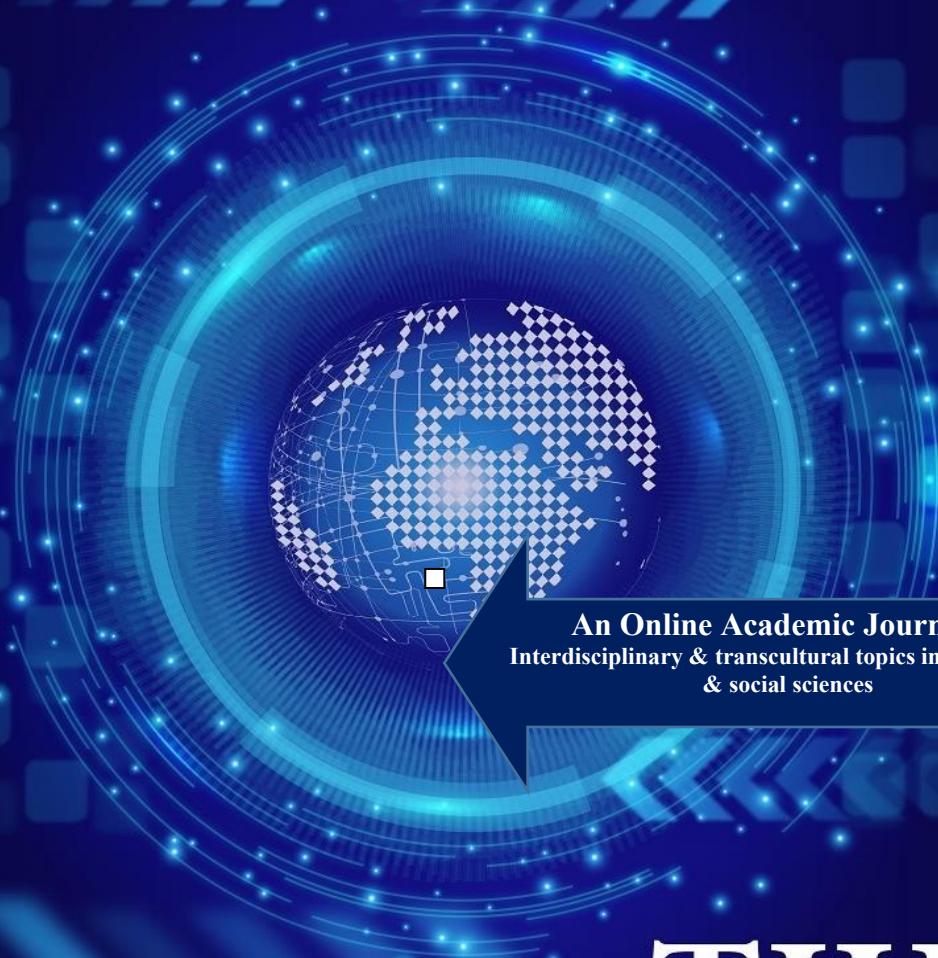


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# TJHSS

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فتميزكم المشهود خير قدوة، ممتنين لعملكم الدؤوب وتفوقكم الباهر، ونتمنى لكم المزيد من  
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تحريراً في يوم الأربعاء الموافق 2024/08/07.

رئيس مجلس الأمناء

د/ حسن القلا

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## **Students' Attitudes and Perceptions toward Introducing Feminism Perspectives in University Syllabi**

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### **Abstract**

The current research investigates the change in senior year female and male students' attitudes toward feminism by affecting their perceptions after introducing materials on feminism in two literature and translation courses. The main questions of the research attempt to address the extent to which senior year students' attitudes have been affected by the inclusion of course materials on feminism and the difference in attitudes between male and female students. The 1960 functional theory of attitudes by Katz is adopted as a theoretical framework of analysis. 56 participants were selected amongst students at the School of Linguistics & Translation, Badr University in Cairo. The research adopted a quasi-experimental method based on questionnaires to a control group and an experimental group to collect data to test the hypotheses and answer the main questions of the research. The respondents were selected purposively and were divided into two groups: a control group (9 males and 9 females) from third year students who do not study any topics related to feminism; and an experimental group (18 males and 18 females) from senior year students who studied both translation and literature course materials on feminism during the Spring and Fall terms 2023-2024. The findings of the research show that a change in attitudes relevant to both utilitarian and knowledge functions occurred; however, the change was not significant among male participants compared to female participants. The research recommended enhancing teaching strategies in delivering materials on feminism to college students such as collaborative learning strategy as well as stressing their social roles that reinforce gender equality.

**Keywords:** Attitude, university students, syllabi, feminism, perspectives

## 1. Introduction

In recent times, there has been a notable surge in efforts to achieve gender equality and acknowledge the role of women. These endeavors have brought about transformative changes in various spheres of society. A substantial focus has been granted to the integration of feminism-related materials into higher education, as addressing gender issues, raises the consciousness about the issues of justice and social equality among students (Vandrick, 2014). This inclusion is a direct response to the increasing recognition of gender inequalities which requires inclusive learning environments.

The integration of gender and feminism studies in higher education syllabi has been researched on different scales; starting with examining and analyzing the degree gender related issues included in the university curricula; and developing gender-balanced curriculum (Shih & Wang, 2021). In addition, studies focused on raising awareness of the issues of justice and social equality among students (Vandrick, 2014). Attempts were made to highlight the issues of power in classrooms and foreground marginalized students' voices (Shrewsbury, 1993; Pace, 2007), to make higher education more feminist friendly (Morely & Macfarlane, 2012), and to tackle gaps aroused due to gender and impact the students' confidence and their engagement in course content and class community. The current research does not only investigate the students' attitudes toward introducing feminist perspectives but explores the power of studying them on changing their attitudes as well.

The functional theory of attitude (Katz, 1960) addresses the motivations that make people change their attitudes. This theory poses that if we enforce these motivations through the four functions; knowledge, utilitarian, value, and ego-defensive functions, the possibility of changing attitudes will be higher. This research focuses on both the knowledge function and utilitarian functions as main motivations in educational contexts. Knowledge function means that if individuals' knowledge of an issue increases, their choices, attitudes and perceptions tend to change. Also, utilitarian function means that if individuals realize the benefits they might get out of something, this encourages them to adopt different attitudes towards it. So, identifying the attitudes of students towards introducing feminism perspectives and reasons beyond adopting these perspectives will be revealed according to these functions.

The examination of university students' attitudes toward the course materials on feminism and delving into the underlying factors that shaped these attitudes or exploring the reasons behind such attitudes were not addressed to the researcher's knowledge. Hence, there is a need to investigate students' attitudes toward the inclusion of course materials on feminism, utilizing the functional theory of attitudes. By employing this theoretical framework, we can delve deeper into the development of students' attitudes and uncover the reasons behind their positive or negative stance toward a particular issue.

To further test the feasibility of this research, the researcher conducted a pilot study on a random sample of (22) female and male senior year students in Spring 2023. A questionnaire was conducted to identify students' opinions toward the idea of introducing course materials on

feminism that they will study during their senior year. The questions addressed their background about feminism, the expected benefits they might gain from studying feminism, and their acceptance to include materials on feminism in university syllabi. Unstructured interviews were conducted as well to further express their opinions and give reasons why they would or would not like to study materials on feminism. Both statistical and data analysis showed the following:

- 82 % of male students had negative attitude toward feminism and expressed no interest in studying the course materials on feminism
- Nearly 80% of female students who had positive attitudes toward feminism expressed their interest in the course materials on feminism.

Students' comments were as follows:

#### **Positive perceptions:**

- I think I'll get more information about my gender and who I am.
- I now believe that women are strong and independent.
- I started to support some ideas in feminism instead of hating it, but not all ideas. (a young man)

#### **Negative perceptions:**

- I believe that men are stronger than women.
- Woman place is in the kitchen.
- I don't believe in feminism because I'm a man.

The findings of the pilot study raised the question; will studying materials on feminism change male and female perceptions and attitudes?

The percentage of male students compared to female students regarding studying course materials on feminism are previously proved in the literature (Yaqot, 2021) as it was also conducted in similar culture in an Arab country, Algeria. However, the percentage of female students who lack the desire to study more on this topic raises questions about their background knowledge about feminism and whether they have a correct perception of it or cannot identify its benefits. Another study (Ogletree & Padilla, 2019) called for more focused study of feminism among students to be exposed to course work and experience as a possible path to increasing positive attitudes among students; as college experience plays a role in shaping or reshaping attitudes on feminism and equality . Add to this the need to raise the awareness about feminism and gender among university students (Unutkan & Yılmaz, 2016), integrate feminist theories and methodologies, and improve the experience of women in higher education (Nicholson & Pasque, 2017).

#### **Aim of the Research**

Investigate the change in students' attitudes toward feminism affected by the inclusion of course materials on feminist perspectives considering two functions of attitude; utilitarian

function and knowledge function and pinpoint the difference between the attitudes of male and female students toward feminism.

### **Research Question and Hypotheses**

To what extent have male and female senior year students' attitudes and perception changed toward feminism affected by the inclusion of course materials on feminist perspectives based on knowledge and utilitarian functions of the functional theory of attitudes?

#### **Hypotheses:**

- Female senior year students in the experimental group adopt positive attitudes toward feminist perspective motivated by utilitarian function enhanced by the course materials on feminist perspective.
- Male senior year students in the experimental group adopt positive attitudes motivated by utilitarian function enhanced by the course materials on feminist perspective.
- Female senior year students in the experimental group adopt positive attitudes toward feminist perspective motivated by knowledge function enhanced by the course materials on feminist perspective.
- Male senior year students in the experimental group adopt positive attitudes motivated by knowledge function enhanced by the course materials on feminist perspective.
- Control group participants do not adopt different attitudes toward feminism in the pre and post-questionnaires.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Feminism in Education**

Incorporation of feminism in higher education is critical to promote a more inclusive and welcoming educational environment that for equality for all students, and there have been many calls to include feminism in higher education and to develop new courses within higher education to promote students' understanding of the value of the diverse voices (Ropers-Huilman & Winters, 2011).

The issue of Addressing gender issues in higher education has been raised, as it raises awareness and promotes a sense of justice and social equality among students (Vandrick, 2014). This inclusion of gender issues would include exploring topics such as gender discrimination and gender-based violence. Also, including topics relevant to feminism (i.e., critical race theory or critical race feminism, Black feminism (Ropers-Huilman & Winters, 2011). It serves to emphasize power dynamics within classrooms and advocates for social change and the

eradication of sexism as well (Shrewsbury, 1993). Moreover, it creates a more feminist-friendly environment within higher education by providing an environment that empowers and supports all individuals to thrive academically and personally (Morely & Macfarlane, 2012). Furthermore, it addresses gender gaps that can impact students' confidence and their level of engagement with course content and the classroom community (Andersen & Smith, 2022).

In a study by Ogletree and Padilla (2019), young men perspectives toward feminism were investigated and they expressed that feminism is a “man-hating” perspective, and it is aggressive and hostile toward men. In addition, men tended to have negative attitudes toward feminism to hold traditional gender views. In another study conducted in Dumlupinar University, School of Health students to determine opinions on feminism and gender roles, male students had traditional opinions on gender roles related to work, social, marriage and family life (Unutkan et al., 2016). Tackling feminism issues and integrating them in EFL classrooms and students' attitudes have been also researched; Yaqot (2021) showed the difference between male and female reaction revealing that most female students maintained the perspective the feminism ought to be consistently integrated into the literature curriculum, while male students reacted negatively to the amount of class time devoted to feminism. This research depends on measuring the students' attitudes regarding aspects related to their religious and cultural backgrounds.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of feminist issues in college curricula can be controversial in some Arab countries due to a variety of cultural, religious, and political factors. In many Arab societies, traditional gender roles and patriarchal values are deeply ingrained, and the concept of feminism may be seen as a threat to these values (Cooke, 2000).

Furthermore, there is a perception that feminist movements and ideas are associated with secularism, and the promotion of feminist ideas and values goes against cultural and religious norms and can lead to moral decay and social instability. As for the feminism related issues, they are not recognized in some Arab countries which have no “feminist” curriculum in higher education (Findlow, 2013) or are not represented with considerable attention (Abouelnaga, 2023)

These factors can cause reluctance to include feminist issues in college curricula in some Arab countries and may lead to censorship or limitations on the discussion of feminist topics in academic settings. Nonetheless, there are also many individuals and organizations within these societies who advocate for the inclusion of feminist and gender perspectives in education, and who work to promote gender equality and women's rights.

In Egypt the inclusion of women's roles in curricula in Egypt has been a topic of research and discussion for many years; however, there is still much work to be done to fully recognize and celebrate the contributions of women throughout Egyptian history especially that gender is on the political agenda (Fouad & UNESCO, 2023)

In recent years, there have been some positive developments in this area. For example, the Ministry of Education in Egypt has introduced new textbooks that include more information on the contributions of women in various fields, such as science, literature, and politics. This is in addition to an initiative by MOE “She leads” that was announced to support women and promote values (Ministry of Education, 2023) Additionally, there are several universities in



Egypt that offer courses in Women's Studies and Gender Studies, which explore the experiences and perspectives of women in Egyptian society.

However, the introduction of materials should consider cultivating positive attitudes of students toward these materials and considering their motives to learn them.

## **2.2 Attitudes and Learning**

Attitudes and learning share a reciprocal connection, whereby attitudes can shape one's approach to learning, and the learning process itself can result in a change of attitudes. According to (Baker, 1988), attitudes are not inherited and can be modified by experience. Hence, it could be argued that learning affects attitudes and might change them, and on the other hand attitudes can facilitate or hinder learning. One of the fundamental reasons that teaching objectives have not been achieved is due to the attitudes of the students toward learning (Glynn, Aultman, & Owens, 2005). By applying these findings to the inclusion of materials on feminism in curricula offered to students, their attitudes would have implications on the learning process and accepting the idea of studying this topic, and the materials could have an impact on reshaping or changing their attitudes.

## **2.3 Functional Theory of Attitudes**

The current research adopts the functional theory of attitudes (Katz, 1960) which emphasizes that to change an attitude, it is crucial to comprehend the underlying motivation or purpose it serves for the individual. An attitude according to this theory is a tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or symbol of that object in a certain way." (Katz, 1960, p. 168). The theory identified four personality functions of attitudes as follows: (a) utilitarian function, (b) knowledge function, (c) ego-defensive function, and (d) value-expressive function. For attitude change to occur, there must be a discrepancy between the need being met by the individual and the existing attitude. Attitude change is accomplished by recognizing the function of the attitude for the individual and designing strategies to produce a disparity between the attitude and one or more of the attitude functions. Furthermore, Attitudes serve different functions as people develop attitudes to serve their goals. Although two people might have the same attitude, it might serve very different functions for each person (Katz, 1960; Smith, Bruner, & White, 1956)

Drawing on the functional theory of attitudes (Katz, 1960), the research investigates two of the main functions that attitudes serve in influencing students' opinions: knowledge function and utilitarian functions. The knowledge function is considered as the most fundamental purpose served by attitudes, and it applies to all attitudes to varying degrees. Also, attitudes fulfill a knowledge function by establishing a sense of coherence within one's frame of reference. As for the utilitarian function of attitudes, it can maximize rewards and minimize punishments derived from objects in one's environment.

To detect the change of attitudes, the motivational basis, or its function for the individual should be realized. Knowing what function an attitude performs for a person will guide the

designer of the persuasive message (designer of course materials on feminism) to change the attitude or to reinforce it.

The research depends on only two functions because they can be easily influenced in educational contexts; the learning process mainly targets increasing knowledge and understanding within the Intended Learning Outcomes ILOs, and it makes the students aware of the benefits they gain from it. The other two functions of the theory (Katz, 1960); value expressive and ego-defensive functions are not easily addressed in educational contexts, as they are more related to psychological factors.

### **3. Method of Research**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

To test the hypotheses and to answer the main question, the current research adopted the quasi-experimental method as it is not possible to randomize individuals or groups participating in this research to avoid the extraneous variables; for example demographic factors, family education, academic year, and country of origin. Quasi-experimental methods test casual hypotheses, offer practical options for conducting impact evaluations in real world settings, and avoid the ethical concerns that are associated with random selection of participants (Thyer, 2012)

#### **3.1 Participants**

Fifty-six female and male senior year students participated in the research. The selection process of the participants observed; university level and studying the same subjects under research. The participants were divided into two groups, an experimental group (36) students (18) female and (18) male students in the fourth level who study literature and translation courses include materials on feminism; and a control group (18) students (9) female and (9) male students in the third level who do not study any courses include materials on feminism. Family education and living in rural or urban environments represent significant extraneous factors in this research, so there was a further selection process taking these factors into account.

#### **3.2 Materials on Feminism**

The two courses offered for the senior year students include materials on feminism. The first course is a literary criticism course which includes a considerable part on feminism theories and encourages students to critically analyze theories with examples connected to their culture. The second course is a simultaneous interpretation course which includes a considerable part on feminism and the role of woman in the society. The students listen to audios and watch videos on this topic showing different events and perspectives toward feminism.

#### **3.3 Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire was designed to gather detailed data on the components of the Functional Attitude theory (Katz, 1960) related to course materials on feminism. Each item was measured on a five-point Likert scale, allowing respondents to express their level of agreement

or disagreement with the provided statements. Other items were added to the questionnaire to have further data to check the extraneous factors.

The statements of the questionnaires objected to unveiling both knowledge and utilitarian functions of attitudes, as well as the students' perceptions.

### 3.4 Procedures

A questionnaire was conducted to both the control and experimental groups at the beginning of Spring term 2023. The course materials on feminism in both literature and translation courses were given in Spring term 2023 for the experimental group. By the end of Spring term 2023 the same questionnaire was conducted to both groups. Then a statistical treatment and data analysis were done to reveal the change in students' attitudes before and after introducing materials on feminism in both courses; and whether this change is positive or negative among female and male students; in addition to the cause of change according to the functional theory of attitude.

## 4. Results

The results of the questionnaire given before and after the intervention is introduced as follows:

Table 1 shows a comparison between the statistical results between pre-intervention questionnaire and post-intervention questionnaire for the experimental group. The word intervention refers to studying the two courses including materials on feminism.

**Table 1. Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores (Mean  $\pm$  SD) for Likert-Scale Variables**

**(1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree).**

Variable	Pre-Mean (SD)	Post-Mean (SD)	p-value	Effect (d)	Size
Utilitarian function <i>Benefits gained</i>	2.4 (1.2)	2.1 (1.3)	0.03*	0.4	
Utilitarian function <i>Clear roles</i>	2.5 (1.1)	2.3 (1.4)	0.08	0.3	
Utilitarian function <i>Equal expression</i>	3.0 (1.3)	2.8 (1.2)	0.15	0.2	
Knowledge function <i>More knowledge</i>	2.0 (1.0)	1.8 (1.2)	0.02*	0.5	
Knowledge function <i>Important knowledge</i>	2.7 (1.4)	2.5 (1.3)	0.10	0.3	
Knowledge	3.2 (1.5)	2.9 (1.4)	0.04*	0.4	

Variable	Pre-Mean (SD)	Post-Mean (SD)	p-value	Effect (d)	Size
function					
<b>More value</b>					
Perception	3.5 (1.6)	3.0 (1.5)	0.01*	0.6	
<b>More interested</b>					
Perception	3.8 (1.7)	3.2 (1.6)	0.005*	0.7	
<b>Changed opinions</b>					

### Variable one: Utilitarian function

Table 1 shows that there is a statistically significant difference in students' beliefs about getting benefits from studying materials on feminism in the experimental group before and after the intervention as the post-intervention scores decreased (2.1 vs. 2.4,  $p = 0.03$ ,  $d = 0.4$ ). This means that the participants perceived significantly greater benefits after the intervention.

However, there are non-significant trends ( $p > 0.05$ ) regarding having more opportunities for equal expression and for having clearer understanding of gender roles in society among the participants in the experimental group. Small improvements ( $d = 0.2$ – $0.3$ ) occurred but not statistically significant. This might show that the intervention may not have sufficiently clarified roles or ensured equal participation.

### Variable two: Knowledge function

There is a statistically significant difference between the participants' knowledge before and after intervention. Post-intervention scores decreased (1.8 vs. 2.0,  $p = 0.02$ ,  $d = 0.5$ ) which shows that participants gained more knowledge about feminism after intervention. In addition, the statistics show that post-intervention scores decreased (2.9 vs. 3.2,  $p = 0.04$ ,  $d = 0.4$ ) regarding the value of studying materials on feminism showing that they found the study more valuable after intervention.

### Perception toward feminism

As for the perception and acceptance of studying materials on feminism, the participants showed more interest and changed their opinions toward the importance of studying materials on feminism showing largest improvements (both  $p < 0.01$ ,  $d = 0.6$ – $0.7$ ). The intervention strongly increased interest and shifted opinions (scores moved from "Neutral" toward "Agree")

For further analysis, the participants in the experimental group were divided according to gender to female and male. A comparison between the two groups was conducted according to

the variables of the research. Table 2 shows a comparison between female and male students considering the variables of the research and their perceptions.

**Table 2. Comparing Males' and Females' Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores (Mean  $\pm$  SD) for Likert-Scale Variables (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree).**

V a r i a b l e	G r o u p	Pre-Mean (SD)	Post-Mean (SD)	Mean $\Delta$ (Post-Pre)	p-value (Group Diff)
Utilitarian function Benefits gained	Female students	2.4 (1.1)	2.0 (1.0)	- 0 . 4	0 . 1 0
	Male students	2.6 (1.3)	2.3 (1.4)	- 0 . 3	
Utilitarian function Clear roles	Female students	2.5 (1.0)	2.2 (1.2)	- 0 . 3	0 . 2 5
	Male students	2.7 (1.2)	2.5 (1.5)	- 0 . 2	
Knowledge function More knowledge	Female students	2.1 (0.9)	1.7 (0.8)	- 0 . 4	0 . 0 2 *
	Male students	2.3 (1.1)	2.1 (1.3)	- 0 . 2	
P e r c e p t i o n Changed opinions	Female students	3.8 (1.6)	3.0 (1.5)	- 0 . 8	0 . 0 1 *
	Male students	3.9 (1.8)	3.5 (1.7)	- 0 . 4	

Participants were split into two groups Female students (18) and Male students (18). The Female participants reported significantly greater gains in knowledge function ( $\Delta = -0.4$  vs.  $-0.2$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ,  $d = 0.6$ ) and perception ( $\Delta = -0.8$  vs.  $-0.4$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ,  $d = 0.75$ ) compared to Male participants, other variables showed no significant group differences.

### The control group

A questionnaire was conducted to the control group at the beginning of the term. The results regarding the Utilitarian function showed that 38.9% agreed that they expect to benefit from studying materials on feminism, 50% were neutral and 11.1% did not expect any benefits. As for the knowledge function 16.7% of the students expressed that they have knowledge about feminism although they did not study it, 68.5% were neutral, and 14.8% did not have any idea



about this topic. The results on the perception and attitude toward studying materials on feminism in courses revealed that 50% expressed their interest in studying this topic, 44.4% were neutral and 5.6% had no interest in studying this topic.

By the end of the term, the same questionnaire introduced to the experimental group was conducted among the control group to check and detect any change in opinions. Table 3 shows the difference between the results at the beginning and at the end of the term; observing that this group was not exposed to any materials on feminism in the courses offered to them during that term.

**TABLE 3. COMPARING THE PRE- AND POST-QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS FOR THE CONTROL GROUP.**

Variable	Pre-Test Median	Post-Test Median	p-value	Conclusion ( $\alpha=0.05$ )
V.1 (utilitarian function)	3	3	0.317	Not significant
V.2 (Knowledge function)	3	3	0.655	Not significant
V.3 (Perception )	2	2	0.157	Not significant

The table reveals that there are not any statistically significant differences between the results of both questionnaires which indicate no change in students' attitudes.

## 5. Discussion

Studying materials on feminism was most effective in changing both male and female students' opinions regarding the benefits they can get as they become able to deal with different issues in their relations with colleagues of the other gender considering their rights and responsibilities. In addition, female students expressed that they have gained broader perspectives regarding the societal problems considering the female roles and rights that could help in addressing these problems. This proved the first hypothesis of the research; female senior year students adopt positive attitudes motivated by utilitarian function enhanced by the course materials on feminism toward feminism.

However, the benefits gained expressed by students were different between female and male students. The female students focused on recognizing their right and being aware of them, on the other hand, some male students expressed the benefits of gaining experience in their relations with their female colleagues with wider perspectives. Still the benefits expressed by male students were very few and vary according to each person's preferences. These findings go against the second hypothesis which predicted that male students would adopt positive attitudes toward feminism based on the utilitarian function. These attitudes adopted by male students go with the results reached by Yaqot (2021) and Unutkan et al. (2016) as their studies show that male students stick to the traditional opinions regarding feminism based on their religious and

cultural background. The current research adds that their attitudes are based on realizing the few benefits they can gain from studying feminism according to the utilitarian function of attitude, which explains why their attitudes were not greatly changed.

The change regarding getting more opportunities for equal expression which lies under the utilitarian function was not highly statistically significant among both female and male students. This could be interpreted in two ways; either the methodology of teaching may not have sufficiently ensured equal participation or they already enjoy this equal participation. Eventually, gender role clarity and equal expression need targeted improvements.

Studying materials on feminism was highly effective regarding the knowledge gained and the value of the materials which reveals the success achieved. This effect has made a great change in female and male students' perspectives toward the definition and understanding of 'feminism' as many expressed that they had had false notions about the concept of feminism and reacted negatively to any context that includes this concept. By understanding and explaining theories and waves of feminism, they are able now to figure out the positive sides and neglect the negative sides that do not relate to their culture. This proved the third and fourth hypotheses as both female and male senior year students in the experimental group adopted positive attitudes motivated by knowledge enhanced by the course materials on feminism.

While female students showed enthusiasm toward the knowledge they gained and appreciated the value of the course materials, most male students raised some concerns toward the inappropriateness of studying these materials to the Islamic and Arab culture. They expressed their concerns of the possible favors for women to men and accepting the superiority of women over men. This result might go with the result reached by Ogletree and Padilla (2019) showing the description of studying feminism as "man-hating" movement by male students; however, the social context here is stronger as male students in this research are not accepting the superiority of women.

## **6. Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the investigation of the utilitarian and knowledge functions, the research revealed a great change in perception toward feminism among students after studying the courses including materials on feminism. The interest in studying increased significantly, which supports the functional theory of attitudes, as stressing the benefits that students could gain and enforcing the knowledge they acquire made a change in their opinions. It is normal to have a resistance which is shown in the few numbers of students who did not show any change, but the percentage of students who changed their opinions was high and statistically significant.

Further investigation was conducted to determine whether those who did not change their opinions have been affected by any of the extraneous factors, yet they were not affected as they do not share a certain factor as being from a city or a village, or from a highly educated family or less educated family. So, there might be other ways to boost the change that has not been covered in introducing the materials.

As for comparing the change occurred among female and male students, the research showed that female students were most affected by both utilitarian and knowledge functions in changing their perceptions; however, male students were mostly affected by knowledge function rather than utilitarian function as they did not see many gains or benefits from studying materials on feminism. This affected the percentage of opinion change among male students.

There were some comments given by male students which show concerns regarding the effect of studying these materials on cultural and religious values. Other comments rejected the exaggerated interest in the topic and the hyperbole of the role of women which can surpasses the role of men. These comments were like the ones detected in Ogletree and Padilla (2019) where men expressed that feminism is a “man-hating” perspective and in Unutkan et al. (2016) where male students had traditional opinions on gender roles related to work, social, marriage and family life. These comments reflect concerns and worries by some male students which could be handled during more open discussion and critical thinking.

The current research studied incorporating materials on feminism in college courses and investigating the attitudes of senior year students toward feminism considering the functional theory of attitude revealed that both the utilitarian and knowledge functions played a significant role in motivating students to change their attitudes and perceptions. Regardless of the challenges that arose from divergent viewpoints of students, and concerns regarding male and female roles, chances and responsibilities, still the change in attitudes can be observed clearly.

- Most senior year students in the experimental group adopted positive attitudes motivated by utilitarian function enhanced by the course materials on feminism.
- Senior year students in the experimental group adopted positive attitudes motivated by knowledge enhanced by the course materials on feminism.
- Female senior year students in the experimental showed more interest and positive perspectives toward feminism concepts and study more than male students after studying of course materials on feminism.

The research clarified the most motivational basis for students to change their attitudes. Female students were mostly motivated by the utilitarian function as they found benefits from studying these materials, as well as the knowledge function; in contrast, male student were mostly affected by the knowledge function and show less interest in the utilitarian function. In addition, the courses materials on feminism were sufficient; however, need development to stress and further clarify the roles of female and male in the society. As the data analysis showed, students did not fully realize the idea of roles which reflected no benefits to be gained according to the utilitarian function.

To conclude, educators should craft course materials that speak directly to learners' personal values and social needs. By aligning feminist concepts with students' existing belief systems, instructors can present ideas in ways that feel relevant and compelling, thereby increasing engagement and receptivity. Moreover, critical thinking strategies should be used into feminist instruction to address student concerns by demonstrating how feminist thought

complements—rather than undermines—their social identity and cultural frameworks. This approach will empower students to engage with feminist concepts as thoughtful participants. Finally, educators should adopt effective awareness-raising strategies to introduce feminism to university students, using methods such as guest lectures, debates, and multimedia resources.

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