THE FUTURE OF FEMINISM

A deep dive into womanhood, gender equality, and the state of feminism today
METHODOLOGY

We conducted an online survey fielded from February 9 - February 28, 2023 among the VICE Media Group audience and youth around the world.

OBJECTIVE

UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A WOMAN TODAY, AND ASSESS THE STATE OF FEMINISM & GENDER EQUALITY NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE

MARKETS

SAMPLE SIZE

N=2067

GENDER

77% WOMEN

19% MEN

4% NON-BINARY/NA

GENERATION

29% GEN Z

71% GEN Y

MARKETS

27% US

24% UK

24% MENA

24% INDIA

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL | 2023
SOCIETY CONTINUES TO PUT PEOPLE INTO ‘BOXES’ BASED ON THEIR GENDER IDENTITY

HALF

Of youth say: “Someone’s social standing is primarily based on their gender identity.”

↑ 65% India Women
↓ 39% US Women
↓ 31% UK Women

60%

Of youth say: “I feel that my gender identity is often politicised.”

↑ 88% Non-binary
↑ 72% Black Women
↑ 69% US Women
↓ 43% MENA Women

1 in 3

Of youth say their gender identity plays more of a role today than in the past in how society perceives them

↑ 66% Non-binary
↑ 44% India Women
WOMEN ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE GENDER DISCRIMINATION THAN MEN

Q: When thinking about the chances or opportunities you've been given so far in your life, which aspects of your identity have been disadvantageous? (Top 3 out of 18 options)

WOMEN SAY...

01 My mental health
02 My body size
03 My gender identity
18 My sexual orientation

MEN SAY...

01 My socio-economic class
02 My mental health
03 My level of education
18 My gender identity
GENDER BIAS IS EVERYWHERE

Q: On a scale of 1–5, where 1 is “Never,” 3 is “Sometimes” and 5 is “Always,” how often do you experience the following as a result of your gender identity? (%Always-%Sometimes)

WOMEN SAY THEY ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE OF THEIR GENDER IN...

EVERYDAY LIFE

90% “I think about how I dress and the reactions I might get from others.”
88% “I feel that others are watching and judging me.” ↑ 94% Non-binary
81% “I feel discriminated against, treated unfairly, and/or stereotyped against.” ↑ 94% Non-binary | ↑ 87% Black Women
79% “I hear comments/jokes about my identity that make me feel uncomfortable.” ↑ 90% Non-binary | ↑ 88% Black Women

RELATIONSHIPS / FAMILY

92% “I do and/or am expected to do most of the household chores.” ↑ 97% India Women
86% “I feel I put/have put more work/thought/sacrifices into my relationship than my partner.” ↑ 92% India Women
80% “I feel pressure to be the breadwinner and provide financially for my (prospective) family.”

WORK

77% “I experience microaggressions at my job.” ↑ 84% Non-binary | ↑ 82% Black Women
↑ 86% India Women
74% “I am treated as not being competent at my job.” ↑ 78% Black Women
↑ 82% India Women
71% “I am not taken seriously by my doctor/healthcare provider.” ↑ 90% Non-binary | ↑ 79% Black Women

HEALTH & SAFETY

95% “I consider whether a certain situation is safe for me before I partake in it (e.g., travelling alone, engaging with strangers etc.).”
71% “I am not taken seriously by my doctor/healthcare provider.” ↑ 90% Non-binary | ↑ 79% Black Women
THERE IS A STARK CONTRAST BETWEEN HOW SOCIETY SEEWS WOMEN AND HOW WOMEN SEE THEMSELVES

Q: Through a societal lens, which of the following attributes are “women” expected to possess? (overall %) vs Through your personal lens, which of the following attributes do you feel “women” possess? (women %)

- LEADERSHIP: 54% (increase of +30 ppts) vs 24% (increase of +30 ppts)
- STRENGTH: 63% (increase of +28 ppts) vs 35% (increase of +28 ppts)
- INDEPENDENCE: 56% (increase of +26 ppts) vs 30% (increase of +26 ppts)
- INTELLIGENCE: 61% (increase of +25 ppts) vs 36% (increase of +25 ppts)
- CONFIDENCE: 61% (increase of +22 ppts) vs 39% (increase of +22 ppts)
- INFLUENCE: 40% (increase of +20 ppts) vs 20% (increase of +20 ppts)
- RESILIENCE: 44% (increase of +18 ppts) vs 26% (increase of +18 ppts)
- VULNERABILITY: 40% (decrease of -5 ppts) vs 25% (decrease of -5 ppts)
- BEING TAKEN CARE OF: 35% (decrease of -10 ppts) vs 25% (decrease of -10 ppts)
- SUBMISSIVENESS: 39% (decrease of -21 ppts) vs 18% (decrease of -21 ppts)

NOTE: Percentages differences (i.e., +/-xx ppts) refer to the difference between how women are seen through a societal lens vs how women see themselves via a personal lens.

Attributes women are not often expected to possess

Attributes women are often expected to possess
THE SAME GOES FOR MEN - THERE IS A MISMATCH BETWEEN HOW SOCIETY SEES MEN AND HOW MEN SEE THEMSELVES

Q: Through a societal lens, which of the following attributes are “men” expected to possess? (overall %) vs Now through your personal lens, which of the following attributes do you feel “men” possess? (men %)

- Attributes men are expected to possess via a societal lens
- Attributes men do possess via a personal lens

**Attributes men are not often expected to possess**
- Vulnerability: 12% (+14 ppts)
- Compassion: 19% (+13 ppts)
- Emotional Intelligence: 22% (+12 ppts)
- Independence: 58% (-7 ppts)
- Confidence: 64% (-8 ppts)
- Strength: 73% (-15 ppts)
- Leadership: 70% (-16 ppts)

**Attributes men are often expected to possess**
- Vulnerability: 26%
- Compassion: 31%
- Emotional Intelligence: 34%
- Independence: 52%
- Confidence: 56%
- Strength: 59%
- Leadership: 53%

NOTE: Percentages differences (i.e., +/- xx ppts) refer to the difference between how men are seen through a societal lens vs how men see themselves via a personal lens.
ON THE INSIDE, MEN AND WOMEN ARE ACTUALLY QUITE SIMILAR

HOW SOCIETY SEES WOMEN AND MEN
- Attributes women are expected to possess via a societal lens
- Attributes men are expected to possess via a societal lens

HOW WOMEN AND MEN SEE THEMSELVES
- Attributes women do possess via a personal lens
- Attributes men do possess via a personal lens

[Bar charts and data tables showing comparisons between societal and personal views of attributes like leadership, strength, independence, influence, and rationality, with percentage differences indicated]

NOTE: Percentages differences (i.e., +/-xx ppts) refer to the difference between how women & men are seen through a societal lens (% overall) vs how women & men see themselves through a personal lens (% women & % men)
WOMEN DO NOT DEFINE THEMSELVES BY THEIR GENDER, BUT BY WHO THEY ARE ON THE INSIDE

Q: Which of the following aspects of your identity are most meaningful to you - i.e., it’s essential to who you are? (Top 5 out of 18 answer options, % Women)

1. My personality (69%)
2. My values (59%)
3. My hobbies/passions (52%)
4. My mental health (50%)
5. My social relationships (45%)
6. My gender identity (24%)

↑ 64% Non-binary
↑ 38% India Women
↓ 18% MENA Women
THE DEFINITION OF ‘WOMAN’ HAS EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THOSE ‘FEMALE’ BY CHOICE

Q: Who do you believe is included in the term “woman”?

- People with vaginas (45%)
- People with uteruses (43%)
- People assigned female sex at birth (54%)
- People who identify as female by choice (40%)
- Whoever wants to, it’s up to the individual (31%)

54% say ‘womanhood’ is dictated by physicality
54% say ‘womanhood’ is dictated at birth
53% say ‘womanhood’ is dictated by choice

↑ 88% Non-binary
↑ 58% Gen Z Women
↑ 69% US Women
↓ 36% MENA Women
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE PUSHING FOR MORE INTERNAL & PERSONAL(expressions of gender

53% MY PERSONAL EXPRESSION OF GENDER ROLES
(i.e., self-determined gender roles that do not adhere to any predefined rules of how someone of a certain gender should be, act, look etc.)

↑ 62% Non-binary
↑ 58% Black Women
↑ 58% US Women

47% SOCIETY’S EXPECTATIONS OF GENDER ROLES
(i.e., gender roles defined by society around how someone of a certain gender should be, act, look, etc.)

What percentage of your life would you say you operate by society’s expectation of gender roles vs. your personal expression of gender roles?
THE CURRENT STATE OF FEMINISM:

PURPOSEFUL, BUT

POLARIZED
WHILE FEMINISM TODAY IS VERY MUCH ALIVE, IT IS ALSO HEAVILY POLARIZED

80% VERY MUCH ALIVE
85% UK Women
84% India Women

20% DYING
26% Black Women
26% Men

Q: Please complete the following sentence: “Feminism today as a movement is...”

72% Of youth say: “When it comes to the feminist movement today we are more polarised than ever.”
83% India Women

I think that the word 'feminist' in today's context is too polluted and politicised.
- Gen Z, Man, India

The term [feminism] has been negatively co-opted and politicised by anti-feminists, I think we just lost this word.
- Millennial, Woman, US

% Based on total youth
MANY PEOPLE FEEL EXCLUDED FROM THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

HALF

Of youth feel that the feminist movement today is not inclusive.

↑ 55% India Women
↑ 54% MENA Women

“BIPOC women are fighting for their rights but are not provided the same opportunity to have their voices heard.”
- Millennial, Woman, US

% Based on total youth
MANY ARE RELUCTANT TO CALL THEMSELVES “FEMINIST,” DESPITE BELIEVING IN GENDER EQUALITY
THE FUTURE OF FEMINISM:

A MORE INCLUSIVE MOVEMENT
FEMINISM MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THE RIGHTS OF ALL GENDER IDENTITIES

THE MAIN GOAL OF FEMINISM IS...

#1 Ensuring equal rights and liberties for women as men have (53%)

THE MAIN GOAL OF FEMINISM SHOULD BE...

#1 Ensuring equal rights and liberties for all gender identities (e.g., women, men, transgender, non-binary, etc.) (51%)

↑ 87% Non-binary
↑ 62% US Women
TO ACHIEVE TRUE GENDER EQUALITY, FEMINISM NEEDS TO WORK HARDER FOR THOSE HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED

82%

Of women say: “Feminism needs to represent a more diverse group of women (e.g., women of colour, women from a socio-economic background)”

↑ 94% Non-binary
↑ 89% US Women
↑ 86% Black Women

73%

Of women say: “Feminism needs to represent a more diverse group of gender identity (e.g., transgender community, queer community)”

↑ 92% Non-binary
↑ 86% India women
↑ 79% US women
↓ 55% MENA women
‘FEMINISM’ MUST ACCOUNT FOR DISPROPORTIONATE INEQUITIES AMONG WOMEN

2 IN 5

Young people say feminism should focus on equity (providing equal outcomes)

↑ 60% Non-binary
↑ 48% US Women
↑ 46% Black Women

We need to be intersectional about our feminism. It has to encompass all ethnicities, all genders, and all sexualities. If it doesn’t, what are we really fighting for? [...] You cannot cherry pick your equity. You need to be equal and fight across the board.

- Millennial, Woman, US
THE PATH TO GENDER EQUALITY:

REQUIRES PARTICIPATION FROM EVERYONE
YOUTH ARE HOPEFUL FOR A FUTURE WHERE ONE GENDER DOES NOT LEAD OVER ANOTHER

55% GENDERLESS
↑ 90% Non-binary

35% FEMALE
↑ 45% Black Women
↑ 42% Women
↑ 50% India Women
↑ 42% MENA Women

10% MALE
↑ 32% Men

81% Based on total youth

Q: Please complete the following sentence: “The future is...”

“I like gender definitions because I like being a woman [...] I want the feminist movement to be inclusive but I don't want it to pretend that gender doesn't exist. It's similar to being ‘colorblind.’”

- Millennial, Woman, US

Of youth say:
“I am hopeful when it comes to the future of gender equality
↑ 91% India Women
↑ 78% Black Women
↑ 69% Non-binary

% Based on total youth
While steps have been made towards gender equality, there is still work to be done.

Q: Where do you believe we are in achieving gender equality, where 0% = no gender equality and 100% = complete gender equality?

- 61% Overall
- 63% MENA Women
- 71% India Women
- 55% UK Women
- 53% US Women
- 53% Black Women
- 42% Non-binary

Q: Overall, do you believe rights and liberties for your gender identity are getting worse or better in your country?

- 46% Getting Better
  - 65% India Women
  - 55% MENA Women

- 23% Getting Worse
  - 57% Non-binary
  - 41% Black Women
  - 49% US Women

- 31% No Change/Progress

% Overall Based on total youth
WORK & HEALTHCARE MUST BE KEY AREAS OF FOCUS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

What do you believe are the most pressing issues when it comes to gender equality?

75% GENDER ISSUES RELATED TO WORK/EDUCATION
- 43% Ensuring equal pay for equal work across all gender identities ↑ 50% Black Women
- 39% Ensuring equal access to certain education/job field between men and women
- 38% Ensuring equal parental leave across all gender identities (e.g., equal time, pay)
- 35% Ensuring equal gender representation in leadership positions at work
- 30% Ensuring equal division of domestic work across all gender identities

74% GENDER ISSUES RELATED TO HEALTHCARE
- 37% Normalising talking about maybe taboo women’s health topics (e.g., menstruation, menopause) ↑ 42% Gen Z Women
- 35% Access to safe, legal abortion
- 35% Ensuring equal access to healthcare across all gender identities
- 31% Ensuring equal access to contraception across all gender identities
- 31% Ensuring equal responsibility to take contraception across all gender identities
- 28% Normalising talking about maybe taboo men’s health topics (e.g., erectile dysfunction)

% Based on total youth
WHILE WORK AND HEALTHCARE ARE THE MOST PRESSING ISSUES WORLDWIDE, THERE ARE MORE SPECIFIC FOCUSES FOR GENDER EQUALITY BY MARKET

Q: What do you believe are the most pressing issues when it comes to gender equality?

**US**
1. Gender issues related to **Healthcare** (82%)
2. Gender issues related to **Work/Education** (77%)
3. Gender issues related to **Violence** (62%)
   - +14 ppts vs Global Average

**MENA**
1. Gender issues related to **Work/Education** (75%)
2. Gender issues related to **Healthcare** (61%)
3. Basic gender issues (e.g., right to own property, etc.) (51%)

**UK**
1. Gender issues related to **Work/Education** (75%)
2. Gender issues related to **Healthcare** (75%)
3. Gender issues related to **Appearance** (56%)
   - +7 ppts vs Global Average

**INDIA**
1. Gender issues related to **Healthcare** (77%)
2. Gender issues related to **Work/Education** (75%)
3. Gender issues related to **Representation** (65%)
   - +9 ppts vs Global Average

% Based on total youth
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TAKING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTION TO IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY

Q: What actions are you currently taking to promote gender equality?

87% OF YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE SOCIAL ACTIONS AGAINST GENDER INEQUALITY

- Speak up when I experience and/or witness a gender discriminatory event
  - ↑ 49% US Women
  - ↓ 48% India Women
  - 44%
- Talking with others about my/their experiences when it comes to gender inequality
  - ↑ 52% US Women
  - 42%
- Educate myself on how to ask and/or negotiate for a raise/promotion when I know I am due
  - ↑ 54% India Women
  - ↓ 50% Black Women
  - 41%
- Talking with my partner(s) about equal division of household work
  - ↑ 44% US Women
  - ↓ 42% India Women
  - 39%
- Challenge gender stereotypes in my daily life
  - ↑ 80% Non-binary
  - ↓ 50% US Women
  - 38%
- Openly talk about salaries with others
  - ↑ 38% US Women
  - 34%
- Use gender inclusive language
  - ↑ 87% Non-binary
  - ↓ 54% US Women
  - 34%

77% OF YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE POLITICAL ACTIONS AGAINST GENDER INEQUALITY

- Keep up to date with news/information around gender equality
  - ↑ 52% US Women
  - 43%
- Engage on social media with accounts/posts that promote gender equality
  - ↑ 46% India Women
  - 37%
- Vote for gender identities that are underrepresented in positions of power
  - ↑ 45% US Women
  - 30%
- Shop from women-owned businesses
  - ↑ 44% US Women
  - 29%
- Not shop from brands that do not support gender equality
  - ↑ 44% Non-binary
  - 23%
- Attend gender equality protests/rallies
  - ↑ 28% India Women
  - 21%

% Based on total youth
Q: From whom would you like to see more participation when it comes to gender equality and/or the feminist movement?

- **45%** Of youth say: “Women in general”
  - ↑51% Black Women
  - ↑54% India Women (top #1)
  - ↑#1 MENA Women

- **47%** Of youth say: “The government”
  - ↑57% US Women

- **41%** Of youth say: “Men in general”
  - ↑73% Non-binary (top #1)
  - ↑58% Black Women (top #1)

- **40%** Of youth say: “The media”
  - ↑47% UK Women

- **32%** Of youth say: “Companies/brands”
  - ↑39% India Women
  - ↑38% US Women
What would culture look like if gender wasn't a determining factor?

How can brands help dismantle society’s gender bias and expectations? In what ways can brands celebrate who people are at their core, regardless of gender?

How can brands strive for equity, not just equality? How can brands correct for historical wrongdoings and further acknowledge the needs of those historically marginalized?

Where can brands do work inside their organizations, ensuring the rights and liberties of all employees? Where can brands leverage their voice and influence in culture, using products, marketing, and creative to further promote a more gender-equal world?
THANK YOU!