

# Perceptions of Feminism on a University Campus

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## Introduction

•There are several existing frameworks of feminism in which different individuals identify with.

•Lorber identifies existing epistemological frameworks for feminism including Varieties of Feminism, Gender Reform Feminisms, Gender Resistance Feminism, and Gender Rebellion Feminism.

•It seems that few feminist frameworks are portrayed in the media and there may be confusion regarding what feminism really is.

### Research Question:

•The present research is interested in how college students perceive feminism, their opinions regarding feminist ideas, and where college students identify themselves in terms of “being a feminist.”

## Method

### Participants

•20 college males and 21 college females participated in this study.

### Setting

•Research was conducted on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Campus in classrooms, dormitories, and campus buildings.

### Procedure

•Structured interviews were conducted either face to face or via telephone with students around campus in which a series of questions regarding perceptions of feminism were asked.

•A thematic analysis was then used to analyze responses.

•Responses were categorized based on their similarities.

## Author Note

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## Results

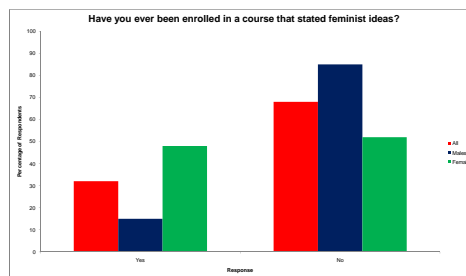


Figure 1: Percentage of students enrolled in courses that state feminist beliefs.

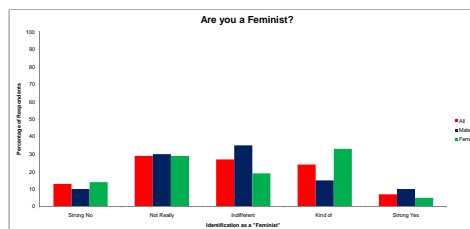


Figure 2: Percentage of students that identify themselves as feminists

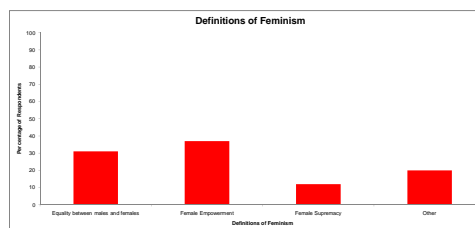


Figure 3: General Definitions for "Feminism"

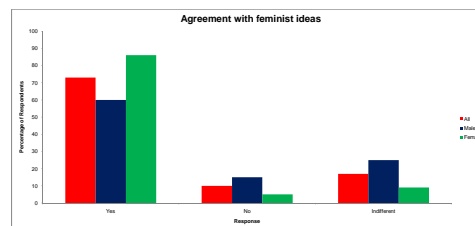


Figure 4: Percentage of students who agree with feminist ideas

## Results (cont.)

•Figure 1 shows the percentage of students that have been enrolled in a course that states ideas of feminism.

•Males and females are separated in order to visualize the comparison between sexes.

- 32% of all participants had been enrolled
- 15% of males had been enrolled
- 48% of females had been enrolled
- The majority of participants had never enrolled

•Figure 2 shows the percentage of students that identified themselves as feminists.

- Few participants either strongly identified as a feminist or strongly identified as not being a feminist

•Figure 3 shows general ways in which participants defined feminism.

- The majority thought feminism is equality between males and females or female empowerment

•Figure 4 shows the percentage of participants that agreed with feminist ideas.

- 73% of all participants agreed with feminist ideas
- 60% of males agreed with feminist ideas
- 86% of females agreed with feminist ideas

## Discussion

•Few participants had an accurate definition of feminism.

•The lack of understanding feminist ideas could be due to the few enrollments in courses that display feminist ideas.

•Those that did enroll in courses that display feminist ideas seemed to have a better understanding of feminist teachings.

•Although most participants agreed with feminist ideas, few identified themselves as a feminist.

- Suggesting a stigma attached to “feminist.”

•These results could be used to by the Women’s Studies department to better educate students on the ideas of feminism and to encourage students to enroll in WMNS courses.

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