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Gender Differences in Dating Intentions Using Dating Apps

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Gender Differences in Dating Intentions Using Dating Apps

Abstract

Research suggests that men and women have difficulty finding dating partners, initiating contact, initiating or avoiding sexual activity, and ending a date (Klaus et al., 1977). Furthermore, social anxiety and depression symptoms among women tend to be related with higher levels of motivation for dating application use (Lenton-Brym et al., 2020). This study investigated the influence of the dating applications on collegiate men and women user's social anxiety and dating intentions. We expected that women would be more likely to find a serious relationship, whereas men would utilize dating apps to find a casual relationship (Tullman et al., 2003). Women would express more anxiety around dating and social interactions (Lenton-Brym et al., 2020). 319 college students answered questions about dating on apps. We found women were looking for a serious relationship, whereas men wanted something casual or hookups. We found gender differences in type of date desired and that women were fearful of meeting the person on a date, whereas men were more scattered about their fears. Women scored higher on social anxiety. Results suggest that male and female college students may want to be cognizant of their motives as motivations for dating online may be different by gender.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN DATING INTENTIONS USING DATING APPS

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INTRODUCTION

Research suggests that men and women have difficulty finding dating partners, initiating contact, initiating or avoiding sexual activity, and ending a date (Klaus et al., 1977). Furthermore, social anxiety and depression symptoms among women tend to be related with higher levels of motivation for dating application use (Lenton-Brym et al., 2020).

PRESENT STUDY

This study investigated the influence of the dating applications on collegiate men and women user's social anxiety and dating intentions. We expected that women would be more likely to find a serious relationship, whereas men would utilize dating apps to find a casual relationship (Tullman et al., 2003). Women would express more anxiety around dating and social interactions (Lenton-Brym et al., 2020).



HYPOTHESES

1. Women would be more likely to utilize dating apps to find a serious relationship, whereas men would be more likely to utilize dating apps to find a more casual relationship or a hookup (Tullman et al., 2003, as cited by Sumter et al., 2019).
2. Women would express more anxiety around dating and social interactions (Lenton-Brym et al., 2020).

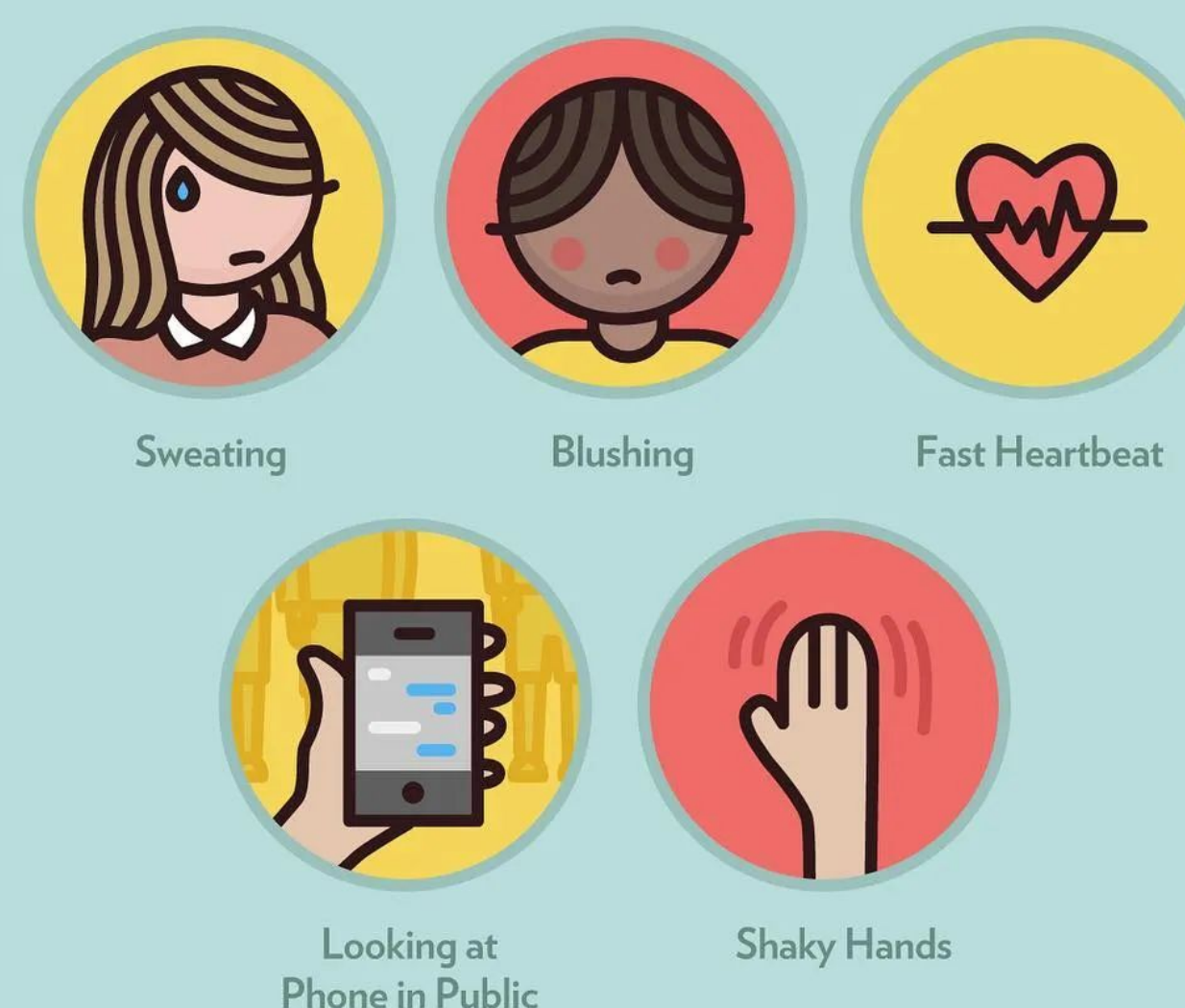
METHOD

Participants included 230 females, 89 males, and 3 who self-identified as non-binary between the ages of 18 and 38 ($M = 19.55$, $SD = 2.89$)

Measures

- Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale
- Dating Anxiety Scale

Common Signs of Social Anxiety



RESULTS

We first hypothesized that women would be more likely to utilize dating apps to find a serious relationship, whereas men would be more likely to utilize dating apps to find a more casual relationship or a hookup. Indeed, we found that women were more likely than men to be looking for a serious relationship, whereas men wanted something casual or a hookup, $\chi^2(2) = 11.02$, $p < .01$.

Second, we hypothesized that women would express more anxiety around dating and social interactions. This finding showed up in a variety of ways in our data set. We found gender differences in type of date desired, with all of the men wanting an in-person date, but women were more scattered in their preferences, $\chi^2(3) = 10.30$, $p < .05$. In addition, women were overwhelmingly fearful of meeting the person on a date, whereas men were more scattered about what they feared (and were more likely to not be fearful at all compared to women), $\chi^2(3) = 16.60$, $p < .001$. Finally, women differed in their social and dating anxiety scores compared to men. Women scored higher on social anxiety ($M = 55.78$, $SD = 22.93$) than men did ($M = 44.51$, $SD = 23.79$), $t(301) = 3.78$, $p < .001$. There was a trend for women to have more anxiety about active intentions ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.32$) than men ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.39$), $t(317) = 1.87$, $p = .06$, but not passive contact or dating interactions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the literature on dating applications, we expected to find that women would be more likely to utilize dating apps to find a serious relationship, whereas men would be more likely to utilize dating apps to find a more casual relationship or a hookup (Tolman et al., 2003, as cited by Sumter et al., 2019). We did, in fact, find that women were more likely than men to be looking for a serious relationship, whereas men wanted something casual or a hookup.

After we explored dating interactions, we found that women were overwhelmingly fearful of meeting the person on a date, whereas men were more likely to not be fearful at all. These findings can be due to the fact that men use dating applications more frequently than women due to increased thrill-seeking (Sumter et al., 2017), and that men are also more active in approaching women online (Kreager et al., 2014).

