

Can Feminism and Christianity Coexist, According to 40 Christian Women?

Riley George

Introduction

- The term Feminism was coined in 1837 by Charles Fourier, a philosopher, activist, and socialist
- 4 Waves beginning in 1840s
- Purpose: Can modern-day feminism coexist with Christianity?

Methodology

- 40 women between 18-50 were surveyed anonymously
- 10 questions were asked regarding feminism and Christianity
- All open-ended questions

Questions

- Do you identify as a Feminist/Do you identify as a Christian
- Recollection of their first interaction with feminism
- Opinions on the #MeToo Movement, body positivity movement, misogyny and sexism
- Overall opinions on modern-day feminism (4th wave) and how it relates to their faith

Social Judgement Theory

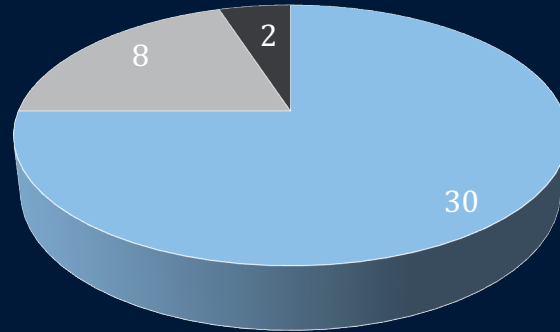
- Carolyn Sherif, Muzafer Sherif, Carl Hovland
- Statements or messages are accepted or rejected based on one's cognitive map
- When Christian women are introduced to feminism, they will have to decide where the ideas being presented can fall in their latitude of acceptance
- Certain aspects of feminism may fall into their acceptance, while other parts may face rejection

Social Judgement Theory

- Most women surveyed were Christians before they heard of feminism
- Must accept, reject, or ignore the ideas of feminism being placed before them as Christians
- Social Judgment Theory states that people choose to reject or accept the idea almost immediately after hearing it

Responses and Results

Do you consider yourself a Feminist?



■ Feminists ■ Not Feminists ■ Unsure ■

Responses and Results

- Unanimously, the first hearing of feminism was through other women and not through a church
- Pro-Choice movement, Wage Gap, women in politics, and protests were the common introductions to feminism

Responses #MeToo Movement

- Divided responses
- Half shared their support and own experiences with sexual assault
- The other half shared the movement had “gotten out of hand”
- Damaging towards males’ reputations when accused falsely
- Applied this lack of support to lying being an unbiblical sin

Responses to the Body Positivity Movement

- 24 respondents were in full support of the body positivity movement with no objections because it was biblically sound
- One respondent was completely against the movement and only responded with “scam” as the response
- 15 respondents said they supported the movement partly but were not in favor of promoting unhealthy lifestyles which they deemed to be unbiblical

Responses to Misogyny/Sexism

- 38 respondents said that they believe misogyny and sexism is still very prevalent in the U.S., and it was not biblical
- 2 responded it was taken “too far”
- The 2 agreed the media dramatizes far more than what is prevalent in the U.S.
- “Not every little thing is sexist”

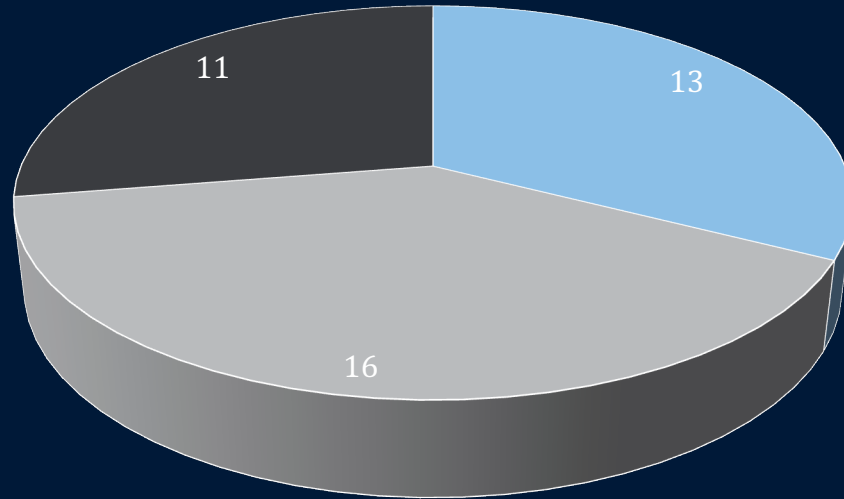
Are Feminists Accurate in Their Beliefs

- 21 respondents said they do not find modern-day feminists accurate
- Lean towards misandry rather than equality and are not biblical, as all are created equal in God's image
- Many said "extreme" or "victim mentality"

Are Feminists Accurate in Their Beliefs

- NOBODY answered that they had complete belief that modern-day feminism is accurate
- “Yes” answers came with a secondary comment about how modern-day feminism borderlines extremist views

Can Feminism and Christianity Coexist?



■ No

■ Yes

■ Unsure

Conclusions

- 30 defined themselves as a “feminist” but 21 of those respondents said that they were not accurate later
- Support for the three aspects asked of the feminist movement were mostly accepted, even if they came with certain objections

Conclusions

- Acceptances of the feminist movement are impacted by their Christian faith FIRST rather than their faith being impacted by their feminist beliefs
- Support for the feminist aspects came with limitations because their Christian faith influenced their beliefs in feminism
- Value their Christian faith as their core belief system with feminist aspects as a secondary belief to Christianity
- Could be accepted but only if it aligned with biblical standards first

Conclusions

- Most had inclination to accepting feminist ideology so long as it did not cross a line in their faith
- Belief in Christianity trumped any feminist idea because acceptances only happened if the feminist idea being presented could coexist with the Christian belief previously held

Value of the Research

- Arguably Christianity is historically based in a very male dominated light, it has been an ongoing battle to determine if feminism could have any place in the Christian worldview
- Conclusion result has value for Christian feminists who are unsure how to balance their beliefs in equality for women and their dedication to their Christian faith
- Feminist ideology can be adapted by Christian women so long as the aspects from feminism do not violate Christian beliefs

Could lay the groundwork for more in-depth research that could give Christian feminists the opportunity to communicate to the Christian world how these two belief systems could coexist in a world where feminism and Christianity appear on the surface to directly violate one another