

A STUDY ON THE ATTITUDE OF MEN TOWARDS FEMINISM

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ABSTRACT

Feminism is a diverse collection of social views, political movements, and moral theories that came into existence for the greater extent of experiences of women, particularly regarding their social, political, financial and economic circumstances. As a social movement, Feminism largely focuses on limiting or constraining imbalance in gender preferences and stereotypes; and work on promoting women's rights, interests, and issues in the public eye. Males especially these days have equally a lot to say about feminism. Hence, a study was conducted to investigate the attitudes of males towards feminism as well as to examine the level of acceptance of males towards feminism. The methodology adopted was descriptive survey method. Convenience sampling and snowball sampling were used for the study. The sample consisted of 200 males of varying age groups from Chennai. A self-developed questionnaire consisting of 12 items to measure attitudes towards feminism, with multiple response options, was developed by the authors. Participants were invited to participate in an online survey via GoogleForms™ that was distributed through social media platforms such as WhatsApp™, Facebook™, Twitter™ and Amino™. Descriptive analysis and percentage analysis were completed for comparison and to observe the general trends as indicated by the collected data. From the results, it was found that males these days are more supportive and have a positive attitude towards feminism.

Keywords: men, gender equality, feminism, females, attitude, urban.

INTRODUCTION

Feminism alludes to any belief system that seeks for balance in rights for women, more often than not through enhancing their status. Feminism is established for the purpose of ending males' chronicled control over females. Recrudescence in feminist theory especially focuses on issues that excessively target females, for example, ending gender pay gaps, sanctioning female voting and providing political rights, and reassessing what is viewed as "female" and "male".

In many cases, the feminist objective of equality for women has correspondingly helped push movements, globally to change the entire way the society is viewed, and in some cases even aided to topple authoritarian governments.

There have been intense debates and open deliberations within the Indian Women's Movements over the association between Western and Indian feminism. A large number of Indian feminists simultaneously claim a specific "Indian" sensitivity and additionally a global feminist solidarity with groups and individuals, worldwide. The ascent of liberal feminism in the West in the 1970's focused profoundly on demands for equal opportunities in education, employment and pay, as well as to end violence and injustice viciousness against women. To a large extent, the emerging feminist movement in India was influenced by Western ideologies.

Feminism can be studied from the perspectives of the actual movements for equality, correspondence or from the works of the people addressing the underlying issues about the reason women have not been and are not seen as equal.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Scambor, E., et al. (2014) from this article, discussed the European research project *The Role of Men in Gender Equality* (2011–2012). This project was the first systematic research study of all European Union member states and was linked to European Free Trade Association states regarding men and gender equality. The main objective of the study was to gain better knowledge on the role and positioning of men concerning gender equality. A number of themes were emphasized, like the situation of men and women in societies. Some heterogeneous social group was chosen in order to gain insights into men's privileges as well as disadvantages according to class, ethnicity, disability, and other social indicators. The result showed that acceptance of equal rights is increasingly taken up in practice.

2. Anderson, K. J., Kanner, M. and Elsayegh, N. (2009), conducted a few studies to examine the empirical accuracy of the stereotype that feminists are men-haters. The subjects were 488 college students; altogether, who were self-identified feminists and non-feminists, and their attitudes toward men was studied. The persistence of the myth of the man-hating feminists was explored and data were evaluated. Contrary to popular beliefs, from the results it was found that feminists reported lower levels of hostility towards men than did non-feminists.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were:-

- 1) To investigate the attitudes of males towards feminism.
- 2) To examine the level of acceptance of males towards feminism.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted was descriptive survey method.

SAMPLE

Convenience sampling and snow ball sampling were used for the study. The sample consisted of 200 males of varying age groups between 15 to 55 years from Chennai.

TOOLS USED

A self-developed questionnaire consisting of 12 items to measure attitudes towards feminism, with multiple response options, was developed by the authors.

DATA COLLECTION

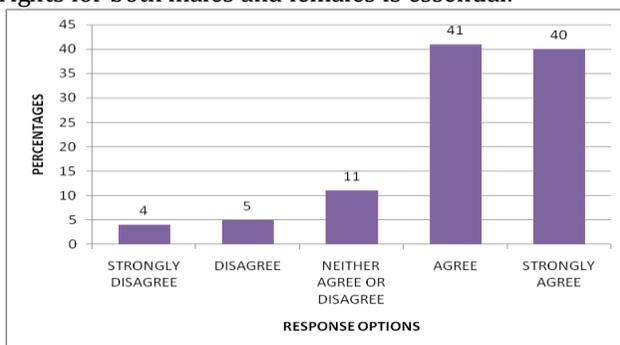
Participants were invited to participate in an online survey via GoogleForms™ that was distributed through social media platforms such as WhatsApp™, Facebook™, Twitter™ and Amino™.

STATISTICS USED

Descriptive analysis and percentage analysis were completed for comparison and to observe the general trends as indicated by the collected data.

RESULTS & INTERPRETATIONS

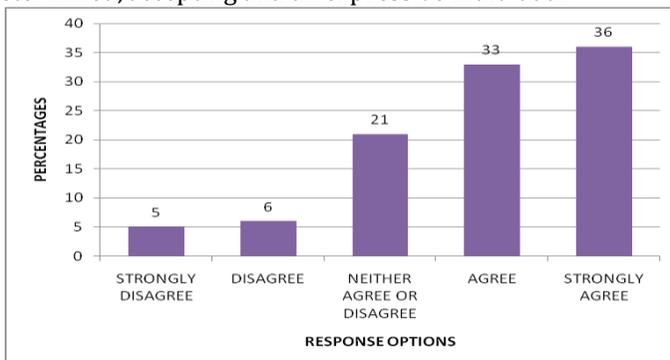
1) I believe equal pay and rights for both males and females is essential.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is seen that nearly half (41%) the male respondents agreed and nearly half (40%) strongly agreed that equal pay and rights for both males and females is essential. This helps us to understand that majority of the males now have a broader outlook and modern perspective towards the uprising need for equality.

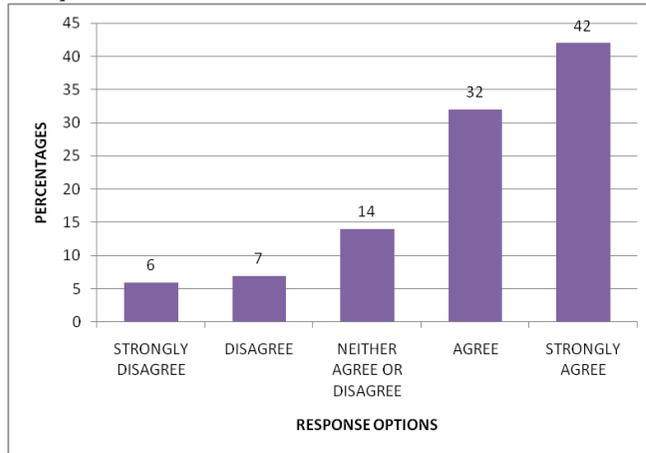
2) A woman to me is a determined, accepting and an expressive individual.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is noted that, nearly half (33%) the males agreed and almost half (36%) strongly agreed that a woman is someone who is a determined, accepting and an expressive individual.

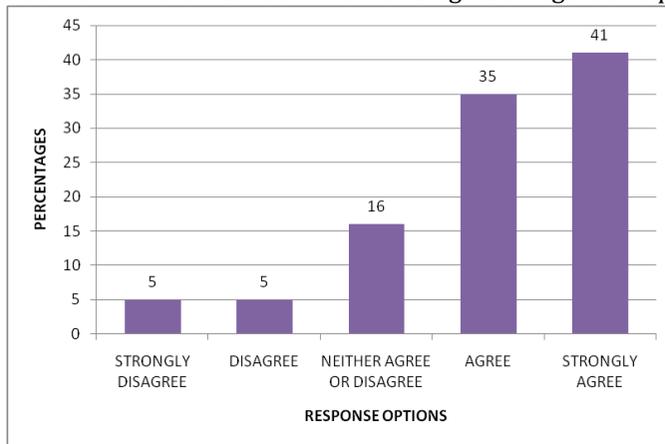
3) I feel women should stand up for themselves.



INTERPRETATION:

- It is seen from the graph, that nearly half (32%) of the males agreed and nearly half (42%) strongly agreed that women should stand up for themselves.

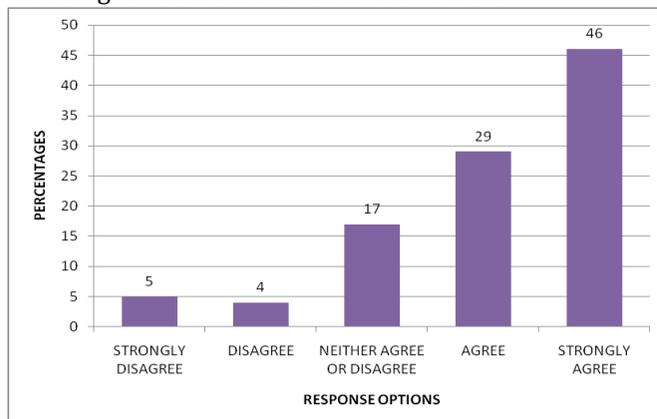
4) I believe there should be more awareness about women's rights and gender equality.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is evident that nearly half (35%) of the males agreed and nearly half (41%) strongly agreed that there should be an increase in awareness about women's rights and gender equality.

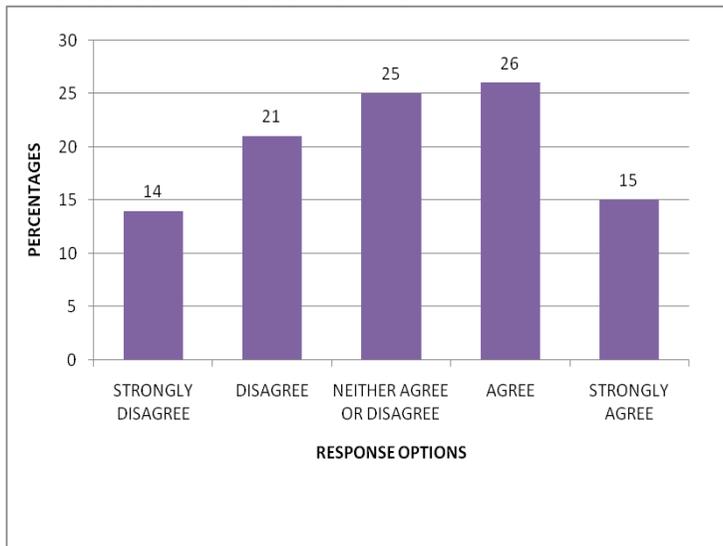
5) I feel empowered and encouraged when I see a successful woman.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is seen that few (29%) males have agreed and nearly half (46%) of them strongly agreed that they feel empowered and encouraged when they see a successful woman.

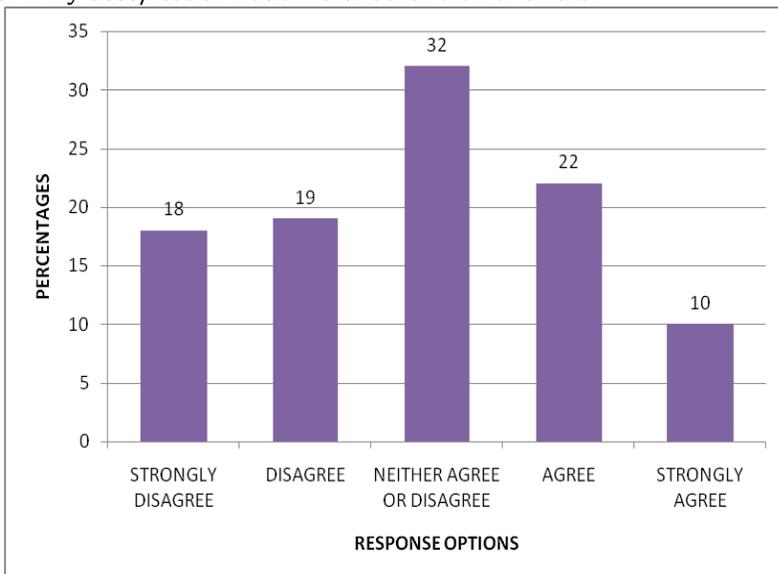
6) I feel uncomfortable when someone talks about feminism.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is clear that few (26%) males agreed and few (15%) strongly agreed about feeling uncomfortable when someone speaks about feminism. This may be so due to some residual old-fashioned background or thinking. Another reason could be that males in particular feel targeted these days, when a feminist speech is given.

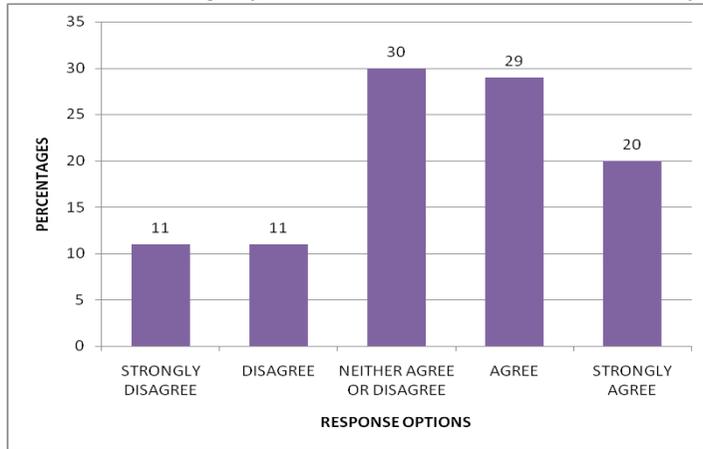
7) I would feel better if my boss/leader was a male rather than a female.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is seen that few (22%) males agreed and very few (10%) strongly agreed that they'd feel better if their boss/leader was a male rather than a female. This could be so due to the stereotype that lady bosses are usually crueler and easily put their emotions into it. Another stereotype that could have played a role is seeing how male bosses are better leaders and have firm control over his subordinates.

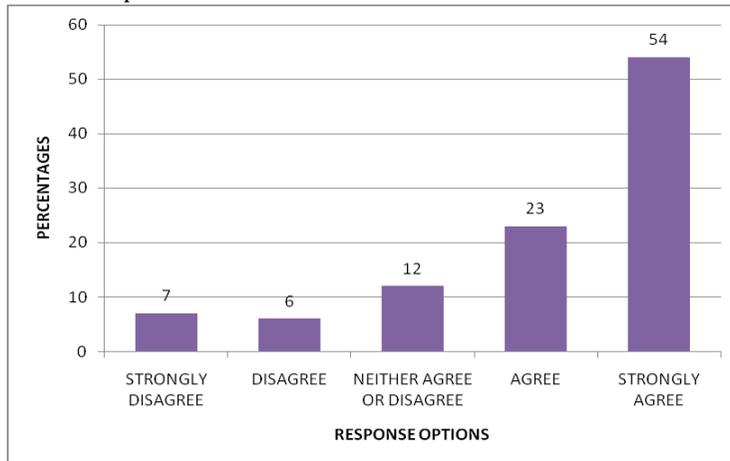
8) I believe it is okay for a woman to not go by the standard social norms that society follows.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is seen that few (29%) males agreed and few (20%) strongly agreed that it is okay for a woman to not go by the standard social norms that society follows.

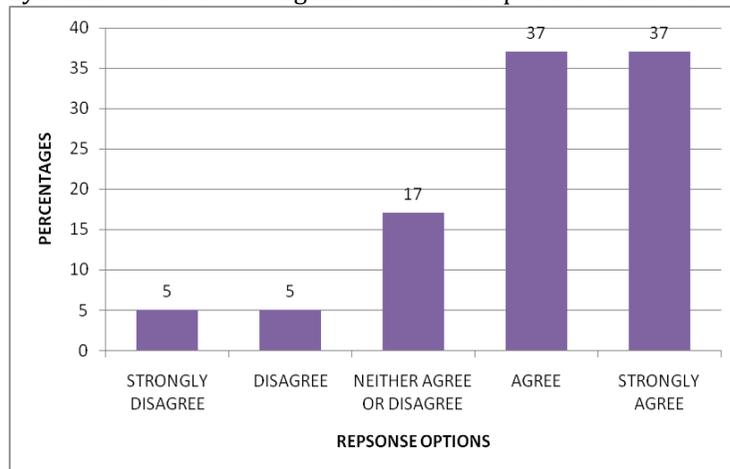
9) I think that career opportunities must be based on the qualifications of the individual and not on based on their gender, irrespective of the post.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is seen that few (23%) males agreed and more than half (54%) strongly agreed that career opportunities must be based on the qualifications of the individual and not based on their gender, irrespective of the post.

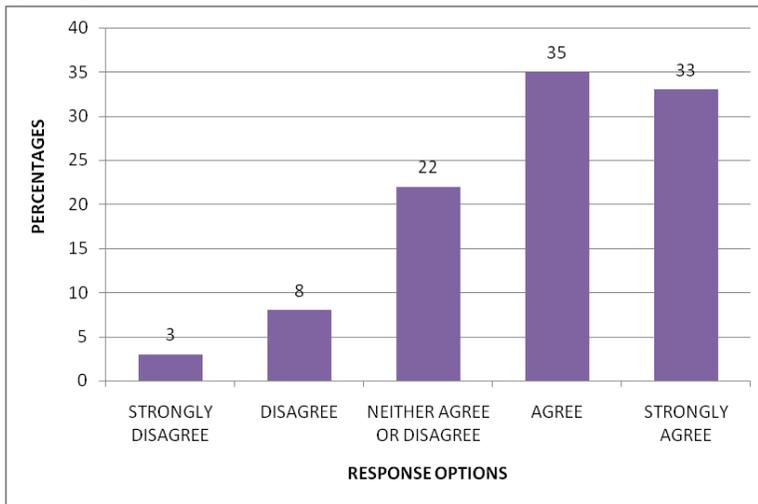
10) I, recently, see many females who are strong minded and independent than before.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is evident that nearly half (37%) of the males agreed and strongly agreed that they see many females who are strong minded and independent than before. This must be because the more the awareness of Feminism is growing, the more the women are getting inspired to become independent and strong minded.

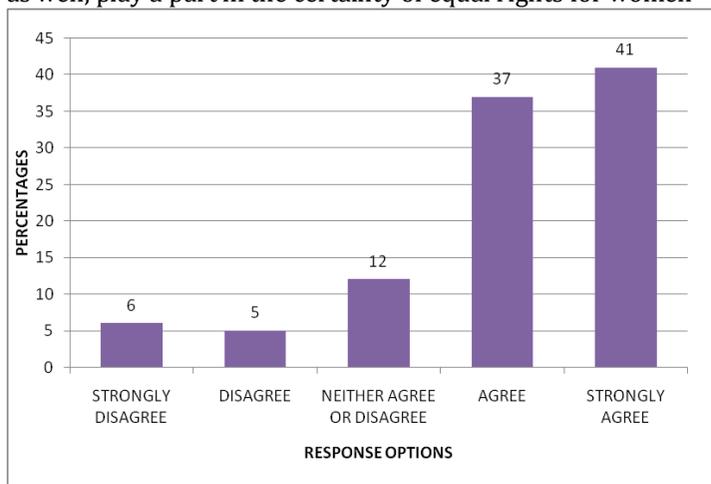
11) I see myself as a feminist.



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is seen that nearly half (35%) of the males agreed and nearly half (33%) strongly agree that they see themselves as feminists. This may be so because the growing awareness as well as breaking old fashioned perception barriers plays a role in broadening of minds from the usual macho stereotype.

12) I believe that men, as well, play a part in the certainty of equal rights for women



INTERPRETATION:

- From the graph, it is seen that nearly half (37%) males agreed and nearly half (41%) strongly agreed that men play a part in the certainty of equal rights for women as well.

CONCLUSIONS

- 1) The majority of the male respondents agreed that equal pay and rights for both males and females is essential.
- 2) More than half the male respondents agreed that a woman is someone who is a determined, accepting and an expressive individual.
- 3) The majority of the male respondents agreed that women should stand up for themselves.
- 4) The majority of the male respondents agreed that there should be an increase in awareness about women's rights and gender equality.

- 5) More than half of the male respondents agreed that they feel empowered and encouraged when they see a successful woman.
- 6) Nearly half of the male respondents agreed feeling uncomfortable when someone speaks about feminism.
- 7) Almost half of the male respondents agreed that they feel better if their boss/leader was a male rather than a female.
- 8) Nearly half of the male respondents agreed that it is okay for a woman to not go by the standard social norms that society follows.
- 9) The majority of the male respondents agreed that career opportunities must be based on the qualifications of the individual and not based on their gender, irrespective of the post.
- 10) The majority of the male respondents agreed that they see a lot more females who are strong-minded and independent than before.
- 11) More than half of the male respondents see themselves as feminists
- 12) The majority of the male respondents agreed that men play a part in the certainty of equal rights for women as well.
- 13) It is seen that the overall attitudes of males towards feminism and equal rights is positive.
- 14) The level of acceptance of males towards feminism is quite good and high.

IMPLICATIONS

It is evident that males, especially the ones who are educated and dwell in the urban areas, are quick in adapting to the rise in gender equality and are more supportive of feminism. Socio-economic background would have also played a role in their high acceptance level.

LIMITATIONS

- 1) The awareness about how important equal rights and pay is, might not be reaching to every male in the local vicinity.
- 2) Many males may still possess old-fashioned ideals and follow outdated cultural norms, even today.
- 3) Age factor seems to may have been a reason to stereotypical answers in older males who aren't used to the idea of women empowerment.
- 4) Unwillingness to change opinions, irrespective of age, and wanting to remain the dominant sex may have played a role as well.
- 5) Almost all the males that participated in the survey were from the city and were all educated or currently receiving education.

SUGGESTIONS

- 1) A larger sample (N>200) is recommended to examine attitudes towards Feminism to get the perfect replication of the population being studied.
- 2) Gather age groups and execute comparative studies between genders and socio-economic statuses of participants for a much elaborate result.

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APPENDIX

ATTITUDE OF MEN TOWARDS FEMINISM

- 1) I believe equal pay and rights for both males and females is essential.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 2) A woman to me is a determined, accepting and an expressive individual.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 3) I feel women should stand up for themselves.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 4) I believe there should be more awareness about women's rights and gender equality.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 5) I feel empowered and encouraged when I see a successful woman.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 6) I feel uncomfortable when someone talks about feminism.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree

- 7) I would feel better if my boss/leader was a male rather than a female.
- a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 8) I believe it is okay for a woman to not go by the standard social norms that society follows.
- a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 9) I think that that career opportunities must be based on the qualifications of the individual and not on based on their gender, irrespective of the post.
- a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 10) I, recently, see many females who are strong minded and independent than before.
- a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 11) I see myself as a feminist.
- a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither Disagree or Agree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 12) I believe that men, as well, play a part in the certainty of equal rights for women.
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