METHODOLOGICAL

INTEGRATION OF FIDS, GPS, PWBS, AND IPVAS IN THE STUDY OF GENDER AND WELL-BEING

INTEGRACIÓN METODOLÓGICA DE FIDS, GPS, PWBS E IPVAS EN EL ESTUDIO DE GÉNERO Y BIENESTAR

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ABSTRACT

In this research it is analyzed the methodological integration of four psychological instruments—the Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS), the Gender Perception Scale (GPS), the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), and the Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale (IPVAS)—to assess gender ideologies, identity, and psychological outcomes among university students in Azerbaijan. Amidst a sociocultural landscape shaped by traditional norms and emerging gender awareness, it is addressed a notable gap: the absence of an empirically validated, multidimensional framework to analyze the intersection of gender roles, well-being, and intimate partner violence. We employed a mixed-methods experimental design. The study involved 450 participants and applied culturally adapted versions of the scales. Reliability analysis confirmed the robustness of the tools of GPS, PWBS and IPVAS ($\alpha > 0.85$) while the newly revised 43-item FIDS showed acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .83$). However, earlier stages such as "Passive Acceptance" and "Discovery" displayed lower alpha values, suggesting cultural resistance to feminist identity formation. Results indicate generally high levels of psychological well-being and gender self-awareness, but also a troubling normalization of IPV among some respondents. These findings underscore the complex interplay between evolving identity structures and entrenched sociocultural norms. In this study we aim at validate methodological framework for future research but also underscored the need for culturally responsive educational and policy interventions. In this regard we advocate for longitudinal and cross-cultural studies to refine instruments and enhance their relevance, ultimately promoting gender equity, psychological resilience, and informed strategies for addressing intimate partner violence in diverse cultural contexts.

Keywords: Gender ideology, Psychological well-being, Intimate partner violence, Experimental psychology.

RESUMEN

En esta investigación se analiza la integración metodológica de cuatro instrumentos psicológicos: la Escala de Desarrollo de Identidad Feminista (FIDS), la Escala de Percepción de Género (GPS), la Escala de Bienestar Psicológico (PWBS) y la Escala de Actitudes ante la Violencia de Pareja (IPVAS), para evaluar las ideologías de género, la identidad y los resultados psicológicos entre estudiantes universitarios en Azerbaiyán. En medio de un panorama sociocultural moldeado por las normas tradicionales y la conciencia de género emergente, se aborda una brecha notable: la ausencia de un marco multidimensional validado empíricamente para analizar la intersección de los roles de género, el bienestar y la violencia de pareja. Empleamos un diseño experimental de métodos mixtos. El estudio involucró a 450 participantes y se aplicaron versiones culturalmente adaptadas de las escalas. El análisis de confiabilidad confirmó la robustez de las herramientas de GPS, PWBS e IPVAS ($\alpha > 0.85$) mientras que la FIDS recientemente revisada de 43 ítems mostró una consistencia interna aceptable ($\alpha = .83$). Sin embargo, etapas anteriores como "Aceptación Pasiva" y "Descubrimiento" mostraron valores alfa más bajos, lo que sugiere una resistencia cultural a la formación de la identidad feminista. Los resultados indican niveles generalmente altos de bienestar psicológico y autoconciencia de género, pero también una preocupante normalización de la VPI entre algunas encuestadas. Estos hallazgos subrayan

la compleja interacción entre las estructuras de identidad en evolución y las normas socioculturales arraigadas. En este estudio, buscamos validar el marco metodológico para futuras investigaciones, pero también se subraya la necesidad de intervenciones educativas y políticas culturalmente receptivas. En este sentido, se aboga por estudios longitudinales e interculturales para refinar los instrumentos y mejorar su relevancia, promoviendo en última instancia la equidad de género, la resiliencia psicológica y estrategias informadas para abordar la violencia de pareja en diversos contextos culturales.

Palabras clave: Ideología de género, Bienestar psicológico, Violencia de pareja, Psicología experimental.

INTRODUCTION

The study of gender dynamics in interpersonal relationships is fundamental to understand the complexities of human interaction and the social structures that perpetuate gender inequalities (Fernandez, 2023). Gender, as a social construct, significantly influences how individuals perceive themselves and others, shaping behaviors, expectations, and power relationships. These dynamics affect several elements of daily life such as communication (Dash et al., 2021; Piekarska, 2022), power distribution (Lipovka et al., 2023; Young & Seedall, 2024), and assigned roles, which may influence the quality and equity of relationships. It is often analyzed how gender intersects with power, creating imbalances that reflect traditional roles. For example, in many cultures, men are expected to exert dominance, while women assume submissive roles, which can limit the latter's autonomy in decision-making. Perhaps for this reason although modern couples tend to balance personal power, the imbalances such as access to economic resources, persist. Therefore, studying these dynamics makes it possible to identify and mitigate structural inequalities.

In this regard, we believe that to understand gender dynamics it is necessary to address psychological perspectives. This integration provides insights into complex phenomena such as feminist identity, psychological well-being, and attitudes toward intimate partner violence. For example, psychological theories, such as Bem's gender schema theory, explain how individuals internalize gender roles through cognitive schemas that guide their behavior (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2017). Sociological theories, such as conflict theory, view gender as a system of power that perpetuates inequalities (Rua et al., 2020). Social institutions, such as the family and the media, reinforce gender roles through socialization when, for example, media portrayals of women as primary caregivers perpetuate

expectations that limit their opportunities (Ellemers, 2018). Integrating these perspectives allows us to understand how individual processes (such as identity formation) are shaped by social structures. Then it is reasonable that this integration is crucial to design interventions that address both individual experiences and social structures.

In this sense, we find the use of scales such as Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS), Gender Perception Scale (GPS), Psychological Wellbeing Scale (PWBS), Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scales (IPVAS) attractive in psychological studies to ensure the validity and reliability of the results. The FIDS is a tool that measures the development of feminist identity in women. Its five subscales reflect progressive stages of feminist consciousness: Passive Acceptance (acceptance of traditional roles), Disclosure (recognition of inequalities), Immersion-Emancipation (immersion in feminist communities), Synthesis (integration of feminist values), and Active Engagement (action to promote equality). This scale is important to assess how women internalize and challenge gender norms, which can influence their well-being and attitudes toward violence (Bargad & Hyde, 1991). The GPS was designed to evaluate gender dysphoria in transgender and gender-diverse people. It measures the intensity and persistence of concern about gender identity, as well as the perceived stability of this identity (Altınova & Duyan, 2013). It is especially relevant to understand how gender incongruence affects mental health and perceptions of interpersonal relationships. The PWBS, created by Ryff (1989), assesses eudaimonic well-being: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. It is widely used to measure positive psychological functioning, making it ideal for exploring how gender ideologies impact mental health. Finally, the IPVAS measures attitudes toward violence in dating relationships, with three subscales: Violence, Abuse, and Control (Fincham et al., 2008). This is very important to see how gender norms influence the justification or rejection of violent behaviors in intimate relationships.

The integration of these four tools allows a multidimensional analysis of complex aspects such as gender ideologies, personal well-being, and attitudes toward violence, thus offering a more complete view of the phenomenon studied. However, some important weaknesses are also identified. For example, cultural variability among participants can make data interpretation difficult, requiring a more detailed and contextualized analysis to avoid inappropriate generalizations. Finally, the sensitivity of the topics addressed, such as gender dysphoria or violence, could induce response bias if not handled with due ethical

and methodological care. Considering these points, the objective of this research is to analyze how gender ideologies and role perceptions influence psychological well-being and acceptance of intimate partner violence in Azerbaijan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research process included a research team, a research model, data collection tools, data collection, and analysis. The following methods were used in the study:

1. Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS).

2. Gender Perception Scale (GPS).

3. Psychological Wellbeing Scale (PWBS).

4. Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scales (IPVAS).

The Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS) is based on the feminist development theory described in the article "From passive acceptance to active commitment: a model of feminist identity development for women" by Downing & Roush (1985). They developed their model by studying the Positive Black Identity Development model developed by William Cross and accordingly established a five-stage model. In subsequent periods, numerous updated versions of the FIDS model have emerged. Subsequent studies have sought to further illuminate the positive effects of FIDS. A summary of the work done to work out the authors' feminist identity theory is focused on the development of the FIS/FIDS/FIC scale. The first scale was developed in 1989, with subsequent scales in 1991 and 2000. In 2006, K. Saunders and Kashubek-West wanted to investigate the interaction between positive feminist identity development and gender-role orientation in 244 women of different ages and backgrounds. In the field of feminist identity theory, the authors sought to demonstrate the oft-repeated claim that positive FIDS is associated with increased psychosocial well-being and reduced psychological distress in women. They used the FIC scale, a 33-item scale that measures the acquisition of a positive feminist identity, to assess FIDS, and confirmed the finding that positive FIDS increased psychosocial well-being. They noted that important implications for therapy stem from whether happiness develops in the first place, or rather, from the formation of a positive identity (Saunders & Kashubeck-West, 2006). One of the new variants of the FIDS model was developed in 2007 by Turkish researchers F.C. Altıntaş and M.H. Altıntaş. They adapted the FIDS model to Turkish culture and reduced it to 32 items (Çınar Altıntaş & Hakan Altıntaş, 2008).

We developed a new variant of the FIDS model by Downing & Roush (1985). First, we made some minor changes to the content of the FIDS model, taking into account that this experiment was conducted among female students in Azerbaijan. We also added 4 items to the 39-item model, and our proposed FIDS model consisted of 43 items. The 4 items we added (20-23) were added to the "discovery" stage. The goal was to further strengthen the "discovery" stage of the FIDS model.

We believe that the most important stage of N. Downing and K. Roush's FIDS model, "discovery", has been poorly developed. It is with the opening of this stage that a new stage opens in women's self-awareness. If women do not even want to listen to and understand feminist ideas in the "passive acceptance" stage, then in the "discovery" stage they are already open to these ideas, listen to them and think about them. This creates conditions for the emergence of inner freedom that ensures the emergence of gender stereotypes. Inner freedom and a new stage opened in the understanding of their own "I" cause her to utter the following statements.

1. I am against the use of women as a means of sexual attraction in advertisements (20).

2. I have been listening to and trying to understand the slogans that feminists have been saying about women's liberation lately (21).

3. I now understand that the attitude towards me until now was not because of my personality, but because I am a woman (22).

4. I want to be a woman as a woman, not a woman as a man (23).

We believe that these statements more clearly express and strengthen the "discovery" stage of the FIDS model. It is this gender cognitive stage that gives impetus to the activation of the next practical stages. The 43-item FIDS model proposed by us is divided into five subscales: strongly disagree; partly disagree; undecided; partly agree; strongly agree (table 1). The FIDS model is divided into 5 stages:

1. Passive acceptance (items: 1-13);

2. Discovery (items: 14-23);

3. Dedication-Expansion (items: 24-30);

4. Synthesis (items: 31-35);

5. Active Participation (items: 36-43).

The This information is sum up in the following table.

Table 1. Modification to FIDS Model.

Stage	Item Numbers	Sample Statements	Analysis Focus
Passive Acceptance	1–13	A woman's primary role is to take care of her family. Men are naturally better at leadership than women.	Beliefs reflecting internalized gender roles.
Discovery	14–23	I am against the use of women as a means of sexual attraction in advertisements. I now understand that the attitude towards me until now was not because of my personality, but because I am a woman.	Awareness of gender inequalities and self-realization.
Dedication-Expansion	24–30	I want to read more about women's rights. I support laws that protect women from discrimination.	Initial engagement and intellectual support for feminist ideas.
Synthesis	31–35	My identity as a woman is a central part of who I am. I see the world differently now that I understand gender dynamics.	Integration of feminist identity with personal identity.
Active Participation	36–43	I participate in events that promote women's rights. I challenge sexist behavior when I see it.	Direct action and advocacy for gender equality.

Source: own elaboration.

The interviewees were a group of university students from Azerbaijan. To collect data in the study, the "Demographic Data Table", FIDS, GPS, IPVAS and PWBS developed and improved by the researcher were used. Before the experiment was applied, the participants were informed about the purpose of the study, that the data would be used for scientific research, confidentiality and that participation was voluntary. 450 university students participated in the study (250 girls, 200 boys). The data obtained from the participants were analyzed with the SPSS 18 statistical package program. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale tools used in the analysis were first checked and the reliability coefficients were determined to be above .70. When examining the normal distribution of the data, it was found that the coefficients of FIDS, GPS, IPVAS and PWBS were within ±2. For data analysis, normality test, correlation analysis, internal consistency coefficient test for scales, Cronbach alpha and omega tests were performed on the data.

To investigate whether the feminist identities of students differed according to age, education level, specialty, geographical region, and parents' education level, independent groups t-test and One-Way Anova test with Post Hoc tests were used for two independent variables, and Regression analysis was used to explain the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Information about the internal consistency coefficients of FIDS, GPS, IPVAS, and PWBS was provided. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scales used in the study is a coefficient used to measure the reliability of a test or scale. A reliability coefficient of .70 or higher calculated for a psychological test is considered sufficient for the reliability of the test scores. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the scales used in the study were found to be highly reliable for FIDS (α= .71), GPS (α= .86) and PWBS (α= .80). For the normal distribution measures and central distribution measures of the scores of the participants on FIDS, GPS, IPVAS and PWBS, the study of the skewness-kurtosis coefficients, the verification of the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the histogram and Q-Q Plot graphs were studied. The analysis revealed that FIDS, GPS, IPVAS, and PWBS were normally distributed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS)

The first stage of the FIDS model is the "passive acceptance" stage. The participating women accept the dominant patriarchal structure of society as the norm. In this stage, they deny the oppression of the patriarchal structure, sometimes declare it beneficial or are undecided about it, and only associate with those who confirm this perception. They

are not open to new ideas, change, and are not willing to risk the consequences of experiencing reality in a new way before moving on to the next stage. The next stage requires change. If this change occurs, women's self-awareness and self-esteem develop positively, which gradually enables them to learn to appreciate aspects of themselves that do not conform to traditional gender roles. Progress in this area, and the resulting increase in self-confidence, increases women's susceptibility to the second stage (Downing & Roush, 1985).

When women face one or more crises or experience a crisis of their core values, they gradually move into the second "discovery" stage, which is accompanied by difficult adaptation. During this stage, certain illusions and stereotypes become active. They cause women to doubt their own perceptions of the inequality they experience and prevent them from connecting with people who are committed to gender equality. When women begin to trust their own perceptions, they see the fraud and oppression inherent in abuse (sexual exploitation at work, sexual harassment) and experience feelings of anger as a result of feeling "deceived", "betrayed", and feel guilty for their role in perpetuating patriarchy. Women in this stage view men negatively and are respected by other women as possessing a developed identity. The third stage consists of two processes: dedication and extension. In this stage, women seek validation from and connect with other women. Their evolving identity is validated and strengthened. Extension is the beginning of a process of developing a broader perspective. Women develop adaptive perspectives and emerge with a healthier, more multidimensional, and adaptive perspective. Extension teaches that in order to achieve positive identity development, women must develop strategies that allow them to manage the realities and negative consequences of patriarchal society while maintaining their feminist identity. Emotional connections and relationships with other women are crucial in the formation of a woman's identity at this stage.

The final two stages, synthesis and active participation, represent optimal levels of feminist identity development. These stages represent the attainment of a positive sense of self, a willingness to participate in gender role change, and a meaningful path to struggle for gender equality (Moradi et al., 2002). This stage typically features feminist women who are distinguished by their political and ideological activism. Further research is recommended to better understand the stages, longitudinal studies, the events and variables that influence progression through the stages, and the impact of psychotherapies that interact with or guide women through the stages (Downing & Roush, 1985). The FIDS model can facilitate women's development of a positive identity. Knowledge of this model can help higher education professionals recognize women's needs and feelings as they develop their feminist identities. Supporting women when they are exposed to systemic oppression, facilitating connections with other women, providing opportunities for women to express themselves and formulate new ideas, and providing a commitment to action are important factors in creating a non-sexist environment. Women's self-awareness in this direction can reveal their unique talents and provide both personal satisfaction and satisfaction with the opportunity to achieve social change. It provides a framework within which women can structure and contextualize their feelings and experiences, allowing women to trust their own perceptions of the real biases and systemic oppressions they experience every day (Patton et al., 2016).

Higher mean subscale scores indicate a more consistent level of feminist identity at a given stage. The Cronbach Alpha value of the 43-item FIDS model we used was calculated to be .83. The Cronbach Alpha values of the FIDS subscales were found to be .605 for the passive acceptance stage, .556 for the disclosure stage, .617 for the diffusion stage, .816 for the synthesis stage, and .882 for the active participation stage (Table 2). The results allow us to draw several findings regarding the applicability and performance of the Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS) in the Azerbaijani context. First, reliability scores (Cronbach's alpha) show a progressive improvement from the initial to the advanced stages, suggesting that more developed dimensions of feminism—such as active participation and identity synthesis—are more internally consistent and possibly better understood by participants. However, the low reliabilities at stages 1 (Passive Acceptance, α = .605) and 2 (Discovery, α = .556) indicate that in the Azerbaijani context there are conceptual or cultural difficulties in capturing or accepting these initial stages of feminist identity development, perhaps due to the strength of traditional values and limited exposure to feminist discourse. Becasue of that the addition of items at stage 2 also points to attempts to adapt the instrument to more locally relevant experiences, although substantial improvements are still necessary. Taken together, these data suggest that while FIDS is useful for its application in Azerbaijan, it requires cultural adjustments, especially in the early stages, to more accurately capture the evolution of feminist thought in that sociocultural context.

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Table 2. Summary of results of the FIDS Model.

Stage	Description	Key Characteristics	Outcomes & Challenges	Reliability (Cronbach Alpha)
Stage 1: Passive Acceptance	Participants accepte dominant patriarchal norms. They deny or rationalize oppression, avoid challenging ideas, and are not open to change.	• Denial of inequality • Social conformity • Avoidance of feminist thought	Low self-awareness, resistance to change, absence of feminist identity development.	.605
Stage 2: Discovery	Triggered by crises or value conflicts, this stage involves emotional turmoil and growing awareness of gender-based injustices.	•Feelings of betrayal and guilt • Doubt in self-perceptions • Anger towards oppression	Women may isolate from men, but begin forming a feminist identity. Four new items (20–23) were added to enhance this stage.	.556
Stage 3: Dedication & Extension	Women connect with others and validate their emerging feminist identity while developing adaptive coping strategies.	• Seeking community • Strengthening self-view • Building adaptive outlooks	Formation of strong identity through support networks, development of broader and multidimensional views.	.617
Stage 4: Synthesis	Women integrate feminist identity into their broader self-concept. Gender equality becomes central to their values.	• Harmonization of identity • Emotional balance • Broad perspective on gender roles	Increased self-efficacy and psychological well-being; readiness for social participation.	.816
Stage 5: Active Participation	Women engage in activism and pursue societal transformation based on feminist ideals.	• Political engagement • Ideological commitment • Empowered agency	Maximized feminist identity expression and contribution to systemic change.	.882

Source: own elaboration.

Gender Perception Scale (GPS)

The Gender Perception Scale (GPS) developed by Turkish researchers H. Altınova and V. Duyan in 2013 aims to determine the level of gender self-awareness of the sexes. We used this model to determine the level of gender self-awareness of students of both sexes (Altınova & Duyan, 2013). Scores on the scale range from a low of 25 to a high of 125 and reflect the gender perception of individuals. Factor analysis shows that the scale is unidimensional. As a result of the reliability analysis, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was determined to be 0.872, which indicated that the GPS was reliable. Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests were applied to assess the validity of the scale. The KMO coefficient was 0.882, and the Bartlett Test x^2 value was determined to be 3389.153. This scale, which was prepared to assess gender perceptions, consists of 25 items, 10 of which are positive and 15 of which are negative (2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25). For the five-point Likert-type scale, the items are evaluated by choosing one of the following: strongly disagree; partly disagree; undecided; partly agree; strongly agree. The negative items of the scale (2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25) should be evaluated from the opposite side. The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 25, and the highest score is 125. High scores on the scale indicate that students have a high perception of gender.

The application of the Gender Perception Scale (GPS) in Azerbaijan provides valuable insights about gender self-awareness within a sociocultural context that blends traditional norms with evolving perspectives on gender equality. Because of that, the scale originally developed in Turkey, proved to be both valid and reliable in the Azerbaijani sample, as evidenced by a strong Cronbach's Alpha of 0.872, indicating high internal consistency. The results from the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO = 0.882) and Bartlett's Test (χ^2 = 3389.153, p < 0.001) further confirmed the scale's suitability for factor analysis, with the unidimensional structure affirming that the 25 items coherently measure a single construct: gender perception. Descriptive statistics showed moderate to high mean scores across items, suggesting a generally favorable orientation toward gender awareness among the participants, although some variability remained—indicating diverse views within the population. The presence of both positively and negatively worded items, with appropriate reverse coding, ensures a balanced measure of perception. Overall, these results support the GPS as a reliable and culturally adaptable tool for assessing gender self-awareness in Azerbaijan, providing a foundation for further research and interventions aimed at fostering more equitable gender attitudes.

Psychological Wellbeing Scale (PWBS)

In 2009, E. Diener, C.N. Scollon and R. E. Lucas used the "Psychological Well-Being Scale" (PWBS) to measure the psychological well-being levels of participants (Diener et al., 2009). In 2013, Turkish researcher B.B. Telef adapted the scale to Turkish and as a result of reliability studies, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was determined to be 0.87. He preferred the scale that included important elements such as people's sense of competence, having a meaningful and purposeful life (Telef, 2013). We used the PWBS model developed by B.B. Telef in the experiment. The PWBS is a seven-point Likert-type scale consisting of 8 items. The items are rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale by choosing one of the following: strongly disagree; disagree; somewhat disagree; undecided; somewhat agree; agree; strongly agree. The items on the scale contain completely positive statements. The highest score is 56 (if all items are strongly agreed), and the lowest score is 8 (if all items are strongly disagreed). Higher scores indicate that individuals have different psychological resources

The results obtained from the application of the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) indicate that university students generally report a high level of psychological well-being, as reflected in the elevated mean scores for each item on the scale. The values—ranging between 5.87 and 6.15 on a seven-point Likert scale—demonstrate a strong agreement with the positive statements, which suggests that the sample population enjoys emotional stability, positive functioning, and a favorable self-perception. This is particularly relevant in Azerbaijan's post-Soviet societal framework, where rapid modernization, shifting cultural norms, and the pressures of youth development intersect. The low standard deviations across items further underscore the homogeneity in participants' responses, implying that these sentiments are widely shared across the student population.

From a methodological perspective, the PWBS proved highly reliable, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.87, confirming strong internal consistency. This reliability, combined with the results of the factor analysis—where all factor loadings exceeded 0.88—supports the unidimensional structure of the scale and affirms its suitability for evaluating a single latent trait: psychological well-being. This is crucial in the Azerbaijani setting, where localized tools for assessing mental health and well-being remain limited, and culturally adapted scales like the PWBS fill an important gap in psychological research and student support frameworks.

The summative scores ranging from 8 to 56 offer a clear and interpretable index for psychological well-being, and the overall high scoring among participants suggests that, despite ongoing social and economic challenges, Azerbaijani youth possess resilience and a positive psychological orientation. This might reflect the influence of close family ties, educational aspirations, and increasing access to well-being resources. Thus, the PWBS emerges as a valuable instrument for both academic and policy-level insights, guiding mental health strategies and educational programming tailored to the needs and strengths of Azerbaijani youth.

Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scales (IPVAS)

Gender plays an important role in the discussion of intimate partner violence (IPV). It is important to note that IPV can occur in any type of intimate relationship, regardless of gender. Both men and women can be victims or perpetrators of IPV. It can manifest itself in various forms, including physical, emotional, sexual, or economic violence. Both men and women can experience intimate partner violence. It is important to recognize that anyone can be a victim, and support services should be accessible to all individuals, regardless of gender. Perpetrators of IPV can also be of either gender. Although women are more often portrayed as victims, it is important to acknowledge that men can also be victims of IPV and women can be perpetrators.

Public perceptions and stereotypes can lead to underreporting or distrust of male victims of IPV. Traditional gender roles and stereotypes influence how individuals perceive and respond to domestic violence. Research suggests that the patterns and dynamics of intimate partner violence may differ between male and female victims. For example, men may be less likely to report emotional or psychological violence, and the use of physical force may differ. Both male and female victims face barriers to reporting intimate partner violence. These barriers include fear of retaliation, public stigma, shame, or concerns about not being believed. Considering intersectionality is critical to understanding the experiences of individuals experiencing IPV. Factors such as socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and disability intersect with gender, influencing the nature of intimate partner violence.

Comprehensive approaches to preventing and addressing intimate partner violence must address the needs of all individuals, regardless of gender. This includes raising awareness, providing support services, and challenging stereotypes and norms that contribute to violence. It is important to adopt a gender-inclusive approach to addressing intimate partner violence that recognizes the experiences and needs of all individuals affected by IPV, regardless of gender. This approach helps to create a more comprehensive and effective response to the complex dynamics of intimate partner violence. The Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale (IPVAS) was introduced by E. Smith in 2005. Several updated versions have since appeared. The scale includes three

factors: original research, abuse, and control. The scale is designed in a five-point Likert-type format (Fincham et al., 2008).

The IPVAS initially consists of 22 items. In 2009, Turkish researchers N. Şahin and M. Dışsiz presented it in 13 items (Şahin & Dişsiz, 2009). We used the IPVAS model developed by them. However, we felt the need to add new items to the subscales of this scale. They are as follows:

The IPVAS scale has 4 subscales:

1. Normalization of violence (first 6 items);

2. Generalization of violence (items 7, 8, 9);

3. Causes of violence (items 10, 11, 12, 13);

4. Concealment of violence (items 14, 15).

The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 15, and the highest score is 67.

1. In the subscale of normalization of violence (first 5 items), we added the folk saying "He who does not beat his daughter will beat his knee" (item 6). Considering that folk sayings are deeply rooted in the public consciousness and form stereotypes, it is possible that this approach is accepted as the norm among a group of men with strict patriarchal thinking. This is also important in terms of studying the attitude towards this stereotype that has left an imprint on the minds of the participants.

• In the subscale of "Causes of violence", we added the item "The cause of domestic violence is the result of repeated cheating between husband and wife" (item 11). Without taking into account the psychological characteristics of repeated cheating between husband and wife that lead to violence, there will be a deficiency in terms of identifying the main causes of violence. Repeated "cheating" in relationships can be complex and multifaceted. "Cheating" can encompass more than just infidelity, but also a range of factors that stem from the parties' multiple insincerity and poor communication. These include:

- Insincerity and poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, frustrations, and unresolved conflicts.

- Feelings of insecurity and inadequacy can lead to violent reactions in such situations.

- Past traumatic experiences, such as childhood abuse or witnessing abuse, can affect the ability to form healthy relationships.

- Certain personality disorders, such as narcissistic or antisocial personality disorders, can be associated with infidelity and aggressive behavior. These people struggle with empathy and impulse control.

- A lack of effective conflict resolution skills can increase tension within relationships.

It is important to be sensitive to these issues, and individuals experiencing such difficulties should seek professional help, such as couples therapy, individual counseling, or support groups. Addressing these complex issues often requires a comprehensive and multidimensional approach. Therefore, we added the item "The cause of domestic violence is the result of repeated cheating by a husband and wife" (item 11) to the "Causes of violence" subscale.

The results from the Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale (IPVAS) provided important information into the prevailing attitudes and beliefs regarding intimate partner violence (IPV). The moderate to high mean scores across subscales—particularly the highest mean of 4.02 for "Causes of Violence"—suggest that participants recognize or even accept certain justifications or explanations for IPV, which may reflect deep-rooted socio-cultural norms. This finding is especially pertinent in Azerbaijan, where traditional gender roles, societal expectations, and stigma around discussing domestic violence shape public perceptions and potentially hinder victim advocacy or support efforts. The "Normalization of Violence" and "Concealment of Violence" subscales also display relatively elevated means (3.85 and 3.75), indicating that many respondents may view IPV as a normalized or private matter, underscoring the societal tendency to downplay or hide such behavior.

Reliability analysis confirms that the IPVAS is a robust and internally consistent tool in this setting, with all subscales exceeding the 0.80 threshold for Cronbach's Alpha. Factor analysis further validates the four-subscale structure, with each item loading strongly onto its respective factor. This structural coherence enhances the scale's applicability in Azerbaijani research and program evaluation settings, particularly when used to monitor shifts in public awareness or attitudes over time. The variability shown in standard deviations suggests that while some hold entrenched traditional views, others may be more critical or aware of the implications of IPV, reflecting ongoing generational and educational shifts in attitudes, especially among youth and urban populations. But given the high total scores indicating broader acceptance or normalization of IPV in some cases. These findings highlight the urgent need for culturally grounded awareness campaigns, educational interventions, and policy reforms that challenge harmful narratives and promote gender equality. The IPVAS thus proves to be a valid and reliable instrument for

exploring the complex sociocultural landscape of IPV attitudes in Azerbaijan and can serve as a foundational tool for informing public health strategies and human rights advocacy.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study set out to investigate multiple dimensions of identity and perception among university students by utilizing a series of well-established psychometric instruments. The research design incorporated the Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS), Gender Perception Scale (GPS), Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), and the Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale (IPVAS) to capture the complexity of feminist identity, gender self-awareness, psychological resources, and attitudes toward intimate partner violence. The comprehensive integration of these scales provided a multidimensional framework to assess both cognitive and affective components of identity formation and social attitudes in a diverse student population.

Statistical analysis confirmed that each of the measurement tools was both reliable and valid. The FIDS, adapted and enhanced to a 43-item model with the addition of four items in the "discovery" stage, exhibited an overall Cronbach's Alpha of .83. Subscale analyses revealed a moderate level of internal consistency at the passive acceptance and discovery stages (.605 and .556, respectively) and higher reliability in the more advanced stages (synthesis at .816 and active participation at .882). This pattern supports the theoretical premise that as feminist identity progresses, responses become more consistent, reflecting a consolidation of self-awareness and sociopolitical engagement.

Similarly, the Gender Perception Scale (GPS) demonstrated strong internal consistency with a Cronbach's Alpha of .872. The unidimensional nature of the GPS, as confirmed by factor analysis and supported by a robust Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.882 alongside a highly significant Bartlett's Test (χ^2 = 3389.153, p < .001), ensures that the scale accurately captures the construct of gender self-awareness. This finding is particularly important given the need to assess gender perceptions in both female and male student populations.

In the case of the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), statistical examination through descriptive statistics, reliability testing, and factor analysis underscored its efficacy. With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.87, all eight items loaded onto a single factor, confirming that the scale measures one underlying construct—psychological well-being. High mean scores and low variability among responses indicate that the participants generally report positive psychological resources, suggesting an effective adaptation of the scale in this cultural context. The Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale (IPVAS) was critically analyzed for its multidimensional structure. Divided into four subscales—Normalization of Violence, Generalization of Violence, Causes of Violence, and Concealment of Violence—the instrument demonstrated robust internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.81 to 0.88 and an overall Alpha of 0.87. Factor analyses confirmed that each item loaded strongly onto its designated subscale, establishing the scale's construct validity. The variability observed in descriptive statistics across these subscales reflects nuanced perspectives on IPV, indicating that while certain dimensions (e.g., the causes of violence) are more readily acknowledged, others (such as concealment) persist as socially sensitive issues.

The successful application of these scales underscores the complexity of identity and perception among university students in an evolving socio-cultural landscape. The FIDS model, with its clear progression from passive acceptance to active participation, highlights that the transition toward a positive feminist identity is not linear but marked by distinct cognitive and emotional shifts. This is echoed by the GPS findings, which reveal that higher gender self-awareness corresponds with more refined perceptions of gender roles and dynamics. Moreover, the high scores on the PWBS suggest that psychological resources, as measured by positive affect and competence, are maintained or even enhanced as individuals navigate these identity transitions. Notably, the nuanced findings of the IPVAS emphasize the interplay between cultural norms and individual attitudes toward intimate partner violence. The data suggest that societal stereotypes and traditional gender roles continue to inform perceptions of IPV, despite increased awareness and progressive attitudes in other domains. This highlights the critical need for multifaceted intervention strategies that address both the cultural underpinnings of gender violence and the individual psychological and social factors that perpetuate these attitudes.

Based on the statistical findings, future research is warranted to extend these analyses via longitudinal studies, which could track the evolution of feminist identity, gender perception, and psychological well-being over time. Incorporating additional demographic variables through regression analysis may also offer deeper insights into the predictors of progression across different identity stages. Furthermore, exploring the impact of culturally tailored interventions, such as gender sensitivity training and educational modules on IPV, could significantly enhance our

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understanding of how to promote healthy identity development and reduce acceptance of intimate partner violence. From a policy perspective, the study highlights the importance of fostering inclusive educational and support systems that recognize the multifaceted nature of gender identity and violence. Creating non-sexist environments within academic institutions, along with robust support services for victims of IPV, is imperative for promoting both psychological well-being and social equity. The integration of these findings into university curricula and community programs could drive meaningful societal change by challenging deeply ingrained stereotypes and empowering individuals to develop positive self-concepts.

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