

A critique of seirian  
sumner and nathalie  
pettorelli's the high  
cost of being a w...



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Back in the ancient days, women did not have much authority to do anything. They cannot go to school or even cannot go to work. They have to stay at home to do all the compromises and take care of the child. Then, the husband is the one who work to be able to feed his wife and children. This traditional convention is broken in the early 90th century, during the rise of feminist.

Even though, in today's society, girls are allowed to go to school and even have a high education, but some abandon this chance to have a " upper class" jobs and study advanced subject such as chemistry, physics, computing, biology... and so on which is also promoted in one of the articles published in the magazine New Scientist, Sumner and Pettorelli claim that woman are leaving sciences. However, the authors fail to convince the reader that women are rarely in science due to lack of references and empirical data. Summary In the article " The High Cost of Being a Woman", the authors begin by explaining that few girls choose science at school and the percentage of girls dropping this subject is high, but the problem becomes more serious after their graduation.

The percentage of undergraduates drops so dramatically, thus, there are not many women in the domain of science overall. Becoming a successful woman in science, costs more than it benefits. Scientists always have to put their job before everything else including their family. The main explanations of women's exit are gender bias and the burden of childbearing. The authors conclude that most of the successful women are single, since the majority of the men do not accept to follow behind a woman.

Even though, there are always solutions to stop women leaving science by equalising the advantage and disadvantage for both sexes. Analysis The authors bring up many statistics to support their arguments, but without any references. The source of their evidences is not accurate. For example, “ The UK odds of three randomly selected mid-career scientists being women are currently 1 in 91, as opposed to a 1-in-2 chance for male scientists of equivalent standing”(1). This proof might be effective and might persuade the readers if they have mentioned the source.

Also, the authors claim that “ the divorce rates are higher among women scientists than men are less likely to follow women, and why all the successful women remain single” (14). This is totally unrealistic, because not all the successful women are single and also, they do not provide any references and examples to support the argument. Furthermore, the portion of girl’s education in science is only based on the situation in UK. The authors use this little evidence to generalize the situation and conclude that women are dropping science.

Moreover, Sumner and Pettorelli inform that science careers are perfect for women, because they are “ generally excel in communication, multitasking and creative thinking and whose personal commitment can be accommodated by the flexible working environment and considerable autonomy that scientist enjoy (5)”. However, later in the article, they argue that women cannot adapt to the working environment after they give birth to a baby which contradicts of what they claimed earlier in the article. Their arguments are lacks of coherent.

Furthermore, at the very beginning of this article, Sumner and Pettoirelli employ a strong vocabulary to express their emotion and to convince the readers; such as “ what is really shocking” (2), “ the vacuity” (3) and “ kicks in” (4). Further, in the middle of the body paragraph, the authors use a contrast to suggest the readers that the costs outweigh the benefits for women who work in the field of science. The paragraph about the benefits is obviously much shorter than the paragraph about the costs. The authors completely persuade the readers that being a female scientist loses more than it gains.

In addition, the authors utilize irony in the title “ The high cost of being a woman in science” to emphasize the sacrifice of a woman in order to become a scientist. As well, in the conclusion, “ who knows- by 2031 two young male scientists might write an article bemoaning the under-representation of men in science! ” (19), they employ irony to forecast that the situation of women in the field of science may change.

Response/Conclusion In my opinion, women are leaving science which is compromised with the author’s idea.

In fact, according to the 2006 program for international Student Assessment, in Canada, the difference between the percentage of female and male in the field of science is only nearly to 3%. This is not really a big difference. Moving to the situation in Finland, there is only 1. 6 % male more than female in science. In Turkey, there is the same amount of women and men in the career science. All together, woman are not leaving science, there is only a tiny less quantity of women than men in science which is totally normal.

Also, in Hammer's article "Where are all the boys?" we can see clearly on a picture which took during the ceremony at MacMaster University to welcome students that there is more girl than boys into medical school. Even though as Sumner and Pettorelli state in their article that since in order to become a female scientist need to sacrifice a lot of their personal life and the time that they could spend with their family, partner or even a chance to become a mother, therefore, women leave science.

Their arguments are effective if their evidence provide the original source of this information and support it by more examples. Furthermore, the techniques of the authors use for writing are appropriated to sustain their thesis. They emphasize the size of the paragraph for the cost and benefit to convince the reader that being a female scientist is disadvantage. In consequence, no women want to work in science. Overall, the article might be provoking, but due to the lacks of sources cause their arguments invalid.