

TITLE: “If a man whistles at you, do not respond. You are a lady, not a dog”: Individual Feminist Identity Development and Street Harassment Experiences

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Introduction:

Street harassment is most often defined as any action or comment between strangers in public places that is disrespectful, unwelcome, threatening and/or harassing and is motivated by gender. Street harassment has become a human rights issue as it creates unsafe public spaces for women. Little research has been conducted in regards to how women define and understand street harassment. It is important that women understand the threat street harassment imposes on their public safety in order to successfully combat it. We are able to comprehend why some females are more likely to recognize the severity of street harassment in comparison to others, by collecting data on college female street harassment experiences, their definitions of street harassment, and their feminist identity development score. We have hypothesized that those with more developed feminist identity scores will recognize the severity of street harassment than women with lower feminist identity development scores. We are able to educate women regarding the dangers of street harassment with this information.

Method:

We explored street harassment experiences, definitions and feminist identity development stages of 216 college females, through an online questionnaire. We posted the questionnaire via multiple social media websites such as Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr. Then, we collected street harassment experiences by administering the Street Harassment Experiences Questionnaire (SHEQ). We calculated feminist identity development scores with the Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS). Participants provided their personal definitions of street harassment with an open-ended portion on the survey.

Conclusion:

This topic of research allows for further understanding of female experience through its exploration of feminist identity, and its potential correlation of perceived street harassment experiences. We will finalize the conclusions of our data analysis. We will code the qualitative definitions of street harassment against a standard definition developed by other researchers, and calculate average feminist identity development scores. We will be able to identify if there is a correlation between perceived street harassment experiences and specific stages within the

FIDS from the analyses. Overall, these research conclusions will demonstrate what level of feminist identity development exhibits intolerance or even intervention for street harassment.