



After 2020, 72% of College Students Are More Aware of Social Justice Issues

Nationwide, 65% of Undergraduates Who Have Supported Social Justice Efforts Believe it Made an Impact and Helped Drive Change

July 29, 2021 (Seattle, WA) - According to a new survey from BestColleges.com, 72% of currently enrolled undergraduates agreed that their awareness of social justice issues increased over the past year. When asked if they actively supported one or more social justice efforts this year, 58% of college students reported they had, and 30% reported they had not but considered doing so. Of those who were active in social justice efforts, the majority (65%) believed their support had an impact and helped drive change.

Click here for more information:

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/students-believe-social-justice-drives-change/>

"The fight for social justice has gained momentum throughout the last year as awareness of several issues has grown," said Cobretti Williams, Ph.D., Senior Editor of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for BestColleges.com. "Increased protests and demands for equality have altered the social climate across the country's college campuses, and students believe it will all make a difference."

Students who were active in social justice movements were motivated by their knowledge of the issue (46%), the topic's link to their own identity (36%), and the fact that efforts addressed an underrepresented or marginalized group to which a friend or family member belongs/belonged (37%). Black college students were most likely to get involved in social justice efforts because these efforts related to their own identity (51%), while nearly half of Latino/a students (49%) supported social justice initiatives because they addressed an underrepresented or marginalized group that a friend or family member belongs/belonged to.

Students are most likely to report race (61%), culture (60%), developmental and acquired disabilities (59%), and ethnicity and nationality (57%) as the topics that are important to them when it comes to social justice movements. Race was the most important issue among Black college students (54%), while culture was the most important among Latino/a college students (32%).

Increased awareness and knowledge of social justice issues among college students comes from off-campus resources like community groups and media (44%), on-campus resources such as clubs and professors (24%), friends (20%), and parents (20%). About half of college students say their involvement in social justice movements has influenced their career interests (48%) and coursework choices (51%).

"The college experience is often one of self discovery, and it is at this pivotal time in a person's life when one can gather information about issues of importance and make connections to their own identity — impacting the adult they will eventually become," said Dr. Williams.

College students are divided on whether their views on social justice issues have influenced their relationships and communication with others. About a quarter (28%) were unsure if their stance on an issue had an effect on their close relationships and nearly a third (32%) were unsure about difficulties discussing social justice issues.

Methodology

The survey was conducted from July 1-7, 2021. Student respondents were fielded by Lucid LLC. Survey participants included 750 currently enrolled undergraduate students nationwide. Respondents were 18-25 years of age; enrolled at a community college, college, or university; and pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree. The respondents for the survey were screened by various quality checks, including systems like Relevant ID, and responses were manually reviewed to ensure consistency and accuracy.

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wide array of college planning, financial aid, and career resources to help students realize life goals and overcome educational challenges as they prepare for careers after college.