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Sexist jokes favor the mental mechanisms that justify violence against women

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Sexist jokes (and all the variants of this kind of humour) favour the mental mechanisms which urge to violence and battering against women in individuals with macho attitudes. Those are the conclusions of a study carried out at the University of Granada, that will be released tomorrow Thursday 2nd of July in the framework of the world most renowned international symposium about humour and its scientific applications ('International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter: Theory, Research and Applications') that will be held in Granada.

In order to carry out this research work, the scientists applied several questionnaires to a group of 109 university male students aged between 18 and 26 years old. They showed them two series of jokes, one of them with sexist jokes where women were denigrated and another one with common jokes, without any kind of sexist content. Next, the researchers proposed them several scenes with different cases of battering against women, from minor to serious attacks, to ask them how they would react in this kind of situation.

The work proved that those who had listened to sexist jokes were much more tolerant with male battering than those who had not, this is, that this kind of humour favours the mental mechanisms tolerant with violent behaviour towards women. However, the researchers warn those individuals affected by sexist humour showed a previous tendency to tolerate violence against women, as we can gather from a survey which weighed up sexist attitudes against women.

Some of the items of the scale used by the scientist to measure men's sexist attitudes were: "Deep down, feminist women intend women to be more powerful than men", "Most of the women do not fully appreciate what men do for them" or "There are many women who make sexual insinuations to men and later they reject their advances just to make fun of them".

More information: The results of this research work have been accepted to be published in the '*Journal of Interpersonal Violence*'.

Source: University of Granada

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