

## **STUDY OF GENDER ISSUES IN THE PETROLEUM ENGINEERING EDUCATION THROUGH A SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF STUDENTS**

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The survey opinion about petroleum engineering education was conducted among two groups of students (120 respondents) in Gubkin Russian State University of Oil and Gas: students of the university preparatory courses and undergraduates on engineering faculties. The results reveal a significant difference between opinions of female and male respondents and between opinions of two groups. The respondents are unanimous in positive opinion of petroleum engineering career. The share of boys planning to get a job in their specialty is 95% and the share of girls is 75%. The question: "Do your parents or relatives have a job in oil and gas industry?" was answered "Yes" by 25% of female and 60% of male respondents. The answers indicate that professional orientation on petroleum engineering specialties is largely determined by family but girls are more independent in choice of profession than boys. The only one question reveals a considerable difference in opinions of two groups: "Who will be harder to get a job in the specialty?" Answer "woman" was selected by 55% females and 23% males on preparatory courses and 95% females and 52% males among undergraduates. The rest of respondents selected the answer "no difference" and no one – the answer "man"!

Five female students studying on "male" specialty (one girl in a group of 25-30 students) were interviewed about their choice of specialty and understanding of barriers on professional career progress. They told about their deliberate choice of the specialty, the inclination to exact sciences, the intention to work in the chosen specialty. The girls are interested in professional career. They are planning to work (at least for a while after graduation) not in office or research institute, but in production (oil fields, refinery) because it is necessary for experience and successful career. The girls are sure that getting married and having children is not hurt to their career due to the opportunity of rational family life in modern society. They are sure that their professional status and contribution to the family budget will be equal or more than the husband's. At the same time the girls understand that equal starting position after graduation don't provide equal career progress for them and their male counterparts.

The processes in petroleum engineering education are considered in a gender point of view. Sociological survey and interviews of Gubkin University students show the traditional gender imbalance. The results give evaluation of motivation and aspiration for professional success of female and male students. They reveal that girls are more independent and ambitious in their choice of profession but the expectation of professional realization is better for boys. Nevertheless all interviewed girls aspire to the highest career levels and are sure in the opportunity of professional success. Students are bearers of gender consciousness caused by gender knowledge, gender attitude and gender behavior in modern society in Russia. Gender issues in the petroleum engineering education reflect gender stratification of the society and culture as a whole.