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Feminist Divide: Do we know what the problem areas are?

Jacqueline Rieth

Abstract

This research focuses on the divide in the global feminist movement between different types of feminism. As well as how divisions in the feminist movements allow for counter movements to devalue the feminist movement. **Hypothesis:** The general population is unaware of the divisions of feminism. **Method:** An online survey was distributed to thirty (n=30) participants asking about their knowledge of the feminist movement as a whole and the divisions within feminism. **Results:** results showed that the majority of the participants understood the divisions of feminism and had been exposed to different types of feminism.

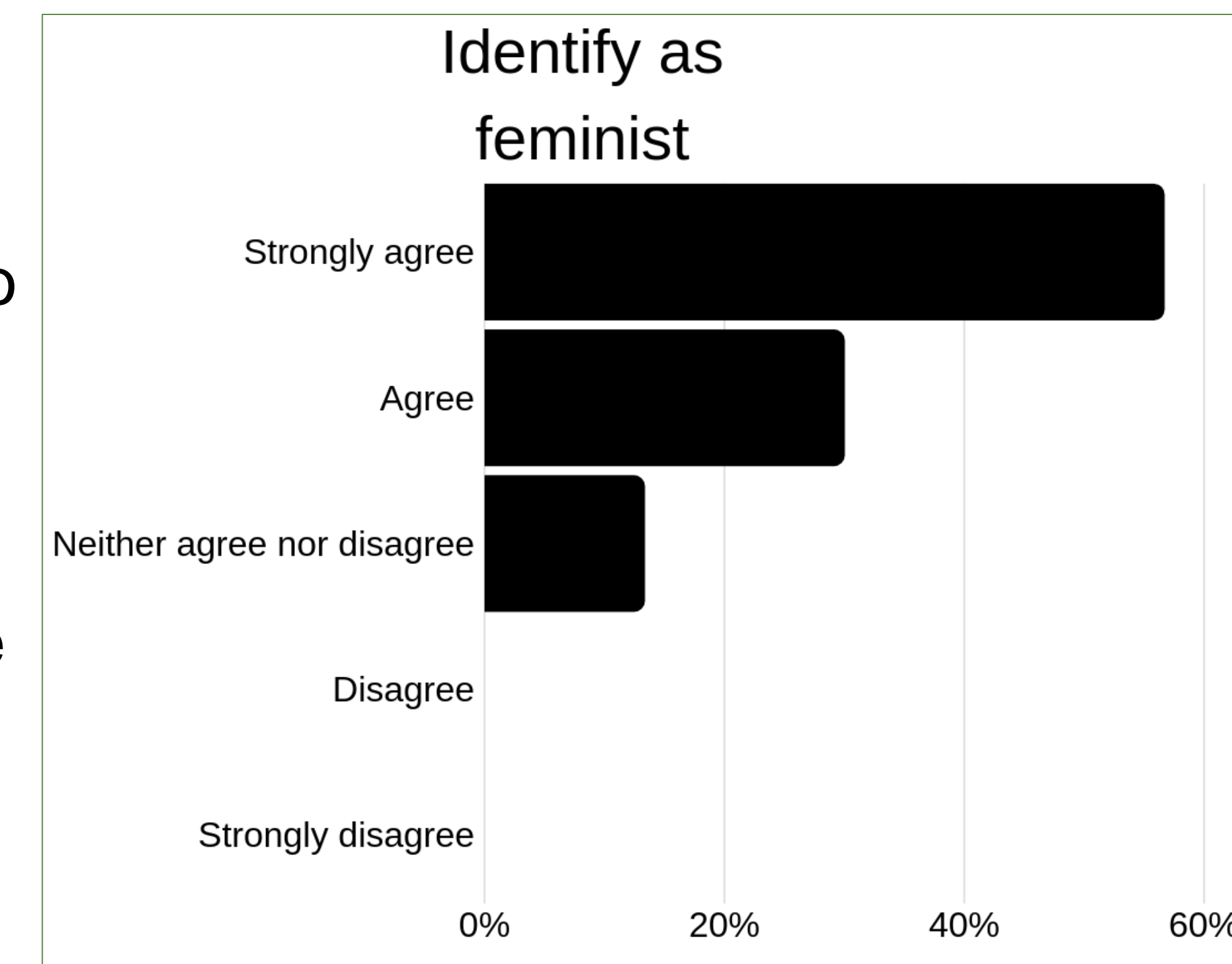
Method

Participants for this research were Portland State University students with a mix of the general public. Participants were contacted through posted flyers in classrooms and around the Portland State University campus. Thirty (n=30) people participated in the survey anonymously answering ten questions that focused on general knowledge of the feminist movements and their divides such as feminist ideas in the media, diversity in feminist movements and visibility of the fact that diversity in feminist movements exists. The survey was scored on a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

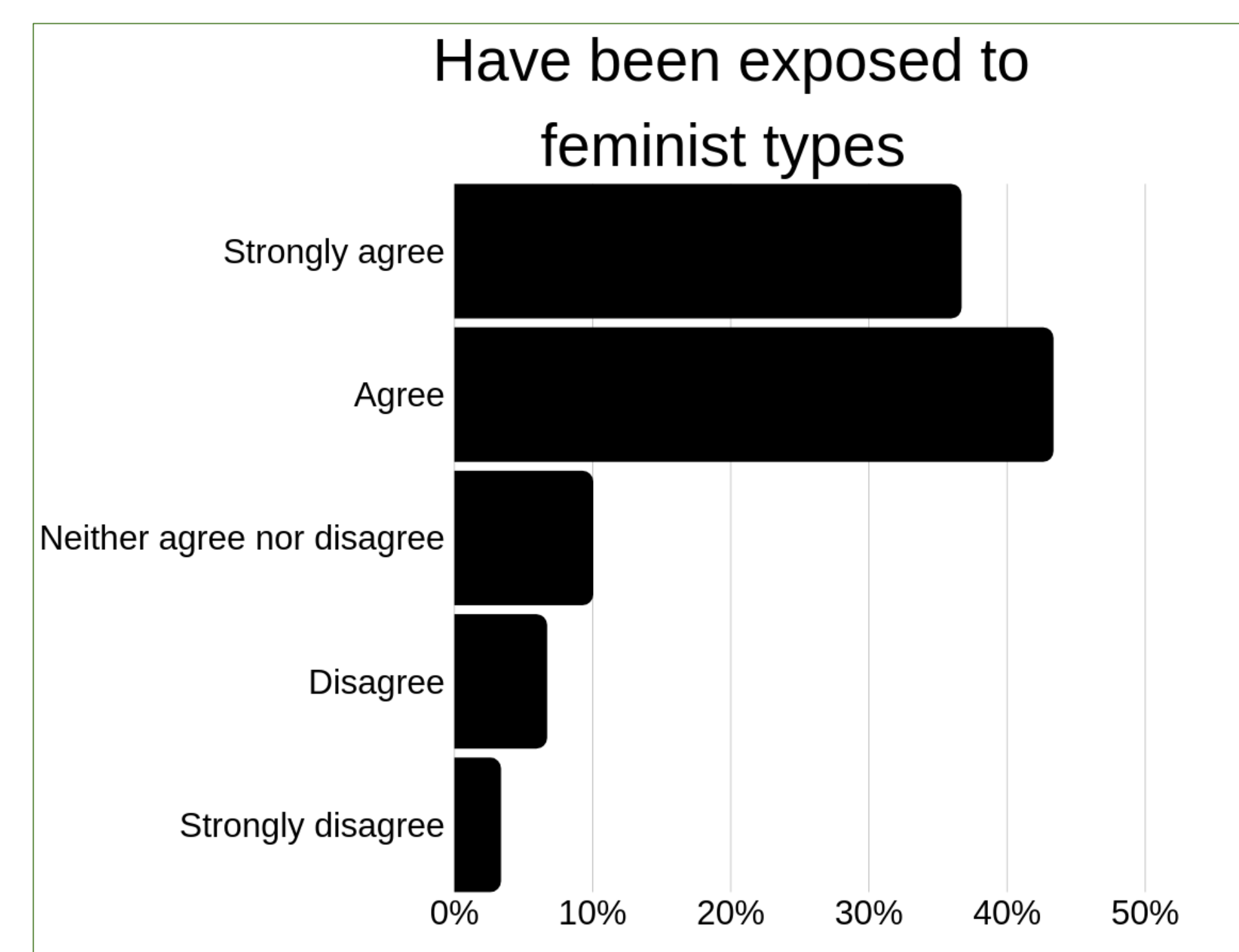
Body

Importance: The global feminist movement increases in size almost every day but many of the smaller sub movements are in disagreement with each other about what the true goals of the feminist movement as a whole is. In

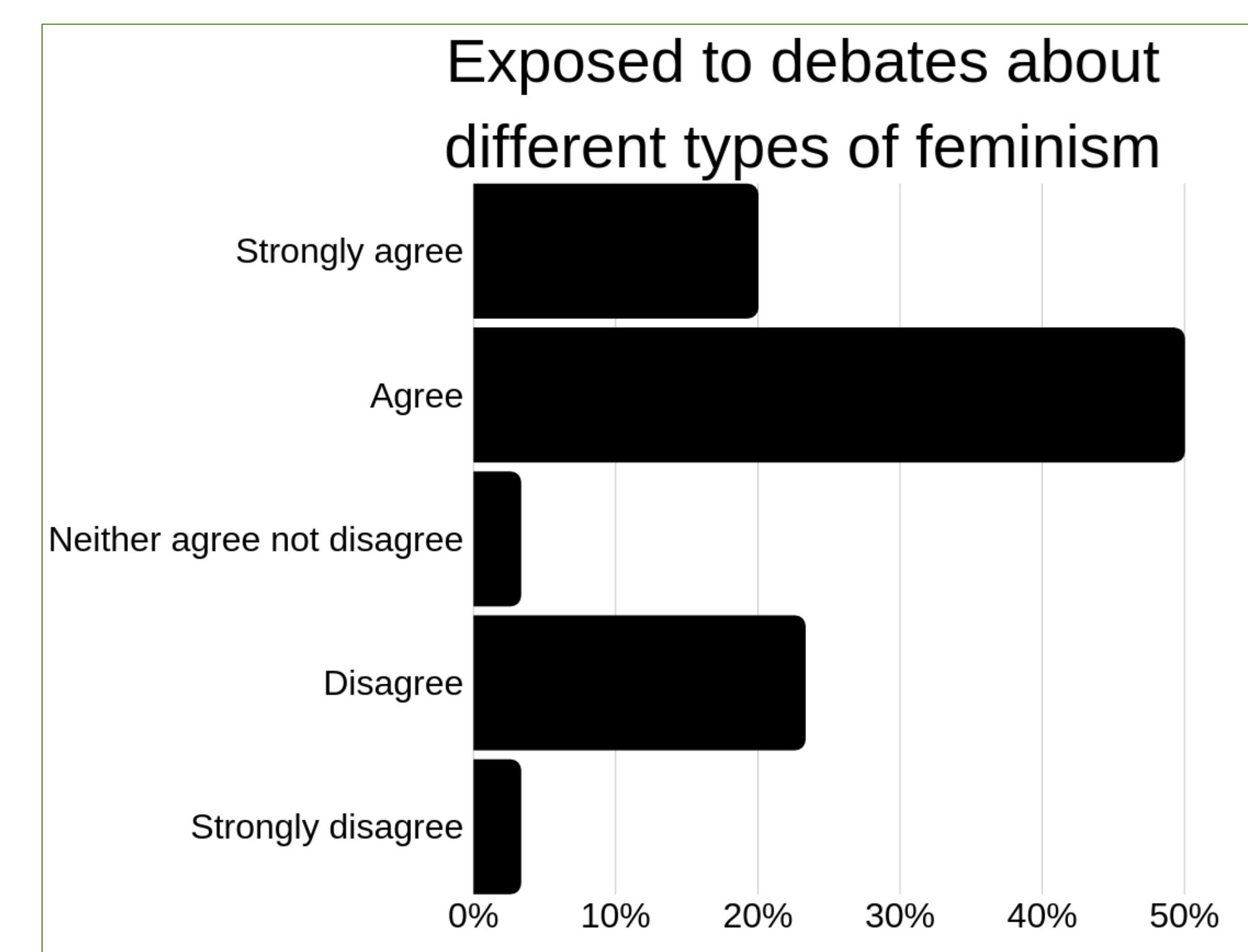
order to expand on this problem, first, investigations into what the public knows and what areas need to be expanded on are needed. The **purpose** of this study is to investigate those areas and examine what areas need more research and expansion. Specifically exposure to different types of feminism and debates about feminism.



Over 50% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were self identified as a feminist. When asked about whether the participant had been exposed to different types of feminism, the majority again agreed or strongly agreed and only small percentages answered with a neutral or disagree response.



While the majority of participants had been exposed to different types of feminism not as many participants answered that they had been exposed to debates about the different types of feminism. Which exposes an area for more research.



Conclusions

The results of this study disprove the original hypothesis that the general population was unaware of the different divisions of feminism. While an exposure to general knowledge was true for most of the participants fewer participants were exposed to debates about the different types of feminism. Meaning that exposure to productive debates are one of the next steps in closing the gaps between the divisions of feminism. An important part of legitimizing the feminist movement is the creation of a harmonious movement as a whole that is stronger against counter movements.

Future research should focus on analyzing the depth of people's knowledge of the different types of feminism. Research should also focus on a wider participant pool such as non-university students. As well as research that moves to explain the historical and political contexts in which the different types of feminism are divided.

Acknowledgements

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