Gender Differences in Consciousness of Sexual Harassment and Attitudes towards Gender Stereotypes among College Students

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This paper aimed to explore how college students perceived the gender equality consciousness and to examine if male and female students had differences in gender equality consciousness. Students at a university in central Taiwan were used as the studying sample. The gender equality consciousness discussed here included knowledge of sexual harassment and the attitudes towards sexual stereotypes.

We analyzed the data from the study on gender equality consciousness that was executed by the Gender equality Committee at a university in central Taiwan in 2008. There were 1,001 valid cases. SPSS was utilized to implement t-tests, chi-square tests and residual analyses.

Significant findings included: 1) College students still had many misconceptions about knowledge of sexual harassment. 2) Females and males had differences in gender consciousness and females have higher gender self awareness. 3) Male stereotypes were more prevalent than female stereotypes among college students.

To propagate the gender equality education on campus, we recommend that schools should endeavor to do the followings: 1) Make the definition of sexual harassment and how to avoid being sexually harassed widely known and raise students’ gender equality awareness to reduce the impact of patriarchal culture and tradition on the recognition and reporting of sexual harassment events. 2) Offer diverse gender courses and encourage students, particularly male students, to take gender courses. 3) Educate students to tolerate and respect people with various gender characteristics. 4) Train teachers with gender equality consciousness since their ideas will influence the students greatly through teaching and interaction.

Key words: gender equity consciousness, sexual harassment, gender stereotype, college students

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