Ignorance Is Not Bliss: How Awareness of Gender Inequalities Affect Women’s Feminist Identity

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INTRODUCTION

• A feminist is someone who believes in social, economic, and political equality between genders (Mann & Huffman, 2014).
• Statistics imply that there are gender discrepancies that are disadvantageous to women in the workplace, politics, and education, yet some women who do not identify as feminists explain that gender equality is achieved.
• Hypothesis: Participants who identified more strongly as feminists would be more knowledgeable about gender inequality than participants who identified less strongly as feminists.

MATERIALS and METHODS

Participants were 40 undergraduate women ages 18 – 22 from the University of Texas.

Measures:
Gender Inequalities Questionnaire – (8 items) Measured how much participants knew about gender discrepancies in political, educational, and corporate situations.
Feminist Identity Development Scale – (39 items) Measured how developed participants were as feminists. 1=Passive acceptance, 2=Revelation, 3=Embeddedness, 4=Synthesis, 5=Active commitment.
Feminist Perspectives Scale – (60 items) Measured the extent of feminist ideals or nonfeminist ideals that participant had.
Feminist Self-Identification Scale – Rating from 1-9 with 1=“not feminist at all” and 9=“strongly identify as feminist”.

Methods:
Participants took an online questionnaire anonymously. The online study included demographic questions and the four measures described above.

RESULTS

CONCLUSION

Results do not indicate a correlation between knowing about gender inequalities and self-identification as a feminist.
• There was only a slightly positive correlation between feminist self-identification and development as a feminist. This suggests that the stages of feminist development may affect women’s feminist identity to a small extent.
• Out of 40 participants, 39 scored as feminists. This suggests that many people who do not think of themselves as feminists actually have feminist ideals.

Future directions: I would like to test the effect of other factors, such as misconceptions about feminism, on feminist identity.

REFERENCES


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