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It's not you, it's me: Shame & misrepresentation in online dating

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Abstract

In the U.S. public opinion about online dating is overall positive with 54% of Americans reporting that relationships that start online through an app or dating site are just as successful as relationships that begin in-person. In dating, success is linked to desirable characteristics such as resources or physical appearance. However, feelings of external shame, which is when a person perceives themselves as existing negatively in the mind of another person is a powerful motivator for avoiding being seen as socially unacceptable. Being seen as socially undesirable as a result of feeling as though oneself is lacking in desirable characteristics leads to misrepresentation, which is defined as a person purposefully misrepresenting themselves in relationship goals, personal assets, personal interests, and attractiveness. However, in the online dating context misrepresentation has become more common. Past research has explored external shame and impression management as well as relationship formation and misrepresentation. However, little is known about the impact of external shame on the use of misrepresentation in the context of online dating. 180 participants (M_{age} = 32, SD = 11) engaged in an online survey asking them questions about their online dating experiences in the last 2 years. Results indicate people who reported higher external shame also reported higher misrepresentation. Results also indicated that people who reported higher external shame also reported higher misrepresentation regardless of biological sex. In sum, this study provides evidence that external shame impacts the use of misrepresentation in the context of online dating.

Keywords: **Shame, External Shame, Misrepresentation, Online Dating**

Shame and Misrepresentation in Online Dating

The internet has become a vital part of everyday society. With the integration of

technology in nearly every aspect of our lives, we are able to connect with others more than ever

before. Despite this hyper-connectivity and the benefits of being able to stay connected like

never before, we are also experiencing the negative impacts that social media has on the

individuals who engage in its use. Specifically, social media related to online dating and

relationship formation. The concern is the rise in misrepresentation in online dating platforms,

and the underlying causes. Humans are social creatures and as a result of this we seek intimate

personal relationships. To achieve these relationships a lot of time and care goes into the mate

selection process. With the appearance of online dating apps, deception, better understood as

misrepresentation has become more common place and is more easily carried out (Mosley et al.,

2020). With the rise in misrepresentation, it is important to discover and understand the

underlying emotions.

Online Dating/Mate selection

The mate selection process is the result of evolution on the mammalian attachment

strategies. In human's, male-female attachment is defined as companionate love and is

characterized as feelings of calm, social comfort, emotional comfort and security (Fisher et al.,

2002). In humans the attachment systems in the brain have evolved to motivate individuals to

find the most suitable partners. This evolution also varies by sex with men tending to be more

attracted to a partners physical attributes (youth and beauty) whereas women tend to be more

attracted to stability (money, education, position) (Fisher, 1998, 2012; Fisher et al., 2002). This

evolution is known as evolutionary theory on mate selection and is the idea that men and women

differ in mate selection on the basis of characteristics pertaining to parental investment

(investment in offspring), fertility, and reproduction (Buss, 1989, 1995; Schwarz & Hassebrauck, 2012). Specifically, these characteristics are desired differently based on biological sex (male/female), with males tending to be more attracted to sexual partners based on the value of youth and physical attractiveness in potential mates (due to their links with fertility and reproductiveness) (Buss, 1989; Schwarz & Hassebrauck, 2012). For females' characteristics that are desired in a sexual partner are based on the value of resources and the willingness to provide said resources (resources being, food, shelter, earning capacity) (Buss, 1989). As a result traits that are associated with earning capacity such as ambition, and industriousness are also valued by women (Buss, 1989; Schwarz & Hassebrauck, 2012).

Based on these evolutionary biological differences in mate characteristic preferences, a critical aspect of searching for a suitable partner are deal breakers and deal makers, defined by positive or negative information that is learned about a person of interest (Jonason et al., 2015). Relationship deal breakers are poor health, negative personality traits, having undesirable sexual/romantic strategies and are rigid across all relationship contexts (long-term/short-tern), but to a lesser extent in friendships (Jonason et al., 2015). Relationship deal makers, the opposite of deal breakers include appearing to be physically attractive, being kind, having a good career, a good sense of humor and seeming intelligent (Jonason et al., 2015). Negative information (deal breakers) leads to avoidance mechanisms whereas, positive information (deal makers) leads to approach mechanisms (Jonason et al., 2015). In other words, if a person is giving a poor impression of themselves to others (through dealbreakers), or if a person is giving a good impression (through dealmakers) this impacts their chances of forming a relationship. Since impressions are important and impact relationship formation, this can cause a person to be highly

concerned with self-presentation and impression management. This self-presentation and

impression management is more easily carried out in online contexts.

Success in Online Dating

In the U.S Public opinion of online dating is overall positive with a little over half (54%)

of Americans reporting that relationships that start in an online dating context are just as

successful as relationships that begin in-person (Vogels, 2020). In the U.S three in ten adults

have reported that they have ever used an online dating app or site, with regard to variance based

on age (Vogels, 2020). In addition, successfulness (i.e., finding a partner) in online dating is

found to be more common in adults who are younger, with 12% reporting they have married or

been in a serious relationship with someone they met while dating online (Vogels, 2020).

MacNeil-Kelly (2020) observed that, as online dating becomes the mainstream method for

meeting and forming relationships, relationships are more successful offline when accurate

descriptions of their appearance, height, weight, and occupation were provided online. In other

words, if a person chooses to present themselves inaccurately, then they are less likely to form a

successful relationship in offline contexts. Using different forms of social media to communicate

prior to meeting face to face also leads to dating success. In fact, using different forms of social

media and using these different forms frequently lead to a higher likelihood of offline

relationship continuation (MacNeil-Kelly, 2020). In sum, to increase your chances of securing

and maintaining a relationship offline, a person must be honest and communicate on multiple

modes of communication frequently. Avoidance and lack of communication would lead to an

unsuccessful offline relationship. The desire to be considered either as socially accepted or

socially undesirable are powerful drivers that can lead to feelings of shame.

Shame

It has been well documented that the emotion of shame is linked with the desire to be perceived as socially accepted so as to avoid situations that would arouse feelings of shame or being socially unaccepted (Fullagar, 2003; McDermott et al., 2008; Scheff, 2003; Schoenleber et al., 2021). In other words, a person who is experiencing conscious or unconscious feelings of shame will go to great lengths to avoid continuing to feel shame. Feelings of shame can have significant impacts on the human experience. Past evidence has observed that shame is closely linked to self-destructive behaviors and suicide (McDermott et al., 2008). Self-destructive behaviors include blaming others and engaging in maladaptive rumination behavior, which in turn can have damaging social consequences (Schoenleber et al., 2021). In summary, people who have a low tolerance for experiencing shame and thus externalize it on to others then have issues maintaining and building close social connections with others as a result of their constant monitoring behavior (McDermott et al., 2008; Scheff, 2003; Schoenleber et al., 2021).

Additionally, constant monitoring of impression management and how one is being perceived by others so as to avoid embarrassment creates an unending cycle of painful emotions which results in low self-esteem and a deep desire to avoid experiencing this emotion (Fullagar, 2003; Scheff, 2003). In other words, people go to great lengths to avoid experiencing shame, which leads us to carefully manage the impressions we imprint on others in an attempt to maintain social acceptance. Social media allows us to carefully manage and preserve the self-image we are sharing with others.

Shame can be split into either internal or external. Internal shame is characterized by negative ideation of self and focusing on perceived shortcomings and personal mistakes. External shame is characterized by a person perceiving themselves as existing negatively in the mind of another person (Castilho et al., 2019; Cunha et al., 2021; Matos et al., 2013; Swee et al.,

2021). An example of external shame would be, a person who believes that they exist in a negative light in the opinion of another person thus externalizing their feeling of shame. Both external and internal shame have been linked to a variety of negative mental health outcomes like depression, social anxiety, social anxiety disorder, and suicidality (Farr et al., 2021; Malinowski et al., 2017; Matos et al., 2013; McDermott et al., 2008; Swee et al., 2021). Due to the fact that external shame is such a powerful and motivating emotion, it can cause people to act in aggressive and passive aggressive capacities as well as engage in rumination (Farr et al., 2021; Malinowski et al., 2017; Schoenleber et al., 2021).

Paradoxically, rumination, which is negative thoughts focusing on ideations pertaining to ones' self, can cause a person to focus on others' perceptions of them which in turn causes increased rumination. External shame also causes individuals to employ safety strategies so as to protect themselves from how they might negatively be seen by others (Castilho et al., 2019). Safety strategies can include attempting to appease others, submission, hostility, isolation, decreasing the number of social contacts, and engagement in social interactions (Castilho et al., 2019). Thus, people will use avoidant strategies to reduce their chances of experiencing a negative social interaction where they would feel socially rejected and perceived negatively. As a result of people's desire to avoid negative social interaction and perceptions (feeling external shame), people will seek to manage other's perceptions of them. Impression management (or self-presentation) plays a key role in online dating as people interact with potential romantic partners and form impressions that are crucial for determining the success at the beginning of a romantic relationship (de Vries, 2016). When a person is motivated to manage their impression's this is when impression construction begins, as impression management is important for social interaction, relationships and especially important for the person in question's self-esteem (de

Vries, 2016). In summary, to avoid feelings of external shame, a person will seek to manage

other's impressions of them at the beginning of a relationship romantic or otherwise.

It is important to note that shame (internal and external) is experienced differently based

on an individual's biological sex specifically male or female (Vescio et al., 2021). This is due to

a difference in expected social norms and how men are stereotyped in a way that is different than

women. Men are expected to be masculine and portray themselves as such at the risk of seeming

unmasculine and experiencing being negatively socially perceived (Vescio et al., 2021). Men are

traditionally stereotyped as being perceived as competent, influential and strong, but lacking in

communality, unlike women who are perceived in the opposite light as men (Vescio et al., 2021).

In sum, men and women are traditionally stereotyped in opposing yet complementary roles. In

the Vescio et al. 2021 study, they observed that the notion of masculinity was important to men

(feeling the need to be perceived as masculine) in a way that femininity wasn't for women.

Therefore, for men the masculine identity and the driving factors pushing to protect that identity

from negative or alternative perception leads to avoidance strategies. In online dating, avoidant

strategies manifest as misrepresentation.

Misrepresentation

In online dating the occurrence of deception, which is more commonly defined as

misrepresentation, has become somewhat of a problem. Misrepresentation is defined as

purposefully misrepresenting oneself in attractiveness, personal assets, goals for the relationship,

personal interests, personal attributes, and past relationships (Hall et al., 2010; Mosley et al.,

2020; Peng, 2020). At the beginning of a relationship individuals are highly concerned with the

impressions that they are making on their person of interest, specifically their self-presentation

(Hall et al., 2010). To control how the person of interest is viewing them, individuals are more

likely to strategically misrepresent themselves to their potential partners to control their self-image. Additionally the drive to control the situation to present their most ideal self led individuals to manipulate information (Peng, 2020). Self-presentation is also motivated by the desire to acquire social approval and avoid social disapproval (Mosley et al., 2020; Peng, 2020). So in an attempt to avoid social disapproval, individuals are more likely to misrepresent themselves in online dating situations and social media.

Purpose of the Present Study

The evolutionary theory on mate selection is one that has evolved based on the idea that men and women differ in the mate selection process on the basis of desirable characteristics (Buss, 1989, 1995; Schwarz & Hassebrauck, 2012). These desirable characteristics can be broken down into relationship deal makers and deal breakers which are predictive of success in dating (Jonason et al., 2015). In online dating, success is linked to honest and accurate self-presentation (MacNeil-Kelly, 2020). However, the emotion of shame, feelings of embarrassment or humiliation, is marked by the desire to be perceived as socially accepted in order to avoid being socially unaccepted (Fullagar, 2003; McDermott et al., 2008; Scheff, 2003; Schoenleber et al., 2021). Specifically, external shame, drives a person to protect themself from being negatively seen by others (Castilho et al., 2019). As a result of experiencing external shame, in an attempt to avoid being seen as socially unaccepted a person will employ the use of avoidance strategies (Vescio et al., 2021). These avoidance strategies manifest as misrepresentation, which is defined as purposefully misrepresenting oneself in attractiveness, personal assets, and goals for the relationship (Hall et al., 2010; Mosley et al., 2020; Peng, 2020). This study seeks to better understand the relationship between the feeling of external shame and misrepresentation in the context of online dating. Through the use of the self-report survey's, deceptive mating tactics

(misrepresentation) (Tooke & Camire, 1991), Other As Shamer (external shame) (Matos et al., 2015) and the Marlowe-Crowne social desirability scale 17 (Stöber, 2001) my hypotheses are as follows:

Aim 1: Examine the relationship between external shame and misrepresentation in participants that have engaged in online dating apps/services within the last two years.

H1: If a person is experiencing high levels of external shame, then this will impact their use of misrepresentation (increased levels of misrepresentation).

Aim 2: Examine the relationship between external shame and misrepresentation through the lens of biological sex.

H2: External shame will be felt differently based on biological sex, with males engaging in increased use of misrepresentation.

Based on past literature, I expect that external shame will impact misrepresentation in participants who have engaged in online dating apps/services within the last two years. In addition, based on biological sex, men and women will experience external shame to different degrees, with men experiencing external shame stronger and therefore engaging in increased use of misrepresentation.

Method

Participants

The sample for the current study consisted of 180 participants. Participant inclusion criteria were (a) individuals who have used an online dating service within the last 2 years, and (b) age 18+. The study was restricted to those who have used or are currently using a dating app to ensure that the data being collected is that of individuals who have used/interacted with online platforms/contexts. Participants were asked about questions regarding their age, preferred gender

identity, race/ethnicity, marital status, and level of education. Participant ages were as follows: $M_{age} = 32$, $SD_{age} = 11$, $Range_{age} = 19 - 72$. Participant gender identification was as follows: 24 Agender, 2 Non-binary, 88 Cisgender Woman, 64 Cisgender Man, 1 Gender Queer and 1 Other. Participant ethnicity identification was as follows: 6 African American/Black, 11 Hispanic/Latinx, 141 Caucasian/White, 15 Asian/Asian American, 3 Native American/Indigenous Alaskan/Canadian First Nations, 1 Middle Eastern, and 3 Other. Participant marital status was as follows: 54 Single, 17 Engaged, 102 Married, and 7 Domestic Partnership. Participant level of education was as follows: 1 Some High School, 19 High School Diploma, 105 Bachelor's Degree, 48 Master's Degree, 1 Ph.D. or Higher, 5 Trade School, and 1 Prefer Not to Say.

Procedure

Participant recruitment took place through social media community forums within Facebook, TikTok, Instagram and Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Qualtrics is the online survey platform that was used for the delivery method. Participants were asked to complete an informed consent and questionnaires about sociodemographic characteristics, external shame, deceptive mating tactic strategies, and a social desirability scale. To ensure that participants were paying attention to questions, each section of the survey included a validity check item embedded in the middle of each section of the questionnaires. Validity check items were in a similar format to other questions on the questionnaire and asked participants to select a particular answer. The survey concluded with a message thanking them for their participation.

Measures

Other As Shamer Scale

The Other As Shamer Scale (OAS; Goss et al., 1994) measures the level at which an

individual is experiencing external shame. This scale contains 18 items that are rated using a 5-

point Likert scale (1 = Never, 5 = Almost Always), judging the frequency of which an individual

believes that others are judging them. Example items include "I feel insecure about others

opinions of me", "I think others are able to see my defects", "Other people see me as somehow

defective as a person". In the original study support for the reliability of the internal consistency

was α = .92 with the scale also having been shown to have a high alpha level of .96. This study

observed strong internal consistency (α = .95).

Deceptive Mating Tactics

The Deceptive Mating Tactics measure (DMT; Tooke & Camire, 1991) measures the

frequency at which the different sex's male/female engage in deceptive tactics and acts as mating

strategies. This measure contains 88 items with 2 sections, intrasexual which is competition with

same biological sex and intersexual which is deceptive mating tactics that a person can

implement when attempting to attract a desired partner. Items were grouped under 14 different

tactic headings, with 6 relating to intrasexual acts while 8 involved intersexual acts. This study

used the intersexual section of this measure. For each item there is a 5-point Likert scale ranging

from "never" to "very frequently" (1 = Never, 5 = Very Frequently), with the participants being

asked to best estimate the relative frequency with which they have performed each act within the

past two years. Example items include, "I mislead potential dating partners about my career

expectations", "I mislead potential dating partners about my age", "I talk big to make myself

appear better than I am" and "I wear tighter clothing to appear thinner to potential dating

partners". In the original study, support for the internal consistency of the act frequency ratings

was calculated for both males (α = .93) and females (α = .95) using Cronbach's alpha. This

study observed strong overall internal consistency (α = .97).

Social Desirability

The Social Desirability scale (SDS; Stöber, J., 2001.) was used to control for responses

biased towards desirable responses. This scale contains 17 items, with each item listing a

statement. For each statement participants are asked to select "true" if the statement describes

them, or if it does not, to select "false" (True = 1, False = 2). Example items include, "I

sometimes litter", "I have tried illegal drugs (for example, marijuana, cocaine, etc.)", "I never

hesitate to help someone in case of emergency", and "I would never live off other people". This

scale has shown support for internal consistency (α =.75) using Cronbach's alpha. This study

observed moderate internal consistency (α = .61).

Biological Sex

Biological sex will be used to analyze sex differences in the use of external shame (OAS)

on misrepresentation (DMT). This question contains 4 response options (Male = 1, Female = 2,

Intersex = 3, and Prefer Not To Say = 4). This question asks participants to select their assigned

biological sex at birth. All participants selected the option of either male or female, with no

participants selecting intersex or prefer not to say.

Data Analysis

Analyses were conducted in SPSS. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations

among study variables were examined. Demographic information was analyzed first by looking

at descriptive statistics in SPSS. Specifically, looking at Age, Gender Identity, Race/Ethnicity,

Marital Status, and Level of Education. Next new variables were created for the scores of the

measures used in this study (OAS, DMT, SDS). For H1 a linear multiple regression was the used

to test whether external shame predicted deceptive mating tactics, controlling for biological sex and social desirability. For H2 the data was split into two groups (male & female) and a linear multiple regression was the used to test whether external shame predicted deceptive mating tactics, controlling for social desirability.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

The results in Table 1 provide the means and standard deviations scores for misrepresentation, social desirability, and external shame. The findings for misrepresentation were M = 2.85, SD = .823. The findings for the social desirability were M = 8.84, SD = 2.94. The findings for the external shame were M = 51.61, SD = 16.1. The results for external shame were not consistent with results found in the literature (Matos et al., 2015). However, this is the result of scoring external shame different than is normally done. The difference being that "never" is normally scored as 0 in the literature but in this study was scored as a 1. This difference in scoring was done in order to have matching numerical scales to simplify data analysis between external shame and misrepresentation. The results in Table 2 provide the intercorrelations among misrepresentation, social desirability, and external shame. External shame was significantly and positively correlated with misrepresentation. Meaning that when participants reported higher external shame, they also reported higher misrepresentation. Social desirability was not correlated with misrepresentation. External shame was significantly and negatively correlated with social desirability, meaning that when participants reported higher external shame, they also reported lower social desirability. Higher scores on social desirability is related to being female, and lower scores on social desirability is related to being male.

Research Question 1: Does External Shame Predict Deceptive Mating Tactics?

Research Question 1 tested whether external shame would significantly predict misrepresentation. A linear multiple regression was used with external shame as the predictor and misrepresentation as the outcome in SPSS. $R^2 = .592$ meaning that, taken as a set external shame, biological sex and social desirability, account for 60% of the variance in misrepresentation. The overall regression model was significant, $F(3,175) = 84.743$, $p < .001$. It was found that external shame significantly predicted misrepresentation (b = .041, t(175) = 15.931, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.036, .046]), as did the control variable social desirability (b = .040, t(175) = 2.811, $p = .006$, 95% CI [.012, .068]). Participants who reported higher external shame also reported higher misrepresentation. This means that for a 1 unit increase in external shame, this model predicts that there will be a .041 increase in misrepresentation. This also means that for a 1 unit increase in social desirability, this model predicts that there will be a .040 increase in misrepresentation. The control variable of biological sex did not significantly predict misrepresentation (b = -.051, t(175) = -.624, $p = .533$).

Research Question 2: Do these associations vary by biological sex?

Research Question 2 predicted that there will be a difference with males engaging in increased use of misrepresentation. A linear multiple regression was used to test whether external shame predicted misrepresentation, controlling for social desirability. This was tested by splitting the data based on biological sex and using two linear multiple regressions with external shame as the predictor, controlling for social desirability with misrepresentation as the outcome in SPSS. For females $R^2 = .612$ meaning that, taken as a set, external shame and social desirability, account for 61% of the variance in misrepresentation. The overall regression model was significant, $F(2, 97) = 76.455$, $p < .001$. It was found that external shame significantly predicted misrepresentation (b = .041, t(97) = 12.175, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.034, .047]), as did the control

variable social desirability (b = .064, t(97) = 3.949, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.032, .096]). This means

that for females for a 1 unit increase in external shame, this model predicts a .041 unit increase in

misrepresentation. This also means that for a 1 unit increase in social desirability, this model

predicts a .064 unit increase in misrepresentation. For males $R^2 = .596$ meaning that, taken as a

set external shame and social desirability account for 60% of the variance in misrepresentation.

The overall regression model was significant, $F(2, 76) = 56.117$, $p < .001$. It was found that

external shame significantly predicted misrepresentation (b = .040, t(76) = 10.081, $p < .001$, 95%

CI [.032, .047]), however the control variable social desirability was not significant (b = -.001,

t(76) = -.050, $p = .960$, 95% CI [-.053, .051]). This means that for males for a 1 unit increase in

external shame, this model predicts a .040 unit increase in misrepresentation. This also means

that for a 1 unit increase in social desirability, this model predicts a -.001 unit change in

misrepresentation. In sum participants who reported higher external shame also reported higher

in misrepresentation regardless of biological sex.

Discussion

External Shame Predicted Deceptive Mating Tactics

Aim 1 of this study was to examine the relationship between external shame and

misrepresentation in participants that have engaged in online dating apps/services within the last

two years. Hypothesis 1 stated that if a person is experiencing high levels of external shame, then

this will impact their use of misrepresentation. Specifically, if an individual is experiencing

higher levels of external shame, it would be associated with a positive increase in the use of

misrepresentation. Results were significant with external shame being a significant predictor of

misrepresentation, while controlling for social desirability and biological sex. Additionally, the

means and standard deviations for misrepresentation and social desirability were consistent with

results found in the literature (Stöber, 2001; Tooke & Camire, 1991). Hypothesis 1 was

supported meaning that external shame does significantly impact the use of misrepresentation in

the context of online dating based on my sample. Despite controlling for social desirability

which was also significant, external shame was a stronger predictor of misrepresentation.

From the literature it was believed that higher scores of external shame would be a

positive indicator for an individual's level of misrepresentation. This being based on the

relationship that external shame has with the desire to be perceived as socially accepted so as to

avoid situations that would arouse feelings of shame or being socially unaccepted (Fullagar,

2003; McDermott et al., 2008; Scheff, 2003; Schoenleber et al., 2021). As well as the

relationship that misrepresentation has with self-presentation that is motivated by the desire to

acquire social approval, and avoid social disapproval (Mosley et al., 2020; Peng, 2020). This

meaning that based on the results external shame does significantly predict misrepresentation

within the context of online dating. However, so too does social desirability, meaning that within

this sample participants felt the need to respond in a socially desirable way. This is concerning

because it means that participants felt the need to respond in a way that they felt was pleasing to

others. While this is concerning, it should be noted that despite social desirability being

significant, results for the impact that external shame has on misrepresentation, were more

significant.

Biological Sex and Misrepresentation

Aim 2 of this study was to explore whether the relationship between external shame and

misrepresentation varied by biological sex. Hypothesis 2 stated that males and females will

experience external shame to different degrees, therefore there will be a difference with males

engaging in increased use of misrepresentation. Results indicated that for females as well as

males, the effect of external shame on misrepresentation was significant. Interestingly, the controlled variable of social desirability did differ based on biological sex. For females, but not males, social desirability was predictive of misrepresentation. Thus, social desirability for females was important in a way that it was not for males.

The current body of literature agrees that the mate selection process is the result of evolution on the mammalian attachment strategies, and that this evolution also varies by biological sex, with men tending to be more attracted to a partners physical attributes (youth and beauty) whereas women tend to be more attracted to stability (money, education, position; Fisher, 1998, 2012; Fisher et al., 2002). Attachment strategies are not where biological sex differences end. The feeling of shame, internal and external, is experienced differently based on an individual's sex, specifically male/female (Vescio et al., 2021). This being due to a difference in expected social norms, with men and women being stereotyped in different ways. For example, men are expected to be masculine and present themselves as such at the risk of seeming unmasculine and experiencing being negatively socially perceived (Vescio et al., 2021). In addition to masculinity, other traditional stereotypes include the need to be perceived as competent, influential and strong, unlike women who are perceived in the opposite light as men (Vescio et al., 2021). So, men and women are stereotyped traditionally in opposing yet complementary roles. However, the results from this study paint a different picture: the results from this study found no differences based on biological sex, contradicting what is said in the literature. What is found to be significant is the sex differences based on social desirability, with men not reporting in a socially desirable way and women reporting in a highly socially desirable way. This means that for women it was more important to respond in a way that was socially desirable whereas for men it wasn't as important.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite this study's findings and contribution to the literature there are limitations that future research will need to address. The majority of the sample used in this study was from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), while a smaller portion was collected using social media. This is a cause for concern as these participants were motivated to participate in the study for a small monetary compensation whereas the remainder of my sample participated on the basis of no compensation. In addition, the majority of the sample is Caucasian/White. This is a cause for concern as it means that there is a lack of balanced Race/Ethnicity diversity within the study. Future studies should focus on recruiting diverse samples to better understand this phenomenon. Finally, future studies should focus on gathering a larger sample that is more representative of the general population. Specifically, gathering a sample with more participants from different educational and economic backgrounds. This study did not collect data on household income and found a sample that was mostly college educated, with the majority of participants having at least an undergraduate degree or higher.

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Table 1 Descriptives

Descriptives for the Study Variables

	M	*SD*	*N*
1. Deceptive Mating Tactics	2.85	.823	180
2. Other as Shamer	51.61	16.1	180
3. Social Desirability	8.84	2.94	180

Table 2 Correlations

Correlations and Internal Reliability for Study Variables

	α	1	2	*3*
1. Deceptive Mating Tactics	.978	--		
2. Other As Shamer	.953	.756**	--	
3. Social Desirability	.607	-.033	-.230**	--

*Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*