INTEGRATION OF GENDER ASPECT INTO THE RESEARCH AND TEACHING CONTENT: PERSPECTIVES AND PROBLEMS

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Purpose. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the integration of gender aspect into the research methodologies, content and teaching programs as a change of traditional science values, also as a source of new information leading to correction of conventional scientific premises and to creation of new scientific knowledge.

In order to increase the European Union and the world's scientific potential and contributions to the knowledge economy, more and more attention is paid to measures that would help to improve gender equality in science in terms of equal opportunities for the scientists of both genders to reveal their talents and to ensure that scientific and industrial products are suitable for users of different genders. The dominance of one sex researchers and objects of the research (usually male ones) has led to scientific standards and methodologies, which are still rarely taking into consideration the different gender needs and ways how scientific knowledge affects them. Sex and gender bias that still exist in scientific knowledge can be socially harmful and expensive.

Approach. Today the scientists of various fields of science are being encouraged to integrate gender aspect into the methodologies and content of the research they conduct. Mostly it is being done by material or external motivation, i.e. by the requirement to include gender into the research then applying for research project funding (e.g. European Commission's 6th Framework Programme practice). The external motivation is not enough to produce substantial change in traditional scientific

knowledge, it is necessary to fight gender bias by forming the internal motivation, i.e. by informing researchers consent in all educational stages, even in early educational phase. Only the complex of educational, organizational and financial measures of gender mainstreaming in science can ensure a high level of research and the quality of the results. It is a way to socially responsible business practices and technologies that would improve women's and men's lives globally.

Findings. Global academic community is rather slow to take new perspectives on scientific knowledge by excluding previously entrenched gender bias. There exists an obvious lack of political will and strategic thinking in modernizing academic institutions and research methodologies in this respect.

Research limitations. There are a limited number of studies on how the integration of gender aspect into the research leads to creation of innovative scientific knowledge in various disciplines. The achievements of this approach are mostly visible and effective in natural sciences directly affecting first of all the health of humans.

Practical implications. The findings of this paper should attract the attention of researchers and science policy makers, as well as other stakeholders to new, socially responsible and more innovative ways to build scientific knowledge equally affecting humans of both genders.

Value of the paper is both informative and analytical as it overviews various studies on gender aspect in research which are very little known for scientists of social and humanitarian sciences, especially in Lithuania, and challenges the traditional gender bias existing in science.

Keywords: gender bias, scientific knowledge, gender mainstreaming, innovative research methodologies, values of science, management of higher education and research institutions

Research type: literature/general review, viewpoint.