

Feminist Attitudes of Nonlabelers

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Introduction

Background

There may be differences in women who identify as feminists compared to women who do not identify as feminists, but still hold feminist ideologies, called “nonlabelers”.

- Nonlabelers’ ratings of universalism, conformity, and tradition are statistically equivalent to those of nonfeminists, while being significantly different from feminists (Zucker & Bay-Cheng, 2010)
- Large differences between nonlabelers and feminists regarding participation in activism (Yoder et al., 2011)
- Highly significant differences between feminists, egalitarians (nonlabelers), and nonfeminists on several constructs such as rejection of sex discrimination, power discontent, and activism behaviors (Zucker, 2004)
- Even within nonlabelers, diversity exists in feminist attitudes (Fitz et al., 2012)

The Current Project

- Examined the differences between feminists, nonlabelers, and nonfeminists
- Compared the three groups on levels of feminist attitudes

Methods

Participants

- 337 undergraduate college women from two universities
- Age ranging from 18-56 (M=20.51, SD=4.498), primarily European American/White (86.35%) and heterosexual (94.10%)

Measures

Feminist Identity Composite Scale

- Fischer et al., 2000
- Consisting of five attitudes relating to the participant’s feminist beliefs based on Downing and Roush (1985) model of feminist identity development
 - Passive Acceptance: how much does she accept traditional gender norms and deny that sexism is an issue?
 - Revelation: is she becoming aware of and angry over sexism?
 - Embeddedness-Emanation: how much is she connected to women’s culture?
 - Synthesis: how much does she believe that we should be looked at in terms of individual strengths and not gender?
 - Active Commitment: how committed is she to the feminist cause?

Feminist Beliefs and Behaviors Scale

- Zucker, 2004
- Indicate agreement with core feminist beliefs and whether they identify as a feminist
- Core feminist beliefs
 - “Girls and women have not been treated as well as boys and men in our society”
 - “Women and men should be paid equally for the same work”
 - “Women’s unpaid work should be more socially valued”
- Create three statuses
 - Feminists: identify as feminists and agree with three beliefs
 - Nonlabelers: do not identify as feminists but agree with three beliefs
 - Nonfeminists: do not identify as feminists and disagree with at least one belief

Procedure

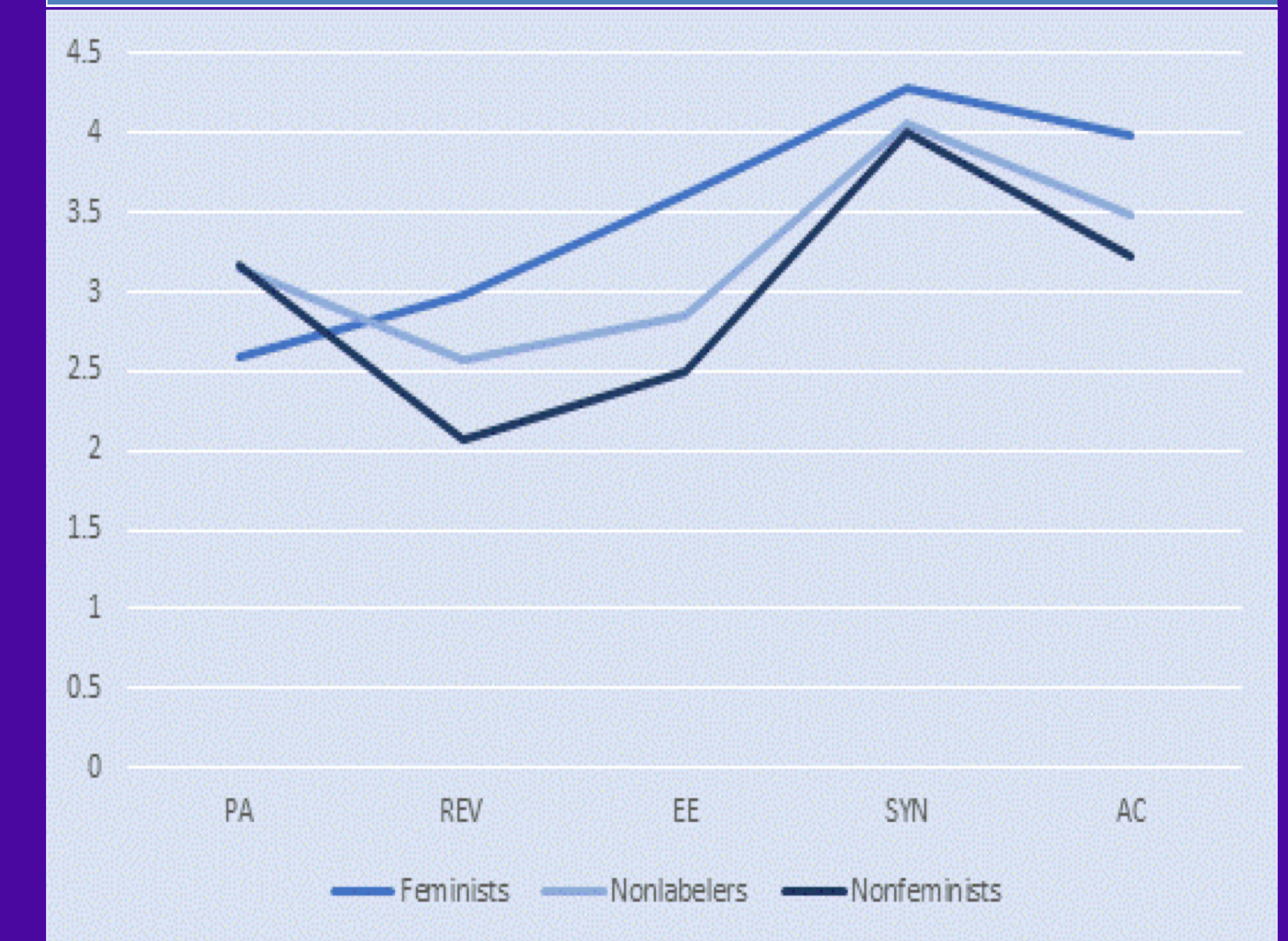
- Participants signed up to participate for extra credit in psychology classes and completed the surveys online

Results

MANOVA found significant differences among feminists, nonlabelers, and nonfeminists on the FIC subscales, $F(10, 660) = 21.862, p < .001$, Wilks’s lambda = .56, $\eta^2_p = .249$. One-way ANOVAs and Tukey post-hoc tests showed differences on all subscales (See Table 1 and Figure 1)

- Nonlabelers and nonfeminists higher in PA than feminists, $F(2, 334) = 34.572, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .172$
- Feminists higher in REV than nonlabelers and nonfeminists, nonlabelers higher than nonfeminists, $F(2, 334) = 56.016, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .251$
- Feminists score higher in EE than nonlabelers and nonfeminists, nonlabelers higher than nonfeminists, $F(2, 334) = 54.138, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .245$
- Feminists higher in SYN than nonlabelers and nonfeminists, $F(2, 334) = 7.578, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .043$
- Feminists higher in AC than nonlabelers and nonfeminists, nonlabelers higher than nonfeminists, $F(2, 334) = 61.508, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .269$

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations



Conclusions

Discussion:

- Nonlabelers fall between nonfeminists and feminists, but are more like nonfeminists regarding accepting traditional roles, denying that sexism is a problem, and the idea of individualism
- One possibility for why nonlabelers are more like nonfeminists in several areas is that nonlabelers may lack personal negative experience regarding sexism
- Nonlabelers commonly believe in equality, but some may think that women are already equal and that sexism is no longer an existing problem
- The belief in equality could be why nonlabelers differ from nonfeminists on Revelation, Embeddedness-Emanation, and Active Commitment

Application:

- Helping to understand the difference and similarities between feminist, nonlabelers, and nonfeminists
- Understanding the difference between feminist attitudes and feminist identity
- Applying to women’s well-being
- Exploring possible attitudes and identities with clients

Future Research:

- Exploring *why* feminists and nonlabelers differ
- Examining what experiences are correlated with a feminist versus a nonlabeler identity
- Testing whether nonlabelers have different or less experience with sexism than feminist
- Looking at different measures of feminist attitudes to see how feminists, nonlabelers, and nonfeminists differ
- Wider sample involving feminist views outside of college women

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations

	Feminists		Nonlabelers		Nonfeminists	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Feminist Identity and Attitudes						
Passive Acceptance	2.59	0.65	3.15	0.51	3.17	0.70
Revelation	2.99	0.53	2.58	0.68	2.07	0.71
Embeddedness-Emanation	3.62	0.81	2.86	0.81	2.50	0.86
Synthesis	4.28	0.55	4.07	0.59	4.00	0.55
Active Commitment	3.99	0.49	3.49	0.52	3.22	0.59

References

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