”

3.2.3. ARE THERE GENDER-BASED CHARACTERISTICS?

Ten interviewees thought that there are characteristics that are purely based on the gender of a person. Most of them thought that there is some underlying thing, which they could not grasp or name, that makes women and men innately different from each other. A majority of those ten participants did not consider gender stereotypes as gentle women to be sexism. 50% of all interviewees said that a person's character is to a certain extent molded by their education and by society.

"That's difficult to answer. Without really knowing why, I think I have to say yes. In the past I often felt like men & women perceive and approach things differently and things are of different importance to them."

"Yes. Some characteristics are peculiar only to women and men, although there are exceptions everywhere"

"No, I think it is a matter of character and education, not gender. For example, the fact that boys are brought up not to cry."

3.2.4. INTERESTING CORRELATIONS

The collected data showed some interesting correlations. For example, all interviewees considered catcalling not to be a compliment, but rather an irritating, offensive action. However, when they were asked about sexist jokes, many claimed that they do not have a problem with those. When questioned concerning gender stereotypes and "friendly" sexism, many were not sure whether they should find them offensive. This shows that issues as sexism are deeply rooted in our thought patterns and everyday lives. Only when we are "actively" and obviously discriminated against, do we start to question these constructs.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, feminism is a movement with a long and eventful history. Feminists have achieved a large number of rights during their fight for equality. However, there are stereotypes around the movement, which stem from a lack of education and a stigma in society. Gender equality has not been reached. There are still various social, economic and political issues, which need to be worked on, in order to achieve equal rights for men and women.

With regard to the data collected through qualitative interviews on the topic, the authors conclude that feminism is still relevant to this day and that the power to change the negative connotation of feminism lies with the people. Upbringing and education seem to be the solution to breaking down the stigma around the term feminism, eliminating gender stereotypes and avoiding gender-based discrimination. These issues need to be taught and talked about, as feminism is designed by society.

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APPENDIX

The following interviews were conducted via phone and video calls. The 24 participants were assigned numbers. The “f” stands for female, the “m” for male interviewees.

1. Are you a feminist? Why? What does this word mean to you?

1(f): I do not consider myself a feminist. It is a fight for equal rights for men and women. In my view of society and the relationship between a man and a woman, I would like him to stand a bit above me, earn more than me. But in a global sense, I think it's right that women should be treated like men for example at work, as it means simply justice and thinking and abilities are not driven by gender. In the household no.

2(f): No, I don't think so. This means that women are fighting for equal rights with men. But I believe that I already have equal rights in many ways, but I consider some issues as masculine, for example, auto repair, home repair, and I do not want to solve them.

3(f): I can't say that I am a feminist, since I am not involved in any activities and do not spread values. But I think this is completely right, and I fully support feminism.

4(f): I am a feminist and for me feminism is not only a fight for equal rights, but also for safe space for women.

5(f): Feminism is about gender equality. I believe that this is common knowledge and everyone should be a feminist. So in this case I am feminist as well. This should not be a label, should be normal and accepted in society.

6(f): I am feminist, just not a radical one. I am not going out with a poster to spread the values, but I know what my values are.

7(m): I guess, yes. Yes, I believe in equal rights. But when I think of the word “feminist” I usually think of someone who actively fights for rights of women/equality. And I don't - I support it in spirit.

8(f): Depends on how you define feminism. I think it means for women and men to have the same chances, rights, possibilities - and I stand behind that. So yes, I guess I am?

9(m): Yes! Because feminism means that we are all equal and our worth is the same. We should all have the same rights and responsibilities in every aspect of life.

10(f): Depends on how you define that word. Hm..No I don't think so. I think I don't want to call myself a feminist, because it is often defined in a radical way and it's like a “keyword” that includes so much.

11(f): I do consider myself a feminist. Feminism for me simply means equality for every human.

12(f): No, I am not feminist. This is a fight for equality of rights when they are really infringed. And who is paying bills and this kind of stuff is not about it.

13(m): I am not a feminist. Feminism is for me considered pretty negative already, because women can decide already pretty much, and they have a chance to change, but quotes about feminism are not making it better.

14(f): Yes, I am a feminist. For me, this is even more about equal opportunities.

15(m): Yes, I think so. It simply means the equal rights of women and men. That's it.

16(m): No, I'm not a feminist. Because I try not to belong to any active movement. This means a social movement that defends the rights of women.

17(f): I do not think so. For me, feminism is an equation of rights, but now it seems to me that women want to be higher than men, higher than patriarchy.

18(m): I do not belong to various movements. But as the basic idea of feminism, that equal rights for both sexes should be everywhere, I agree with this.

19(f): Feminists are those who fight for equality, so that women are not infringed. I stand for equal rights, but I don't agree with all directions of feminism. I believe that men and women are created different in nature, so I can't say easily that I am a feminist. I like the separation of duties in traditional families, but at the same time I want to work and earn money. For example, I think that girls in Russia settled down well. They have many options how to live, some just let men work, they use their money and are happy about that, when others are building careers. And both variants are considered equally okay, it's a choice. When in Europe I've noticed that women are already supposed to work equally as men, although when some of them want to choose another model of living.

20(m): Yes. But I don't approve of some things that are seen as typically feminist. I don't like the word. So yes I am, but the word means so many things in our society... I do think everybody should have the same rights.

21(f): No, I don't consider myself a feminist. It means for me a woman who wants to be equal with a man. But for me, this is too much because it means that for example girls must carry heavy stuff and not ask for help although they are "weaker" physically and it is a fact..

22(f): Depends on how you define it. I am all for equality, but this goes both ways!

23(m): I'm bothered by the meaning that has lately been embedded in the concept of feminism. And I'm for equal rights, but without any wild stuff, like not shaving armpits, and I don't know if this makes me a feminist or not. And I'm still for manners, like giving a coat to a girl.

24(m) yes of course. I think it is sad that not everybody knows the true meaning

2. What do you associate with feminism?

1(f): Radicalism, not being gentle anymore.

2(f): Radicalism, scruffy women.

3(f): Demonstrations.

4(f): Equality, safe space, justice, power.

5(f): Fight, equality.

6(f): Equality and justice.

7(m): Active fight for rights

8(f): Equality, but also words like radical, extreme

9(m): Equality

10(f): The fight for certain rights. Demonstrations, refusal, radical.

11(f): Equal rights, being seen & heard, breaking down stigma

12(f): Fight for equal rights

13(m): Demonstrations, extremism, women rights

14(f): For me it is associated with an active movement, but it is about adding rights to women to equalize them, this is the complete equation in the salary, the right to abortion, the right to drive a car, etc.

15(m): Although I know that feminism is not only about radical feminists, but the first association I have is with extremes.

16(m): Radicalism

17(f): Aggressive activism and it pushes me away

18(m): With radical feminists at first who try to impress and do it sometimes in not very pleasant ways

19(f): Frankly, with radicalism, girls with posters, or who show their breasts or something in society, showing off their unshaven legs, although I understand that this should not be, but they suppress men with this, and this is not equality anymore, but pressure.

20(m): Same opportunities and rights, same wages, negative connotation

21(f): Fighting for equal rights

22(f): Gleichberechtigung, emma watson talk, equal pay, wage gap, frauenquote,

23(m): Lately with fat women who are too much, and it's sad. It's like with gays, there are normal dudes, but there are too many who scream about it

24(m): Equality, rights, change

3. Have you ever had to use phrases like "i'm not overreacting" / "i'm not on my period" while stating/defending your opinion?

1(f): Yes. But sometimes it's really hitting the point (laughs).

2(f): Yes.

3(f): Yes, sure.

4(f): Yes, people were using these phrases against me.

5(f): Yes, I think so.

6(f): Yes, it is fucking irritating.

7(m): No.

8(f): No, I don't think so.

9(m): [still need to ask]

10(f): Yes, definitely...several times.

11(f): Yes.

12(f): No, never.

13(m): Yes.

14(f): Yes, and normally strangers don't say smth like that, but your близкие да.

15(m): Seriously no, but there were definitely such jokes, although I won't remember right now.

16(m): No.

17(f): Yes, boys at school told me a couple of times.

18(m): If she aggressively defended her opinion, then this could be, if active, then not.

19(f): Probably just for fun. I am usually very reasonable, so i am not really giving a reason for that

20(m): No.

21(f): Yes, that phrase was used sometimes against me

22(f): Yes, can't think of example...

23(m): Yes, I used it, but the funny thing is that I often guessed the timing and sometimes it even helped the situation, so that the girl understood the reason for the emotional outburst

24(m): No.

4. Have people ever reacted to your actions/hobbies with phrases like: "but you are a woman/man..." ?

1(f): No.

2(f): Yes, „why are you cursing, you're a girl, what are you smoking, you're a girl, be gentle, you're a girl“.

3(f): Yes, for example, dad throughout life

4(f): Yes, for example, my mother never allowed me to buy clothes in men's departments

5(f): I don't think so.

6(f): Yes, when I was wearing black, when I wanted to learn drums and so on.

7(m): Yes. When I was a kid I had a doll I loved to play with and people/friends commented on it. But I also used the phrase myself - no I really regret it. There was a boy who liked wearing dresses. And I commented on it, because I didn't know any better

8(f): No, I can't think of anything like that.

9(m): I played with my sister's barbie and I always felt like people thought it was weird, so I already thought about stuff like that when I was little, which is kind of messed up. Now I would say I have a very open circle of friends who wouldn't say sth like that.

10(f): Yes. I am a very active person and I like to fix things (around the house etc. ...using tools). People have often asked me why I try doing that stuff. They didn't think I could, because of my gender.

11(f): Yes, I was athletic when I was younger and I could sprint very fast so I was running against boys. People commented on that. I also had a phase where I really loved green & blue clothing and I didn't find stuff like that in the girls section, so I went over to the boys clothes and people thought it was weird.

12(f): I can't remember any of some situations.

13(m): Yes, with work, when showing emotions, during sport, from teacher, mom and so on.

14(f): Yes, for example, it's not a hobby for a girl, for example in the childhood I had never had Lego, as my parents said it's not for a girl, and when I also told them that I want to study IT, and they said it's not for a girl. Even now my mom can say about my clothes that it's too buggy, dress something more for a girl.

15(m): Yes, for sure, unfortunately I do not remember examples.

16(m): Something exactly was, but I can't remember exactly.

17(f): Yes, many times, for example my mom was saying that I need to choose high heels instead of sneakers, or finally skirt instead of trousers.

18(m): Yes, it was, 100%, even in the relationship there was something like "hey, which of us is a man at all"

19(f): Well, yes, of course, grandmothers say that, mostly they, mom and friends never said that.

20(m): Yes, often. I play the violin, have been horseback riding, like to bake, ...

21(f): yes, but most likely it was a long time ago when I was younger and it came from my mother and some relatives, for example, when I could say something rude

22(f): yes. I played soccer and baseball, loved sports and was competitive, (but also other direction: ballet, horseback riding)

23(m): 100% it happened, but i can't make an example. My girlfriend says sometimes "please decide it, you are a man here".

24(m): i wanted to play with my sisters toys and wear her clothes, some relatives didnt like it

5. Do you think that there is such a thing as a casual sexist joke?

1(f): Yes, and I absolutely normally react to such jokes.

2(f): Well, yes, some features of a female character do exist, and for me it is inoffensive. Perhaps because no one directed such jokes at me.

3(f): If this is a harmless meme, then you can laugh, but if it is aimed at the person, then it sucks.

4(f): I think all jokes of this kind are sexist; from the smallest, the greater is born.

5(f): I think it's sexism.

6(f): I think it's sexism anyway.

7(m): I believe that you can make jokes about everything. But if you are offending someone it isn't funny anymore.

8(f): I think it depends on the context. I can joke around with close friends about anything and we know that it is not meant seriously. But in a different setting/context/group I think it is really inappropriate!

9(m): It depends, I think there is a place and time for these kinds of jokes. With friends it can be okay, but in big groups of people where you are not even sure if it is meant as a joke, I think it is just shit.

10(f): A sexist joke is sexist. Of course you can joke around about women, minorities etc using these typical stereotypes, but it is only okay to a certain degree. And you should joke about everybody "equally" at least.

11(f): I do think it is sexist. Of course I can laugh about all kinds of (messed up) stuff, but that doesn't change that it is sexism.

12(f): Probably, but what I'm saying is driven only by my own experience, although I saw in films, read

13(m): Yes.

14(f): I often do not like this, and I can speak out, but unfortunately this will not change anything. Although I believe that jokes of any degree of this kind belittle the dignity of the other sex. But unfortunately, I myself can sometimes make jokes like that too and realize it only later. Perhaps because it is so rooted in society.

15(m): I think the joke is either sexist or not. She cannot be more or less sexist.

16(m): I think such a joke can be funny, even if it's a harsh sexist. It's like joking about the older people, it's a joke about the old people anyway. Therefore, any joke in this direction is simply sexist.

17(f): I think yes. Now the people are modern, and I think if it is funny and a person has normal self-esteem, then this is okay. For example, when my colleague quitted her job, men colleagues presented a cake with a banana in the form of a penis and everyone laughed and took a picture, and only one girl was indignant, but we explained to her that the point was that in principle the boys made a cake for her. And this is a joke.

18(m): Of course it exists, but this is purely a joke. I can joke about a woman - your day is March 8, but only with people who understand what I mean.

19(f): I see nothing wrong with that. There are differences between men and women and they are undeniable, for example, that a woman has her period is undeniable. And if this is appropriate and does not offend a person, then I do not see anything wrong. Just as we joke about nationalities.

20(m): I don't like these stupid jokes when friends tell them. I think it is something else when comedians do that. Because they raise awareness and make you question these things...

21(f): I think that there are jokes about both men and women and there will always be a person whom they will offend, but this has never offended me.

22(f): I can only laugh about it sometimes (only in certain contexts) I think they mean it as a joke, but they don't get how stupid it is

23(m): I need an example, but so far I'm absolutely sure that yes. I often joke, using not the categories that I think. For example, I can make a joke about a girl-dishwasher, but I don't think that women are like that or must do it, for example, I am responsible for washing dishes at home. I love black humor, and I don't joke like that anywhere.

24(m): no. I don't like them. I never know if people mean it seriously

6. Do you consider catcalling as a compliment?

1(f): I don't consider it as a compliment, but I didn't have such a thing.

2(f): No.

3(f): No, it's disgusting.

4(f): No, it's disgusting.

5(f): Nooo, it's disgusting and fu.

6(f): No, it's disgusting.

7(m): No. I think it is invasive and uncomfortable.

8(f): No. It's dumb people coming on to women. It's not flattering.

9(m): I would never do it. It can be very uncomfortable for the other person. But I think I would maybe find it funny if it happened to me.

10(f): No. People who do it react to very "basic" stimuli and I think it is kind of gross.

11(f): No!

12(f): No, not all.

13(m): No.

14(f): Not at all.

15(m): No, I don't, I think it's disgusting.

16(m): I find this primitive.

17(f): No, I do not like it, it's disgusting.

18(m): It is mediocre and nasty.

19(f): No, it's disgusting.

20(m): nein. Find ich ziemlich unangebracht und seltsam. Einfach nein.

21(f): it irritates me, but i guess these people think that it is compliment, but i don't like them

22(f): nein. Ich finds ungut (vorallem abends)

23(m): i don't approve it

24(m): no!!

7. Do you think maternity leave is a duty or a right?

1(f): It is a right. A man can also take it, just in our society (Belarus) there is already such a formed mindset that a

woman should take it, but I think that both can.

2(f): I think this is a right.

3(f): This is not an obligation, but if a child is born, someone should look after him, but it is up to everyone to choose who will stay with a child.

4(f): I believe that maternity leave should be shared between partners so that both can participate, but they can also refuse to use this right.

5(f): I believe this is a right, and I believe that men should also use it.

6(f): I believe that it should be shared between partners as in Sweden, as it's just and I think it raises understanding between partners, as both take part in "creating" a baby.

7(m): I think both parents have a certain duty and both of them should ideally have the option. It is not only the duty of the mother. This should be openly discussed and decided together in a relationship.

8(f): I think it is a right. It should be a decision. But I do think it makes sense for mothers to be there after birth.

9(m): It is a right.

10(f): I have to say it is a privilege to even be able to make the decision to stay home - for men and women. Many people don't get that much time at home (depending on the law in the country).
It is, of course, a right. If a woman simply doesn't see herself in this role then why should she do it?

11(f): A right. It should be decided individually and women should not have to feel pressure to do sth they don't want

12(f): I think it is a right. A man should also have this possibility.

13(m): I think it is a right, responsibility should be carried by both parents.

14(f): It is a right, it should be done also for a man. As it is a right it should be equal for both genders.

15(m): It's firstly right and not a duty. And also fathers can do it when it's more convenient for the family. But of course there are some 1-2 periods of time that women should heal from giving birth.

16(m): It is a right. When you have money, for example, then nobody has to do this. If a woman earns more, then why not for the father to stay with a child.

17(f): I do not think that only a woman should go on maternity leave. For example, girls in my company often stay at work because they earn more than their husbands. How it is more convenient for family.

18(m): I think this is a choice. More naturally on biological grounds, it seems to me that this should do mother. But if the family decides that the father, then this is also super.

19(f): This should not be a duty, but it must have such a right. And there should be a normal amount of time. And it's good when both partners have such an opportunity.

20(m): A right. And if they want to do it, they should still have rights at work.

21(f): It is a right.

22(f): Definitely a right!

23(m): I am sure it is a right, and it should be normal that both can use this right. But i am sure that firstly it is more important for a baby that mom will be with him/her.

24(m): definitely a right.

8. Have you ever experienced any kind of “discrimination” because of your gender?

1(f): Most likely not, I can't remember exactly. But it infuriates me that men (and some women, too) believe that women on the road are sheep, especially blondes, and I am blond.

2(f): Yes, at work, partners and clients did not take me seriously when I was taking a high position.

3(f): Yes, for example in the post-Soviet space there is an opinion that a woman cannot make decisions. Now I am in a normal environment, so such situations don't occur.

4(f): Yes, for example, at university, the professor believed that a woman cannot be a good leader because of her periods 7 days a month.

5(f): Yes, for example, during a driving exam, at work only girls should have brought coffee and dressed beautifully so that the boss liked it, although this was not written in our responsibilities and duties.

6(f): Yes, but can't think of any example now.

7(m): Not really, no. I can only think of being kicked out of “girls” rooms when I was younger, and wondering why it needs to be seperated.

8(f): When online shopping. I wanted to buy a jacket and saw that the ones for women were more expensive and had pink zippers. I felt like they were messing with me.

9(m): Not really no. The only thing I can think of is not having other people pay for my drinks.

10(f): Yes! For example there were workers/mechanics who didn't want to talk to me. They said “ we will talk about that to your husband”, even though they didn't know anything about me. They simply assumed I wouldn't understand because of my gender. This is a reality, even today. This happened only a few years ago.

11(f): Yes. Small stuff and also comments on my body that would never have been said to a man.

12(f): I am sure I did, but I can't definitely remember. But I have a feeling that I know that feeling.

13(m): I don't think I ever got discriminated. Maybe there were some moments, for example I had to do some tasks as I am a man.

14(f): Yes, it's also about harassment. That I got it, because I am a woman. I just remembered also, at work people are asking men, which kind of sport you like and women, do you like to cook.

15(m): Yes, definitely. For example with my relatives she is always telling me what to do or not as I am a man. And in university there were some situations as I am a man. Although I can't name a situation, but an environment.

16(m): No, probably not.

17(f): I once wanted to apply for a waitress, but they didn't take me because I am small and plump. I think it was the only discrimination. And due to the fact that I am a girl, I think not. For example, the boys respected me at school, because I was “their” among them, and I was not a tomboy at the same time.

18(m): I don't think so, maybe there were some little things, but I did not regard them as discrimination and did not notice.

19(f): I think yes, probably, once it happened, but I can't remember. But rather, it was simply incorrect inappropriate behavior on the part of men.

20(m): in der schule gibt es das vorurteil, dass buben im unterricht schlimmer sind - werden dann "bestraft", mädchen sind die "braven", in gesprächen haben mir leute gesagt, dass ich nicht mitreden soll weil es ein mädchen thema ist (auch anders herum zb mädchen&fußball)

21(f): actually I can't remember any kind of discrimination

22(f): yes: in school: treated differently than the boys, my ex-boyfriend told me i couldn't wear a certain piece of clothing once

23(m): no.

24(m): i dont think so, no

9. Do you think that men must earn more (in relationships)?

1(f): If possible, yes. This I consider the norm.

2(f): No, they must not. It is just very desirable.

3(f): No, how life will turn out (laughs).

4(f): No.

5(f): No, he must not for sure.

6(f): No, but I would like to see a man near who wants to develop and not stop and enjoy my high salary.

7(m): No. That's just a social stigma.

8(f): No, I don't care about who earns more. I just think it is good for both of them to be independent from the other.

9(m): No. But personally I would like to earn a good amount (or more) to be able to provide for my family. I know it is a stereotype, but I do want that in the future.

10(f): No, that's irrelevant.

11(f): No.

12(f): No, of course.

13(m): No, I don't think it is important for man more, it's just important when something happens, like divorce, death, that they have the same quality of life. For example, when a man earns more and then leaves his wives that she stays in shit.

14(f): No, no, no, no.

15(m): No. I think it's flexible for all relationships.

16(m): No, I don't think so.

17(f): Hmm, I do not think so, but I would like it to be so.

18(m): I believe not, to each according to his abilities and needs. If you can earn more, then super, if not, also good.

19(f): No, not obligated. But I would like it to be so. Although I struggle with this attitude in my head, it seems to me that it is just a stereotype in me because of which society I grew up in.

20(m): No! Same work, same money!

21(f): no, but I think for a man it feels weird and uncomfortable when it is another way around

22(f): no.

23(m): yes.

24(m): no.

10. Do you think that stereotypes about women (gentle, delicate) are "friendly" sexism?

1(f): No.

2(f): Yes, I think women should be what they want to be, should not be tender and fragile. This applies to everyone.

3(f): These are not the only definitions of women, these are human characteristics. I can't say that it offends me, but it infuriates me when someone demands that from me.

4(f): Yes.

5(f): Yes, I didn't think so before, but now I do.

6(f): Yes, this only supports stereotypes if we consider it as a norm.

7(m): I think stereotypes are stupid- everybody is different. They can be funny, but they are still sexist. You look at people based on their gender- and it doesn't apply to everybody.

8(f): Yes. It is labelling people as something, based on their gender.

9(m): I'm not sure. I know that these characteristics don't describe every woman, but I'm not sure I would call it that.

10(f): I'm not sure if I would call it sexism. But I don't like it when characteristics like that are always emphasized when talking about women. It is like when I read the newspaper and see that the articles discuss what female politicians are wearing rather than what they are working on.

11(f): Yes. I think these kinds of labels only reinforce the sexist opinions that already exist.

12(f): More yes than no. All people are different and should understand that one woman can be gentle and another not.

13(m): Yes, I do think so.

14(f): From one point yes, but it's kinda of a norm now, but I don't think that people mean to discriminate someone like this. Although it is a stereotype and it's bullshit.

15(m): Actually not, formulation is sowie sexist, but i know that people are not trying to offend somebody, for example, when older people congratulate they just do it that way. But I analyse the message and it's good, although formulation is 100 percent sexist.

16(m): No. I think that it's more physiology.

17(f): No, on the contrary compliment. I think that girls are like this and it's cool that we are like this.

18(m): Probably not. Personally i think that if girl gentle and feminine moderately then it is cool

19(f): A stereotype is such a thing that implies that everyone should be like that. But all are different, not all should be tender. Such an image exists, but this does not mean that you must be so. While no one is forcing you to be like that, I don't think this is sexism.

20(m): I think this is sexist. But i understand why this happens..there are stereotypes and people only see the „cases“ that confirm their views. When someone doesn't fit into the box, they are „different“...even though everyone is.

21(f): nope, i think that sexism is more used in negative sense and i don't see anything negative in being gentle

22(f): i know i should find it sexist, it is just so engrained into us that we dont even question that kind of stuff, now that i think about it it isn't even always used in a positive way (men saying you are so communicative - putting their own deficits on their gender)

23(m): no, i think that feminism should be healthy, and to deny that we are biologically equal is stupid. It is funny btw that women are biologically more endurant

24(m): i do think it is sexism. Cause it just cant be generalized like that

11. Do you think there are gender based characteristics? Is there such a thing as a typical woman/man?

1(f): No.

2(f): No, I think it is a matter of character and education, not gender. For example, the fact that boys are brought up not to cry.

3(f): In our society it is like this. I do not consider sexism that we are different, but it just sucks if there is discrimination because of that, like a man is bulled when he is soft or so. I think we are not the same, there are differences, but it is also completely okay if a woman has some more recognized male characteristics and vice versa.

4(f): In theory, there is an image of a man and there is an image of a woman. But this is a social construct, something that society ascribed to itself.

5(f): I would like to say yes, but I understand that there are so many different people that have to say no.

6(f): No, I think it's character and upbringing.

7(m): No. I think that people develop individually. These images we have in our heads are because society put them there.

8(f): I think there might be an underlying difference, due to biology/evolution. But for the most part it is probably upbringing and society that "shape" us. It is hard to say.

9(m): I think that man and woman are different, when born. Their bodies are and maybe also certain characteristics. So yes maybe there is an "average" man/woman. But of course everybody is different and there is a spectrum where everyone finds their place.

10(f): That's difficult to answer. Without really knowing why, I think I have to say yes. In the past I often felt like men & women perceive things differently and things are of different importance to them. When bringing up my 3 children, I was very conscious and offered them all the same. And still I saw a difference between my daughters and my son.

11(f): No. I think most of a person's character develops really early on in childhood, so I would say it depends on upbringing/ the social background, and just individual character(dna).

12(f): No. I don't have such stereotypes.

13(m): No, I don't think they exist, they are educated and trained. The only one is a love of the mother that a man can never understand.

14(f): Physically I think yes, they exist, but about character I think it's more coming from society.

15(m): First thing I think is that even I can say "oooo, what a man", but I think it's because we are just used to it. I don't think actually there are these characteristics. But I am sure the society and upbringing creates them.

16(m): Yes. I think that women are more often impulsiv, rational thinking is also from my point of view is also more often women's characteristic.

17(f): Probably yes. Nowadays there can be anything, but I don't want for example to see crying men. But other things as caring or trustworthy should be for both, like human qualities.

18(m): In general, taking into consideration our society, we have such a concept. But usually this is in a negative sense. Typical "weib" or typical dork. But in general, probably not, all people are different and have their own set of characteristics.

19(f): I think yes. This is the traditional understanding of man and woman. And it is. And some of them, I think, come from nature. Although there are more courageous women and more feminine men. And this is about the feeling of oneself, not the presence of a penis or vagina.

20(m): I think there is some underlying thing, stemming from biology (hormones). But it is hard to tell. And this does not determine your character. Men aren't more violent because it is their personality, but because it is engrained into them by society

21(f): Well, yes, because some characteristics are peculiar only to women and men, although there are exceptions everywhere, but if to generalize, then I think so. There are generally accepted adjectives that apply to men, although they can be applied to women as well. But if you ask me to give examples, I realize that my opinion is different. That all this is generally accepted, but in practice it can be applied to any person, regardless of gender. So yes, it's just a social construct in this case.

22(f): no, but i think there are certain „patterns“ ...but i guess i just think that because society tells me..it is our upbringing and education, I guess.

23(m): it smells like sexism, but yes. But i consider them more as jokes i guess, like, unwashed and brutal man, or girl that cries to make a pressure on man.

24(m): honestly im not sure about this, but i dont think there are. I think it has to do with individual character and education. Everybody is different i think.

12. What do you think needs to change/can be done about sexism and inequality?

1(f): Awareness and other parenting strategies, in Belarus people do not know what feminism and sexism are.

2(f): Education comes from the family, we were brought up like that, with the values imposed by society.

3(f): If another point of view will be offered, for example, by the mass culture. These values are all in the head, but if a different point of view is offered to people, not imposition, then these views will form the values of others. And if it came to the state level, then everything would be super cool.

4(f): Raising awareness and making decisions at the political level, for example, as a paternity leave. Then people see that there is this option and start thinking why and it's easy to accept it than from a girl on the internet.

5(f): In all instances, they should pay attention to this, that is. Increasing awareness, maybe some people do things not for purpose, they just do not know that it can offend some.

6(f): Raising awareness and changing the way we bring children up.

7(m): It is hard to change people. I hope that in the future we will have an education system that will open everyone's eyes and people will become more considerate.

8(f): we should get rid of stigma & expectations. Free decisions, equal right. We should educate/bring up children differently. I think that would make a difference.

9(m): I think feminism has a "marketing problem", because of the name and the things people associate with it, so I think this needs to be changed. People need to stop putting labels on others and judging them. There should be equal pay for women and more women should work in politics/ higher positions (politicians represent the people, but the people=50% women, and when I look at the government I don't see that number being represented). The new generation could and should change that.

10(f): same amount of money for the same amount of work! And the same possibilities for women to be in leading positions.

11(f): I think it is important for women and men who are aware of these problems to come together and make a change - it concerns and affects everybody, stigma and sexism also go the other way around and affect men. Raise further awareness and be conscious of the things when bringing up/educating children. Talk to others: open discussions and conversations can change views.

12(f): I can't think of any measure. Self-education. You need to understand that you are not better than anyone.

13(m): Mothers and fathers should motivate their daughters to break out of the roles that society gives them.

14(f): Raising awareness, and to use it yourself, to use feminities and so on. Not to stay aside. And to explain what it is, because some people think that feminism means to hate men.

15(m): I am not an activist. And I think it's the personal thing of everyone how to behave. I think it's a personal change. One day I changed myself about this topic, but I can't think of any measures.

16(m): Raise awareness and educate both genders, how to behave, which prejudices shouldn't take place and not to turn it into radicalism, so that it wouldn't be associated with something negative.

17(f): I think that radicalism is bad: patriarchy is bad as well as radical feminism, but when it is mutual respect and support everything will be alright. Somehow women are not fighting for working at factories or serving in the army. Then it's not really equality.

18(m): I think that it's just a relic of the past when a man and a woman had specific roles in society. And now everything is changing, society is evolving. Therefore, it seems to me that only time and patience are needed. But of course, do not sit back if you are infringed, but it is simply impossible to eradicate all stereotypes in one second.

19(f): I believe that quite a lot has already been done. But social changes as the real equation in salaries. And stereotypes are a problem of education and society. And this is not a matter of gender. And in the acceptance by people of other people as they are, it concerns everything, including nationalities. It is necessary to cultivate a culture in people and their understanding, then people will consciously approach not only gender differences, but also other. And it also seems to me that feminism becomes a trend saying that it is not cool to be a woman in its traditional sense. But I am for freedom of choice for everyone.

20(m): a lot has to change! but i have the feeling this will be quite difficult...we would have to do that as a society. I wish this discussion was more inclusive and present in our lives

21(f): I think actually nothing, it's not on a governmental level to fight it, because women can vote and be doctors for example, so it's pretty well regulated already. But on the personal level, it's only about how a person thinks, and it's hard to change.

22(f): society: education, upbringing, at work: fix pay gap, maybe anonymous applications

23(m): education, really

24(m): i guess parents can do their part (upbringing) and there is still a lot to do on a bigger scale (system change)