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Incorporating feminist practices into (psychological) science - the why, the what and the how



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Background



- Inspired by 2022 SIPS hackathon “Feminist Ways of Doing - A Hackathon Collecting Resources for Feminist Approaches to Science”.
- Little knowledge among scientists regarding the general definition, implementation or impact of feminist approaches in the psychological sciences.
- We focus on feminist practices (the method), related to but different from feminist psychology (the topic).

Background



We answer three questions:

1) **Why** can the incorporation of feminist approaches be beneficial for psychological science?

- It broadens theoretical perspectives, encourages **collaboration** and **inclusion** of **marginalized groups**.

2) **What** are feminist approaches?

- We propose a list at the individual and institutional levels.

3) **How** can psychological science researchers move towards incorporating feminist approaches into their work?

- We offer a summary of the potential barriers and a 'Top 11' author-curated list of actions for anyone to begin incorporating feminist practices.
- Glossary of key feminist terms

The *Why* of feminist practices in science



Naming the issues

- Science still tied to prejudice from its past, based on work done by a few in a privileged position.
- The **leaky pipeline** (Ong et al., 2011): How can science keep gender diversity in academia?
- By keeping marginalized researchers out of (psychological) science, we restrict psychological research to one dominant worldview (McCormick-Huhn et al., 2019) and deprive it from diversified perspectives (Hofstra et al., 2020).

The *Why* of feminist practices in science



Naming the issues

- Elsherif et al.'s (2022) Academic Wheel of **Privilege**: gender is one many more intersectional dimensions important for improving (psychological) science
- Lack of social diversity = limited scientific conclusions!
- Open Scholarship movement providing access: Women scholars are more likely to occupy high-status author positions within open scholarship networks, encouraging by itself more women to join the movement (Murphy et al., 2020).
- Framework for Open and Reproducible Research Training - **fort.org**
- Advancing Big-team Reproducible science with Increased Representation (**ABRIR**)



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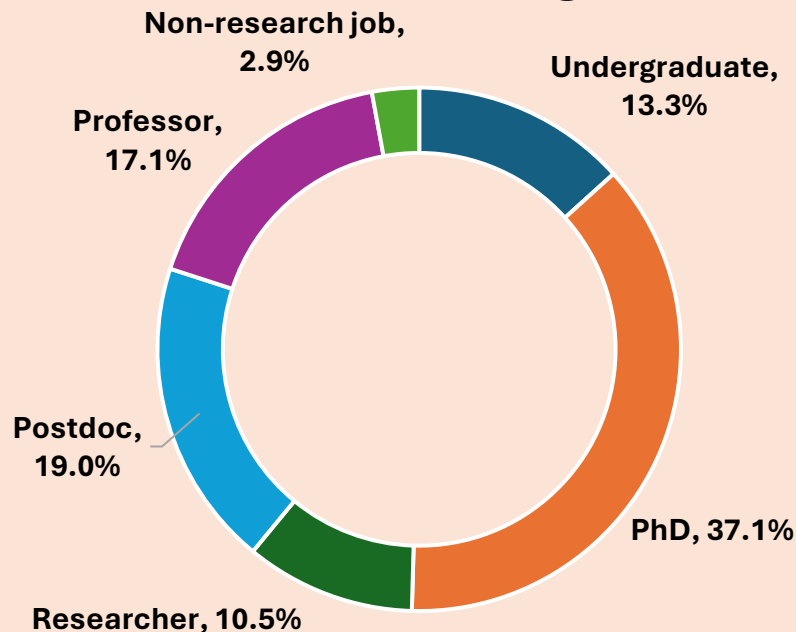
The *What* of feminist practices in science

Survey results:

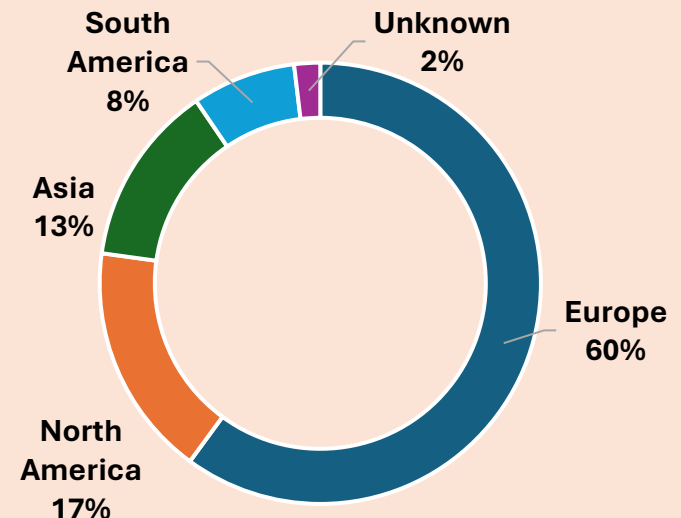
- A general grasp of what feminist approaches are. But ~17% did not know what these meant.
- 61.9% would like to implement them
- For only 10.5% their department implemented feminist practices in open science, and almost half (42.9%) believed their institution did not intend to do so.

- **Feminist practices:** all (research) practices that align with feminist values, including not on feminist topics
- How clear is the concept of feminist practices to academics?
- To crowdsource daily practices: an informal survey (N=105) on existing individual/institutional practices in the context of open scholarship

Career Stage



Location



The *What* of feminist practices in science



Used practices from the literature:

1) Individual-level:

- Intersectionality: more diversity in research teams and in studied populations (more diverse samples)
 - awareness of own explicit/implicit biases
- Teaching and mentoring: need for mentors that can reveal the **hidden curriculum**, becoming an **ally** to a marginalised student
- Critical thinking and justification:
 - authorship acknowledgement for diverse duties
 - reference list audit

The *What* of feminist practices in science



Used practices from the literature:

2) Institutional-level:

- Systemic intersectionality: considering the cross-cultural interpretations of feminism
- Sexual harassment:
 - supportive structures and effective evidence-based by-stander trainings
 - defining clearly unacceptable behaviours, beyond just criminal misconduct
 - Existing examples: **Bringing in the Bystander workshop** (Soteria Solutions, 2023), **Code-of-Conduct templates for conferences and laboratories** (Saderi, 2019; Sharp, 2022), the **Respect Is Part of Research initiative** (STAR, 2023)
 - Collecting data: **Project UniSAFE** (European Science Foundation, 2021) - sexual and gender-based violence in universities and research institutions
- Policies: who creates policies and what are their values?

The *What* of feminist practices in science



- Family-work balance:
 - creating part-time tenure positions
 - normalizing career breaks and pausing the “tenure clock”
 - providing paid parental/adoption leave
 - scheduling work events around family duties
- Service imbalance and career:
 - formalising service as part of the job and including it in promotion/raise decisions
 - rotational principle of assigning service tasks
 - Collect more data on workloads, responsibilities and compensation

The *What* of feminist practices in science



- Grants and awards:
 - projects and organisations: implementing implicit bias interventions and gender equity plans
 - specific funding opportunities for women
 - concrete but diverse awards criteria
- Visibility:
 - involvement of more women in conference decision panels
 - monitoring speakers gender separately at different career stages
 - Available online tools: the **Conference diversity distribution calculator** (Prasad, 2019), the **Gender bias in recommendation letters tools** (Forth, 2013; Lowe, 2023), the resources of **BiasWatchNeuro group** (2023), etc.
- Gender pay gap:
 - salaries should be publicized for a job offer
 - institutions should publish detailed yearly reports on salary gaps per career stage, demonstrating any improvements

The *How* of feminist practices in science

- We curated a **Top 11 list** of the easiest and most impactful feminist practices to start implementing now.
- A **glossary** of useful feminist terms to address the issues

Key takeaways:

- Feminist practices are widespread and varied, and most probably we are already implementing some of them without terming them as such.
- We urgently need more data documenting the effects of the implementation of these practices.

| Practice | Mean Difficulty | Mean Importance |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Bringing The Bystander sexual harassment prevention workshop: https://www.soteriasolutions.org/college/ . | 2.4 | 7.8 |
| Self-care: move your body, stay hydrated, eat nutritious food, talk to other feminists! | 2.0 | 8.8 |
| Reflect on hierarchies (in power, priorities, and thought) and privilege in work contexts, as well as on personal gender biases. | 2.8 | 8.6 |
| Speak up more often, pointing out sexist behavior and gender inequality. Be an active bystander. | 3.4 | 9.4 |
| Publish open-access and share your work (data, code, materials) if possible and allowed, in a FAIR way & allow others to take part, especially those from regions/institutions who have less resources than you. | 2.6 | 8.0 |

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Demographic inertia | The idea that women's much later entrance into some scientific and research fields additionally contributes to their lack of representation in the more senior faculty staff. | Charlesworth & Banaji (2021) |
| Diversity | A variety of different expressions of gender, sexual preference, ethnicity, and many other factors etc. This includes a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. | Martinez-Acosta & Favero (2018) |
| Dual career | Referring to the concept of professionals or academics who, apart from pursuing a full-time or part-time career, also perform caring duties for family members. | Schiebinger & Schraudner (2011) |

Thank you! Questions?



Interested to know more or join the Feminist WonderLab Collective?

We are a diverse group of ECRs and practitioners of open scholarship who identify as feminists. We meet online monthly to discuss feminist practices and open scholarship.

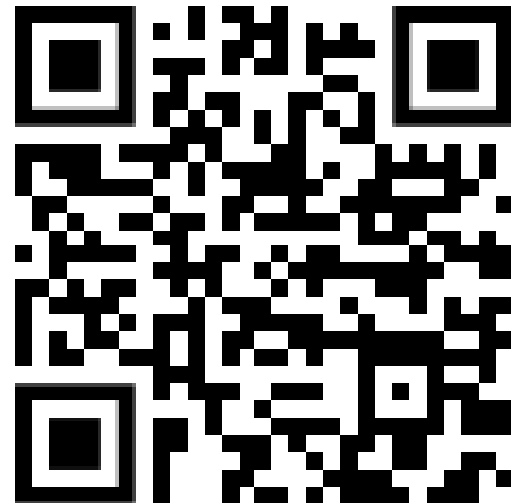
Interested in joining one of our future projects or maybe looking for like-minded collaborators for your own project?

Email: z.g.ilchovska@bham.ac.uk

X (Twitter): @Zlatilchovska

Or come talk to me!

Article (under review) pre-print, Top 11 Checklist & Feminist Glossary at:



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