

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**

**Department of Humanities**



**Diploma Thesis**

**Attitudes and Awareness of Feminism and Women  
Discrimination in the Czech Republic**

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# CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Economics and Management

## DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Bc. Karolína Zemanová

Economics and Management

Economics and Management

Thesis title

**Attitudes and Awareness of Feminism and Women's Discrimination in the Czech Republic**

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### Objectives of thesis

The main objective of this thesis is to investigate attitudes and awareness towards the feminist movement and gender discrimination in the Czech Republic. It will approach feminism as a specific social movement, with a focus on its economic goals, motivations and outcomes, focusing in particular on the concept of discrimination at work and in wider society. The thesis will investigate peoples understanding of feminism and gender discrimination and what perceptions of it, specifically with the aim of identifying differences between popular understandings and existing legal and institutional frameworks.

The literature review summarizes existing interpretations and understandings of social movements in general, the feminist movement in particular, and the concept of discrimination. The practical part involves research into public attitudes through quantitative and qualitative methods.

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### Methodology

Literature review based on data collected from specialized publications and other written, audio or online sources.

Research into public attitudes through quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) methods.

**The proposed extent of the thesis**

50-60 pages

**Keywords**

Social Movement, Feminism, Feminists, Women Rights, Society, Gender, Equality, Discrimination, Anti-discrimination Law, Czech Republic

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**Recommended information sources**

- ALTMAN, Andrew, "Discrimination", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entries/discrimination/>>.
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**Expected date of thesis defence**

2020/21 SS – FEM

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Electronic approval: 24. 3. 2021

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## **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled ‘Attitudes and Awareness of Feminism and Women Discrimination in the Czech Republic’ by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any third person.

In Prague 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2021

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Karolína Zemanová

## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Daniel Rosenhaft Swain, Ph.D., MA, for his valuable comments, supervision and assistance during the assessment of my diploma thesis.

Author: Karolína Zemanová

## **Abstract**

The main objective of this thesis is to analyze and evaluate acquired data from the interviews and survey that were used in the practical part and to determine the attitudes and awareness of Czech people towards the feminism and gender discrimination in the Czech Republic. This thesis investigates how people understand the context of feminism, gender discrimination and the perceptions they have about it. And to find out whether there are some misconceptions about the discussed topics.

This diploma thesis is divided into two main parts: theoretical and practical. Based on the literature review and online sources, theoretical part summarizes the basic definitions and knowledge of the social movements, feminism, discrimination and legal regulations towards the discrimination in the Czech Republic.

Practical part is divided into two parts: in-depth interviews and survey. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods are used to gain a complete understanding of the target audience's awareness, knowledge and attitudes of the discussed topics.

First part consists of in-depth interviews. Primary data were conducted from the interviews in order to gain an in-depth picture of the individual views of the respondents. The aim is to gather as much information as possible from the respondents and the end goal is to develop a deep understanding of people's attitudes towards the feminism in the Czech Republic.

The following part is dedicated to the survey. Quantitative survey gives better understanding of people's knowledges, attitudes and awareness of the gender discrimination in the Czech Republic. The final chapter of this work is dedicated to the conclusion.

### **Key words:**

Social Movement, Feminism, Feminists, Women Rights, Society, Gender, Equality, Discrimination, Anti-discrimination Law, Czech Republic

## **Abstrakt**

Hlavním cílem této práce je analyzovat a vyhodnotit získaná data z rozhovorů a průzkumů, které byly použity v praktické části, a zjistit postoje a povědomí Čechů o feminismu a genderové diskriminaci v České republice. Diplomová práce zkoumá, jak lidé chápou kontext feminismu a diskriminaci na základě pohlaví a jaké jsou vnímání zmíněných témat, a zjistit, zda o diskutovaných tématech existují určité mylné představy.

Tato diplomová práce je rozdělena do dvou hlavních částí, teoretické a praktické. Na základě literární rešerše a online zdrojů, teoretická část shrnuje základní definice a znalosti sociálních hnutí, feminismu, diskriminace a právních předpisů směřujících k diskriminaci v České republice.

Praktická část je rozdělena do dvou částí, přičemž jsou použity metody kvantitativního i kvalitativního výzkumu k získání úplného pochopení povědomí cílového publika, znalostí a postojů diskutovaných témat.

První část se skládá z hloubkových rozhovorů. Primární data byla získána z rozhovorů za účelem získání podrobného obrazu jednotlivých pohledů respondentů. Cílem je shromáždit co nejvíce informací od respondentů a konečným cílem je hluboké pochopení postojů lidí k feminismu v České republice.

Následující část je věnována průzkumu. Kvantitativní průzkum umožňuje lépe porozumět znalostem, postojům a povědomí lidí o diskriminaci na základě pohlaví v České republice. Závěrečná kapitola této práce je věnována shrnutí.

### **Klíčová slova:**

Sociální hnutí, Feminismus, Feministky, Práva žen, Společnost, Pohlaví, Rovnost, Diskriminace, Antidiskriminační právo, Česká republika

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## 1. Introduction

*‘Women belong in all places, where decisions  
are being made. ... It shouldn't be that women are the exception.’*

(Ruth Bader Ginsburg – American lawyer and jurist)

Social movements have changed the world in the past two centuries. They overthrew monarchies, won independence from colonial empires, and founded republics in postcolonial states. (Schaeffer, 2014) Social movements are today an indispensable part of global political reality with their ability to they make demands and negotiate with the government.

Over the centuries, people have always found ways to protest and get rid of their anger and experience of wrongdoing as well as express their desires for change and justice. It is in human nature to fight for the fundamental rights and freedoms. Some individuals fight lawsuits or carry out protests that put their own body and the body's vulnerability at risk (hunger strikes, attach themselves to trees, set fire to themselves, etc.). For centuries women have lived oppressed lives and have been treated unequally than man. After some time, women gathered their courage and strength and started fighting for their rights. And that is how feminism was born.

Feminism had to go through many obstacles to reach the form as we know it today. Today, feminism is an international movement that strives for an equal position for women in different areas. Feminism criticizes the unequal (power) relations between men and women and wants to change that. According to feminists, women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. Feminists believe in political, economic and social equality of both genders and fight against sexual and domestic violence.

Even though women's equality in the society is getting better and women are increasingly represented in senior positions in politics or business and more attention is paid to equal salaries, there are still areas left for improving. And despite the fact that women are paid better than before, those salaries are still not fully equated with that of men.

What considers feminism in the Czech Republic, it is still an unclear topic that needs to be understood and given its attention. Above all, the general public often has distorted ideas about the influence of feminism. Feminism is not a widely discussed topic in the Czech Republic, and when it is talked about, negative opinions and attitudes are heard.

Feminism also addresses the issue of discrimination against women such as sexual violence and harassment, gender-based violence, discrimination in the workplace or discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Or in other words, gender discrimination refers to unfair rights between male and female based on different gender roles which leads to unequal treatment in life.

Despite the fact that Czech Republic has come a long way in achieving equality, much remains to be done to close the gap and gender equality. For example, salary discrimination against women in the Czech Republic is one of the highest in Europe, so there is still plenty of space to improve in this area.

It looks like the current generation, millennials and Generation Z, will more often stand up for women's rights in the future to take more action through protests and oppose the current situation.

## **2. Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives**

The objective is to investigate attitudes and awareness of Czech people towards the feminism and gender discrimination in the Czech Republic. Thesis will investigate how people understand the context of feminism and gender discrimination and what perceptions of it they have and to find out whether there are some misconceptions about the discussed topics.

### **2.2 Methodology**

Thesis is divided into two main parts, theoretical and practical. Theoretical part is divided into four sections. First section describes basic definitions and types of social movements. Following chapter describes the feminist movement, and for understanding this movement it is necessary to mention its history as well as some Czech feminist organizations. Third section focuses on describing discrimination and its forms. Last chapter of theoretical part is dedicated to the legal regulations towards discrimination in the Czech Republic and in the European Union.

Second part of the work is practical part. Quantitative and qualitative research methods will be used to gain a complete understanding of the target audience's awareness, knowledge and attitudes of the discussed topics. This form was chosen for a more comprehensive view of the researched issues.

Firstly, an in-depth interviews will be conducted in order to gain an in-depth picture of the individual views of the respondents. The aim is to gather as much information as possible from the respondents and the end goal is to develop a deep understanding of people's attitudes towards the feminism in the Czech Republic.

The following part will be dedicated to the survey. Quantitative survey method is a good method for gathering broad insights and developing basic profiles, validating assumptions about the population and when there is a need for the statistical representation of a population. Survey will give better understanding of peoples knowledge, attitudes and awareness of the gender discrimination in the Czech Republic.

### 3. Literature Review

#### 3.1 Social Movements

Social movements are larger and informal groupings of individuals and organizations that focus on specific political, cultural, environmental or social problems in the society. Social movements are clearly aimed at some change in the society. People in the social movements are not satisfied with the current state of affairs, but are agitating for their own project, for their alternatives, for their ideas about how some social issues are best tackled and resolved. Examples of social movements might be the worker's movement, the women's movement, the peace movement, the human rights movement or the environmental movement. Because what do all those social movements want? They want some social, economic, political, cultural or environmental changes.

Andrew Heywood, a British author of textbooks on politics and political science, in his book *Politics* (2019) defines social movements as: *'a particular form of collective behavior in which the motive to act springs largely from the attitudes and aspirations of members, typically acting within a loose organizational framework. Being part of a social movement requires a level of commitment and political activism, rather than formal or card-carrying membership: above all, movements move. A movement is different from spontaneous mass action (such as an uprising or rebellion), in that it implies a level of intended and planned action in pursuit of a recognized social goal.'* (Heywood, 2019)

*'A social movement is an excluded collectivity in sustained interaction with economic and political elites seeking social change.'*

(Sidney Tarrow – an American professor of political science)

In the book 'The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups' is stated that forming and operating in groups is an important method for individuals to achieve goals (Olson 1965). This is evident from the many examples in society where collectives play an important role for individuals to achieve their shared economic goals. As an example of coordinated action can be used Czech movement called *Děti Země* (Children of the Earth) with their main aim to rescue the Vesek valley (*'Za záchranu veseckého údolí'*), which is a campaign to prevent the construction of a dam and the adjoining recreational area in the valley of the Luční and Mlýnský streams in Liberec - Vesec.

The action is much more successful if more interested parties participate. In addition, costs for legal aid are lower per participant when more people participate.

Charles Tilly, an American sociologist and political scientist, explains in his book *The Politics of Collective Violence* that the term social movements is usually used about collective networks and organizations that gather and mobilize around conflicting issues, common goals, and feelings of solidarity. Externally, they are commonly distinguished by using different forms of protest in confrontation with a common opponent, typically existing dominant authorities. Studies of social movements often pay close attention to the organized protest repertoire such as demonstrations, occupations, sit-ins, etc. (Tilly, 2013).

### 3.1.1 Formation of Social Movements

Social movements have changed the world. Since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, they have been crucial players in creating social and political development. They have overthrown monarchs, won independence from colonial rulers, founded republics, fought for the democratization of these republics and fought for civil rights and citizenship for various groups such as slaves, women, workers and ethnic and sexual minorities. (Flesher Fominaya, 2014; Schaeffer, 2014)

In his book '*Politics*', Andrew Heywood talks that an interest in social movements has been brought to life mainly thanks to the emergence of so-called 'new' social movements such as the women's movement, the environmental or green movement and the peace movement. According to Heywood, social movements can be traced back to the early nineteenth century. The earliest were the labor movement, which campaigned for improved conditions for the growing working class, various national movements, usually struggling for independence from multinational European empires.

Author also mentions that in the twentieth century it was also common for fascist and right-wing authoritarian groups to be seen as movements rather than as conventional political parties. (Heywood, 2019)

William Little, the author of the book '*Introduction to Sociology*' (2014) argues that throughout the time, more and more social movements took place among the population because of the development of education, as people had wider access to literature, also through help of technologies. Education helped people to broaden their knowledge about

some specific political or economic topics that in turn lead to willingness to support or even protest against some global topics. This is also connected to urbanization and industrialization of society that occurred in 19th century. Researchers support the idea that more and more social movements occur because of economic independence, education and freedom of expression of individuals thoughts and views. (William Little, 2014).

### 3.1.2 Types of Social Movements

Social movements can be categorized in many ways. One way to look at the social movements is from a geographical point of view. Social movements can be organized or happen locally, for example in a particular city, regionally, nationally and also globally.

*Ostravák* is an example of a *local social movement* in the Czech Republic. This political movement aims to protect the local environment and to have public control of municipal finances of the city Ostrava.

An example of *regional movement* is *Moravské hnutí* (The Moravian Movement), which is a political movement striving to restore the self-government of Moravia and Bohemian Silesia, either as a higher territorial unit within the Czech Republic, a federal state associated with Bohemia and Prague in the federation, or in a radical form of its secession from the Czech Republic and independence.

An example of a *national movement* is *Česká Ženská Lobby* (The Czech Women's Lobby) - a network of non-profit organizations defending women's rights in the Czech Republic, protecting the feminist belief that women have the same rights as men in political, social, cultural and economic aspects of life.

*Global social movements* are networks that work together across the world to promote thematically similar agendas, while becoming powerful players in global governance. Feminist movement can be used as an example to the global social movement.

Another way to distinguish social movements is to the '*old*' ones and the '*new*' ones. Andrew Heywood in his work *Politics* (2019) mentions the emergence of so-called '*new*' social movements, which have arisen since the 1960's. Among these movements belong for example the women's movement, the environmental movement or the peace movement.

Among the '*old*' movements Heywood places the labor movement, which campaigned for improved conditions for the growing working class in the beginning of the

20<sup>th</sup> century, various national movements, usually struggling for independence from multinational European empires. In central Europe he stresses in particular, a Catholic movement that fought for emancipation through the granting of legal and political rights to Catholics. (Heywood, 2019)

According to Anthony Giddens (1985), an English sociologist, social movements can be distinguished by what their focus is. There are four areas in which social movements can be divided into: *Democratic movements, Labor movements, Ecological movements and Peace movements.*

### **Democratic movements**

The objectives of democratic movements are mainly political and human rights issues. As an example, can be used World Movement for Democracy, which connects and unites people and organizations around the world who are working on a daily basis to promote democratic values and build and strengthen democratic institutions in their respective countries. Another example of a democratic movement is LGBT Rights Movement, which seeks for equal rights for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people and calls for an end to discrimination of those people in employment, wedding restrictions (registered partnership), children adoption and other areas of life.

### **Labor movements**

Labor movements fight in the interest of the employees/workers. With as main objectives to improve employee's rights and working conditions as well as their salaries. *Českomoravská konfederace odborových svazů* (Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions) can be named as an example in the Czech Republic. As stated on their official website: *'Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions is the largest trade union headquarters in the Czech Republic and is a voluntary, open and independent democratic association of 30 trade unions, whose mission is to protect wages, working and living conditions and the rights of employees.'* (ČMKOS, 2021)



## **Ecological movements**

Ecological movements, or sometimes also referred as environmental movements or green movements, refer to all activities and organizations that are concerned with protecting nature and the environment. Environmental movements have been established mainly due to the ever-deteriorating environment on our planet. Mostly, these movements are organized by people who like nature and do not want to destroy the gifts that have been here for several thousand years.

In the Czech Republic, anyone who is interested in nature and wants to preserve it as our ancestors left it can become a member of the ecological movement. The *Brontosaurus movement* is the most known ecological movement in the Czech Republic. As Tomáš Wimmer writes in the webpage *ekologie.aktualne.cz*: *'It is a non-governmental, non - profit organization that combines the pursuit of environmental education with leisure activities - games, theater, art and music, and also works to keep our environment as beautiful as possible.'* (Wimmer, 2021)

Another Czech ecological movement is called *Hnutí Duha* (Rainbow movement), according to their website the movement: *'strives for a free and democratic society that respects and protects nature and provides a clean and healthy environment for life'*.

## **Peace movements**

Peace movements are movements that aim towards peace in the given country, region or in the world. Peace movements want to unite all people who believe that war is a crime against humanity and that the causes of wars should be removed and also that the organized violence should be banned.

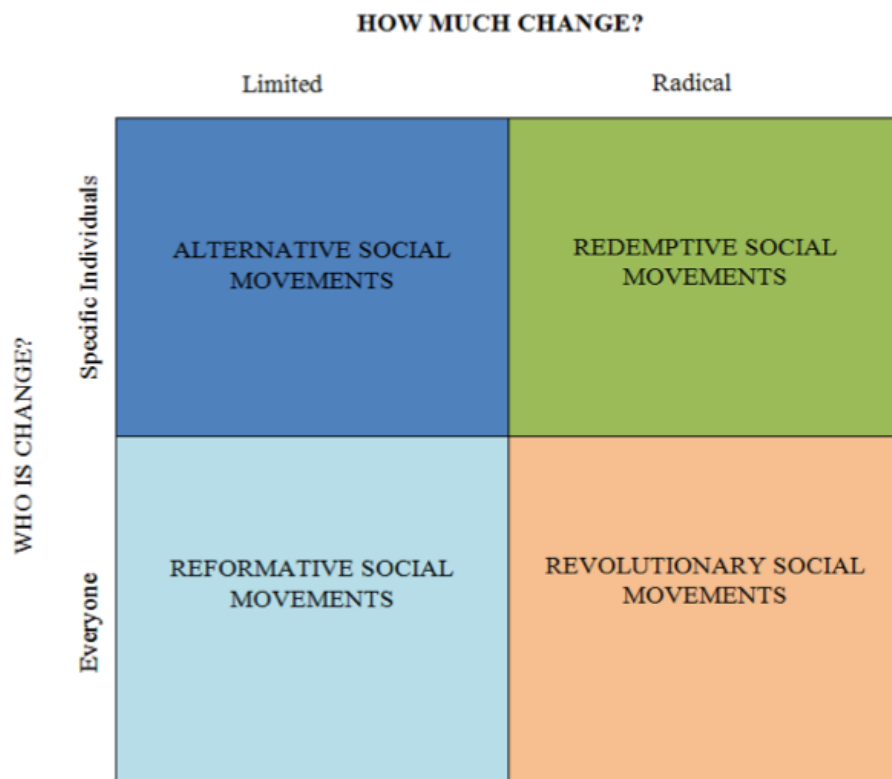
The main peace movement in the Czech Republic is called *České mírové hnutí* (The Czech Peace Movement). *'It is a peace, anti-war and anti-imperialist organization that was created within the successful movement against that time efforts to build a US military base in the Czech Republic. It is a member of the World Peace Council and publishes the Peace Newsletter (Mírový Zpravodaj).'* (České mírové hnutí, 2007-2018)

These four types of social movements mentioned above can be described according to an American anthropologist David Aberle (1966), upon two characteristics: *Who is the movement attempting to change? How much change is being advocated?*

Anti-tobacco movement is an example of a social movement that is aiming to change individuals with the main goal to make individuals stop smoking. An article ‘*The Rise of Anti-smoking Movements*’ published by Yale University Library describes how an anti-smoking campaign was targeted: ‘*By the 1990’s, public health campaigns clearly stated how smoking negatively affected babies and advocated for a smoke-free environment around children. Mothers were strongly encouraged to quit smoking for the health of their children, or risk being stigmatized as a ‘bad mother’.*’

*Slezská pro život* (Silesian for Life) is an example of a Czech social movement reaching broader group of people rather than an individual. ‘*The Silesian political movement was founded in order to improve living standards, especially in the Silesian region of Ostrava. Members of this movement are ready to fight to ensure that this part of the city remains a predominantly residential area for citizens for a happy and full life.*’ (Slezská pro život, 2021)

Figure 1 - Four Types of Social Movements



Source: Aberle, 1966

In the picture above, Aberle (1966) discusses that there are four different types of social movements, which are *alterative, redemptive, reformative, and revolutionary (transformative) movements*. These types are categorized on how much influence people are trying to change and what is the objective they are trying to achieve. The question is whether the movements are trying to make *change at an individual level or at a societal level* and whether the movements are seeking *partial change or total change*.

First type is an **alternative** movement. This movement's objective is *partial individual* change or in other words, its goal is partial change in individuals' behavior. As an example, Alcoholics Anonymous, which is an international fellowship with its main aim to help the members with stop drinking the alcohol. Another example of an alternative movement is a movement that efforts promoting recycling. In the Czech Republic there is an alternative movement called *Hnutí Duha* with their main challenge to reduce the amount of waste we produce and by promoting people to be more aware about the benefits of recycling and then in return to get individuals to recycle their waste.

**Redemptive** social movement seeks *total individual* change. According to the article '*The Four Types of Social Movement*' written by Nick Lee (2019): '*the redemptive movements promoting a total change in a person are mostly religious movements that promise salvation through a complete personal transformation.*' (Lee, 2019)

New Age is an example of a redemptive social movement. According to the article called '*New Age Movement*' by J. Gordon Melton: '*the movement looked forward to a "New Age" of love and light and offered a foretaste of the coming era through personal transformation and healing.*' (Melton, 2019)

Third type, **reformative** movements often seek *partial social* change in social systems. According to Lee (2019) an example would be: '*the Women's Suffrage Movement, the movement for women to gain the right to vote. They merely wanted to change a part of the system — they wanted to have equal voting rights, the same as men.*' (Lee, 2019)

Last type is called **transformative** movement. This movement aims *total social* change — a total change in social systems. Here belong also revolutions, because their main goal is to change or annihilate the current system.

William Little in his book *Chapter 21: Social Movements and Social Change* (2004) gives another way of dividing social movements. He distinguishes social movements into 'Reform' and 'Radical' movements. "*Reform movement is a type of social movement that aims to make changes in some laws and legislations, including some norms and values of society. Such movements can be oriented on better ecological environment or on human rights, e.g., right to abortion. On the other hand, radical movement includes changing systems in a fundamental way, e.g., Civil Rights Movement, polish Solidarita movement.*" (Little, 2004)

### **3.2 The Feminist Movement**

*'A feminist is anyone who recognizes the equality and full  
humanity of women and men.'* – Gloria Steinem  
*(famous American feminist)*

Feminism is a policy that fights for gender equality and against gender discrimination. Feminism believes in political, cultural, economic and social equality of both genders. This concept is commonly understood in society as a movement for the emancipation of women. The movement is based on the belief in the disadvantageous situation of women in society and their worse, and in some cases degrading position compared to men.

Feminism has its roots in the fight for women's human rights and their equal rights with men. For most of human history, women had fewer rights than men in society and were largely or somewhere completely excluded from positions of influence in the society and kept home to take care of the children and household. Since then, of course, policy and society has evolved and changed, and women gained over the time their positions of influence in the society.

Nowadays, feminist movement is very diverse and includes many currents and directions. Therefore, feminism cannot be said to be a single group of attitudes, opinions or claims anymore. Current feminism stands up for women's interests, strives for legal equality

between men and women, demands physical autonomy for women and fights against domestic and sexual violence on women.

### 3.2.1 History

To understand feminism and its current form, it is necessary to mention the history of this movement that shaped it. The history of feminism is divided into three waves, each with its own characteristics, objectives and the approaches to the solution of the women's issue. In the following subchapters, these three waves are summarized and only the main figures, who have made a significant contribution to the history of feminist thinking, are mentioned. Simultaneously is described the development of feminism movement in the Czechoslovak Republic and in the Czech Republic as well.

#### **First wave of feminism (end of 19<sup>th</sup> century – 1930's)**

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, women gradually became more and more concerned about the position in which they found themselves. More and more women worldwide saw how unevenly the division actually was between men and women. Important sources of irritation at this time were that there was no women's right to vote and no equal rights in the labor market. No wonder that a number of women and also some men tried to oppose this.

In those times women were hardly involved in political decision-making and only men were allowed to vote and stand for election. A woman in government was unthinkable at that time. It was common thinking that men felt that women should not be allowed to vote because the woman, by her nature (emotional and weak), was unable to make an objective judgment.

Hana Havelková, Czech sociologists focusing on gender issues, in her book *'First and second wave of feminism'* (První a druhá vlna feminizmu) writes that the history of feminism began in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the struggle for women's human and civil rights. Movement's representatives called for the recognition of fundamental rights, which society declaratively attributed to 'all people'. These were the most basic civil and political rights, such as the right to vote, the right to education and the right to property, but at the heart of all these requirements - it meant, above all, the right to decide on oneself, to be the real "owner" of oneself. (Havelková, 2004)

Perspectives on feminism differed in different parts of the world. Feminism was viewed completely differently in the Western part of the world than in the Czechoslovak Republic.

Barbora Osvaldová, Czech publicist and university teacher, in her book *‘Česká média a feminismus’* (Czech media and feminism) writes that: *‘feminism in the Czech environment did not reflect the struggle of women against men, but it was primarily about a better position and employment of women in civic life. A typical sign that appeared in the beginning of feminism in our country was moderation. Czech women were one of the first in Europe to achieve the right to vote in 1920. After the First World War, women managed to get other jobs. Even women began to appear in parliament as deputies and senators. Milada Horáková was an important figure fighting for women's equality. This woman sought the professional employment of a woman, but not at the expense of family life.’* (Osvaldová, 2004)

For this period, the main representative of the women emancipation was Milada Horáková. She was a politician and a doctor in law and was fighting for women’s rights as well. She criticized the Czechoslovak communist regime a lot, which escalated into the political trial and she was hanged by the communist regime on June 27, 1950 as a punishment for conspiracy and treason.

This confirms Barbora Osvaldová in her book *Česká média a feminismus* (Czech media and feminism): *‘Milada Horáková is undoubtedly an important figure in interwar Czechoslovakia. She focused on promoting women's equality and worked, for example, in the Women's National Council, where she began to get involved as a university student. Another place where Horáková worked is membership in the Petitions Committee ‘Věrní zůstaneme’ (We will remain faithful). She worked here during the occupation of Czechoslovakia. After the war, she joined and became the chairwoman of the Council of Czechoslovak Women.’* (Osvaldová, 2004)

According to Hana Havelková (2004), the first wave of feminism lasted worldwide until about 1930, when it subsided for two main reasons.

First reason was that the main objectives - the already mentioned right to education, the right to vote, the right to property - have in principle been met by this time. In most European countries, the right to vote was granted to women after World War I. Women contributed to this by proving their abilities - taking the positions of men in many jobs.

Second reason was the global economic crisis, which was caused by the collapse of the American stock market in New York in 1929. This led to a chain reaction in the economies of Europe countries. This event caused women to reorient their attention from feminism. Third main reason was the onset of fascism that have forced women to address other societal issues. This was reflected, for example, in the Czech feminist movement, whose leading representative Františka Plamínková left aside the women's issue, as she considered it more important to warn against Nazism. (Havelková, 2004)

### **Second wave of feminism (1960's – 1990's)**

After the success of the first wave, the removal of visible legislative obstacles, the women's movement fell silent for some time. This Klára Čálková explains in her work '*Český feminismus*' (Czech Feminism), that due to the conservatism of the 1950's and the emphasis on the public sphere as more valuable than the domestic sphere, women again felt useless and isolated. But during the 1960's, a second wave of the feminist movement began to take shape. It manifested itself in connection with the hippie movement after 1968. Hippies fought mainly for civil rights, the rights of minorities (developing gay and lesbian communities), against the war in Vietnam and against racism. It rejected the bourgeois model of the family, and part of this attitude was the demand that women decide for themselves. (Čálková, 2006) After this the women's movement gradually separated and formed into a separate stream.

Authors Renzetti and Curran (2003) state that an important factor in triggering the second wave was the publication of 'Feminine Mystique' by Betty Friedan in 1963. '*Friedan was able to challenge the feelings of women who felt unfulfilled and trapped. They realized the impossibility of personal growth, dissatisfaction, and frustration. Friedan called this feeling a 'problem without a name'. This book was significant in that it revealed the problem as social, not personal.*' (Renzetti and Curran, 2003)

Another important step for Western feminist movement was the establishment of the '*National Organization for Women*', which was formed in the year 1966 in the United States, with the participation of already mentioned Betty Friedan and other women representing state committees on women's issues.

This movement exists till now with the main objectives: '*to focuses on a broad range of women's rights issues, including economic justice, pay equity, racial discrimination, women's health and body image, women with disabilities, reproductive rights and justice,*

*family law, marriage and family formation rights of same-sex couples, representation of women in the media, and global feminist issues.* ' (National Organization for Women, 2020)

The second wave of feminism differs from the first in that it brought new themes and approaches. The feminists during the second wave had multiple goals in mind. For example, they wanted to increase the participation of women in the labor process and a subsequent redistribution of household tasks. This would make women more economically independent and acquire an equal position in society. Another goal was sexual freedom and the associated eradication of sexual violence and abuse of women. One of the aims was also the right to abortion.

*„After achieving the goals of the first wave of feminism, women had the opportunity to know that the legislation itself solves only a small part of the problems. In addition to the logical effort for the laws to have a greater real impact, i.e. for women to realize at all that they have a right to something and dare to apply it, attention has now begun to focus on two basic levels, in which the origin of gender inequalities: on culture in the broadest sense (institutions, language, behavior of actors, members of a given culture, etc.) and on psychological issues of gender identity formation, on issues of socialization in childhood and mechanisms of reproduction of so-called gender patterns in adulthood.“* (Havelková, 2004)

After the end of the Second World War, the socialist Czechoslovakia was formed, and the Czechoslovak Republic remained part of the Eastern bloc. The rise of communism in Czechoslovakia affected many spheres of life, including the area of equality between men and women. The communist regime lasted from year 1948 till the Velvet Revolution in November 1989, which removed the Communist Party from power.

Important question is, what has been reached in the second wave of the feminism? Despite the historical events in the Czechoslovak republic and in the world as well, the qualifications and educational levels of women began to increase. Alena Wagnerová (2009), Czech author and journalist, in her book *'Co přinesl a co nepřinesl českým tženám socialistický model rovnoprávnosti - aneb nejen jesle a traktoristky'* (What did the socialist model of equality bring to Czech women and what did it not bring - or not just crèches and tractor drivers) writes that increased qualification of women in employment had been



reached but women still did not reached leading positions and their salaries corresponded to only 66% of the average salary of men. (Wagnerová, 2009)

Women's working conditions had also changed. Women were treated better and had a greater career choice, partly because they were now able to study.

### **Third wave of feminism (1990 - present)**

From the nineties of the twentieth century till present time we count the third wave of feminist movement. The main focus was/is on self-development.

Author of the book *„Současné trendy feministického myšlení“* (Current trends in the feminist thinking) Věra Sokolová writes: *‘From the second half of the 1980’s, and especially during the 1990’s, feminism became a global social phenomenon. Feminist thinking and the currents emanating from it were so diverse and fragmented that it was very difficult to find common ground. Feminist dialogue consisted of criticism and delineation against each other. Apparently for these reasons, feminism has been declared "dead" in the media. As a result of these problems and criticism, feminist thinking has received a new impetus for its development. A significant benefit of this third wave is the emphasis on the link between gender and other categories of social inequalities, such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social status, age, religion and more. Gender inequality is still perceived here as fundamental, but also as part of social stratification and discrimination.’* (Sokolová, 2004)

In order to understand better the feminist movement in the Czechoslovak and Czech Republic it is essential to be aware of the historical events. The Velvet revolution took place in November 1989, which overthrew the communist party in the Czechoslovak Republic. On January 1, 1993, the two countries officially separated, and the Czech Republic was established.

Jana Chaloupková in her book *‘Základní charakteristika protžensky orientovaných neziskových organizací v České republice.’* (Basic characteristics of women-oriented non-profit organizations in the Czech Republic) writes: *‘After the Velvet Revolution in 1989, a large number of women’s organizations and groups were formed. It was related to the change and reconstruction of society after the fall of communist era.*

*Before 1989, there was only one official women's organization, the Czechoslovak Women's Union. Just for comparison, at the end of 1989 the number of women's groups in*

*our country stopped at number 27 and in the mid-nineties the number of organizations increased and stopped around the number 70. To show what these organizations were striving for, their activities were divided into 7 areas, such as health and healthcare, support for minority groups of women, the position of women in society in general and others.'* (Chaloupková, 2006)

The fight of feminism is still not yet fully achieved in the Czech Republic. For example, equal pay for women and men is still not a fact. According to Eurostat data: *'the Czech Republic has the third highest difference in earnings between women and men or Gender Pay Gap (GPG) in the EU – 20.1% compared to the EU average of 14.8%, to the disadvantage of women.'*

*'Rovná odměna – 22% k rovnosti'* (Equal pay – 22% towards equality) is a project of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, which is focused on solving the problem of unequal pay for women and men in the Czech Republic. They argue that there are many reasons for unequal pay. *'These include, for example, a higher concentration of women in lower paid jobs (education, health and social care), smaller representation of women in leadership positions, gender stereotypes in the perception of social roles of women and men (woman - caregiver, man - provider), unequal division of childcare and domestic work, or even direct discrimination.'* (www.rovnaodmena.cz, 2021)

Another reason is that there is also still not enough childcare. While this is an absolute necessity to give all women access to the labor market.

Another issue is that women are still a minority in many (political) administrative bodies, on the highest rungs of the career ladders. For example, Czech Republic has never had a woman as a Prime Minister, while half of the developing countries had or has woman in this position. The number of women in decision-making process is one of the smallest in the Europe. According to the report *'Political participation of women in the Czech Republic'*, created by Veronika Šprincová and Marcela Adamusová: *'participation of women in the Czech political scene has been low for a long period of time.'* According to the authors: *'the Czech politics exhibits an inverse relation – the higher level of political decision the lower number of women. This same has been proved in the local governmental bodies.'* (Šprincová, Adamusová, 2014)

To sum up the history of feminism, the primary goal of the first wave was to grant the right to vote to women. Other goals included the effort to grant the right to education and the right to property. All that had been reached in the first wave. Second wave fought for women's education and job positions. What considers the third wave of feminism, today's women really want men and women to become completely equal, there to be equal pay and more respect for women. However, most women today believe that the situation is already good and that there is no need for more fight.

In my opinion, women still have to compete against prejudices and stereotypical gender roles and the battle is not fully over yet and there are still areas for improvement.

### 3.2.2 Feminist Associations in the Czech Republic

Important topic related to the feminist movements is the associations that fight for women's emancipation in the Czech Republic. *'One of the important already existing organizations is the Český svaz žen (Czech Women's Union), which has an extensive membership base and several branches. These branches are not organizationally or thematically uniform, on the contrary, they differ considerably from each other. This organization implements its own projects, which mainly affect topics such as gender stereotypes in the media, opportunities in the labor market, etc. Another very important non-profit organization can be considered the organization Gender Studies, which focuses on a large number of topics and such as the labor market, anti - discrimination measures and also set up a professional library, where we can find literature on gender and equal opportunities for men and women. It is important to mention the Brno organization Nesehnout. The importance of this organization lies primarily in the launch of the Women's Rights is a Human Rights program in 1999.'* (Sokáčová, 2009)

Another major Czech association dealing with the feminism issue is the *Česká ženská lobby* (Czech Women's Lobby). According to their website: *'it is a network of organizations that defend the rights of women in the Czech Republic. The Czech Women's Lobby promotes the rights of all women, regardless of their race, ethnicity, abilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or faith.'* Their mission is to take on real problems women face and raise them to a political level as well as to improve the situation of women in society. They are part of the European Women's Lobby, an organization that unites women and gender associations in Europe and cooperate with European institutions. (Czech Women's Lobby, 2021)

Their main goals are:

- to advocate laws that ensure a better life for women,
- to promote equality between men and women,
- to strengthen the position of disadvantaged groups of women,
- and to call attention to women's issues and propose solutions. (Czech Women's Lobby, 2021)

Next association is *Genderové informační centrum Nora* (gender information center Nora), which contributes to awareness of gender equality issues with regard to various areas and supports, in particular, events in the region. Among their activities belong: gender audits, educational workshops for schools, advising and many more. (Genderové informační centrum NORA o.p.s, 2013)

Last mentioned association concerning this issue is called *Gender Studies*. This organization is a non-governmental non-profit organization that serves primarily as an information, consultation and educational center on issues of relations between men and women and their position in society. (Gender Studies o.p.s, 2008)

### **3.3 Discrimination**

Discrimination is very closely linked to the subject of feminism. If there was no discrimination, specifically discrimination against women, feminism would not exist.

Discrimination has a long history and takes on various manifestations, but it is generally understood as the absence of equality between people. If one group of people is different, the other group tries to limit, oppress or otherwise disadvantage it. Discrimination has been a powerful tool for controlling people for a long time. When we look at distant history, we see customs that are incomprehensible to us, religious ceremonies, laws that we can hardly understand today, and we wonder how humanity could function in this way. But let's not have big illusions about what our descendants will see in 200 years. We might be wondering what they find incomprehensible to them. They probably would not understand why a woman is paid less for the same work, why the vast majority of our politicians are men, why in some countries a woman cannot have an abortion when her child should be seriously injured, etc.

### 3.3.1 Definitions

Amnesty International, which is a non-governmental worldwide organization focused on human rights, describes: *‘that discrimination occurs when a person is unable to enjoy his or her human rights or other legal rights on an equal basis with others because of an unjustified distinction made in policy, law or treatment.’* (Amnesty International, 2014)

According to the Czech Ombudsman, who is a person that has been appointed by the government as a public defender of rights, states that: *‘discrimination generally means different treatment in comparable situations without reasonable justification. However, it is not enough for the discriminated person/people to just feel discriminated, but discrimination must really exist as an act described and prohibited by law.’* (Office of the Ombudsman (Kancelář ochránce práv), 2021)

### 3.3.2 Forms of Discrimination

In terms of forms, discrimination can be divided into three main forms: *direct*, *indirect* and *intersectional* discrimination.

**Direct discrimination** is when people who are otherwise equal are treated differently. Amnesty International writes that direct discrimination occurs: *‘when an explicit distinction is made between groups of people that results in individuals from some groups being less able than others to exercise their rights.’* An example is when a person does not get a job because of his or her skin color, or because he or she is openly gay. Or when a taxi driver refuses to drive a client because of his or her ethnic group.

This also happens when, because of your sex, someone treats you worse than someone of the opposite sex who is in the same situation. For example, a nightclub offers free entry to women but charges men to enter. This situation is considered as direct discrimination against men.

Or another example would be when an employer avoids employing a woman because he thinks she would be more likely to take time off work to look after the children.

**Indirect discrimination** is, according to the Czech Ombudsman, a conduct in which someone is treated less favorably on the basis of a criterion that is seemingly neutral. ‘An

example, a restaurant declares an unrestricted ban on dogs, thereby banning people with disabilities who use guide or assistance dogs from entering.’ (Office of the Ombudsman (Kancelář ochránce práv), 2021). Another example is that there may be a lack of wheelchair ramps in the public buildings for disabled people.

In other words, indirect discrimination occurs when someone sets a policy or way of working that applies equally to both sexes, but at the same time disadvantages one. For example: the employer decides to change the working hours so that the employees end at 17:00 instead of the original 15:00. Employees caring for children could be disadvantaged if new working hours mean that they cannot pick up their children from kindergarten or school on time.

**Intersectional discrimination** occurs according to Amnesty International: *‘when several forms of discrimination combine to leave a particular group or groups at an even greater disadvantage. For example, discrimination against women frequently means that they are paid less than men for the same work. Discrimination against an ethnic minority often results in members of that group being paid less than others for the same work. Where women from a minority group are paid less than other women and less than men from the same minority group, they are suffering from intersectional discrimination on the grounds of their sex, gender and ethnicity.’* (Amnesty International, 2014)

Other forms of discrimination are - *organizational*, and *structural (institutional)* discrimination.

### **Organizational discrimination**

Andrew Altman writes in his work *‘Discrimination’*: *‘that in many cases, acts of discrimination are attributed to collective agents, rather than to natural persons acting in their individual capacities. Accordingly, corporations, universities, government agencies, religious bodies, and other collective agents can act in discriminatory ways. This kind of discrimination can be called “organizational,” and it cuts across the direct-indirect distinction. Confusion sometimes arises when it is mistakenly believed that organizations cannot have intentions and that only indirect discrimination is possible for them. As collective agents, organizations do have intentions, and those intentions are a function of*

*who the officially authorized agents of the institution are and what they are trying to do when they act as their official powers enable them.* (Altman, 2020)

As an example, author writes: *'the Board of Trustees of a university votes to adopt an admissions policy that (implicitly or explicitly) excludes Jews, and the trustees vote that way precisely because they believe that Jews are inherently more dishonest and greedier than other people. In such cases, the university is deliberately excluding Jews and is guilty of direct discrimination.'* (Altman, 2020)

**Structural discrimination** - sometimes called 'institutional' - concerns the rules that constitute and regulate the major sectors of life such as family relations, property ownership and exchange, political powers and responsibilities, and so on (Pogge, 2008). It is true that when such rules are discriminatory, they are often the deliberate product of some collective or individual agent, such as a legislative body or executive official. In such cases, the agents are guilty of direct discrimination. But the idea of structural discrimination is an effort to capture a wrong distinct from direct discrimination. (Altman, 2020).

Altman (2020) add that: *'It is also likely that some collective and individual agents continue to engage in direct discrimination in such a society. But by invoking the idea of structural discrimination and attributing the discrimination to the rules of a society's major institutions, we are pointing to a form of discrimination that is conceptually distinct from the direct discrimination engaged in by collective or individual agents. Thus understood, structural discrimination is, as a conceptual matter, necessarily indirect, although, as an empirical matter, direct discrimination is (almost) always part of the story of how structural discrimination came to be and continues to exist.'* Altman (2020)

There are also many other forms of manifestations of discrimination such as *harassment* (including *sexual harassment*), *prosecution*, *instruction to discriminate* or *incitement to discrimination* are also considered discrimination.

**Harassment** occurs when someone makes another person feel humiliated, offended or degraded. The legal definition according to the Ombudsman is: *'harassment is conduct that has the intention or effect of diminishing the dignity of another person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment.'* (Office of the Ombudsman (Kancelář ochráníce práv), 2021).

An example: men colleagues are using racist slang, phrases or nicknames towards another female colleague.

**Sexual harassment** is another type of harassment. It occurs when someone makes another person feel threaten, hostile, humiliated, offended or degraded a sexual way. This behavior can be verbal, symbolic and / or physical, like sexual comments or jokes, touching, or assault. It also covers sending messages or emails of a sexual nature or publishing pornographic pictures.

An example: flirting, gesturing or making sexual remarks about someone's body, clothing or appearance or telling sexually offensive jokes.

It is necessary to mention another type of harassment. This type was defined by the British Equality and Human Rights Commission. Some may classify it as sexual harassment. However, this commission ranks it as a separate type of harassment. This harassment occurs when someone treats another person unfairly because he or she refused to put up with sexual harassment.

As an example, the Commission cites: *'A male manager invites one of his female employee home after they have been out for a drink. She declines. A couple of weeks later she is turned down for a promotion. She believes this is because she turned down her boss's proposition.'*

It can also cover unfair treatment even if the person had previously accepted sexual conduct.

For example: The employee above did have a brief relationship with her boss. After it ended, she applied for a promotion but was turned down. She believes this is because the relationship with her manager had ended.

*'Persecution is unfavorable treatment, punishment or disadvantage in response to a person exercising his or her right under anti-discrimination law.'* (Office of the Ombudsman (Kancelář ochráníce práv), 2021).

An example: an employer penalizes an employee for bringing an action for discrimination.



**The instruction to discriminate** is the abuse of a subordinate to discriminate against a third party.

An example: the director of a company gives a binding instruction to the head of the personnel department not to accept woman for the position.

To sum it up, discrimination can be sometimes easy to spot - for example, if a waiter in a restaurant refuses to serve someone because he/she is gay. This is called direct discrimination. This is when someone is treated differently simply because of who they are. But there are other times when someone may be treated in the same way as everybody else, but it has a different and worse effect on him/her because of who they are. This is also discrimination and it can be in other forms of discrimination like indirect, harassment, structural or institutional discrimination.

### 3.3.3 Is Discrimination Wrong?

The right question is whether discrimination is wrong or not. *Altmann (2020) argues that: 'the distinction between direct and indirect discrimination plays a central role in contemporary thinking about discrimination. However, some philosophers hold that talking about indirect discrimination is confused and misguided. For these philosophers, direct discrimination is the only genuine form of discrimination.'* (Altman, 2020)

Young (1990) argues that the concept of discrimination should be limited to 'intentional and explicitly formulated policies of exclusion or preference.' She holds that conceiving of discrimination in terms of the consequences or impact of an act, rather than in terms of its intent, "confuses issues" by conflating discrimination with oppression. Discrimination is a matter of the intentional conduct of particular agents. Oppression is a matter of the outcomes routinely generated by 'the structural and institutional framework' of society. (Altman, 2020; Young,1990)

According to Altman (2020): 'critics will contend that the concept of indirect discrimination is problematic, because its use mistakenly presupposes that the wrongfulness of discrimination can lie ultimately in its effects on social groups. Certainly, bad effects can be brought about by discriminatory processes, but critics argue that the wrongfulness lies in what brings about the effects, i.e., in the unfairness or injustice of those acts or policies that

generate the effects and does not reside in the effects themselves. Addressing this argument requires a closer examination of why discrimination is wrong.’ (Altman, 2020)

In author’s opinion, discrimination, in whatever form, is wrong in many ways. Any form of discrimination can cause either intentional or unintentional harm, whether or not it is perceived by the individual. People who are / have been discriminated against or restricted in many things and situations in life, it can lead to such consequences that people do not believe in themselves or that they feel like they have a brake in life ('I'm not good enough' thoughts) and this is most often transferred to other areas of life (e.g., work, relationships, finance). If a person is discriminated against, he/she must feel inferior, and it must certainly leave some traces in him/her (psychic blocks or barriers). Discrimination is wrong when someone is prevented from doing something for reasons that may be debatable or biased. The following case can be used as an example: a young girl is applying for a job and the employer assumes that she will want to have children soon and therefore will not employ her. But she doesn't want children or can't for health reasons. Or if a job seeker is not selected by the employer on the basis of qualifications and abilities (as it should be), but on the basis of gender, age or race (what suits the employer).

Society needs to unite on this issue, because the ethics of discrimination is more complex than it might seem and deserves further attention.

### **3.4 The Policy and Legislation on Discrimination in the Czech Republic**

Human rights should, of course, guarantee the right of everyone to enjoy them regardless of religion, race, disability, gender, nationality, social status, gender identity or other irrelevant reasons. It is in the nature of things that everyone should enjoy privacy, freedom of expression, freedom of association, the right to life and so on. In order to shield all the mentioned above, it is necessary to mention a few anti-discrimination laws in the Czech Republic.

#### **3.4.1 Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms**

The Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms is part of the constitutional order of the Czech Republic. It is a fundamental law document, which was adopted as a

constitutional law by the Czech National Council on 16<sup>th</sup> of December 1992 and went to effect on 28<sup>th</sup> of December 1992.

It was published in the Czech Collection of Laws under No. 2/1993 Coll. The Charter was inspired and based primarily on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from year 1948.

The Charter has 44 articles divided into six titles. Title One guarantees certain rights, Title Two contains a catalog of fundamental human rights and freedoms, Title Three regulates the rights of national minorities, Title Four economic, social and cultural rights, Title Five deals with the right to judicial and other legal protection, Title Six then regulates common provisions.

Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms states that: *'people are free and equal in dignity and rights. Fundamental rights and freedoms are inalienable, inalienable, non-expiring and irrevocable.'* And that: *'fundamental rights and freedoms are guaranteed to all without distinction of sex, race, color, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, membership of a national or ethnic minority, property, gender or other status.'* (Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, Law No. 2/1993 Coll) For these reasons, segregated and unequal treatment of people is inadmissible and illegal unless it can be justified by some other objective justification (e.g., national security, protection of public health, state of emergency, protection of the rights and freedoms of others).

#### 3.4.2 European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

According to the EUR-Lex, which is an online website that provides an official access to the EU legal documents, the ECHR is an international treaty to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in Europe and it was signed in 1950 by the Council of Europe. All 47 countries forming the Council of Europe are party to the Convention, 28 of which are members of the EU.

The Convention established the European Court of Human Rights, intended to protect individuals from human rights violations. Any person whose rights have been violated under the Convention by a state party may take a case to the Court. This was an innovative feature, as it gave individuals rights in an international arena. Judgments finding violations are binding on the countries concerned. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe monitors the execution of judgements. (EUR-Lex)

The Convention was ratified by the Czech Republic on 18<sup>th</sup> of March 1992 and published under the Law No. 209/1992 Coll.

Article 14 is called Prohibition of discrimination and states: *‘the rights and freedoms granted by this Convention shall be exercised without discrimination on any grounds such as sex, race, color, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, membership of a national minority, property, gender or other position.’*

Another article states that: *‘for the same work or for work to which equal value is attributed, direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of sex with regard to all aspects and conditions of remuneration shall be eliminated.’*

*‘In particular, where a job classification system is used for determining pay, it shall be based on the same criteria for both men and women and so drawn up as to exclude any discrimination on grounds of sex.’* This specific sentence in the law says that women and men should be equally rewarded for the same work. This concerns wage inequality, which unfortunately still exists in Europe and also in the Czech Republic.

### 3.4.3 Labor Code

Labor Code is a Czech code registered under the law number 262/2006 Sb. It took effect from 1st of January 2007.

The Labor Code generally prohibits any discrimination, in particular on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic origin, nationality and so on. Discrimination on grounds of pregnancy, maternity, paternity or gender identification is considered to be discrimination on grounds of sex. (MPSV TREXIMA spol. s r.o., 2021) *‘For the same work or for work of the same value, all employees of the employer are entitled to the same wage, salary or remuneration from the agreement.’* (Labor Code, 262/2006 Sb.)

Section 16 (1) of the Labor Code sets out the principle of equal treatment of employers with all employees (i.e., regardless of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, religion, etc.)

with regard to:

- working conditions (e.g., working time arrangements),
- remuneration for work and other monetary benefits and performance of monetary value (e.g., bonuses, bonuses or benefits),

- vocational training (e.g., various vocational training in terms of raising or deepening qualifications),
- opportunity to achieve a functional or other career advancement. (Labor Code, 262/2006 Sb.)

This Labor Code does not address discrimination in areas such as disability or harassment. Specifically, harassment by managers, co-workers or others in the workplace.

#### 3.4.4 Anti-Discrimination Act

Officially called *Act on Equal Treatment and Legal Remedies for Protection against Discrimination and on Amendments to Certain Acts* (Anti-Discrimination Act) is an Act registered under the law No. 198/2009 Coll., which took an effect from 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2009.

This Act incorporates the relevant regulations of the European Union and, in connection with the directly applicable regulation of the European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms and international treaties, which are part of the legal order, further defines the right to equal treatment and non-discrimination in matters:

- a) the right to employment and access to employment, including assistance provided by the Labor Office of the Czech Republic,
- b) access to a profession, entrepreneurship and other self-employed activities, including integration into professional life,
- c) employment, employment and other dependent activities, including remuneration ...

(Anti-Discrimination Act, No. 198/2009 Coll.)

The Anti-Discrimination Act expands the provisions contained in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, defines the terms associated with equality and non-discrimination. It sets out what treatment is not considered discrimination and it also helps victims of discrimination to choose specific legal instruments that will enable them to defend discrimination effectively.

An important area where legal relations are defined is the private sector (e.g., renting an apartment, employment relations, relations with a doctor, etc.).

## 4. Practical Part

Feminism is a global movement that connects women and aims to achieve equal rights for women and men. There are different political, social and religious conditions in each country, which is why women in Bangladesh deal with completely different things than women in Poland or the Czech Republic. Discrimination is generally understood as the absence of equality between people. If one group of people is different, the other group tries to limit, oppress or otherwise disadvantage it.

These two topics are very closely connected, and this work examines the perception, attitudes and knowledge of people in the Czech Republic on both topics. People's attitudes toward feminism can affect how people perceive discrimination and vice versa.

### 4.1 Research Methods

Practical part of this thesis is divided into two parts. First part consists of semi-structured interviews focused on feminism and the second part consists of a survey focused on discrimination and gender discrimination. So, both qualitative and quantitative methods, were chosen for this part of the work. This form was chosen for a more comprehensive view of the researched issues.

### 4.2 Interviews

For the first part of practical part, semi-structured interviews were conducted with chosen respondents. Semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that involve a series of open-ended questions based on the topic areas the researcher or interviewer wants to cover. In this way, interviewer gets more in-depth picture of individual views and opinions. Naturally, semi-structured interviews are also suitable for learning more about the underlying concept and opinions about examined issue. Semi-structured interviews do not contain a standard questionnaire, the respondents are stimulated to speak freely.

Purpose of the interviews was to find out what was the perception and attitudes of people towards feminism. Whether people actually know what feminism is, what it stands for, if people find it helpful or needed in Czech society etc. Another objective of the interviews was to find out people's perception towards discrimination against women.

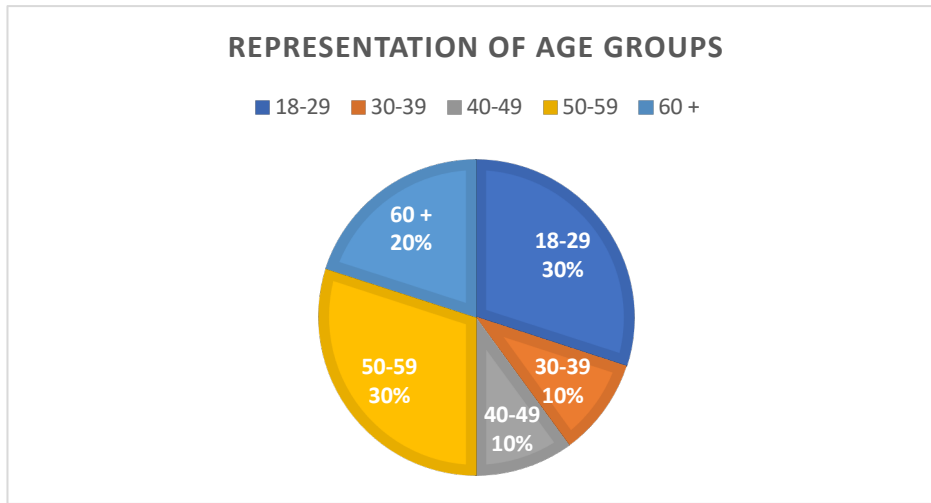
Whether people know what discrimination is, how such behavior looks like, what people consider as discrimination behavior and what not.

Interviews were conducted with 10 people – 7 women and 3 men, the percentage of representation is therefore 30% men and 70% women. All those people were native Czech people. This sample was chosen because of the relevance of the questions that had been related to the feminism and discrimination in Czech society. The youngest respondent was at that time 24 years old and the oldest one was 76 years old. The age range was between 24 – 76 years old, the purpose of such wide range was to see and demonstrate different perceptions of feminism and discrimination across the generations.

Due to Coronavirus restrictions, the interviews were made with respondents via Microsoft Teams platform and by the telephone. Interviews were recorded, assessed and suitably used in a quotation for demonstration of the thesis' issue. Of course, this does affect the degree to which an in-depth interview is personal. An online or telephone interview has a different atmosphere than a personal in-depth interview in which the interviewer and respondent sit opposite each other 'face-to-face'. Conducted data were evaluated and processed using Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word to transform these gathered data into graphs, tables and statistical statements on the issue.

The biggest representation with 30% was in categories of age between 18-29 and between 50-59, which means that I have interviewed 3 people in each category. The next most numerous group was group with respondents above the age of 60. They have accounted for 20% of respondents. Other age groups were less represented. Age group 30-39 accounted for 10% of respondents and group of age between 40-49 accounted the same. Graph below (Figure 3) illustrates the age groups of respondents.

Figure 2 - Representation of Age Groups



Source: Own data processed

### Question number 1: Have you ever heard about feminism?

From the respondents I have found out that all of them had ever heard about feminism. This was a nice surprise for me. When I have asked the additional question *from where*, respondents mainly heard about feminism from media – television, radio, internet or printed media such a magazine or newspaper.

Kateřina (35) stated: *'Yes, I have heard about it. I don't remember when the first time was or from where I have heard about it, but I think it must have been from television or newspapers or some magazine. Probably the newspaper and there was some article about feminism.'*

Stanislav (68): *'Yes, I have heard about it. I think it was the Pussy Riot group, wasn't it? Yeah, I think so and they were in Russia, right? So yeah.... I have heard about it from television news. Maybe I have heard about it before but didn't pay attention. This is what I now recall in connection to feminism.'*

(Pussy Riot is a Russian feminist protest punk rock and performance art group based in Moscow. Two members of the band have been jailed for two years after staging an anti-Putin protest in a Moscow cathedral of Christ the Saviour.)

Probably this respondent had ever heard earlier in his life about the feminism, but during the interview he remembered the story of Pussy Riot group.



*Šárka (52): 'Yes, I have... I have heard about it for sure from media, social networks, from the internet... well, classically from the television. Television I would put as a first. From television I have heard it the most.'*

*Jarmila (76): 'Of course, I have heard about feminism. It is women's equality. I have heard about it from radio, television, the public is talking about it.'*

This shows that all participants are aware of the movement and gender or age played no role. In recent years, women's topics have also opened up on social media such as Facebook or Instagram, and from time to time the topic of feminism appears on television or in newspapers (e.g., salary differences). Nowadays, people have access to all the information and therefore it is not a problem to find out what interests them.

## **Question number 2: In what areas do you think feminism is involved?**

The feminism movement is presented as a movement that fights for women's rights and for the equality of women in society. These statements were confirmed (in other words) by all respondents. Most of the respondents also argued that feminism advocates equal pay for men and women. The knowledge of all the respondents was surprising.

*Jarmila (76) stated: 'Feminism I imagine as women's equality... that women are as men. That women can do all kinds of jobs... women should be able to do everything ... vote, be president, have the same jobs as men, have colleague education etc.'*

Another respondent Adéla (24) said: *'Feminism deals with women and their rights. For example, equal pay for the same job or also I think feminists want to have more women in political posts.'*

Respondent Jan (53) answered in a similar way: *'Hmm.... It is an enforcement of women's right or make women more visible or emancipation of women in the world.'*

In general, all respondents had average knowledge of what feminism means. The statements above show that people associate the concept of feminism with social, political or economic equality between both sexes and also with women's emancipation. People were of the opinion that why women cannot do politics or be entrepreneurs just because they are women. Many respondents consider this to be unfair and unacceptable.

### **Question number 3: What is your attitude towards the feminist movement?**

70% of respondents were positive towards the movement and said that they like the content of the feminist movement, specifically they supported the idea that there should be equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women. Some have argued that women have a different way of thinking and look at certain things differently than men and this can be beneficial in some areas such as politics, business, etc.

Majority of interviewed people explained their positive attitude towards feminism by emphasizing the movements goals such as emancipation of women. One of interviewed supporter (Zuzana - 26) have stated: *'I think it is good that some people are not indifferent to this issue and actually care to make a difference and achieve something. I am fan of those people.'*

Another supporter (Jarmila -76) answered: *'I think it is a perfect thing, because women are sometimes smarter than men are. And I think that women are also more ambitious and more fun. So, women should hold the same posts as men.'*

Different opinion had respondent Lenka (43): *'If I perceive it in the original meaning that feminism is about strengthening the rights of women so that they can vote, freely decide whether they want to work, that they have the opportunity to participate in the running of society ... then I perceive it as a good thing. And it sounds right and natural to me. That's right. Another thing is this, and it is my subjective opinion, that in some countries it is moving to other level. This is in the sense that women sometimes confuse the gallantry of men with the fact that men do not approach them as equals. Which I don't see that way. When a man opens the door for me, I don't see him discriminating me or seeing me as an unequal person. Interpretation plays a role in this and especially the cultural environment.'* She pointed out that feminism was changing and that in some countries it was losing its original context and becoming a so-called "sensitive movement". After a deeper interview, the respondent has this opinion due to the feminist campaign Me Too, which was presented in the Czech Republic as exaggerated. As an example, an article by Czech Radio, written by Renata Kropáčková, entitled *'Year of #MeToo: Abroad, the campaign has swept away many people abroad, in the Czech Republic we make fun of it'*. Campaign Me Too was not received positively in the Czech Republic.

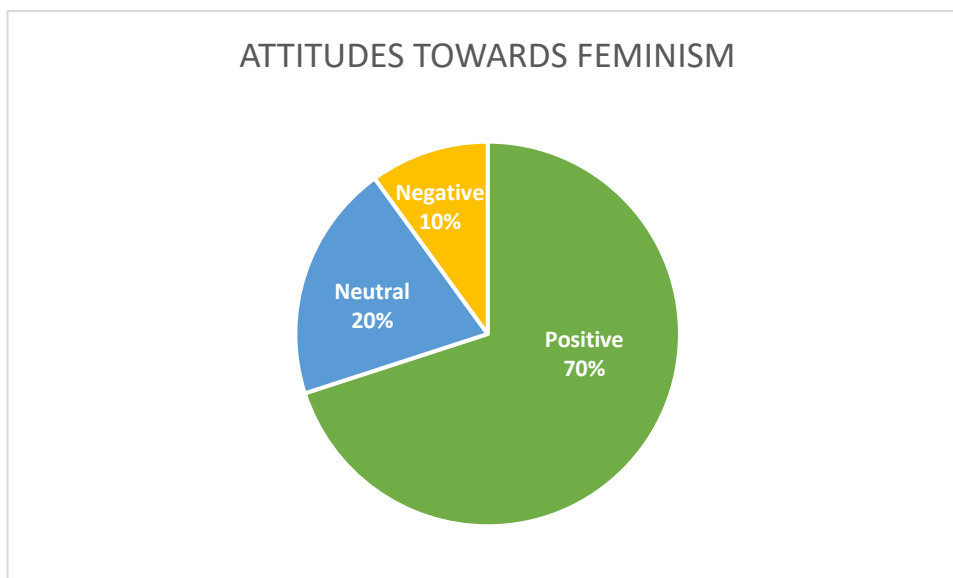
Another respondent expressed similar opinion regarding the division of forms of feminism. Respondent replied that she was personally a fan of the movement in terms of

how feminism is perceived in the Western world. However, the respondent does not identify with the perceived feminism in the Czech Republic. Šárka (52): *'Feminism in the context of how it is perceived currently is that it is almost an aggressive movement of crazy intellectual women or lesbians.... So, it feels bad to me. What concerns me, I am ok with that (feminism)... let them do that if they want, but not with the escalated opinions as someone usually has...now I can't think of any example, but yeah let someone stand for women's rights. That I agree with.'*

Respondent Stanislav (68) expressed negative attitudes toward the movement. He sees feminism, as *'a crazy and hysterical movement of bored housewives.'* This view can be interpreted as meaning that in his early years, women had no ambitions, and the role was given by the fact that women took care of children and few of them went to work. He can think this way because he himself was raised in a family where man works, and woman is home with the children. He sees that in the past women worked in the fields, had a lot of children and worked hard physically. Today, women do not work so hard, life is easier than it was in the past, and in his eyes, some women are bored and therefore protest or draw attention to feminism in some other way (e.g., nudity).

Respondents' answers are illustrated in a following chart (Figure 5):

*Figure 3 - Attitudes towards the Feminist Movement*



Source: Own data processed

**Question number 4: Do you think feminism is still important and needed in year 2021? Where can feminism improve?**

With this question, I examined whether, according to the respondents, feminism still makes any sense at present. The majority of respondents were more inclined to believe that feminism is still important and needed in 2021 and that it hasn't reached its targets yet and if so, there are still many areas that need improvement. Just two respondents didn't know what to respond.

Supporter Anna (25) said: *'Yes, I think it is needed also in these days. Women in some sectors are still not paid equally, so I think this is for example an area for improvement.'*

Another respondent Kateřina (35) answered: *'Yes! I think for example in politics or in general in leading companies, because if women will be more in these functions.... Then I think it will not be that hard, it won't be chasing just the business, but it will be gentler. Yes, that way I would like it to happen.'*

When I have asked additional question *'Where can feminism improve?'* Jarmila (76) answered: *'According to my opinion I think women can do a lot in every area. They have good ideas, social behavior... I think women have in general better manners. Even if a woman has to represent in politics... women are great in that.'*

Another opinion was Marcela (43): *'I would say that feminism should improve firstly with its own PR, because people have a basic awareness of what feminism is about, but it's not really heard in our country at all ... that is, my opinion. Then feminism, for example, could improve its fight for equal pay or more women in politics.'*

Among the specific areas where there is room for improvement, respondents mentioned equal position in the labor market, equal pay, greater involvement of women in politics and in leading positions in companies.

There are a lot of topics and they are decided by our politicians, who are mostly men. Greater involvement of women in politics, in public life will be ideal, not because of the quotas set by the European Union, but because women will feel responsible for their community, for their city or country. Women by nature are more empathetic, kind, maternal, 'do not go over corpses', and this could bring a whole new direction for our society.

### **Question number 5: Do you consider yourself a feminist? Why yes/no?**

When I asked the question whether the interviewees consider themselves a feminist, all respondents answered that they don't consider themselves being a feminist. I had a feeling that it would be embarrassing for them to admit it and that in the public's eyes or their surroundings they would look ridiculous or even awkward. Despite the fact that respondents had mostly positive attitude towards the movement, being involved themselves was not 'acceptable'. This showed me, that feminism is not perceived well in the Czech society and there are still some judgements towards this movement and people involved with it. Marcela (43) stated: *'Well, not exactly, but maybe someone would say that I am... because I am straightforward, but I would be acting the same as a man so I wouldn't consider myself feminist in the right meaning.'*

Jarmila (76) said: *'In my age I am only a woman. But when I go to the society I try to behave well as a lady.'*

Respondents also had the idea that considering themselves a feminist, they would have to be active in this issue or be part of some feministic organization. This can be demonstrated on the opinion of respondent Kateřina (35): *'No, I don't consider myself as a feminist. I mean I am in favor for equal salaries and all the stuff, but I am not active in that, so I am not.'*

All the 3 interviewed men said that they don't consider themselves a feminist, mostly they had a vision that only women are feminists, and they didn't know that also a man can be considered as feminist.

When I have asked additional question if respondents at least knew someone else in their surroundings, who is feminist, the answer from all respondents was negative.

### **Question number 6: How would you describe a feminist? (Can a man be a feminist?)**

I purposefully included what type of person people imagine and associate with typical feminists in my research, because I expected diverse answers from respondents of different ages and genders. I consider the importance of how people imagine a feminist, because I think that how a person imagines a person associated with feminism also affects his or her general attitude toward feminism.

Thanks to further discussion during the interviews, the participants were able to expand their thoughts and feelings about how they imagine and perceive the feminist. All of the interviewed people saw feminists as women who aim to fight for emancipation of women in society.

Most respondents imagined a typical feminist in a positive way. These respondents pointed to qualities such as high education, self-sufficiency, purposefulness. Many respondents associate a typical feminist with the public sphere, specifically the idea of a feminist as a politician, a businesswoman, lawyer or as a woman who takes care of her job and career. And conversely, the emphasis on family background appears in a few responses.

Adam (58): *'I would imagine feminist as a childless woman... probably a lawyer'*  
Similar opinion had respondent Šárka (52): *'It would be, of course, a woman that stands for women's rights. I would say that she is around 30 years old, childless, I wouldn't say that she is attractive, she might be a politician. She will be certainly well-educated person. I would say that it can be also a woman that likes woman (lesbian).'*

Interesting finding was that people took in consideration child status. Respondents with such answers had perception that childless woman would have more time for such activities.

Another respondent Jarmila (76) said that a feminist woman should be a woman with good behavior and helping hand for others that reach for help. *'I think has to have a good background, if she wants to do for example some political function. I think she should have certain level of behavior, when she wants to represent women... she should be instrumental... meaning if someone needs advice or help, so he / she could reach her, and she understands and help him / her. She should have high education level. And have some morals... that she is not corrupted if she holds higher posts.'*

Another type of statement describes feminists as ordinary women who have a family and children and lead a normal life that is not significantly different from others. Marcela (43): *'It should be a normal woman that is not dissimulated to be someone else. A feminist should be in general a woman.'*

Two respondents associated the image of a typical feminist with a negative image. It should be noted that such an idea of a feminist does not correspond to the third question (attitude to feminism), where feminism is perceived positively. Despite the various answers provided by the respondents, it can be stated that the idea of a typical feminist is quite positive. Apart from two respondents, the rest spoke of a feminist in a positive way.

What considers the additional question *'Can a man be a feminist?'* All the respondents answered that they connect with this position woman or rather women than men. Although few respondents admitted that a feminist can be also a man, still they prefer in general in these positions' women. Marcela (43): *'I would say that also a man can act as feminist, but I believe there is just a very few individuals like that.'*

### **Question number 7: Do you know any Czech feminist association?**

This question is linked to the mentioned chapter in theoretical part of this work, chapter 3.2.2 Feminist Associations in the Czech Republic. The aim with this question is to see the awareness and knowledge of Czech feminist associations by public.

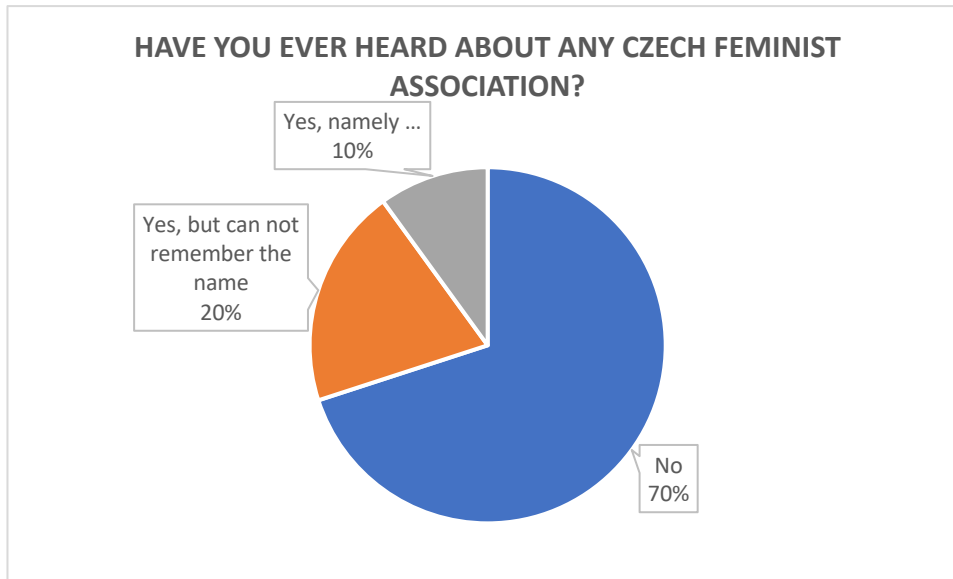
70% of respondent haven't heard of any Czech feminist association, Adam (58) answered: *'No, I have not. But I think there are few in the Czech Republic.'* 20% of respondents have heard about some feminist association but could not remember or recall the name of that organization. Šárka (52): *'Yes, I have heard, but I can't remember which one. So, I don't know how to answer you.'* And only one person (which makes it 10% of all the respondents) knew of a Czech feminist association, namely Český svaz žen (Czech Women's Union).

The lack of knowledge could be caused by the fact that the topic of feminism is not a topic in our country that would be perceived as necessary. Probably the topic is not so much a priority to people that they would look for more information.

It also depends on what society a person lives in and in what is he/she specifically interested in. Someone can move in an environment, both private and professional, and not face gender discrimination, so there is no need for him/her to seek more information on the subject or pay more attention to it. And someone who has experience with gender discrimination, then he/she probably has the need to find more information about it or maybe even seek help from some Czech feminist association.

Graph below (Figure 5) illustrates answers to the question: *'Have you ever heard of any Czech feminist association?'*

Figure 4 - Awareness of Czech Feminist Associations



Source: Own data processed

#### Question number 8: How do you think feminism is perceived in the Czech Republic?

I already presented the respondents' personal ideas on feminism and the topics associated with it at the beginning of the practical part. Now, with this question, I focus on how the respondents perceived the general attitude of the Czech people towards feminism.

The vast majority of respondents were of the opinion that feminism in the Czech Republic is rejected, undeveloped and generally behind the Western world. These views are based on the argument that communism in our country oppressed any form of feminism, and also on the fact that feminism is perceived in Czech Republic as an action of bored women who have nothing interesting in their lives and no problems, because if they did, they would not deal with feminism.

Respondent Marcela (43) said: *'I think this (feminism) is not in our country recognized. Meaning women in higher functions. Here are women let's say unheeded.'* Similar opinion had respondent Jarmila (76): *'I think in general it is society's opinion that women don't belong to politics and I think that here men underestimate women. Here is still some stereotype in thinking that women should stay home with kids, cook, do laundry and do knitting and men are men and can do whatever.'*

Although one respondent is personally positive about feminism, she describes that she perceives feminism in the eyes of Czech society in a rather negative sense, explaining



that while women strive to achieve rights, they use unusual, sometimes even offensive, methods, which makes them look like crazy hysterics. Šárka (52): *'I unfortunately think that in the Czech Republic it could be perceived as a hysterical movement, but if the women take it differently, smarter, and maybe if they wouldn't be hiding behind some movement then it would be good. Because women in general are smart and skillful and the fact that they act differently from men... gentler...then they can give everything different expression. But I unfortunately think that since they are hiding under this feminist movement ... so it is actually harming it.'*

She also added that communism played a significant role in evolving feminism in the Czech Republic. *'Also, communism suppressed the evolving of the movement. Or well it wasn't encouraging it to evolve or grow.'* It should be noted that many respondents were of the same opinion and that gender and age did not play a role in this issue. The same answer appeared in both men and women that the Communists were to blame for the non-development of feminins in Czechoslovakia and subsequently in the Czech Republic.

**Question number 8: From 1-10 (1 low, 10 high), on what scale would you put the importance of feminism in the Czech Republic?**

With this question I was aiming to find out how important feminism is for the Czech people.

Surprisingly respondents didn't find feminism that important in our country. On a scale of 1-10, where 1 was the lowest and 10 was the highest score, respondents graded between 4-7, with the total average 5.4 points. This shows that respondents actually don't care if there is or isn't feminism in the Czech Republic. Maybe they answered like this because they think that feminism doesn't make any big difference in our country. I personally think that it is mainly because feminism is not that widespread and popular in our country.

In further conversation, all respondents stated that they think that feminism abroad is more accepted and popular. Many respondents also directly cited examples of countries where feminism has gained ground and spread more than in the Czech Republic. Mostly as an example they said Western countries, namely United States, France and Great Britain.

Respondent Zuzana (26) described the perception of feminism abroad in a following way: *'In USA women have more power and people there listen them more and support them. Also, I would say that in West Europe like Great Britain or France feminism is more popular then in Czech Republic. And no wonder, here we had communists for almost 50 years and people were not allowed to do such things.'*

Respondent Šárka (52): *'Widespread I think for sure. I would say a lot in Western Europe, more precisely England, France and also United States'*

#### 4.2.1 Summary of Results

From the answers conducted by the interviews, it can be concluded that all of the Czech people that were interviewed are aware of feminism and its context. Respondents mainly answered that feminism was about fighting for women's rights and improving their position in society. The fact that feminism is not that active or widespread does not mean that Czech society doesn't know about it.

80% of respondents' personal attitudes towards the feminist movement were positive, they liked what feminism tries to achieve and they agreed with it. Two respondents thought about the movement in a negative way, that it is a movement of 'hysterical women'.

What considers people's opinion on what Czech society's attitude is, majority of respondents responded that they think that feminism is perceived in The Czech Republic rather in negative way.

Most of the respondents (70%) answered that they imagine feminist as women with high education, mainly with lawyer or political career.

High percentage of respondents (80%) suggested that feminism should improve its position in the Czech Republic, mainly in areas of equal positions in the labor market, equal pay or in politic positions.

One of the questions in my interview was whether the respondents would call themselves a feminist. Interestingly, despite the rather positive perception of feminism, no one would call herself/himself a feminist.

Relatively little percentage (30%) of interviewed people knew or had ever heard of any Czech feminist organization.

With the question number 8, I have asked about people's opinion about the importance of feminism in the Czech Republic. Respondents graded between the rank 1 (low) – 10 (high), and the average answer was 5.4 points.

### 4.3. Survey

In the second part of the practical part of this diploma thesis, a questionnaire survey was conducted by the survey method and technique, with the help of semi-structured questions. This survey dealt with discrimination, which was focused on discrimination against women in the Czech society. This form was chosen for a more comprehensive view of the researched issues.

A survey is a quantitative method and a good method for gathering broad insights and developing basic profiles, validating assumptions about the population. A survey can be taken online or offline from several people to collect data about the research topic and when there is a need for the statistical representation of a population. The end goal is to develop a deep understanding of a topic, which in this case is what Czech people imagine and understand as discrimination. What people consider and what they do not consider as discrimination, although by definition it is considered as discrimination.

The survey was sent to 40 people – 20 men and 20 women and was provided in Czech language, so all the information written in this part was translated to English. The sample size of the respondent is large enough so that the survey is representative.

The survey is divided into two parts, first part consisted of questions and respondents had a choice of five answers – *'Yes'*, *'Rather yes'*, *'I do not know'*, *'Rather No'* and *'No'*. Respondents had to evaluate these answers according to their opinion on the probability of the phenomenon happening. Second part of the survey consisted of real-life situations related to discrimination to find out people's opinion on these situations and to see whether people consider these situations as a discrimination or not.

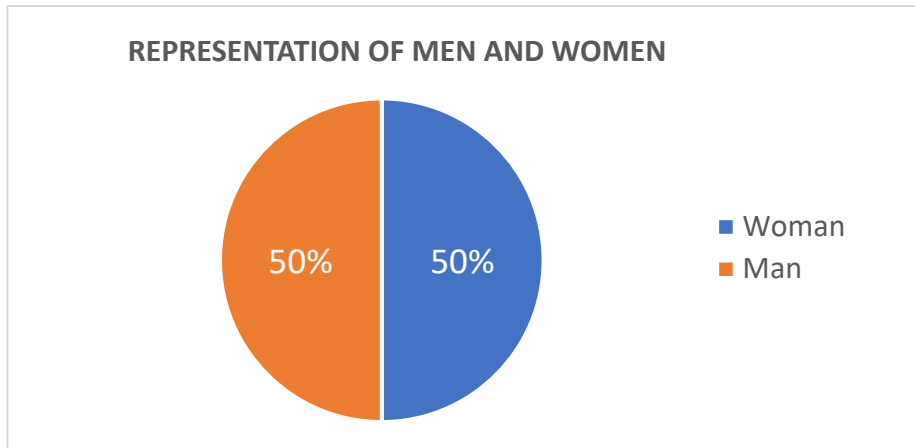
The first two questions (about the respondents' gender and age group) were asked to collect personal data in order to gain more insight into the survey sample. The rest of the questions are related to the topic the thesis is investigating. The respondents were asked to answer the survey in online form, namely by email and social media.

After the collected answers, the results were analyzed and displayed in graphs. For the graphical demonstration the respondents' answers were divided into two groups – women's and men's opinions.

As it was mentioned above, the survey was sent and answered by 40 people - 20 women and 20 men. The percentage of respondents is therefore 50% women and 50% men.

Graphical representation of the gender representation in the survey is illustrated below (Figure 5).

*Figure 5 - Representation of Men and Women in the Survey*

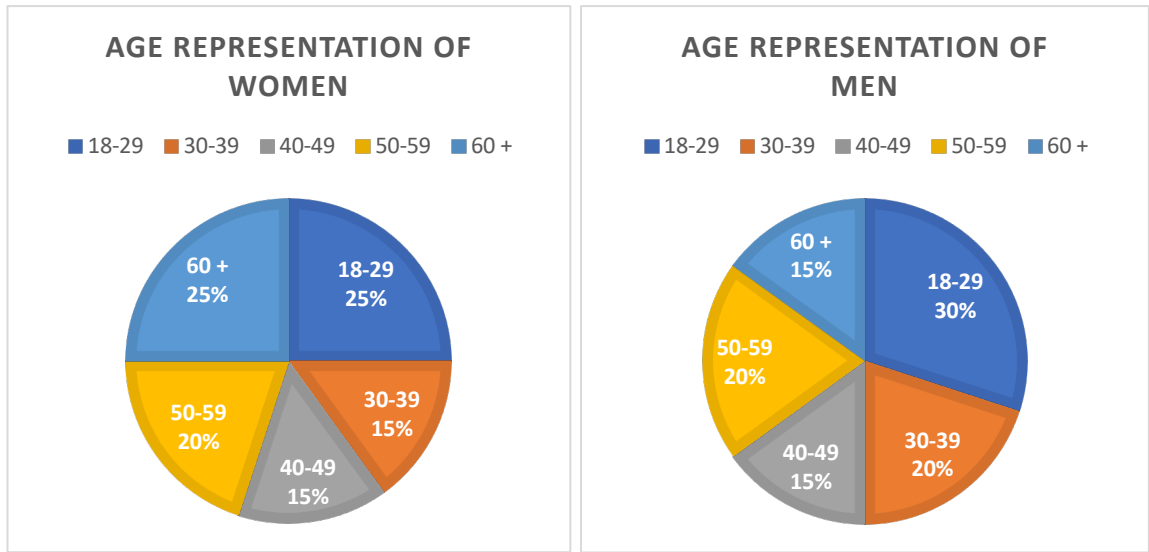


Source: Own data processed

For women, most women that answered the survey were in the age groups 18-29 and above 60. Each group accounted for 25% of the respondents and together they made up 50% of respondents. The second most numerous groups were women in the age range of 50-59, which accounted for 20% of respondents. The other two age groups (30-39 and 40-49) were less represented, each accounted for 15%.

What considers men's age representation, the age group 18-29 was represented the most out of all the groups, with 30% of all male's respondents. Age groups 30-39 and 50-59 accounted each for 20% of respondents and the other two age groups (40-49 and 60+) were less represented, each accounted for 15%.

Figure 6 - Age Representation of Women and Men in the Survey



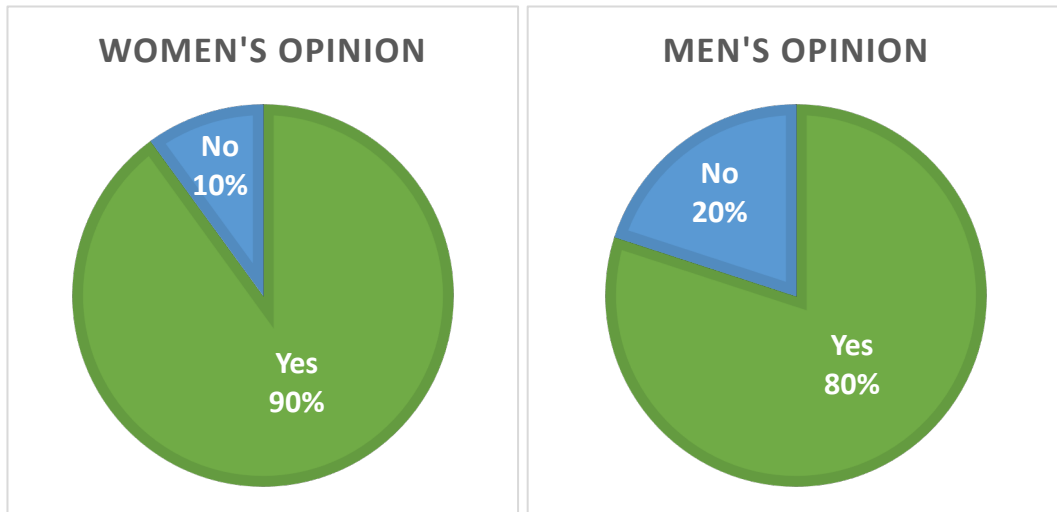
Source: Own data processed

### Q 1: Do you know what gender discrimination is?

90% of women respondents answered that they are aware of what gender discrimination means and only 10% did not know what it means or had never heard of it. For men, 80% knew what gender discrimination means or had ever heard of it and the rest 20% has never heard of it or did not know what gender discrimination stands for or mean. Overall, these answers show that Czech population knows what gender discrimination is or is aware of this issue.

It must be said that this question could be subjective. People answered based on what they think gender discrimination is. And that may not be the same as what the Czech legislation says.

Figure 7 - Awareness of Gender Discrimination

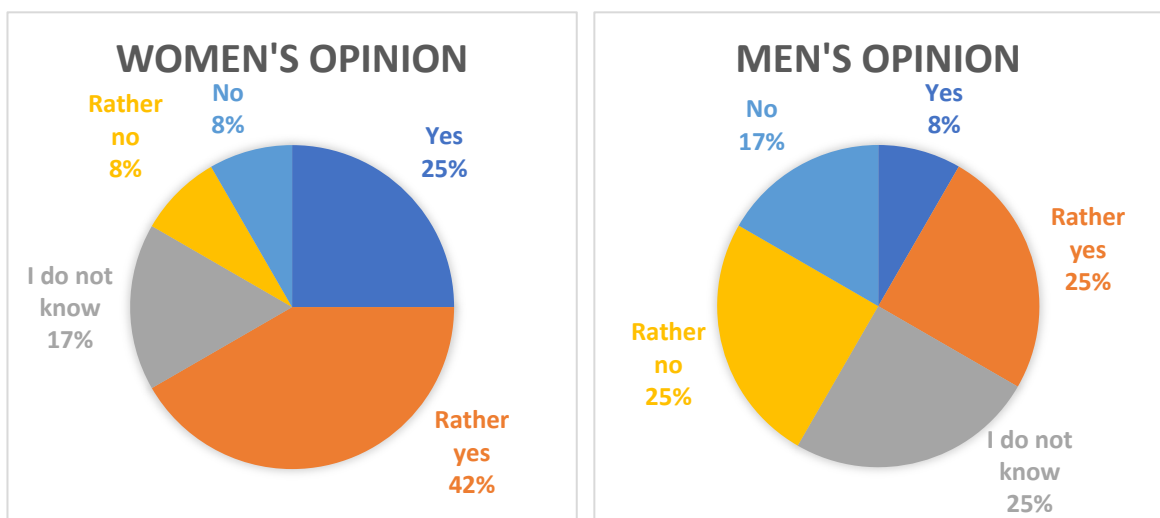


Source: Own data processed

**Q 2: Do you think that women are being treated different opposed to men in the Czech Republic?**

When comparing women's and men's opinions on the question if they think that women are being treated differently in the Czech Republic than men, 67% of women responded positive ('Yes' and 'Rather yes') and only 16% responded negative ('No' and 'Rather no'). For the same question men responded 33% positive and 25% negative. 25% of the men that responded to this question did not have an opinion and had answered 'I do not know', this is compared to 17% of women.

Figure 8 - Opinions on Women's Discrimination



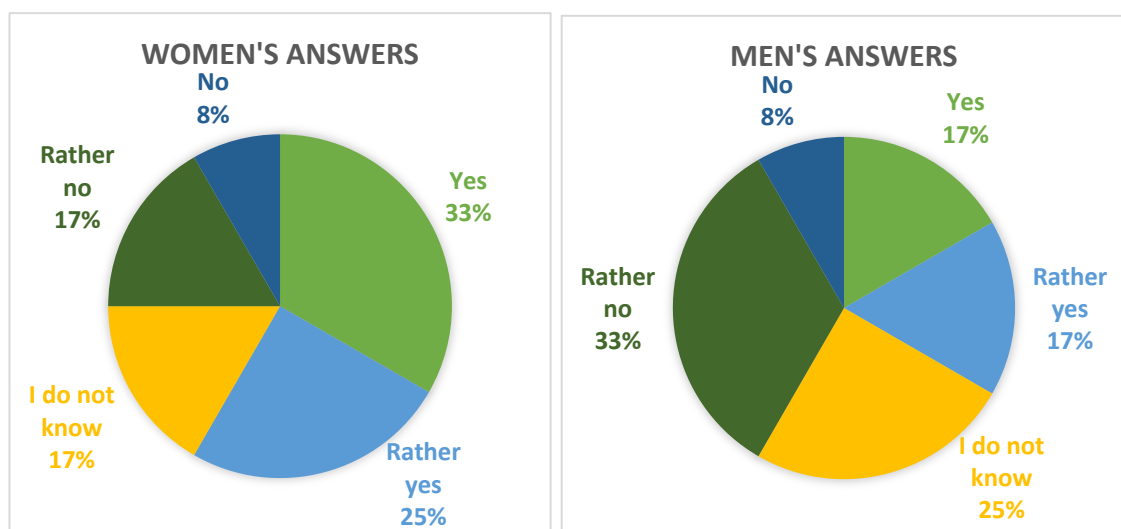
Source: Own data processed

### Q 3: Have you ever encountered gender discrimination?

As graph below (Figure 9) illustrates the answers of both genders to the question: 'Have you ever encountered gender discrimination?', there is a clear difference in women's and men's answers. 58% of women have encountered with gender discrimination in their lives meanwhile by men it was only 34%. Big difference also was between women and men who have never encountered gender discrimination in their area, the percentage of women who answered, 'Rather no' and 'No' was in total 25% while by men it was 41%.

Needed to say that this question is subjective, and respondents might have answered that they have or have not experienced gender discrimination according to their own understanding of discrimination, which might be different from the definition given by the law.

Figure 9 - Answers to Question Number 3



Source: Own data processed

### Q 4: Do you consider unequal pay as a discrimination?

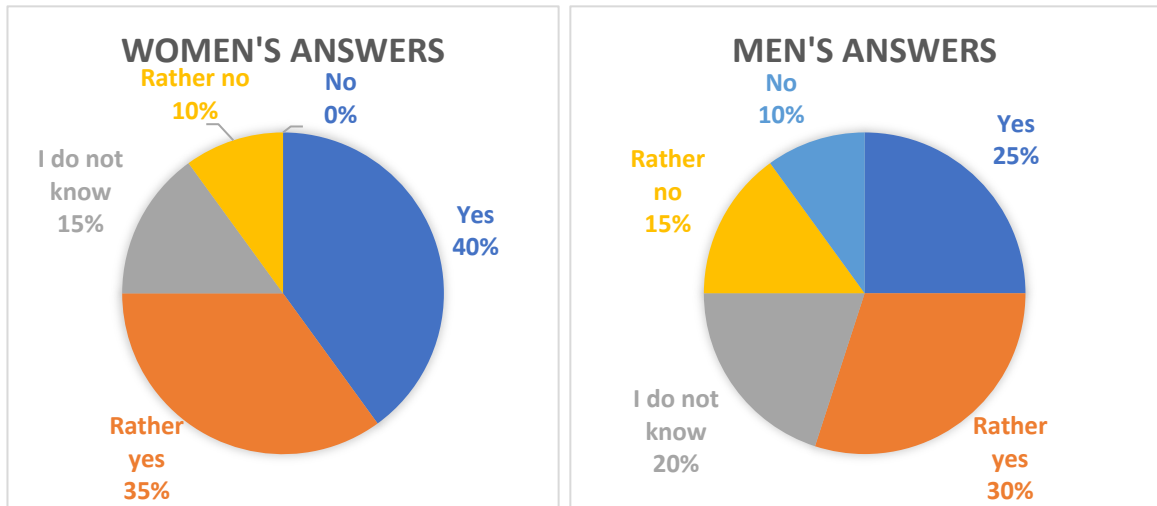
Question number 4 in the survey is focused on people's opinion whether they consider unequal pay as a discrimination. Since women are generally known for earning less than men, it didn't come as a surprise that they had answered positive more than men, specifically 75% of women had answered 'Yes' and 'Rather yes' compared to 55% of men.

Interesting finding was that very few respondents in both categories, men and women, answered negative to the question, with women it was 10% while for men it was 25%. These results show that both genders consider unequal pay not fair and groundless and



that there is no reason to do so. It is unjustified taking automatically less money just because someone is a woman.

Figure 10 - Answers to Question Number 4

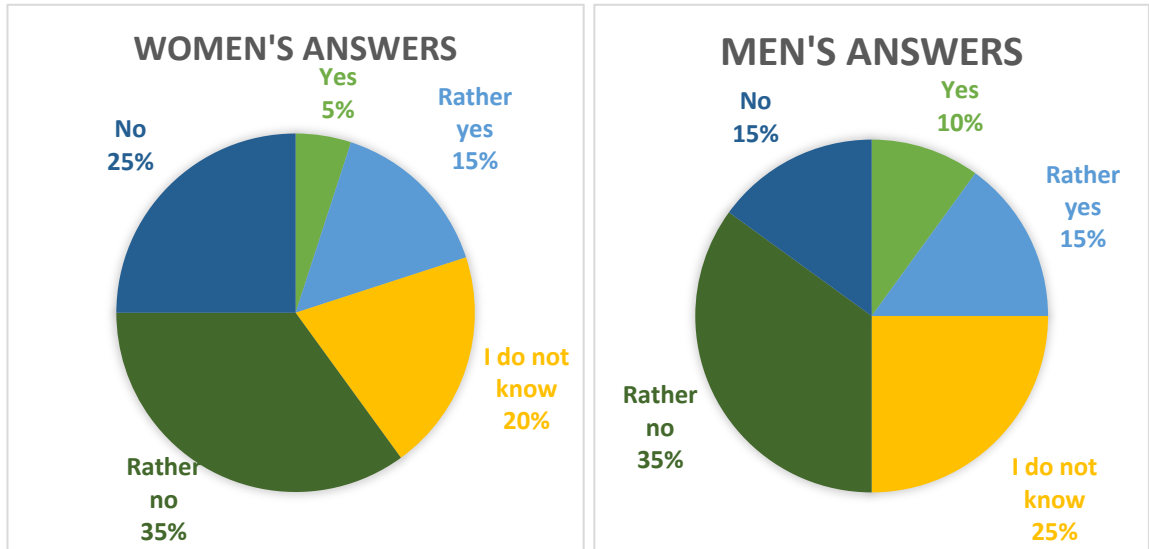


Source: Own data processed

**Q 5: Do you think that in general men and women have equal earnings in the Czech Republic?**

When comparing women's and men's opinions on the question whether respondents think that men and women have equal earnings, it can be stated that 60% of women think that they do not earn the same amount as men (for the exact same job), while for men it was 50%. The percentages of the rest of the answers were very similar for both genders. According to the graph below (Figure 11), it can be stated that the survey shows that both genders have almost the same opinion on the issue.

Figure 11 - Opinions on Equal Earnings



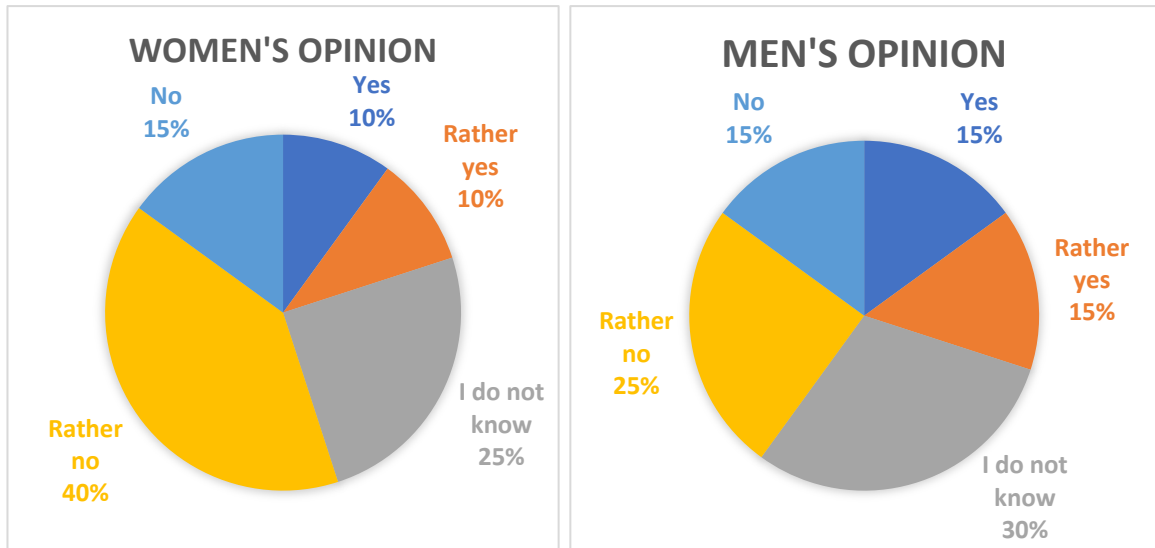
Source: Own data processed

**Q 6: Do you think Czech Republic is actively fighting for inequality in the country?**

This question was asked intentionally and is linked to the mentioned chapter in theoretical part of this work, chapter 3.4. *The Policy and Legislation on Discrimination in the Czech Republic*. A bit more than half of the female respondents had the opinion that the enforceability of anti-discrimination law in the Czech Republic is not good and 25% of women did not know what to answer or did not have opinion on that topic. 40% of male respondents also inclined towards the same opinion as women and 30% of them stated 'I do not know'.

It can be stated, that if Czech Republic wants to reach better picture with discrimination, it should start with better anti-discrimination law and mainly with its validity and enforceability. If people think that the enforceability of discrimination in the Czech Republic is at a good level, then people could be 'afraid' not to discriminate someone else and the number of cases of discrimination would be reduced.

Figure 12 - Opinions on the Enforceability of Anti-discrimination Law



Source: Own data processed

Second part to the survey consists of six examples of real-life situations. The aim with these situations was to find out whether people consider these situations as discrimination and/or whether there are some misconceptions about discrimination etc. Important to mention that those answers are purely subjective, and results show general opinions of those respondents.

Five of the situations are classified as discriminatory, whether direct, indirect or other form mentioned in the theoretical part (3.3.2 Forms of Discrimination). Although the last situation is not classified as discrimination, this question was asked intentionally to find out people's opinion on this situation.

*Situation 1: Restaurants declare an unrestricted ban on dogs, thereby banning people with disabilities who use guide or assistance dogs from entering.*

This situation is considered by law as an indirect discrimination, because there is neutral provision or practice (banning the dogs) that leads to someone being discriminated against or ending up in the worse position (disabled people who need the dog).

*Situation 2: The waiter in the restaurant refuses to serve the guest because of his ethnic group.*

This situation is direct discrimination, because people who are otherwise equal are treated differently. In this particular situation it is because of human race.

*Situation 3: The director of the company gives a binding instruction to the head of the personnel department not to accept pregnant women.*

It may seem as, an indirect discrimination but in fact it is an instruction to discriminate, which is less known form of discrimination.

*Situation 4: An outdoor center provides a variety of activities from walks on graveled areas to ones involving strenuous physical activities. Their policy says they will only let people do the activities if they have a medical certificate of good health.*

This situation is indirect discrimination because the requirements or conditions are set to apply to all persons, but that requirement or condition can only be met by a small part of a particular group. Also, ensuring health and safety is reasonable but applying a policy like this to every activity is likely to be indirect discrimination. This is because customers who had mental health problems would not be able to join any activities and so would be treated worse than other customers. People with mental health problems might be quite capable of doing all of the activities on offer as their mental health conditions would not affect their ability to take up exercise or taking up the less strenuous activities.

*Situation 5: The job advertisement states: 'We are looking for a person to a young and dynamic team ...'*

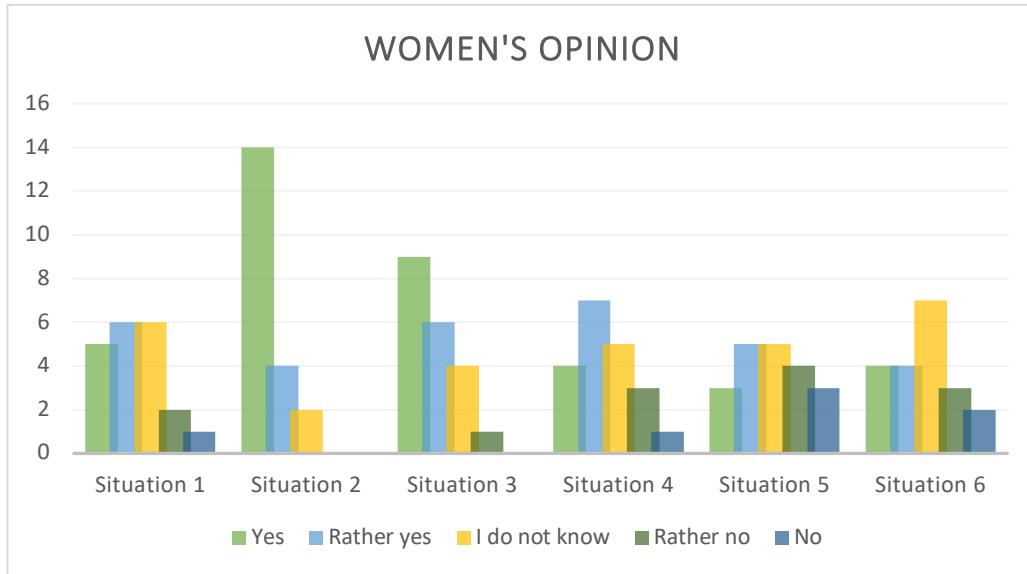
In this case the situation is indirect discrimination because it is a priori of exclusion of older applicants.

*Situation 6: Parents persuade their offspring not to marry a dark-skinned spouse.*

This situation is not by law considered as discrimination. However, this situation is intentionally included in the survey. The goal is to find out if people think this is discrimination or not.

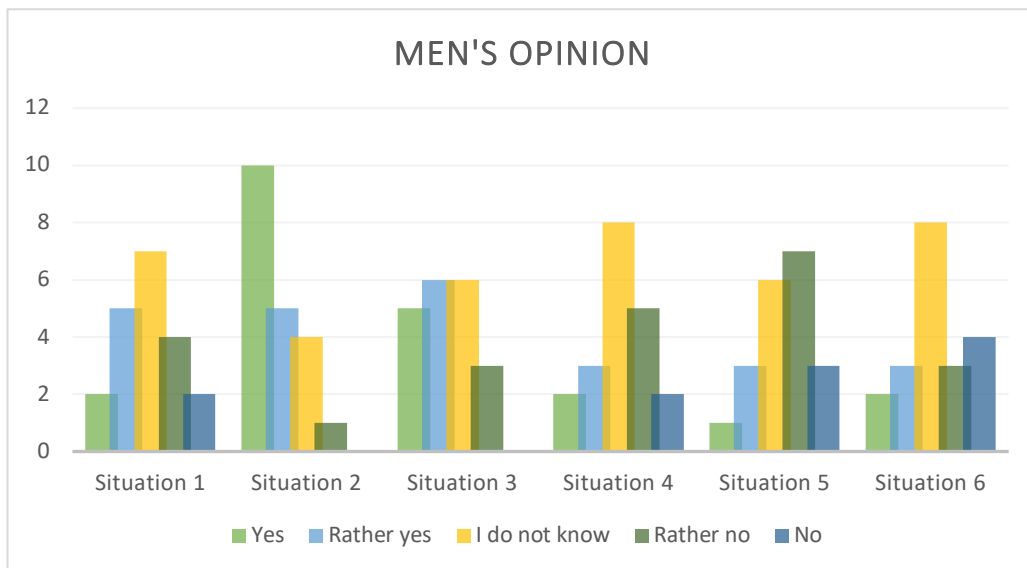
Data describing awareness and opinions on discrimination among interviewed people is illustrated in the graphs below (Figure 15 and Figure 16).

*Figure 13 - Women's Answers to the Survey*



Source: Own data processed

*Figure 14 - Men's Answers to the Survey*



Source: Own data processed

#### 4.3.1 Summary of Results

The aim of this survey was to test people's awareness of the discrimination and to see what they personally find discriminative and what not. The answers were compared according to the gender.

##### Situation 1

The first situation shows a slight difference in the responses of both sexes. 55% of women answered positive meanwhile by men it was only 35%. Similar number of people from both sexes answered, *'I don't know'*.

##### Situation 2

Both groups have a high percentage of positive answers. These results were expected as this situation is obvious discrimination. It can be explained that Czech people primarily connect discrimination with race or ethnic discrimination.

##### Situation 3

Both groups of the respondents inclined more towards the opinion that this situation is discrimination. 30% of men did not know how to answer this question and another 15% stated that they do not consider this situation as discrimination. For women it was just one respondent, which accounted for 5%.

##### Situation 4

Given the fact that this situation is less obvious form of discrimination, it still came as a surprise that 40% of men answered neutral (*'I do not know'*) and 35% answered negative, or in other words that they themselves did not consider such situation being discriminatory. What considers women, they have answered in majority that they consider it as a discrimination situation.

##### Situation 5

Very different answers were conducted from both groups on situation number 5. Half of the male population did not think or consider this situation being discrimination, for women it

was 35% of respondents. On the other hand, 40% of women found it discriminatory and only 20% of men as well. This clearly shows that people have big misconception about the topic.

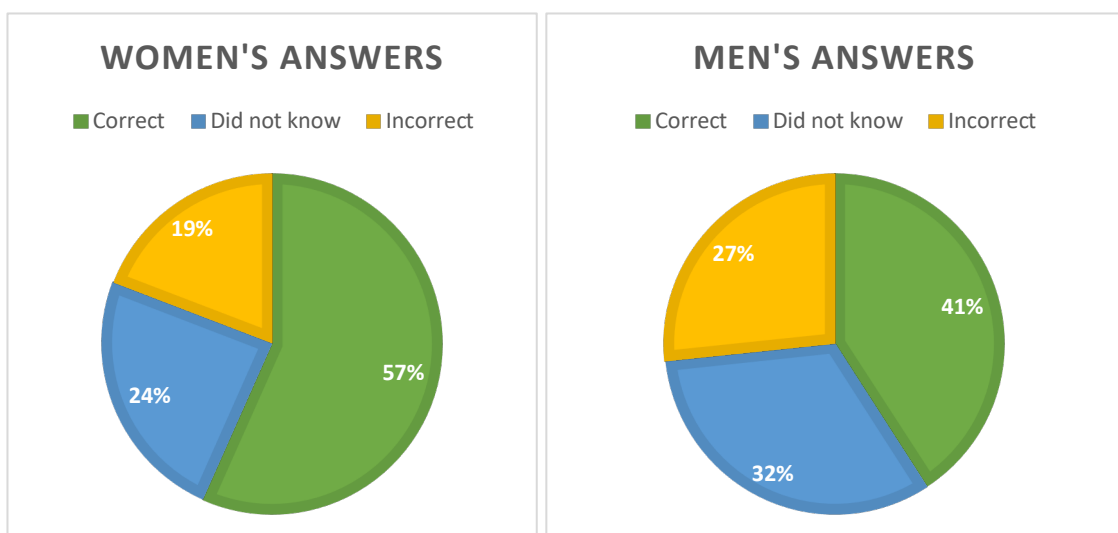
### Situation 6

Interesting with the last situation is, that even though it is not considered as a discrimination by law, still a lot of respondents considered it as one, specifically 40% of women and 25% of men. Also, both groups have a high percentage of 'I do not know' answers, for women it accounted for 35% and for men for 40%. This can be explained by the lack of information on the topic.

To sum it up, these discriminatory situations are considered discrimination by the Czech law. As the survey showed, that 57% of women respondents had knowledge of what discrimination looks like in real-life situation, 24% did not know what to answer so it could be interpreted that they lacked the education or knowledge about the issue and 19% of female respondents were incorrect with their answers.

For men only 41% of respondents were aware of what discrimination is and big part (32%) did not know enough about the topic to answer the questions. And lastly, 27% of male respondents answered incorrect, in other words they did not consider situations being discriminatory even though it was.

Figure 15 - Results of the 'Situation Survey' by genders



Source: Own data processed

## 5. Conclusion

This thesis has shown feminism and discrimination as a complex process with a big reaching impacts on the society and its perception towards the topics.

First aim of this bachelor thesis was to focus on perceptions and attitudes to feminism in contemporary Czech society, from the perspective of the Czech people. The results from the conducted interviews showed that people had awareness and general idea of the content of feminism, mainly they responded that feminism was about fighting for women's rights and improving their position in society.

80% of respondents' personal attitudes towards the feminist movement were positive, they liked what feminism stands for and what it tries to achieve. When considering people's opinion on what Czech society's attitude is, majority of respondents responded that they think that feminism is perceived in The Czech Republic rather in negative way. High percentage of respondents (80%) suggested that feminism should improve its position in the Czech Republic, mainly in areas of equal positions in the labor market, equal pay or in political positions. Also, the change itself should come from the Czech government too. The government should realize that the economy grows better when all the talents are used in our country. That is why the government should aim to increase the economic and financial independence of women and improve access for women to the top positions.

The results of the questionnaire survey in this thesis provided an opportunity to understand how respondents perceive the issue of gender discrimination in the Czech Republic and the knowledge of what is and is not stated by law as a discrimination. I can conclude that people think they know what discrimination is but actually they do not know. Education and better information would be useful in this area if we want people to be more aware of what discrimination is and thus to prevent it. Society needs to unite more on the issue, because the ethics of discrimination is more complex than it might seem and deserves further attention.



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## 7. Appendices

### Part 1 – Interviews.

General perception, awareness and knowledge of the concept of feminism and its relevance.

#### 9 Questions:

- 1) Have you ever heard about feminism?
- 2) In what areas do you think feminism is involved?
- 3) What's your attitude towards the feminist movement?
- 4) Do you think feminism is still important and needed in year 2021? Where can feminism improve?
- 5) Do you consider yourself a feminist? Why yes/no?
- 6) How would you describe a feminist? Can a man be a feminist?
- 7) Have you ever heard of any Czech feminist associations?
- 8) Do you think feminism is perceived in the Czech Republic?
- 9) From 1 to 10 {1 low, 10 high} on what scale would you put the importance of feminism in the Czech Republic?

### Part 2 – Survey.

General perception, awareness and knowledge of the concept of discrimination and gender discrimination and its relevance.

#### 6 Questions + 6 situation examples:

- 1) Do you know what gender discrimination is?
- 2) Do you think that women are being treated different opposed to men in the Czech Republic?
- 3) Have you ever encountered gender discrimination?
- 4) Do you consider unequal pay as a discrimination?
- 5) Do you think that in general men and women have equal earnings in the Czech Republic?
- 6) Do you think Czech Republic is actively fighting for inequality in the country?

Situation 1

Restaurants declare an unrestricted ban on dogs, thereby banning people with disabilities who use guide or assistance dogs from entering.

Situation 2

The waiter in the restaurant refuses to serve the guest because of his ethnic group.

Situation 3

The director of the company gives a binding instruction to the head of the personnel department not to accept pregnant women.

Situation 4

An outdoor center provides a variety of activities from walks on graveled areas to ones involving strenuous physical activities. Their policy says they will only let people do the activities if they have a medical certificate of good health.

Situation 5

The job advertisement states: 'We are looking for a person to a young and dynamic team ...'

Situation 6

Parents persuade their offspring not to marry a dark-skinned spouse.