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Title: Forms of contact in the field of gender and prejudice reduction

MASTER THESIS

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Abstract

Gender prejudice is a central issue in the field of social psychology that has been studied extensively in the literature of social psychology over the past decades. A very important and well-replicated theory in social psychology, is the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), which supports that intergroup contact can eliminate many types of prejudice that exists between the groups. Existing studies have investigated the effects of contact between the genders, and there are findings that support that gender prejudice beliefs are influenced if men and women come in contact in various social relationships (e.g., acquaintances, friendships, romantic relationships). The current study aimed to investigate the effect that these different forms of contact have in the elimination of gender prejudiced beliefs, as well as on feminist attitudes, via replicating the design of the existing study by Endendijk, (2023). This study aimed to extend the existing findings and provide further information around contact and its influence on gender-prejudiced beliefs and feminist attitudes. The findings provide a glimpse of how gender prejudiced beliefs and intergroup contact are related in the context of a Mediterranean country and shed light into the dynamic relationship between the various factors that were assessed. The strengths as well as the limitations of the study are discussed.

Key words: gender prejudice, contact hypothesis, gender inequality beliefs, gender discrimination

Introduction

Prejudice & the importance of prejudice reduction.

Prejudiced beliefs are assumptions or opinions about a person or a specific group of people and are created based on that person's or group's membership to a particular group (Oxford Reference, 2024). Those assumptions or opinions are negative in their nature most of the time and can lead to the development of stereotypes that end up characterising groups of people in negative and degrading ways. Prejudice can appear in the form of racial discrimination (racism), gender discrimination (sexism, homophobia), age discrimination (ageism), discrimination against religions (religious prejudice) and in many other forms as well (Human Rights Careers, 2024). Prejudice in all sectors of life can lead to the development of negative and dangerous behaviours of discrimination and usually lead to the development of negative feelings and attitudes towards the social group that is being discriminated against. Social psychological theories have managed to recognise the phenomenon of prejudice in all these sectors of life, and each of those theories have tried to explain in their own unique and different ways, the reasons behind prejudiced beliefs and behaviours.

Some of the theories in the field of social psychology that explain the concept of stereotypes and prejudiced beliefs, are the Social Identity Theory and the Realistic Conflict Theory. The Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) suggests that individuals have an innate need to belong to different groups within a society, and that the sense of belonging to those groups provides them with purpose, self-esteem and a unique identity, based on their group membership. SIT has distinct stages (social categorisation, social identification, social comparison) and those lead to the ingroup-outgroup differentiation. Although group membership has positive social purposes in terms of maintaining a sense of belonging and a sense of identity, the tendency of group categorisation can often lead to

negative consequences, such as stereotyping and prejudice that can lead to intergroup conflict, discrimination and prejudiced beliefs.

Ever since the earliest studies of Tajfel and colleagues, via the first experiments that were done to test how social identity influences people's actions in various social situations, those experiments indicated that when faced with an award allocation task, people consistently favoured their ingroup (Tajfel et al., 1971). Participants of those series of experiments also demonstrated the willingness to 'sacrifice' other objective advantages, when attempting to increase the gains of their in-group, with the ultimate goal to achieve the highest difference of number of rewards between the ingroup and the outgroup.

The Social Identity Theory was also applied in other social contexts, like the organisational settings within the workplace. Ashforth and Mael, (1989), made important realisations regarding the importance of developing a social identity in the workplace. Their findings indicated that identification with the in-group of a newcomer in a workplace environment, supports the internalisation of the organisational values and beliefs, and encourages the feeling of loyalty and commitment to the workplace. Another unique and interesting finding was that of the discovery of the 'compartmentalisation of social identities', whereby it is suggested that individuals develop multiple, loosely coupled identities, which they separate or buffer, because inherent conflicts between the demands of those identities are not resolved by cognitive integration. This is an important finding as it explains the existence of apparent hypocrisies and double standards within people's behaviour.

Self-categorisation and the influence this has on perceptions of group homogeneity and intergroup relations were explored within various studies, including a very representative study in the field, the study by Haslam et al., (1999). Haslam and colleagues investigated the processes via which groups coordinate social perceptions and judgement, via a characteristic study that tested the claim that perceivers are more likely to produce a shared in-group

stereotype up to the level that they define themselves, and that they interact in terms of a common social category membership. The study consisted of an individual phase and a group phase (social identity condition), and within each, participants were called to complete a series of tasks that tested their identity salience and various perceptions around Australians and the Australian identity. Their findings indicated that there was enhanced stereotype consensus within the individual phase of the experiment, when manipulation of social identification took place. For instance, when the participants' identity as Australians was more salient, they were more likely to describe Australians with positive traits, suggesting a favourable in-group stereotype. These tendencies were also maintained within the group phase (social identity condition) of the experiment, where highly shared in-group stereotypes were generated.

Overall, the results of the aforementioned studies managed to reveal the various ways in which social identities are produced, the processes that the formation and upholding of social identities go through, and the high importance that our various social identities hold for our individual and our group perceptions. The social identity theory demonstrates how powerful the identities that we develop in our social lives really are, and how big their impact is on our behaviours and perceptions.

The Realistic Conflict Theory (Sheriff, 1966) is another theory in social psychology that describes intergroup processes that take place within conflict situations. The realistic conflict theory suggested that when there are scarce resources, groups get involved in conflict over those resources, with this resulting intergroup conflict. A famous study that became the basis of the realistic conflict theory, was the "Robbers' cave experiment" by Muzafer Sherif. In the specific study, the groups that consisted of young boys that took part in the study, while thinking that they were taking part in a summer camping experience, demonstrated the importance of group norms, group stereotypes in situations where the groups had to go into

conflict for scarce resources. The different phases of the experiment consisted of the ingroup formation, the rise of the conflict between the two groups after the groups came in contact and were called to compete in games and challenges in order to win those competitions, and finally, the conflict resolution phase. The resolution of this conflict and the elimination of prejudice between the ingroup and the outgroup was only achieved when the groups were called to work together in order to achieve superordinate goals. In the case of the experiment, the groups were called to fix the reservoir that was providing everyone in the camp with drinking water and cooperate to resolve the issue.

Identification with one's own group and group categorisation based on identification with the in-group, has been found to influence intergroup biases and conflicts (Brewer, 1979). In an attempt to investigate in-group bias in the context of minimal group paradigms, Brewer was led to the conclusion that even the slightest group categorisation can produce biases and conflicts between competing groups, after analysing the findings around intergroup conflict literature that were available at the time. This analysis proceeded into investigating and explaining the dynamic relationship of group categorisation, group identification and the creation of intergroup conflict, and found several useful clues that characterise the relationship between ingroup identification and intergroup conflict. One of the findings was that several of the factors that indirectly influence the importance of the differences that separate the ingroup from the outgroup are similarity, status and competition, while another important conclusion of this analysis was that the enhancement of in-group bias is more closely linked to favouritism towards the in-group, rather than a product of higher hostility towards the outgroup.

The results of these early pioneer theories and studies in social psychology, indicate that the social construct of prejudice is directly influenced from our own social identity that is constructed via our personal beliefs, and that prejudice can arise from social situations of

conflict, where ingroup and outgroup members reside to conflict over scarce resources. Those scarce resources in real life can also be in the sense of fighting over a materialistic necessity (e.g., a team winning another team on a project within a company, selection bias towards people that belong to our ingroup identity etc.).

In social psychological research there have been quite a few applications of the realistic conflict theory in past as well as more recent studies. An example of the application of the theory is a recent study by Goldman et al., (2019), who used the realistic group conflict theory as a base to study whether individuals with history of felony convictions of non-white background in US are discriminated against when it comes to employability. In two experimental studies, they indeed found that minorities with non-white background are more highly discriminated against in job opportunities than individuals with the same felony convictions that come from a white background. The researchers found that in-group favouritism and subconscious or unconscious bias have the power to affect even the most well-intentioned hiring managers. The realistic conflict theory has been quite supported especially in occupational environments from very early on in social and occupational psychology studies (Brown et al., 1986) as a predictor for explaining intergroup differentiation within industrial organisations, alongside other social psychological variables that relate to the realistic conflict theory, such as the contact hypothesis (intergroup contact) and social identity theory (group identification).

Explaining the origins of prejudice and intergroup conflict - Stephan & Stephan (2000)

Integrated threat theory

Prejudice has also been defined as a process that arises from various types of 'threats' that undermine our various social relationships. Stephan and Stephan (2000), in their Integrated Threat Theory, describe their model that has four different types of threats (realistic threats, symbolic threats, intergroup anxiety and negative stereotypes) as the basic

components that cause prejudice. Realistic threats consist of perceived threats from the outgroup that threaten the political and economic power, the physical or material well-being of the ingroup and its members. Symbolic threats are described as intergroup differences in morals, values, beliefs, standards and attitudes. Symbolic threats are activated when the ingroup members feel that they are threatened from the outgroup in terms of their morals and beliefs (e.g., differences in behaviour and attitudes due to culture, religion etc). Intergroup anxiety refers to the type of anxiety that is initiated when members of the ingroup feel anxiety during interactions with the outgroup, as they fear the possibility of negative outcomes (e.g., embarrassment, rejection). Finally, negative stereotypes are the fourth type of threat that Integrated threat theory utilises to describe the initiation of prejudice. They describe that the negative expectations and the fear for negative consequences regarding the behaviour of the outgroup as one other element that predict (prejudiced) attitudes towards an outgroup.

A great example of the relevance and validity of the Integrated Threat Theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2000) is the study by Stephan et al., (2000). Intercultural attitudes between Americans and Mexicans, as well as other similar studies that investigated the subject of prejudice towards immigrants with American participants (Stephan et al., 1999), and prejudice towards immigrants in countries outside America (Spain, Israel) (Stephan et al., 1998). In the first study (Stephan et al., 2000), the four types of threat were assessed via the use of allocated relevant scales, alongside participants' attitudes towards the outgroup. Quantity and quality of contact between ingroup and outgroup were also assessed. The findings indicated that all four threat variables were predictors of attitudes in either of the samples. Americans' attitudes towards Mexicans were mostly related to intergroup anxiety rather than the other types of threats, and their attitudes were directly related to quality of contact with Mexicans. These results provided strong support for the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), since amount and quality of contact were indirectly related to lower feelings

of threat. In the Mexican sample, participants' attitudes towards Americans were also significantly related to anxiety, but also to negative stereotypes, and less related to symbolic threats. Amount of contact was not a significant predictor of Mexicans' attitudes towards Americans, but the quality of contact was shown to provide lowered negative attitudes towards their outgroup. Through these findings, it is demonstrated once again, that the Contact Hypothesis has great power in eliminating prejudice and bringing opposing groups together by helping them further understand one another in multiple ways.

In the second study, (Stephan et al., 1999), very similar findings were produced, with regards to prejudice towards immigrants from Cuba, Mexico and Asia, as the four types of threat were found to be significant, or marginally significant predictors of prejudice, and they all had a common denominator, which was threats to the ingroup or its members. In the third study, (Stephan et al., 1998), although all four threats were found to be significant in predicting prejudice towards immigrant groups in the Spanish and Israeli sample, but intergroup anxiety and negative stereotypes were more powerful, consistent predictors of prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants than realistic threats or symbolic threats. These two studies can be seen as the basis on which Stephan and Stephan (2000) based their integrated threat theory.

As the aforementioned theories demonstrate, the process of prejudice formation is a process that incorporates and integrates many elements that entail many similarities, as well as some differences in terms of the application of these theories. The key point that needs to be derived from studying these theories and studies is that prejudiced perceptions in every domain of life, create negative consequences for the individuals and the groups that are targeted and victimised via prejudice and discriminatory attitudes. It is thus very important in social psychology to maintain as a goal to eliminate prejudice, as prejudiced beliefs and behaviours can have seriously negative effects in today's society. The integrated threat theory

is additionally important for investigating contact between the genders, as later on in this study we will see how contact between the two genders (contact hypothesis, Allport, 1954) in various social settings influences the ways in which each gender perceives the other, and how gender discrimination attitudes are influenced by these interactions.

As we can see from the results of important studies in the field of social psychology, stereotypes and prejudice are elements that cause conflict, and many times, negative consequences for everyone involved. A field that suffers heavily from prejudice, and a field that the current study will be focusing on, is the field of gender. Social psychological theories try to explain the processes behind the social phenomena that surround the concept of gender. One of those theories is the social role theory (Eagly, 1987).

More specifically, Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) is a theory of social psychology that describes how social roles that are assigned to each gender influence the development of gender stereotypes. More specifically, Social Role Theory suggests that widely shared gender stereotypes arise from the division of labour within each society. The theory thus suggests that gender differences and similarities are created because of the social roles that society assigns to men and women via the observation of the social roles that are assigned to each gender, and which work as regulators of the adult life. Expectations then are created for each gender, and men and women are expected to behave in society in the specific stereotypical manner. This theory explains exactly the cycle of maintenance of these stereotypes and representations of gender within the industrialized societies and goes into the depth of describing that the way that each gender is expected to behave, leads to the development of gender typical skills and traits, while also addressing how the human biology is influenced by these assigned social roles and alongside psychology, facilitates role performance of the two genders. The processes that are described by this theory are also found to be described by the creators of the theory, as the 'biosocial construction' of sex differences and similarities in

behaviour (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Diving more deeply into the concept of gender, the following section of this literature review will be focusing on describing gender and the various social processes of gender prejudice and discrimination in further detail.

Gender prejudice

The Role of the Social Gender

The social gender is an important part of our daily life, since our gender influences many of our actions within society. Gender and the facets that describe each gender are mostly socially constructed, and those characteristics are subject to change, based on which society and culture we live in (WHO, 2024). Most often, the male and female genders are characterised socially by various roles, behaviours and norms, that are usually products of stereotypes and representations which lead to the creation of various types of inequalities (e.g., in the workplace, in their friendships and romantic relationships, in schools, in public, in institutions etc.).

Gender prejudice and discrimination can have serious negative consequences on women's and men's mental and physical health, as gender prejudice and discrimination has been found to cause both women and men to view life in a more pessimistic way, and negatively enhance their emotional vulnerability when both genders experience or perceive gender prejudice (Kaiser et al., 2004). Additionally, health issues such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder as well as eating disorders, constitute only some of the physical health issues that predominantly women experience when gender discrimination takes place in everyday life, since gender inequality has been flagged as a risk factor that increases gender-based violence by the World Health Organisation (Villines, 2021).

Other social issues that are triggered by gender prejudice and discrimination are products of socioeconomic inequalities that mostly burden women, as job satisfaction and work engagement are two domains of social life that women feel like are negatively affected

by when experiencing gender discrimination (Kim, 2015). Gender inequality in the workplace has also been characterised by metaphors like the “glass ceiling”, which describe the barrier between marginalised groups (e.g., women, people of colour) and socially dominant groups (e.g., men) in receiving promotions to higher job positions or reaching managerial positions within the workplace (Jackson & O’Callaghan, 2009; Powell & Butterfield, 2015).

Gender Stereotypes & Representations

Stereotypes and social representations within the scope of the social gender have been in the spotlight of social psychological research for the past decades. Gender stereotypes are defined as “a generalized view or preconception about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are or ought to be possessed by, or performed by, women and men” (OHCHR, 2024). According to the United Nation’s Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, gender stereotyping is characterised as wrongful when it leads to violations of human rights (e.g., not criminalising rape within a marriage, victim blaming in sexual violence against women etc.). Thus, wrongful gender stereotyping contributes to the violation of fundamental human rights of individuals within the areas of health, political participation and representation, marriage, and many other aspects of life within society.

The social representations of gender consist of representations that are socially assigned to each gender and inform us about the various characteristics that describe each gender. We are being exposed to social representations of gender from a very young age, since as children, we are being raised in a world that is already structured with social representations (Duveen, 1993). They have been studied by many renowned researchers in the field of social psychology, including Vygotsky, Piaget and others. Duveen, (1993) integrated the theories by mainly Moscovici and Vygotsky (cultural learning and development, scaffolding), and elaborated on the ways in which children develop their

representations of gender. More specifically, he denotes the absence of structures or processes between Vygotsky's interpsychological and intrapsychological functioning, and also the absence of awareness of how important social identities are as mediators of the interpsychological and intrapsychological levels. Duveen also noted that children possess an important active and constructive role in the construction of their own social representations of gender and this demonstrates the importance of their developing psychological capacities.

In Duveen's studies, there is evidence that gender representations in childhood, are not only useful social functions that help situate them within their world, but rather, those representations serve to position them less or more clearly within the world of social representations of gender. Bringing in examples of his own work, Duveen notices how young girls positioned themselves in different ways with regards to their relationship to the boys of the class within a primary school class environment, since some of them chose to exclude them from their feminine identity, whereas others preferred to include them. These different ways in which children situate themselves within their social representations of gender suggest that there are many different ways in which young girls and boys perceive each other's identity, and thus leads them to interact in varying ways with one another.

As the aforementioned theories and studies demonstrate, gender representations are embedded within children from a very young age, since they uptake a huge part of how society views the two genders. A question that is under investigation in the field of gender, is whether there is a difference in the way that men and women communicate and how interaction between men and women influences the two genders.

With regards to communication, research in developmental psychology has indicated that there are apparent differences in the way that males and females communicate, and those differences can be noticed from a very young age (Tenenbaum et al., 2011). More specifically, young girls seem to use more emotion explanations than young boys while

conversing with either girls or boys. Additionally, girls seem to also use a higher proportion of collaborative speech acts when talking with girls, but both genders used the same amount of collaborative speech acts when conversing in mixed-gender dyads. Boys tended to use more informing acts when conversing with boys, whereas girls used more informing acts when conversing with boys. The specific study also mentioned noticeable differences within gender, since not all female or all male children behaved in fully consistent ways. This brings support for Duveen's observation, that young girls positioned themselves in different ways with regards to their relationship to the boys (Duveen, 1993). Studies like these support that there are gender differences in communication, with emotion expression differences between boys and girls being an interesting finding that could be attributed to the gender stereotypical ways in which boys and girls are raised within society.

Gender is thus a very important element that influences the way we perceive each other, and the way we interact with each other and form relationships, since the various social constructs, gender representations and stereotypes that we are exposed to from very early in our lives, influences our interactions and ways of communication.

Although at first glance it might seem that those distinct differences that exist in the way that men and women are raised within society are harmless, however, it has been found that gender stereotypes and social representations of gender, topics that have been extensively researched within the field of social psychology, not only directly and indirectly influence our interactions, but they consist of an important barrier for building and maintaining gender equality.

Some of the most prominent negative consequences that gender stereotypes produce, have been documented by social psychological research. Women, more specifically belong to the gender that mostly suffers from the gender stereotypical handling in today's society.

Women are persistently underrepresented in the STEM fields, and this has led to substantial

gender equity gaps within those fields, and this has led to researchers believing that sparse representation of women has adverse effects on the academic achievement, persistence and graduation of women who take STEM courses (Bowman et al., 2022). This is something that could also be captured and quantified via the process of analysing the academic publications within those fields, since research has pointed out a gender gap in academic research publications (Holman et al., 2018), and that women authors are being persistently underrepresented in high-profile journals (Shen et al., 2018). There were also studies that could not identify a clear gender bias in research publications in some cases (Marescotti et al., 2022), there was evidence of some bias in specific times like the decrease of representation of female authors and reviewers in the months following the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, women have also been found to experience a higher amount of unpaid work when compared to men, and can also be restrained by their families, as they are called to juggle their private and professional lives all at once. Women are generally viewed as more dominant within the household, and men are generally viewed as more suitable for managerial positions (Mihalcova et al., 2015). These perceptions of men and women by society generally lead to the unfair allocation of job positions and can definitely deprive women from the chance to elevate their careers and their personal lives at once.

In even more important areas of life, gender stereotypical characterisation of women have been found to hold the power to deprive them of their fundamental human, and social rights. Media representations of gender have been found to lead to the strengthening of gender stereotypical beliefs, of the gender role norms, as well as enhancing the endorsement of sexist beliefs, harassment, and violence in men, and even eliminate career-related ambitions in women (Santoniccolo et al., 2023), which is directly related to the findings of the aforementioned studies about women's underrepresentation in STEM careers.

Furthermore, Santoniccolo and colleagues emphasise that exposure to objectifying and

sexualizing representations of women, seems to be inked to the internalization of cultural ideals of appearance, endorsement of sexist attitudes and tolerance of abuse and body shame. These then lead to the harm of the physical and psychological wellbeing of women, as their body image is directly affected by these negative attitudes, they are led to constant monitoring of their body and appearance, and they then become more prone to developing disordered eating behaviours. Gender discrimination has also been documented to indirectly affect the mental and physical well-being of individuals that are being discriminated against (in most cases women), alongside other factors that mitigate the negative effects of discrimination on mental and physical health (e.g., lack of social support) (Hennein et al., 2021).

More research has dived even deeper into the impact and influence of gender stereotypes on the role of women in the workplace. Heilman, (2012) in their chapter titled gender stereotypes and workplace bias, defined gender stereotypes in two distinct ways. They referred to descriptive gender stereotypes (how men and women are like) and prescriptive gender stereotypes (what men and women should be like) with regards to their implications for women's career progress. They discuss the fact that both descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes promote gender bias in their own ways. Descriptive gender stereotypes create negative performance expectations regarding women, as there is an uphold of the perception that there is a poor fit between what women are like and the characteristics and attributes that are necessary for successful performance and fulfilment of the roles that are described as male positions. In addition, prescriptive gender stereotypes create normative behavioural standards that induce disapproval and social penalties when they are violated or when violation is inferred due to the fact that a woman is successful.

As we can infer from these findings, gender stereotypes dictate the ways in which men and women should appear and behave like, and this brings negative consequences for

the social and professional lives especially of women, since they are simply not viewed by society as having the innate characteristics to cope in managerial positions and in workplaces that are heavily considered as positions that require male characteristics, thus depriving women of career opportunities and professional elevation.

Although the findings point towards the fact that women are negatively impacted by gender stereotypes, however, more recent evidence suggests that men can also be affected by gender stereotypical characterisations. Objectification and toxic masculinity are some of the concepts that have concerned research around the topic of gender stereotypes of men thus far. Men's higher scores in psychometrical scales that measure harmful masculinities, indicate a higher chance of expression of violence and poor mental health, with the effects being replicable across three different countries (Hill et al., 2020), and these behaviours do not only harm men themselves, but they also harm people in their relationships, as socially prescribed gender roles and toxic masculinity ideals lead to behaviours that are destructive and lean to toxicity and unhappiness in heterosexual romantic relationships (Gray, 2021).

The findings about the negative ways in which both men and women are being impacted by gender stereotypes and representations lead us to the further analysis of the next element that will also be investigated within the scope of the current study, which is the concept of sexism.

Sexism

The concept of sexism within the scope of social psychology is often described as comprising of two main practices of sexism. Those are hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. The terms are mentioned under the more generic label of Ambivalent Sexism, which were all coined by Glick and Fiske (1996). Ambivalent Sexism: Ambivalent sexism includes two sides of the harmful elements of sexism: Benevolent sexism (e.g., chivalrous ideology) and Hostile sexism (hostility against women and their rights). These attitudes have been

supported to be very harmful with regards to society, since they negatively influence women's rights and the goal for gender equality. Sexism is an important element that needs to be investigated within the scope of contact between the genders, because attitudes that relate to sexism have been found to affect at least some of the interactions between men and women. Glick & Fiske, (2001), the researchers that proposed the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory which has been successfully administered to 19 nations and well over 15,000 male and female participants all over the world, support that both hostile and benevolent sexism are prevalent in many cultures and are able to predict gender inequality. The rejection of hostile sexism due to its more violent nature is more prevalently rejected by women rather than men, but due to the more subtle nature of benevolent sexism, both genders are more prone to endorsing it, with the most negative aspect being that it seriously inhibits the efforts of society for gender equality.

From the early studies that investigated alongside other variables the effect of ambivalent sexism on tolerance of sexual harassment, has found that ambivalent sexism and more specifically hostility against women, are some of the greatest predictors of tolerance of sexual harassment, demonstrating that individuals of both genders that tolerate sexual harassment share ambivalence and hostility against women (Russell & Trigg, 2004). Although benevolent sexism might seem harmless at first glance, results from studies that investigated the dangers of benevolent sexism for women have found that benevolent sexism is worse than hostile sexism for women's cognitive performance, and researchers noted that identification with one's gender did not seem to protect against benevolent sexism (Dardenne et al., 2007). The researchers attribute these findings and insidious dangers of benevolent sexism, to its positive and seemingly inoffensive tone. Further research has also identified the contribution of benevolent sexism to the conservation of gender inequalities, since research in this sector shows that men and women who endorse benevolent sexism are much less likely

to be viewed as sexists, when compared to men or women that endorse hostile sexism against women (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005). This data adds to the argument that indeed, the endorsement of benevolent sexism cannot be as easily identified as hostile sexism, and this allows for its negative effects to continue to be a burden to gender inequalities and gender discrimination.

The impact of ambivalent sexism was also investigated in the scope of the social and sexual double standards that undermine the social equality between the genders. Zaikman and Marks, (2014) found that individuals' sexist beliefs and attitudes towards both men and women were related to negative evaluations of highly sexually active individuals of the same gender, and that benevolent attitudes towards the opposite gender were linked to positive evaluation of highly sexually active targets of the opposite gender. This relationship between sexism and sexual double standards shows how perceptions towards the genders influences the way people judge other people's actions merely based on the variable of gender.

Ambivalent sexism has been studied within the scope of close relationships, a theme that is directly related to the current study. Findings support that hostile and benevolent sexism have the power to shape relationship ideals, and more specifically, the aspect of benevolent sexism has been found to predict partner ideals, in both China and the US, besides the cultural differences that exist between these two countries. Hostile attitudes were found to predict men's ideals, again, in both countries and cultures (Lee et al., 2010). The findings demonstrate the effect of ambivalent sexism on different types of cultures, suggesting that it is inevitably an intercultural phenomenon.

The negative consequences of sexist attitudes make their appearance pretty frequently within the scope of employment equity, as mentioned earlier. Hideg and Ferris, (2016) enhanced the literature around the effects of ambivalent sexism with regards to employment equity with four studies, by investigating more specifically the positive and negative effects

of benevolent sexism on the policies that had been employed for the support of gender-based employment equity. They found that endorsement of benevolent sexism, as well as priming individuals towards endorsing benevolently sexist attitudes, increases the chances of support of the potential employment equity policies, and this effect was mediated by feelings of compassion. However, they discovered that these intentions applied only to policies of employment equity that had to do with hiring women in stereotypically feminine positions, and not positions that are stereotypically masculine. These results at first glance show that benevolent sexism may bring positive outcomes when it comes to policy making, but it does not take long for the negative outcomes of the subtle undermining nature of benevolent sexism's nature to make its appearance in the real-life settings, as it turns out it contributes to occupational gender segregation, and eliminating actions towards promoting women in job positions that they are underrepresented in.

Yet another study that demonstrated the undermining and dangerous nature of benevolent sexism was the one by Becker and Wright, (2011). Investigating the effects of both hostile and benevolent sexism on motivation for collective action towards contributing for social change, this research has showed that exposure of women to benevolent sexism eliminates their motivation in engagement in collective action, whereas exposure of women to hostile sexism increases their willingness to take part in collective action towards social change. Variables that mediated these relationships were the variables of gender-specific system justification and perceived advantages of being a woman, as well as positive and negative affect. The mediating power of these variables was validated via manipulations of these variables within the researchers' studies, since increasing gender-specific system justification and perceived advantages of being a woman, indeed reduced intentions to participate in collective action. Additionally, the activation of gender stereotypes in experimental studies has been supported to increase system justification (Jost & Kay, 2005),

since activation of variables such as communal and agentic gender stereotypes, as well as benevolent and hostile sexism items, increase support for the status quo among women, whereas activating stereotypes of men as agentic also had a similar effect on status quo for both genders, but only when women's characteristics were associated with higher status.

Justification of the traditional system and conventional gender roles have also been studied in younger ages, more specifically in young school students, and European contexts and countries like Spain (Ferrero & Lopez, 2007). Findings suggest that indeed, benevolent sexism towards both men and women contribute to the maintenance of established conventional gender roles and expectations from both genders. The findings in such young samples suggest that as mentioned before in this introduction, gender stereotypes and expectations are deeply embedded in today's society, so much so that they make their appearance even in young children's behaviour from a very young age.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of ambivalent sexism has also been investigated across ages, and across time in large samples (more than 10,000 adult participants), with the aim to study the development of the phenomenon across time and across different ages, as well as its trajectory for both men and women (Hammond et al., 2018). The findings suggest that benevolent sexism, had a positive linear trajectory for male participants and tended to remain the same across time. Across the lifespan, the trajectory for endorsement of hostile sexism from both males and females presented a U-shape, and this was also true for the endorsement of benevolent sexism from women. However, the positive side of the findings was that, overall, the endorsement of the two types of sexism presented a decreasing tendency for most ages.

Thus, it is essential for social psychological researchers to investigate the development of phenomena such as the one of ambivalent sexism, since the endorsement of those beliefs presents interesting changes over time, and across ages and genders. The

findings derived from these studies provide social psychological research with important information that will further help with the development of strategies for the effective elimination of the negative consequences of such phenomena. The results and conclusions of these studies demonstrate the important role of sexism in communication between genders, gender stereotypes and gender equality.

Feminism

The ideology of feminism has additional importance within the frame of studying gender and gender prejudice formation. In this study we considered it important to also investigate the role that feminism plays with regards to contact between genders and gender stereotypes and discrimination. The initial study by Endendijk, (2023), assessed sexism levels of participants that had various levels of contact with same-gender and other-gender friends, acquaintances and contact with other-gender romantic partners, in order to assess how the participants' contact influenced, if at all, their gender-inequality/ gender prejudiced beliefs. The addition of the variable of feminist beliefs is something we thought important enough to add into this study, because, assessing whether and how contact affects feminist beliefs, we could also explore how those with high levels in sexism would perform in a feminist beliefs assessment scale.

Individuals that support feminism vs individuals who disagree with feministic values and who do not identify with the feminist identity may react/ behave differently when interacting with others, especially when interacting with women that belong in an outgroup. Studies demonstrate the various characteristics of the feminist identity (e.g., feminist men vs feminist women), the various ways someone identifies with the different approaches to feminism (feminists vs non-labelers), as well as how identifying with feministic values leads to differences in the perception of many social circumstances. Feminist attitudes and values

can also influence personal attitudes (e.g., relationship between feminism and body image/disordered eating).

In an attempt to identify the various possible ways in which willingness to label oneself as a feminist is associated with gender role identity, support for feminism and non-traditional gender roles, Toller et al., (2004), conducted a study investigating the relationships between these variables. The findings suggest that men who score higher in masculine characteristics of personality, are less likely to be willing to label themselves as feminists, whereas men who score higher in more feminine characteristics, are more likely to be willing to self-identify as feminists. Similarly for the women, it was found that identification with the label 'feminist' was more favourable for the women who scored higher in more masculine traits and characteristics, as more feminine women, viewed feminism and non-traditional gender roles to be more masculine, and tend more to steer clear of this identification, so as to not appear more masculine than feminine. The researchers suggest that this may also be the case because the term 'feminist' is more associated with 'dominating' and 'aggressive' connotations, as demonstrated by other studies as well. A similar example is the study by Madison et al., (2014), who investigated the feminist paradox – the fact that although the ultimate goal of the feminist movement is to improve the social conditions for women, only a minority of women in modern societies self-identify as feminists. The perception that women who identify as feminists project more masculine physiological and psychological characteristics, discourages women from willing to identify as feminists in fear of being perceived as less feminine. The researchers indicate that they also found evidence for biological differences (measures of dominance personality trait and measures of digit ratios from both hands) between women who identify and those who chose not to identify as feminists, which is proposed as another variable that may explain the feminist paradox.

Additionally, Zucker & Bay-Cheng, (2010), identify the ideological and behavioural divide between feminists and non-labelers, by indicating that although the ideology of feminism is beneficial against the negative effects of sexism, there are ideological differences between individuals who identify as feminists, and those who although they hold feminist beliefs, do not label themselves as feminists. Indeed, they found that non-labelers engaged in less collective action for the benefits of women's rights. They also note how important it is to detach attitudes from identity for research to be able to predict feminism and its relation to psychological and behavioural variables, and for the engagement in further social change. An interesting suggestion that the researchers made was that non-labelers may steer clear from the feminist label, due to fear of stigma, or other characterisations. Indeed, the stigma of the feminist label was later identified by further research that indicated that the label of the feminist and behaviours linked to feminism within the workplace and other social settings made the individual less favourable for recruitment, and less likely for coworkers to befriend the individual that identified as a feminist (Anastasopoulos & Desmarais, 2014). Moreover, the stigma around the 'feminist' label, was found to be perpetuated by the "man-hating" stereotype, while a feminist with a less-stereotypical physical appearance was more likely to change people's attitudes towards the feminist label. Additionally, vicarious interaction between a more stereotypically appearing feminist and a non-feminist significantly increased identification with the feminist label, while vicarious contact between a less-stereotypically appearing feminist and a non-feminist did not change attitudes towards the feminist label (Arcieri, 2017).

The feminist identity has also been explored within the field of personality and personality traits and characteristics. The dark triad traits are more prominently present in men, and a higher score in the dark triad is linked with negative attitudes towards feminism

and feministic attitudes, even in samples where men and women present the same levels of feminist attitudes (Douglass et al., 2023).

A rich selection of studies by Van Breen et al., (2017), has investigated gender identities and group membership via the scope of identification with women, with feminists, as well as the interaction between those. The findings of their first study, illustrated that identification with women reflects group attitudes such as femininity and self-stereotyping, and identification with feminists reflects attitudes towards the group's social position (e.g., perceived sexism). Their second, third and fourth studies demonstrate that higher identification with feminists led to endorsement of radical collective action, as well as critical attitudes toward gender stereotypes, especially at lower levels of identification with women. The unique element in this series of studies was the fact that researchers viewed identification with women and identification with feminists in the sense of separate, distinct identities, and this multiple identity approach has made room for the exploration of gender identities and gender issues via different perspectives.

Moreover, the literature around the effects of the gender stereotypes about feminists on feminist self-identification has provided further information on how individuals exposed to positive, negative, or no stereotypes about feminism influences whether they decide to self-identify as feminists or not. Women that were exposed to positive stereotypes about feminism were twice as likely to want to self-identify as feminists, in comparison to those who were exposed to either negative or no stereotypes at all, and also demonstrated higher non-traditional gender-role attitudes and higher performance self-esteem compared to those who were not exposed to neither positive nor negative feminism stereotypes Roy et al., (2007), These findings demonstrate once again how powerful stereotypes are in influencing the attitudes of individuals that are exposed to them.

Similar variables that were also linked with higher feminist identification were women's social gender identity, exposure to feminism and gender-egalitarian attitudes Leaper & Arias (2011). In more detail, components of the feminist identity had a great influence on women's cognitive appraisals of coping responses to sexual harassment, so for example, self-identification as a feminist predicted seeking social support when faced with sexual harassment situations. The independent variables of social gender identity, non-stereotyping of feminists and public identification as a feminist, predicted higher chances of confrontation in such situations. The results of these studies led to the conclusion that there are certain aspects of women's feminist gender identity that have a significant impact, especially when it comes to coping responses in situations of sexual harassment.

The impact of the feminist ideology reaches an even deeper levels of the psychological and physiological wellbeing of women, since there are findings regarding the feminist ideology's impact on general psychological wellbeing, as well as physical wellbeing (e.g., body image, disordered eating), and the feminist ideology's impact on women's career aspirations. The development of the feminist identity and gender-role orientation contributed independently to the explanation of variance in psychological well-being Saunders & West, (2006). Specific characteristics that individually related positively to psychological wellbeing were the variables of instrumentality, expressiveness, and a more well-developed feminist identity. Additionally, the link between body image, disordered eating behaviours and the development of a feminist identity has been explored in the context of community-based programs and samples. Borowsky et al., (2016), found that women who identified as feminists, reported significantly higher body satisfaction, while those who identified as non-feminists or those who held feminist beliefs but nonetheless did not adopt the label of the feminist, reported a much lower satisfaction with their own body. Although there was this significant difference in body image of young adult women who identified or did not identify

as feminists, the mere identification as a feminist did not improve disordered eating in women who had already developed disordered eating behaviours. Although there was no evidence that adopting this label can actually improve one's disordered eating behaviours, the self-identification of being a feminist and adopting more feminist beliefs can improve young women's body image. These findings may work as a basis of developing more efficient interventions in order to enhance women's positive body image, and prevent the development of eating disorders early on, before their onset.

Regarding the more social consequences of the feminist identity and the positive outcomes it can have in women's career aspirations, Lee & Wessel, (2022) provide valuable findings regarding the relationship between the feminist ideology and women's perceptions of their careers and professional potential. Within this study there was assessment of participants' perceptions around variables such as women's career aspirations, anticipated family-interference-with-work, and willingness to compromise career for family. They found that among 700 participants, stronger feminist self-identification was more positively related to women's career related cognitions. This was also true with stronger participation in feminist activism. These findings suggest that the feminist identity holds a great impact on women's professional and social lives and demonstrates also the importance of being active within the feminist identity, as being active has shown to also have a beneficial effect on women's career taking paths.

The need to tackle gender prejudice

As the aforementioned literature has demonstrated, gender prejudice can lead to gender inequalities within various aspects of society, and negative consequences in women's lives. These data demonstrate that there is a need for gender prejudice to be eliminated, in order to achieve a fairer society for all genders. The further exploration of research studies in social psychology, that have explored the essence of the genders can help inform us about

whether there are any essential differences between the genders and whether we can accept or reject the current stereotypes and representations that lead to gender prejudice.

A study that analysed multiple meta-analyses of studies that investigated the 'gender similarities hypothesis', by Hyde, (2005), was led to the conclusion that there are in fact, little to no essential differences between males and females in the cognitive level, the social level, the personality level, as well as the well-being level. The only moderate-to-large differences between the two genders was found in motor performance (velocity domain and throwing distance).

More recent studies also provide support for the fact that there are very few essential differences between men and women, since the large meta-analytic study by Zell et al., (2015), found very similar results with the aforementioned meta-analysis of 2005, after analysing 106 meta-analytic studies of this subject. They found that only a small percentage of differences between men and women were described as medium or large. Furthermore, factors like age, culture and domain (well-being) did not impact the findings.

These results suggest that in essence, men and women are very similar with regards to abilities in all domains of life, with the differences between them due to the sole factor of gender being very small. These findings thus lead us to the conclusion that many of the boundaries and differences we assign to reasons surrounding the gender factor, are purely created by societal stereotypes and expectations.

Allport's Intergroup Contact Hypothesis: In the context of gender

Intergroup Contact and its effects

Gordon Allport's Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1954) suggests that contact between competing groups has the power to eliminate prejudices perceptions and ultimately leads to the realisation and acceptance of the essence of each group. Contact hypothesis by Allport originally suggested that in order to achieve the elimination of prejudice between two groups,

there should be four specific conditions under which the groups should come in contact. The four conditions were for the two groups to be of equal status, to have common goals in order for the groups to cooperate to achieve those, to be willing to cooperate with one another, and for institutional support to be present along the lines of this period of contact between the groups.

Allport's contact hypothesis has been extensively studied by many researchers in the field of social psychology and has been provided with extensive support by the results of important meta-analyses (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Researchers in the aforementioned meta-analysis, analysed 515 studies and found that indeed intergroup contact leads to lowered levels of intergroup prejudice, thus suggesting that bringing ingroup and outgroup into contact has the power to eliminate prejudice between the groups. They state that these effects are strong enough to generalise to the whole outgroup, and that these effects are prominent in various types of contact settings, as well as different types of outgroups (e.g., racial, ethnic prejudice, disability prejudice etc.). Pettigrew and Tropp also suggested that Allport's conditions under which contact was suggested to be effective, were not found to be completely necessary for prejudice elimination to occur, but they did act as good complementary factors that enhanced the positive effects of intergroup contact. The researchers also characterised Allport's four conditions as an "interrelated bundle" rather than independent factors, as elements of those were found to be very similar, and sometimes had no clear characteristics or boundaries. Research thus suggests that bringing individuals that belong to different groups with different identities in contact, can help with the reduction of prejudiced beliefs that each individual or group has for the competing party.

Although the contact hypothesis was created on a basis to eliminate racial prejudice specifically, it was later supported by many other studies, that the contact hypothesis can also be an efficient way of eliminating prejudice in other contexts of social discrimination, and

that as a theory, it was so powerful, that it could generalise to reduce prejudice against members of a variety of marginalized groups.

As the current study is very much focused on investigating how intergroup contact between the genders influences gender inequality beliefs, it has been deemed necessary to review the most important parts of the literature around how intergroup contact in the contexts of friendship and heterosexual romantic relationships influences, if at all, prejudiced beliefs about the outgroup.

Contact in the context of friendship.

The effectiveness of intergroup contact on the elimination of prejudice has also been studied in the context of friendship. Davies et al., (2011) initiated a metaanalysis regarding cross-group friendships and intergroup attitudes, which led to the conclusion that time spent with outgroup friends, as well as self-disclosure, led to much greater and improved attitudes towards the outgroup in comparison to other measures. They thus suggest that cross-group friendships promote positive intergroup attitudes, but the definition of the term “friendship” may influence the effectiveness of intergroup contact. They emphasise, that active, transactional engagement between friends is the most effective way for challenging negative attitudes between ingroup and outgroup.

Moreover, it has also been supported that having indirect contact with the outgroup can also be as effective as direct contact with the outgroup in reducing prejudiced beliefs. This means that having a friend that has a friend that belongs to an outgroup, can influence the reduction of prejudice with regards to the outgroup that the person belongs to (Pettigrew et al., 2007). The presence of opportunity for contact between the groups is also emphasised in these findings, as are some other characteristics that may limit the chances of coming in contact (e.g., having an authoritarian personality). Individual and collective sense of threat are some mediators in the relationship between friendship and prejudice reduction. Within

more recent evidence, it is shown that because the development of prejudice and negative stereotypes begins from a young age, it is suggested that cross-group friendships formed and encouraged early in life, can eliminate the chances of children becoming prejudiced against the outgroup, and can thus help address the negative long-term consequences of many types of prejudice (racism, discrimination), that have their roots in childhood (Killen et al., 2022)

The way that friendships may or may not influence specifically gender prejudice has recently started being investigated, with recent findings indicating that for emerging adult men, hostile sexism was more negatively associated with having female friends, while hostile sexism was found to be positively associated with having male friends. Additionally, benevolent sexism appeared not to be influenced by any type of friendship. For emerging adult women, there were no significant relations between friends and gender prejudiced attitudes. The authors suggested that this may be the case because ambivalent sexism was assessed, which is a type of sexism directly related to the female gender (Jenkins, 2023).

The literature on gender prejudice and the influence of same-gender and other – gender friendships on the elimination of gender prejudice still remains understudied, especially with regards to any mediating or moderating variables, such as contentedness with one's own gender. This is why the current study has deemed necessary to further investigate this relationship. Additionally studying other variables within this relationship between friendship and gender prejudice, like the feminist attitudes, will provide the literature with valuable information about the ways in which attitudes other than sexism are affected by social relationships, such as friendships.

Very early findings around the impact of feminism on same-gender friendships between women had been found by researchers Rose and Roades (1987). They hypothesized that the specific ideology of “sisterhood” within the feminist movement, would mean that feminists’ and non-feminists’ same-gender friendships would have many differences. Their

sample consisted of heterosexual feminists and non-feminists, as well as lesbian feminists. This study also included the variable of sexuality, which provided interesting findings. They found that lesbian feminists preferred more privacy with their friends than those who did not identify as feminists but, they rated their friends as lower on relationship quality and degree of equality than heterosexual feminists and non-feminists. The variables of affective content of friendship (e.g., liking, loving, satisfaction and commitment) did not present any differences between the three groups of participants. Finally, feminists were the only group within the study to subjectively perceive their feminism as having contributed to both structural and affective changes in their friendships. These findings suggest that the feminist ideology, holds the power to create different dynamics between same-gender relationships, especially among women, and this suggests that further research is indeed necessary for the literature to draw more consistent conclusions and explore the dynamics of these relationships even further.

Contact in the context of heterosexual romantic relationships

The current study aims to further explore how contact within other-gender romantic relationships influences sexist and feminist beliefs, and the ways in which gender and gender contentedness moderate this relationship. The investigation of this relationship is another essential element that needed to be studied within the scope of intergroup contact and gender prejudice elimination.

More specifically, heterosexual intimacy may very well affect the way men and women view gender inequality and similar beliefs, since communication with an individual of the opposite gender while in a romantic relationship may be characterised by a different relationship dynamic than friendships. It is documented in research that men and women in heterosexual relationships experience romantic relationships in different ways and maintain both their similarities and differences in various levels within their relationships (Karantzas et

al., 2011). Although the study by Endendijk, (2023) did not find any effect of other gender contact in romantic relationships on gender-inequality beliefs, other-gender contact with romantic partners within the context of gender prejudice beliefs remains understudied, thus there is a need for further exploration of this concept.

Additionally, the relationship between variables such as romance, beauty and feminism, were extensively investigated by Rudman & Fairchild, (2007). In their initial study about whether feminism is incompatible with beauty and romance, the researchers found that both men and women perceived beauty as being in disagreement with feminism, that the stereotype that feminists were unattractive was robust. They also found that more attractive female participants had lower feminist orientations than their less attractive counterparts, and that romantic conflict was a negative predictor of support for feminism and women's civil rights. One of the most important findings was that participants demonstrated that beliefs that feminism and sexual harmony are incompatible, negatively predicted support for feminism and women's civil rights. The findings of this study were further investigated into a next study by Rudman & Phelan, (2007). In that study, the researchers explored the accuracy of the aforementioned findings. Surprisingly, they found that having a feminist partner, led to a healthier romantic relationship for women. Men who reported having a feminist partner, also reported greater relationship stability, as well as sexual satisfaction. The negative stereotypes about feminists being single, unattractive, or lesbian, were not provided with any support within these findings, suggesting that the once perceived negative association between feminism and romance was in fact, inaccurate. These findings suggest the importance of concepts like feminism and highlight their importance role within romantic relationships.

The fact that the results of these studies presented such differences between each other, besides the fact that they took place within the same year, and that had similar samples, demonstrates how stereotypes and association between concepts can be supported or not at all

supported from one study to the other. Many other extraneous variables take place within social psychological experimental studies, and this is the reason why interpretation of findings around social psychological concepts like stereotypes and prejudice should be done with caution and with the thought in mind that social situations and samples may very well differ from one another.

Aims and objectives of the current study – the need for replication in Cyprus

A replication of the design of the existing study by Endendijk (2023) will be beneficial for the academic community of psychology in Cyprus, since its findings will help us shed light on the different ways in which contact with same-gender friends and acquaintances, as well as contact with romantic partners influence gender prejudiced beliefs, as well as feminist beliefs, and it will also help us investigate whether gender and gender contentedness moderate the relationship between contact and gender prejudiced beliefs.

The inclusion of the feminist attitudes measure is one that has not been investigated before alongside the investigation of ambivalent sexism. The investigation of feminist attitudes alongside the investigation of ambivalent sexism, will demonstrate how same-gender and other-gender contact influences the positive gender beliefs of feminism, and whether those who demonstrate high sexism levels, demonstrate any differences in their feminist attitudes.

The additional advantage of this study will be the fact that the gender prejudice beliefs are mostly investigated with university students and younger samples, but this study aimed to recruit participants from various age groups, so that we can infer whether age plays an important role when it comes to the influence of contact on gender prejudiced beliefs. Having a more inclusive age range will hopefully provide us with valuable information regarding a higher and more inclusive number of individuals and will be more representative of the Cypriot and Mediterranean community.

Research Question and Hypotheses of the current study

The research question of the current study is the following: *“Does contact with same-gender and other-gender friends, acquaintances and other-gender romantic partners influence individual levels of sexism and feminism, and is this relationship moderated by gender and gender contentedness?”*

Hypotheses

For the purposes of this study, we will test again the hypotheses of the original study by Endendijk, (2023), while slightly alternating them to include the new elements that were added in the current study (e.g., feminist beliefs – the LFAIS scale). The first hypothesis is a) more contact with other-gender friends will be associated with less gender prejudice. The second hypothesis that we will be testing is b) less contact with same-gender friends will be associated with less gender prejudice. Additionally, the third hypothesis of the current study is, c) contact with the other gender in a romantic relationship will be associated with more gender prejudice, and finally, the fourth hypothesis of this study is that d) the association between more other-gender contact (or less same-gender contact) with friends and lower gender prejudice will be stronger for people high on gender contentedness, as well as for men.

Method

Participants

The current study aimed to investigate the ways in which gender and prejudice beliefs are influenced by the various types of contact of the individuals of Cyprus and the Mediterranean area. Being over the age of 18 and being able to understand the Greek language were the only requirements to participate in the study. The study recruited 151 participants in total, of which 133 participants completed the study until the end. Ninety-six (96) of which were women (72.2%), and thirty-seven (37) of which were men (27.8%). The

age of our sample ranged between 18 and 80 years old, with a large percentage of our participants being between 18 and 23 years old (65.5%). The majority of the participants were of Greek-Cypriot ethnicity (90%), while the rest were of Greek ethnic background and one participant of Ukrainian ethnic background.

The participants for this study were recruited via snowball methods and via advertisement of the study on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) and at the University of Cyprus via the help of the university's lecturers.

Materials

The materials for the current study consisted of the materials used by Endendijk (2023), as well as some additional scales that were implemented to assess other important concepts and beliefs (e.g., LFAIS – feminism scale, 'inclusion of other in the self' scale (Aron et al., 1992)). This section extensively discusses and describes all materials and scales that were used to conduct the study.

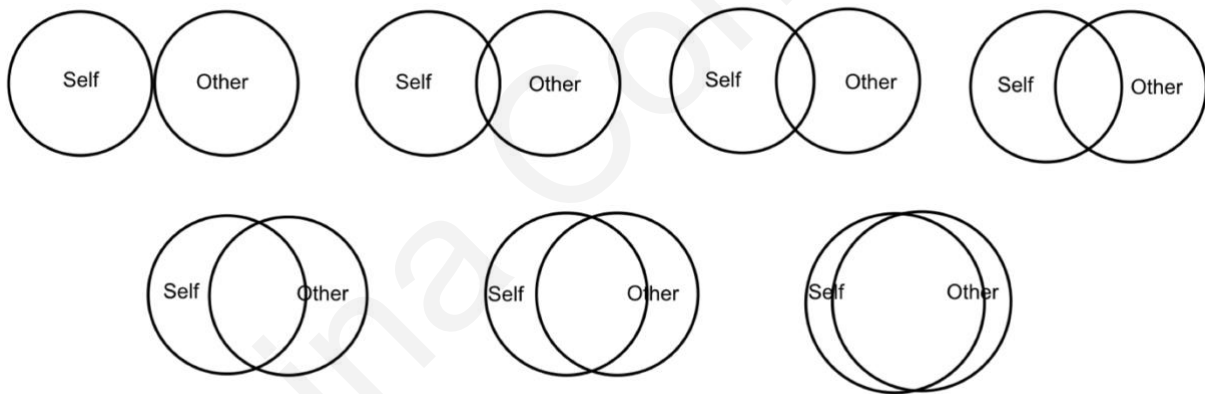
Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

Using the ambivalent sexism inventory by Glick and Fiske, (1996), we wanted to capture the participants' levels of identification with the various sexist beliefs. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the 22 items of the specific scale. The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory is a scale that consists of the Hostile Sexism subscale and the Benevolent Sexism subscale. The first measures hostility against women while the latter includes items that measure attitudes of protective paternalism, complementary gender differentiation, and heterosexual intimacy. An example of the items in the hostile sexism subscale is "Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.", while an example of the items in the benevolent sexism subscale is "Women should be cherished and protected by men." Participants had to reply to each of the statements in this scale by choosing one of the

options ranging from '0' - Disagree strongly, to '5' - Agree strongly. Cronbach's alpha for the hostile sexism scale was $\alpha = .71$, while for the benevolent sexism scale it was $\alpha = .38$.

Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) scale - (Aron et al., 1992).

The IOS scale measures how close one feels with individuals that belong to different groups than themselves. In the case of the current study, this item measured how close one feels with individuals of the opposite gender. The participants were shown the graphic below and were asked to indicate on a scale of 1 = no overlap at all, to 7 = most overlap, the degree to which they felt close to the other gender. The number chosen was the respondent's score. We chose to incorporate the IOS scale instead of the scale by Martin et al., that was used in the original study, since the IOS is a scale that was more well-defined and was closer to the Contact Hypothesis which is a theory that our study is testing.



LFAIS (Liberal Feminism Attitude and Ideology Scale) (Morgan, 1996).

The LFAIS measures the extent to which individuals embrace or not, the feminist ideology and attitudes. It is a 60-item scale which incorporates various subscales such as: the gender role sub-scale (10 items), the discrimination and subordination sub-scale (10 items), the general feminism sub-scale (6 items), the global goals sub-scale (4 items), the specific political agendas subscale (20 items), and the Collective Action (Strategies for Change) subscale (10 items). Examples of the items of the LFAIS scale are some of the following: "It is insulting to the husband if his wife does not take his last name", "A woman should have the

same job opportunities as a man”, “Men should respect women more than they currently do”, “A "women's movement" is basically irrelevant to the most vital concerns of our society.”

The participants had to answer on the 60 items of this scale, by picking an answer ranging from Strongly disagree- ‘1’, to Strongly agree- ‘6’. Cronbach’s alpha could not be obtained for the specific scale.

Quality and Quantity of same-gender and other-gender contact with friends and acquaintances.

This measure aimed to assess (1) how many of the participants’ closest friends and acquaintances were women and men, and (2) the amount of contact with same-gender and other-gender friends and acquaintances in school or at work, individually or in groups that participants have. The first scale was used to measure quantity of male/female friends and acquaintances, and included 4 questions, while quality of contact with male/female friends and acquaintances was assessed via a scale consisting of 8 items. Response options for the scale measuring quality will range from 1 = not at all, to 5 = a lot.

Other-gender contact with a romantic partner

Other gender contact with a romantic partner was assessed via the simple question: ‘Have you been in a heterosexual romantic relationship in the past 12 months?’. Response options were “yes” or “no”.

Gender contentedness

An adapted version of the gender contentedness subscale of Egan and Perry's (2001) multidimensional gender identity assessment was used to measure participants' satisfaction with, and pride of, their own gender (Kornienko et al., 2016), exactly like the original study by Endendijk, (2023) did. This subscale consisted of 6 items (e.g., ‘I am proud to be a [woman/man]’) and the response options ranged from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Gender contentedness is a concept that can be related to Social Identity Theory and the

way in which it is measured. The way one identifies with their own gender can indicate the extent to which they feel content with being that specific gender. Cronbach's alpha for the gender contentedness scale was $\alpha = .49$.

Procedure

The study took place online, via the use of a Qualtrics generated link that led directly to the questionnaire. The questionnaire commenced with the consent form, which informed participants about the aims of the study and provided them with all the details that they needed to complete the questionnaire. At the end of the consent form, the consent question that was used, asked participants to indicate if they agreed to take part in the study. If a participant chose to disagree and not take part after reading the information about the study, they were led to the end of the questionnaire and were thanked for their time. All the participants that chose to agree to take part, were then presented with the first set of demographic questions to answer, which included age (requirement to be 18+), ethnicity, gender, and education level. The current study was a replication of the design of an existing study published by Endendijk (2023), thus most of the items that were used in this study were very similar to those used in the aforementioned study, although we made some alterations to accommodate for the different elements that we wanted to capture, like the addition of the LFAIS scale and the use of the IOS scale. The questionnaire was translated to a Greek version, since we aimed to recruit Greek-speaking participants and investigate the various forms of contact within the scope of gender and prejudice reduction of individuals living in the Mediterranean area, and more specifically in Cyprus.

The first set of items that participants were assessed at was the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Then, participants were asked to report how close they felt with individuals of the other gender, using the IOS measure by Aron et al., (1992). This measure included the use of a graphical representation image. Next on, the participants were

asked to complete the LFAIS (Liberal Feminism Attitude and Ideology Scale) (Morgan, 1996), which measured the extent to which individuals embraced the feminist ideology and attitudes related to the feminist movement. Moreover, the quality and quantity of same-gender and other-gender contact with friends and acquaintances was assessed via the use of two scales that aimed to measure attitudes and practices around interpersonal relationships, such as number of same-gender or other-gender friends and acquaintances. Participants were then asked to report other gender contact with a romantic partner via a simple question, as well as how content they felt with their own gender via the use of a gender contentedness subscale. After completing all the questionnaires, participants were debriefed and informed further about the aims and goals of the study they had just completed and were then thanked for their time.

Results

The results section of this study will be presented in the following way. This first section will present the demographic information of our sample, as well as the descriptive statistics, and then, in the following paragraphs, the hypotheses (descriptive statistics and regression/moderation tests) that were tested will be presented one by one, alongside the evidence that were found for those.

Descriptive statistics: The age of our sample ranged between 18 and 80 years old, with a large percentage of our participants being between 18 and 23 years old (65.5%). The majority of the participants were of Greek-Cypriot ethnicity (90%), while the rest were of Greek ethnic background and one participant of Ukrainian ethnic background. Regarding the educational level of the individuals who took part in our study, fifty (50) participants reported that they had reached the level of receiving their high school or technical school-college diploma/apolytirion (37.6%), and five (5) participants indicated that they had reached the level of completing their GCSE, A-levels or equivalent exams (3.8%). Forty-nine (49)

participants reported that they had completed their university degree (BSc, BA, etc.) (36.8%), and twenty-eight (28) participants had reached the level of a Master's degree (MSc, MA, etc.) (21.2%). Only one (1) of our participants reported to have completed their PhD degree (0.8%). There were no participants that indicated 'no' when asked if they wanted to take part. However, a significant number of participants (33), failed to provide a number as an answer to the questions regarding the number of female and male friends and acquaintances, which resulted in missing values that are expected to have negatively impacted the results and the findings of the current study.

The first Hypothesis of this study was that "More contact with other-gender friends will be associated with less gender prejudice". To test the first hypothesis, we conducted hierarchical linear regressions, with hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, and feminist attitudes as the dependent variables, and quality of contact with friends as the independent variable. The analyses were all done separately for each gender (men and women).

For hostile sexism, and men's contact with friends and acquaintances that were women, we found that hostile sexism attitudes were not significantly affected by men's contact with female friends and acquaintances, $F(4, 36) = 1.26, p = .307$. For women, contact with individuals of the same gender, did in fact predict their levels of hostile sexism, $F(4, 95) = 4.11, p = .004$. The specific model explained 15% of the variance in hostile sexism. This meant that contact of women with friends and acquaintances that were also women, had the power to lower women's hostile sexism levels.

Additionally, for men, contact with same-gender individuals in friendships, as well as having same-gender acquaintances, did not significantly predict their levels of hostile sexism, $F(4, 36) = 1.99, p = .120$. The same effect was observed with women that had contact with friends and acquaintances who were male, since hostile sexism levels were found no to be predicted by these relationships either, $F(4, 95) = .80, p = .524$.

When investigating whether male friendships and acquaintances influenced at all men's levels of benevolent sexism, it was found that these types of same-gender relationships did not seem to have impacted men's benevolent sexist attitudes, as expected, $F(4, 36) = 2.06, p = .109$. Also, when investigating whether male friendships and acquaintances influenced at all women's levels of benevolent sexism, we found that women's benevolent sexism was not significantly predicted by contact with male friends and acquaintances, $F(4, 95) = .442, p = .778$.

When investigating whether female friendships and acquaintances influenced at all men's levels of benevolent sexism, we found that men's other-gender friendships and acquaintance relationships, did not significantly influence their levels of benevolent sexism, $F(4, 36) = .57, p = .687$. Almost the same effect was found in female same-gender friendships and acquaintance relationships with regards to benevolently sexist attitudes. Benevolent sexism was not predicted by those relationships, $F(4, 95) = .64, p = .637$.

Since we also wanted to investigate whether feminist attitudes were impacted by men and women's same-gender and other-gender friends and acquaintances, we also conducted a regression analysis including feministic attitudes as a dependent variable. During these analyses it was found that male other-gender friendships and acquaintance relationships with women, did not significantly predict men's feministic attitudes, $F(4, 36) = 1.02, p = .410$. Women's feministic attitudes were also not predicted by having female friends and acquaintances, $F(4, 95) = .67, p = .613$. Additionally, men's friendships and acquaintance relationships with men, did not significantly predict their feministic attitudes, $F(4, 36) = 1.76, p = .161$, and women's feministic attitudes were also non-significantly predicted by having contact with male friends and acquaintances, $F(4, 95) = .61, p = .655$.

The second hypothesis of the current study was that "Less contact with same-gender friends will be associated with less gender prejudice". To test the second hypothesis, we

conducted a linear regression with the number of friends and acquaintances as the predictor and the gender prejudiced beliefs (hostile sexism, benevolent sexism), as well as feminism, as the dependent variables. We found that for men, levels of hostile sexism were not predicted by having more male friends and acquaintances, $F(2, 24) = .33, p = .725$, and that hostile sexism levels for women were also not predicted by having more female friends, $F(2, 67) = 2.45, p = .094$, although this was the closest effect from the analyses in reaching significance.

When investigating whether number of female friends and acquaintances influenced at all levels of hostile sexism in men, we found that hostile sexism levels were not significantly predicted by having female friends and acquaintances for men, $F(2, 25) = .46, p = .636$. Additionally, when investigating whether more female friends and acquaintances predicted levels of hostile sexism in female participants, we also failed to discover a significant prediction, $F(2, 67) = 2.06, p = .136$.

Moreover, benevolent sexism levels were non-significantly predicted by having male friends and acquaintances in male participants, $F(2, 24) = .11, p = .893$, and having male friends and acquaintances in female participants, also did not significantly predict levels of benevolent sexism, $F(2, 67) = .21, p = .812$. For men, having women friends and acquaintances, did not significantly influence their levels of benevolent sexism, $F(2, 25) = .32, p = .725$, and for women, having female friends and acquaintances, also did not significantly predict benevolent sexism levels, $F(2, 67) = .56, p = .572$.

When looking into how feministic attitudes were influenced by the number of same-gender and other-gender friends and acquaintances, we found a marginally significant effect in male participants, who had male friends and acquaintances, $F(2, 24) = 3.17, p = .062$. We also found a statistically significant effect when looking into how feministic attitudes were influenced by women participants having male friends and acquaintances, $F(2, 67) = 4.77, p = .012 (p < .05)$. This demonstrates that for women, having male friends and acquaintances,

significantly heightened their levels of feminist attitudes and beliefs. This model explained 12% of the variance in feminist attitudes and beliefs.

Additionally, when investigating whether having female friends and acquaintances, we found that men's feminist beliefs were statistically significantly heightened by the number of female friends, $F(2, 25) = 4.91, p = .017 (p < .05), b = -.501, b = -.225$. This model predicted 29% of the variance in feminist attitudes. Another statistically significant effect was found when investigating whether women participants' feministic attitudes were influenced by the number of female friends and acquaintances, $F(2, 67) = 5.55, p = .006 (p < .05)$. This model explained 14% of the variance in feminist attitudes. Women participants' feminist attitudes were higher when female participants reported interacting with a higher number of female friends and acquaintances.

The third hypothesis of this study was that "Contact with the other gender in a romantic relationship will be associated with more gender prejudice". To test the third hypothesis, we conducted a linear regression analysis, one for each dependent variable (hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, and feminist attitudes). The results demonstrated that being in a heterosexual romantic relationship for the past twelve months, only significantly predicted levels of hostile sexism in male participants, $F(1, 36) = 8.23, p < .05 (.007), b = -.436$ and this model explained 19% of the variance in hostile sexism. Being male, in a heterosexual romantic relationship, hostile sexism levels appeared to be decreasing. Being in a heterosexual romantic relationship the last twelve months, did not significantly predict women's levels of hostile sexism, $F(1, 95) = .56, p = .457$, neither did it predict male participants' benevolent sexism, $F(1, 36) = .04, p = .853$, nor did it predict women participants' benevolent sexism, $F(1, 95) = .17, p = .684$. Being in a heterosexual romantic relationship the past twelve months, also failed to predict men $F(1, 36) = .00, p = .996$, or women's feminist attitudes, $F(1, 95) = .46, p = .499$.

These findings are similar to the findings of Endendijk, (2023) who noted that heterosexual romantic relationships did not seem to influence any gender prejudiced attitudes, with the difference that in our sample, we detected an effect of heterosexual romantic contact in men's hostile sexism levels. Men's hostile sexism levels appeared to be lower when men reported that they were involved in a heterosexual romantic relationship the past year.

The fourth hypothesis indicated that "The association between more other-gender contact (or less same-gender contact) with friends and lower gender prejudice will be stronger for people high on gender contentedness, as well as for men". Finally, to test the fourth hypothesis, we conducted a moderation analysis, with contact with male/female friends as the predictor, with gender prejudiced beliefs as the independent variable, and gender contentedness as the moderator.

When investigating how gender contentedness moderates the relationship between contact with male friends and hostile sexism levels, we found that gender contentedness significantly moderated the interaction between having male friends and hostile sexism levels, $b = 0.10$, BCa CI [0.02, 0.19], $z = 2.51$, $p < .05$ ($p = .012$). Being in contact with male friends, led to higher levels of hostile sexism attitudes, and being content with one's own gender appeared to be a moderator of the relationship between these variables, by lowering levels of hostile sexism. When investigating whether gender contentedness moderated the relationship between having male friends and benevolent sexism levels, we found that gender contentedness did not significantly moderate the interaction between having male friends and levels of benevolent sexism, $b = -0.02$, BCa CI [-0.07, 0.03], $z = -0.97$, $p = .33$. Additionally, there was no significant moderation of gender contentedness in the relationship between having male friends and feminist attitude levels, $b = .003$, BCa CI [-0.02, 0.03], $z = 0.26$, $p = .51$.

When investigating whether the relationship between having female friends and hostile sexism levels is moderated by gender contentedness in our sample as a whole, including both men and women, we found that there was no significant moderation of gender contentedness in the relationship between having female friends and hostile sexism levels, $b = -0.05$, BCa CI [-0.11, 0.02], $z = -1.45$, $p = .19$. Additionally, there was no significant moderation of gender contentedness between the relationship of having female friends and levels of benevolent sexism, $b = 0.02$, BCa CI [-0.02, 0.05], $z = 0.90$, $p = .21$. When investigating whether gender contentedness moderates the relationship between having female friends and levels of feminist attitudes, we found a non-significant moderation of gender contentedness in the relationship between feminist attitudes and having female friends, $b = 0.02$, BCa CI [-9.76, 0.03], $z = 1.83$, $p = .07$.

When investigating whether the relationship between hostile sexism and having male friends, is moderated by the variable of gender, we found that there was a non-significant interaction between those variables, $b = 0.04$, BCa CI [-0.04, 0.12], $z = 1.07$, $p = .47$. Also the relationship between having male friends and levels of benevolent sexism, was also non-significantly moderated by gender, $b = -0.02$, BCa CI [-0.06, 0.02], $z = -0.89$, $p = .32$. The relationship between having male friends and levels of feminist attitudes, was also non-significantly moderated by gender, $b = 0.01$, BCa CI [-0.01, 0.03], $z = 0.96$, $p = .08$.

Moreover, when investigating whether there was a moderating effect of gender on the relationship between having female friends and gender prejudiced beliefs (hostile sexism and benevolent sexism levels), as well as feminist beliefs, we found that the only significant interaction was the one between having female friends and levels of feminism, $b = 0.004$, BCa CI [-0.01, 0.02], $z = 0.49$, $p < .05$ ($p = .008$). Thus, having female friends was significantly associated with alternating levels of feminism. The rest of the interactions were

all non-significant, hence, there was not a moderating effect of gender between having female friends and gender prejudiced beliefs (hostile sexism levels, benevolent sexism levels).

Discussion

The current study aimed to investigate the relationship between various types of same-gender and other-gender contact and the impact of these types of contact on gender prejudiced and gender related beliefs and attitudes. This was done via the attempt to replicate the design of the study by Endendijk (2023), which was used as an example study to guide the development of the current one, by investigating in general, the same research question, and similar hypotheses. More specifically, the contact between same-gender friends and acquaintances, other-gender friends and acquaintances, as well as the contact between heterosexual romantic partners were all investigated with regards to how they influence both men and women's levels of hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, and feminist attitudes and beliefs. It was also investigated whether the relationship between contact and gender prejudiced beliefs was moderated if at all, by gender and gender contentedness.

The research question of the current study was "*Does contact with same-gender and other-gender friends, acquaintances and other-gender romantic partners influence individual levels of sexism and feminism, and is this relationship moderated by gender and gender contentedness?*". Drawing from a relatively final small sample of 133 participants, we found relatively little support for the four hypotheses that were tested. The four hypotheses of the current study were: a) more contact with other-gender friends will be associated with less gender prejudice, b) less contact with same-gender friends will be associated with less gender prejudice, c) contact with the other gender in a romantic relationship will be associated with more gender prejudice, and d) the association between more other-gender contact (or less same-gender contact) with friends and lower gender prejudice will be stronger for people high on gender contentedness, as well as for men.

This study, although small in power has managed to produce some significant effects, when investigating the effects of intergroup contact on gender prejudice elimination.

Regarding women participants, we found that contact with other women was related to their levels of hostile sexism, and having male friends, as well as female friends was related to their feminist attitude levels and beliefs. Thus, women's feminist beliefs were increased when female participants reported having friends of both genders, and additionally, women's hostile sexism levels were lowered when having increased contact with female friends and acquaintances. Regarding male participants, our study's results show that men's feminist beliefs were predicted by the number of female friends they reported that they had. Thus, men's feminist beliefs were increased when interacting with a higher number of female friends. Additionally, being in a heterosexual romantic relationship for the past twelve months, only predicted levels of hostile sexism in male participants. When looking at the moderating effects of gender contentedness, we found that gender contentedness significantly moderated the relationship between having male friends and hostile sexism levels, and gender contentedness moderated the relationship between having female friends and levels of feminist attitudes that were reported. This study's findings present a quite a few differences to the findings that Endendijk (2023) presented, but this could very possibly be because of the multiple limitations of the current study, and the differences in the approach of studying certain variables. Although the results of the study might seem quite promising, there are multiple limitations that constitute the interpretation of the results a very tricky process, and the interpretations and generalization of the results should be done with caution due to the limitations. This study also provides some support for the theories that were mentioned (e.g., the contact hypothesis, (Allport, 1954), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), since some of the findings indicate the influence of contact in different social contexts on gender prejudiced beliefs, as well as on feminist beliefs and attitudes.

As with every study in social psychology, this one comes with its own set of limitations. A limitation of this study is its sample size. This study only recruited 133 fully completed responses. Considering also the fact that in the protagonist variables of the study, (e.g., contact with friends and acquaintances), 30 participants failed to provide answers with numbers in many of the questions regarding their quality and quantity of contact with same-gender and other-gender friends and acquaintances, thus resulting in a big number of missing values in some of the most important variables of the study.

Furthermore, due to the correlational design of the current study, we are not able to infer causality in the statistically significant effects and relationships between the variables that were discovered in the statistical analyses. The direction of the relationship between the variables is also hard to claim, as we can only infer a relationship between the variables, without knowing which variable comes first in the relationship or which one leads to the other. For example, having found that having female friends relates to the feminist attitudes of a women, we cannot for certain claim that the fact that there are many female friendships, that this is the mere reason behind levels of feminist values of women.

As stated above, the findings of the current study should be taken with a grain of salt and interpreted in caution, since they could have been influenced by extraneous variables that impacted their true meaning, and due to the fact that the significant effects that were found between the variables could be false due to the study's small sample size and power.

This study, although small in statistical power, provides further information for future directions in the field of contact and its effects on prejudice reduction, and provides some basis for future studies that want to study the relationships between these variables, and their causality, as well as the direction of the relationship between them. This study has also made the first steps in further investigation of how various types of contact and interactions influence gender prejudiced beliefs in the context of Cyprus, a Mediterranean country that

may have quite a few cultural differences in these social psychological domains when compared to other European countries.

Future studies could take the study of these variables a step further by studying more closely the influence of the participants' social and personal relationships, gathering more valid evidence, such as closer monitoring of individuals' actual behaviors. More specifically, the use of qualitative data will provide future studies the ability to detail the level of actual interactions with friends, acquaintances, and romantic relationships.

In addition, future studies can be more inclusive of the social data of gender by studying the levels of sexism and feminism from the perspective of the individuals of the LGBTQ+ community, thus including a more gender inclusive spectrum, by studying the relationships between all these variables from the point of view of non-heterosexual individuals by including more definitions of sexuality and gender.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Message of approval of the study from the CNBC



ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ



ΕΘΝΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ ΒΙΟΗΘΙΚΗΣ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ

Αρ. Φακ.: ΕΕΒΚ ΕΠ 2024.01.33
Αρ. Τηλ.: 22809038/039, 22819101
Αρ. Φαξ: 22353878

31 Ιανουαρίου, 2024

Καθ. Χάρης Ψάλτης
 Καθηγητής Κοινωνικής και Αναπτυξιακής Ψυχολογίας
 Πρόεδρος Τμήματος Ψυχολογίας
 Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου
 Λεωφ. Πανεπιστημίου 1
 2109 Αγλαντζιά
 Λευκωσία

Κυρία Δέσποινα Κωνσταντίνου
 Κύκκου 21^Α
 2062 Στρόβολος
 Λευκωσία

Αγαπητέ Καθ. Ψάλτη και κυρία Κωνσταντίνου,

Αίτηση γνωμοδότησης για την πρόταση με τίτλο:
«Forms of contact in the field of gender and prejudice reduction»

Αναφορικά με την αίτηση σας ημερομηνίας 29 Ιανουαρίου 2024 για το πιο πάνω θέμα, επιθυμώ να σας πληροφορήσω ότι από τη μελέτη του περιεχομένου των εγγράφων που έχετε καταθέσει η Εθνική Επιτροπή Βιοηθικής Κύπρου (ΕΕΒΚ) **γνωμοδοτεί θετικά υπέρ της διεξαγωγής της εν λόγω έρευνας.**

2. Η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να τονίσει ότι παραμένει ευθύνη δική σας η διεξαγωγή της έρευνας με τρόπο που να τηρούνται οι πρόνοιες του νέου Ευρωπαϊκού Γενικού Κανονισμού Προστασίας Προσωπικών Δεδομένων (2016/679) και του περί της Προστασίας των Φυσικών Προσώπων Έναντι της Επεξεργασίας των Δεδομένων Προσωπικού Χαρακτήρα και της Ελεύθερης Κυκλοφορίας των Δεδομένων αυτών Νόμος του 2018 (Ν. 125(I) /2018), ως αυτός εκάστοτε τροποποιείται.

3. Σας ενημερώνουμε ότι για σκοπούς καλύτερου συντονισμού και αποφυγής επανάληψης ερευνών με το ίδιο θέμα ή/και υπό εξέταση πληθυσμό μέσα σε σύντομο σχετικά χρονικό διάστημα, η ΕΕΒΚ δημοσιεύει στην ιστοσελίδα της το θέμα της έρευνας, τον φορέα και τον υπό εξέταση πληθυσμό.

4. Κατά τη διάρκεια εκπόνησης της έρευνας, ο συντονιστής / επιστημονικός υπεύθυνος θα ενημερώνει την ΕΕΒΚ για κάθε τροποποίηση των αρχικά κατατεθειμένων εγγράφων (πρωτόκολλο ή άλλα ερευνητικά έγγραφα) και θα υποβάλλει τις απαιτούμενες έντυπες τροποποιήσεις στην Επιτροπή.

.../2

Λαέρτου 22, 2365 Άγιος Δομέτιος, Λευκωσία

Ηλεκτρονικό Ταχυδρομείο: cnbc@bioethics.gov.cy, Ιστοσελίδα: www.bioethics.gov.cy

-2-

5. Σε περίπτωση διακοπής της έρευνας, ο συντονιστής/ επιστημονικός υπεύθυνος θα ενημερώσει γραπτώς την Επιτροπή κάνοντας αναφορά και στους λόγους διακοπής της έρευνας.

6. Ο συντονιστής/ επιστημονικός υπεύθυνος θα ενημερώσει την Επιτροπή σε περίπτωση αδυναμίας να συνεχίσει ως συντονιστής και θα υποβάλει τα στοιχεία επικοινωνίας του αντικαταστάτη του.

7. Με το πέρας της ερευνητικής πρότασης, ο συντονιστής / επιστημονικός υπεύθυνος θα ενημερώσει εγγράφως την Επιτροπή ότι το υπό αναφορά ερευνητικό πρωτόκολλο ολοκληρώθηκε.

8. Σας ευχόμαστε κάθε επιτυχία στη διεξαγωγή της έρευνάς σας.

Με εκτίμηση,

K N. Φελλάς

Καθ. Κωνσταντίνος Ν. Φελλάς
Πρόεδρος
Εθνικής Επιτροπής Βιοηθικής Κύπρου

Appendix 2 – Questionnaire

0%

Survey Completion

100%

Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου
Τμήμα Ψυχολογίας
Δελτίο Συγκατάθεσης για διεξαγωγή έρευνας

Μορφές επαφής στον τομέα του φύλου και της μείωσης των προκαταλήψεων

Αγαπητοί συμμετέχοντες,

Με το παρόν δελτίο συγκατάθεσης σας ζητείται η άδεια να συμμετάσχετε σε έρευνα που διεξάγει το Τμήμα Ψυχολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου. Παρακαλώ διαβάσετε προσεκτικά τις ακόλουθες πληροφορίες πριν αποφασίσετε αν πρέπει ή όχι να δώσετε την συγκατάθεση σας.

Σκοπός: Ο σκοπός της έρευνας είναι η μελέτη των διαφόρων μορφών επαφής, της προκατάληψης και τον ρόλο του φύλου στις σχέσεις μας, καθώς και των διαφόρων κοινωνικών και προσωπικών παραγόντων που ενδεχομένως να επηρεάσουν αυτές τις σχέσεις. Η έρευνα διεξάγεται από την μεταπτυχιακή φοιτήτρια Δέσποινα Κωνσταντίνου του τμήματος ψυχολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου στο πλαίσιο της διατριβής της, υπό την επίβλεψη του καθηγητή κοινωνικής και αναπτυξιακής ψυχολογίας Χάρη Ψάλτη. Η απόφαση σας να παρέχετε ή όχι την άδεια συγκατάθεσης, καθώς και όλες οι πληροφορίες που

θα συλλεχθούν, θα είναι διαθέσιμες μόνο στους ερευνητές.

Λιαδικασία: Θα κληθείτε να συμπληρώσετε ένα ερωτηματολόγιο το οποίο θα διαθέτει ερωτήσεις και δηλώσεις διαφόρων ειδών τις οποίες θα πρέπει να απαντήσετε βάσει εξ ολοκλήρου της δικής σας άποψης και των δικών σας πεποιθήσεων. Συγκεκριμένα, οι ερωτήσεις θα αφορούν απόψεις και πεποιθήσεις γύρω από γεγονότα που συναντούμε στην κοινωνική μας ζωή, καθώς επίσης και λεπτομέρειες για τις διαπροσωπικές σχέσεις. Η συμπλήρωση του ερωτηματολογίου θα διαρκέσει περίπου 20-25 λεπτά, και οι απαντήσεις είναι ανώνυμες.

Εθελοντική Συναίνεση & Συμμετοχή: Η συμμετοχή σας στην παρούσα έρευνα είναι εθελοντική. Είστε ελεύθεροι να αποσύρετε οποιαδήποτε στιγμή εσείς επιθυμείτε τη συγκατάθεση για την συμμετοχή σας στο πρόγραμμα, χωρίς την οποιαδήποτε αρνητική συνέπεια.

Ρίσκα: Η συμμετοχή στην παρούσα έρευνα δεν θα προκαλέσει περισσότερο άγχος από αυτό που μπορεί να αντιμετωπίσει κανείς στην καθημερινότητα του.

Όφελος: Πίστωση βαθμού σε μάθημα της επιλογής σας (μετά από συνεννόηση με τον/την διδάσκοντα/ουσα).

Ανωνυμία και Εμπιστευτικότητα: Η προστασία της ιδιωτικής ζωής και του απορρήτου είναι εγγυημένη καθόλη της διάρκεια της έρευνας. Με την συγκατάθεσή σας πιο κάτω, θα έχετε την ευκαιρία να συμμετέχετε στην έρευνα απαντώντας τις σχετικές ερωτήσεις που ακολουθούν εντελώς ανώνυμα. Αν τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας δημοσιευτούν, θα παρουσιαστούν ομαδικά. Τα προσωπικά δεδομένα (δημογραφικά χαρακτηριστικά, δηλ.: ηλικία, φύλο, εθνικότητα) θα διατηρηθούν μόνο για δυο χρόνια μετά το τέλος της παρούσας έρευνας.

Στοιχεία Επικοινωνίας: Αν έχετε οποιοδήποτε ερωτήσεις, σχόλια ή ανησυχίες, μπορείτε να επικοινωνήσετε μαζί μας. Δέσποινα Κωνσταντίνου, Μεταπτυχιακή Φοιτήτρια, Τμήμα Ψυχολογίας, Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου (dconst06@ucy.ac.cy , 99955974) Δρ. Χάρης Ψάλτης, Τμήμα Ψυχολογίας, Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου (cpsaltis@ucy.ac.cy , 22892077)

Έχω διαβάσει τις ανωτέρω αναφερόμενες πληροφορίες και συμφωνώ να συμμετάσχω στην έρευνα. Κατανοώ πως αποφασίζοντας να μην συμμετάσχω δεν θα υπάρξουν οποιεσδήποτε αρνητικές συνέπειες.

Συμφωνώ, και θέλω να συμμετέχω

Διαφωνώ, και δεν θέλω να συμμετέχω

0%

Survey Completion

100%

Ποιά είναι η ηλικία σας;

Ποιό είναι το φύλο σας;

Άνδρας

Γυναίκα

Non-binary

Άλλο

0%

Survey Completion

100%

Ποιά είναι η εθνικότητά σας;

Ελληνοκυπριακή

Τουρκοκυπριακή

Αρμένικη

Μαρωνίτικη

Λατινική

Ρομά

Άλλη (παρακαλώ διευκρινίστε)

Ποιό είναι το μορφωτικό σας επίπεδο;

Απολυτήριο λυκείου / Τεχνικής σχολής

GCSE / A levels (ή ισοδύναμο)

Πτυχίο Πανεπιστημίου (BSc, BA, etc)

Επίπεδο Μάστερ (MA, MSc, etc.)

Διδακτορικό επίπεδο (PhD)



9. Στην πραγματικότητα υπάρχουν πολύ λίγες γυναίκες που τους αρέσει να πειράζουν τους άνδρες με το να φαίνονται σεξουαλικά διαθέσιμες και μετά να αρνούνται τις αντρικές προσεγγίσεις.

10. Μόλις μια γυναίκα κάνει έναν άντρα να δεσμευτεί μαζί της, συνήθως προσπαθεί να τον βάλει σε "σφιχτό λουρί" (δηλ., του αφήνει λίγη ελευθερία, τον ελέγχει).

11. Οι περισσότερες γυναίκες αποτυγχάνουν να εκτιμήσουν όλα όσα κάνουν οι άντρες για αυτές.



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20. Οι άντρες είναι
πλήρεις (σαν άτομα)
χωρίς (να χρειάζονται)
τις γυναίκες.

21. Ανεξάρτητα από
το πόσο επιτυχημένος
είναι, ένας άντρας δεν
είναι πραγματικά
ολοκληρωμένος ως
άτομο, αν δεν έχει την
αγάπη μιας γυναίκας.

22. Οι άνθρωποι είναι
συχνά πραγματικά
ευτυχισμένοι στη ζωή
χωρίς να έχουν
ρομαντική σχέση με
ένα άτομο του άλλου
φύλου.

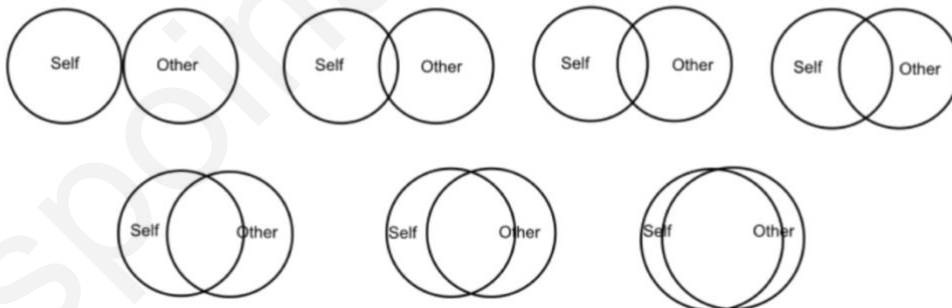


0%

Survey Completion

100%

Παρακαλώ κοιτάξτε πιο κάτω την εικόνα. Ο κύκλος με τη λέξη "self" αντικατοπτρίζει εσάς (το φύλο σας) και ο κύκλος με τη λέξη "other" αντικατοπτρίζει ένα οποιοδήποτε άτομο με το αντίθετο φύλο από το δικό σας. Η απόσταση μεταξύ των δύο κύκλων σε κάθε περίπτωση δείχννει το πόσο κοντά ενδέχεται να νιώθει κάποιος με το αντίθετο φύλο.



4. Ως αρχηγός του νοικοκυριού, ο πατέρας πρέπει να έχει την τελική εξουσία στα παιδιά του.

5. Τόσο ο σύζυγος, όσο και η σύζυγος, θα πρέπει να είναι εξίσου υπεύθυνοι για την φροντίδα των μικρών παιδιών.

6. Το πρώτο καθήκον μια γυναίκας με μικρά παιδιά είναι το σπίτι και η οικογένεια.

7. Ένας άνδρας που έχει επιλέξει να μείνει στο σπίτι και να αφοσιωθεί στις συζυγικές και πατρικές ευθύνες, δεν είναι λιγότερο αρρενωπός από έναν άντρα που εργάζεται με πλήρη απασχόληση.

8. Μια εργαζόμενη γυναίκα μπορεί να δημιουργήσει μια τόσο ζεστή και ασφαλή σχέση με τα παιδιά της, όσο μια μητέρα που δεν εργάζεται.

9. Μια γυναίκα δεν πρέπει να αφήνει την γέννηση και την ανατροφή των παιδιών να σταθεί εμπόδιο σε μια καριέρα, αν το θέλει.

10. Οι γυναίκες θα πρέπει να ενδιαφέρονται περισσότερο για τα ρούχα και την εμφάνισή τους, παρά οι άντρες.



Παρακαλώ απαντήστε στις πιο κάτω δηλώσεις, βάση της προσωπικής σας γνώμης.

| | 1 - Διαφωνώ έντονα | 2 - Διαφωνώ | 3 - Διαφωνώ ελαφρώς | 4 - Συμφωνώ ελαφρώς | 5 - Συμφωνώ | 6 - Συμφωνώ απολύτως |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 15. Τα αγόρια και τα κορίτσια θα πρέπει να μπορούν να γίνουν ότι θέλουν, υπό τον όρο ότι έχουν τις δεξιότητες και την κατάρτιση που απαιτεί η δουλειά. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 16. Η ισότητα μεταξύ των φύλων είναι ένας αξιόλογος στόχος. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 17. Οι άντρες πρέπει να σέβονται τις γυναίκες περισσότερο απ' ότι τις σέβονται στις μέρες μας. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 18. Τα στερεότυπα που υπάρχουν για τους άντρες και τις γυναίκες πληγώνουν τους πάντες. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 19. Οι άνδρες και οι γυναίκες θα πρέπει να μπορούν να κάνουν ελεύθερα επιλογές για τη ζωή τους, χωρίς να περιορίζονται από τα στερεότυπα που διέπουν το φύλο τους. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 20. Η ανατροφή των παιδιών, είτε γίνεται από άνδρες είτε από γυναίκες, πρέπει να εκτιμάται περισσότερο από την κοινωνία. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



38. Τα ομοφυλόφιλα ζευγάρια πρέπει να μπορούν να δείχνουν δημόσια την τρυφερότητά τους ο ένας για τον άλλο, π.χ., να κρατούν χέρια όταν περπατούν.

39. Τα ομοφυλόφιλα ζευγάρια πρέπει να παρέχονται με "συζυγικά προνόμια" όπως η επέκταση ιατρικής ασφάλισης στον σύντροφο.

40. Μια γυναίκα που έχει πολλούς σεξουαλικούς συντρόφους δεν είναι απαραίτητα πόρνη.



0%

Survey Completion

100%

Παρακαλώ απαντήστε στις πιο κάτω δηλώσεις βάση της προσωπικής σας γνώμης.

1 - Διαφωνώ έντονα 2 - Διαφωνώ 3 - Διαφωνώ ελαφρώς 4 - Συμφωνώ ελαφρώς 5 - Συμφωνώ 6 - Συμφωνώ απολύτως

41. Παρόλο που κάποια πράγματα έχουν αλλάξει, οι γυναίκες εξακολουθούν να αντιμετωπίζονται άδικο στη σημερινή κοινωνία.

42. Οι γυναίκες έχουν υποστεί άδικη μεταχείριση με βάση το φύλο τους στο μεγαλύτερο μέρος της ανθρώπινης ιστορίας.

43. Τα επιτεύγματα των γυναικών στην ιστορία δεν έχουν τονιστεί τόσο πολύ όσο αυτά των ανδρών.

44. Οι άνδρες έχουν υπερβολική επιρροή στην πολιτική της χώρας μας σε σύγκριση με τις γυναίκες.

45. Οι άνθρωποι που παραπονιούνται ότι η πορνογραφία αντιμετωπίζει τις γυναίκες ως αντικείμενα, αντιδρούν υπερβολικά.

46. Οι άντρες εξακολουθούν να μην παίρνουν στα σοβαρά τις ιδέες των γυναικών.

47. Οι γυναίκες έχουν ήδη ίσες ευκαιρίες με τους άνδρες σε όλους τους σημαντικούς τομείς της ζωής τους.

48. Οι γυναίκες έχουν λιγότερες επιλογές στη διάθεσή τους σε σύγκριση με τους άντρες.

49. Οι γυναίκες στη χώρα μας αντιμετωπίζονται ως πολίτες δεύτερης κατηγορίας.

50. Όλοι οι άντρες λαμβάνουν οικονομικά, σεξουαλικά και ψυχολογικά οφέλη από την ανδρική κυριαρχία.



56. Ενώ οι γυναίκες ίσως έχουν δικαίωμα να είναι δυσαρεστημένες σχετικά με ορισμένες πτυχές των ρόλων τους στην κοινωνία, κάνουν λάθος με τον τρόπο που διαμαρτύρονται.

57. Οι πλείστες ομαδικές διαμαρτυρίες εξυπηρετούν μόνο στο να κάνουν το κοινό να βλέπει τους διαμαρτυρόμενους/ διαδηλωτές ως φανατικούς.

58. Για να αλλάξουν οι αδικίες/ανισότητες μεταξύ των φύλων, πρέπει να κάνουμε περισσότερα από το να φερόμαστε δίκαια μόνο στους άνδρες και τις γυναίκες της ζωής μας.

59. Οι πλείστες ομαδικές διαμαρτυρίες αποτυγχάνουν να οδηγήσουν σε οποιαδήποτε πραγματική αλλαγή.

60. Αν αφήσουμε τα πράγματα όπως είναι σήμερα, τότε εν τέλει, οι άντρες και οι γυναίκες θα έχουν ίση μεταχείριση.



0%

Survey Completion

100%

Πόσοι από τους πιο στενούς σας φίλους είναι άνδρες;

Πόσες από τις πιο στενές σας φίλες είναι γυναίκες;

Πόσοι από τους γνωστούς σας είναι άνδρες;

Πόσες από τις γνωστές σας είναι γυναίκες;

0%

Survey Completion

100%

Παρακαλώ δηλώστε πόσο συμφωνείτε ή διαφωνείτε με τις πιο κάτω δηλώσεις, βάση της προσωπικής σας γνώμης.

Μέσα σε μια βδομάδα, πόσο συχνά ...

| | 1- Καθόλου | 2- Λίγο | 3- Κάπως | 4 - Αρκετά | 5 - Πολύ |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| ... δουλεύετε ή διαβάζετε μαζί με φίλες ή γνωστές σας που είναι γυναίκες; | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ... δουλεύετε ή διαβάζετε μαζί με φίλους ή γνωστούς σας που είναι άνδρες; | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ... βγαίνετε (one-on-one) με φίλες ή γνωστές σας που είναι γυναίκες; | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ... βγαίνετε (one-on-one) με φίλους ή γνωστούς σας που είναι άνδρες; | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

... βγαίνετε με ομάδα φίλων ή γνωστών σας που είναι γυναίκες;

... βγαίνετε με ομάδα φίλων ή γνωστών σας που είναι άνδρες;

... στέλνετε μηνύματα/emails ή/και μιλάτε στο τηλέφωνο με φίλες ή γνωστές σας που είναι γυναίκες;

... στέλνετε μηνύματα/emails, ή/και μιλάτε στο τηλέφωνο με φίλους ή γνωστούς σας που είναι άνδρες;



0%

Survey Completion

100%

Είσαταν σε ρομαντική σχέση με άτομο του αντίθετου φύλου τους τελευταίους 12 μήνες;

Ναι

Όχι



Απαντήστε στις πιο κάτω δηλώσεις βάση του φύλου σας.

| | 1. Διαφωνώ έντονα | 2. Διαφωνώ λίγο | 3. Ούτε συμφωνώ, ούτε διαφωνώ | 4. Συμφωνώ λίγο | 5. Συμφωνώ απολύτως |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Μου αρέσει που είμαι άνδρας / γυναίκα | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Νιώθω ενοχλημένος/η που πρέπει να κάνω κάποια πράγματα, απλά επειδή είμαι γυναίκα / άνδρας | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Ποτέ δεν αισθάνομαι εξαπατημένος/η επειδή υπάρχουν κάποια πράγματα που δεν μπορώ να κάνω επειδή είμαι γυναίκα / άνδρας | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Μακάρι να ήταν εντάξει να κάνω μερικά πράγματα που συνήθως κάνουν μόνο οι γυναίκες / άνδρες. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Μερικές φορές, σκέφτομαι ότι μπορεί να είναι πιο διασκεδαστικό να είσαι άνδρας / γυναίκα. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Δεν νομίζω ότι είναι δίκαιο κάποια πράγματα να είναι μόνο για γυναίκες / άνδρες. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



0%

Survey Completion

100%

Φτάσατε σχεδόν στο τέλος αυτής της έρευνας... (πατήστε το τοξάκι ακόμη μια φορά για να αποθηκευτούν οι απαντήσεις σας στην έρευνα, αφού διαβάσετε τις πιο κάτω πληροφορίες)

Ευχαριστούμε που απαντήσατε όλες τις ερωτήσεις της έρευνας. Η συμβολή σας είναι πολύτιμη και βοηθητική, αφού τα αποτελέσματα αυτής της έρευνας θα βοηθήσουν με τον εμπλουτισμό της βιβλιογραφίας στην κοινωνική ψυχολογία.

Πριν συνεχίσετε στο τέλος της έρευνας, αυτές είναι κάποιες σύντομες πληροφορίες που αφορούν τους σημαντικούς στόχους της έρευνας στην οποία έχετε λάβει μέρος:

Ο άμεσος στόχος είναι να ερευνήσουμε κατά πόσο η επαφή με άτομα του ίδιου φύλου ή του αντίθετου φύλου σε διάφορα επίπεδα γνωριμίας (π.χ., φίλιες, γνωστοί, ρομαντικές σχέσεις) επηρεάζουν τα ατομικά επίπεδα σεξισμού και φεμινισμού, και αν η σχέση μεταξύ αυτών των μεταβλητών μετριάζεται από το δικό μας φύλο και την ικανοποίηση που νιώθουμε με το φύλο μας.

Προηγούμενες έρευνες υποστηρίζουν ότι όση περισσότερη επαφή έχουμε με άτομα διαφορετικού φύλου από το δικό μας, τότε αυτό συνεπάγεται με χαμηλότερες πεπειθήσεις που αφορούν την ανισότητα του φύλου, ενώ περισσότερη επαφή με άτομα του δικού μας

φύλου ενδεχομένως να επιφέρει τα αντίθετα αποτελέσματα όσων αφορά τις πεπειθήσεις αυτές.

Αυτή η έρευνα έχει επίσης προσθέσει το στοιχείο του φεμινισμού, αφού είναι ένα ενδιαφέρον στοιχείο που δεν έχει ακόμη μελετηθεί σε συνάρτηση με τα προαναφερόμενα στοιχεία.

Σας ευχαριστούμε ξανά για την συμμετοχή σας. Παρακαλώ όπως **σιγουρευτείτε να πατήσετε το τοξάκι στο κάτω δεξί μέρος της οθόνης σας για να αποθηκευτούν οι απαντήσεις σας στην έρευνα.**



0%

Survey Completion

100%

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

Note: Appendix 2 contains the questionnaire of this study, as it was presented to the participants while they were completing the survey.

Despoina Constantinou