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Does the Sex of Mentors and Students Affect Students' Perceptions of Research Mentors?

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ABSTRACT. Students' views of mentors have been examined, but over the past 30 years there has been a dramatic increase in both female students and faculty in psychology. The purpose of this study was to determine whether there were sex differences in mentoring. Two hundred twenty-seven undergraduate, masters, and doctoral students completed a 58-item questionnaire assessing whether they had mentors, and the characteristics and perceptions of their mentors. 48% of the students had mentors. Analyses included chi-square tests of independence and analyses of variance. The probability of having a mentor, or satisfaction with the mentor, did not differ by sex of the student/mentee. Students reported that female mentors were more likely to seek out students, and that male mentors were more likely to be selected because their research was interesting. Male and female students did not differ in the likelihood of having a mentor, nor did graduates and undergraduates differ in the likelihood of having a mentor as function of their sex. However, female mentors were more likely to have female mentees, and male mentors were more likely to have male mentees. The findings are encouraging and provide evidence that psychology has adapted well to the shift from a male- to a female-dominated profession.

Keywords: mentoring; sex differences; psychology; students; mentor satisfaction

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1. Introduction

For many students, being mentored in research is an important part of the academic experience. Most of the research conducted in the first 100 years of psychology did not require faculty to seek extramural funding (Jahnke, 2014). However, during the economic crisis in the early 1990s, many administrators in institutions of higher education were forced to look for alternative sources of funding (Zusman, 2005). Alternative sources of funding included obtaining additional extramural support for research, and fund-raising in the community. As a result of these changes, from 1985 to 1995 the number of Ph.D.s awarded in the United States increased from 31,295 to 41,747 (National Science Foundation, 2016), and research mentoring became more important. Extramurally funded research often required additional administrative responsibilities and personnel. Students' working on faculty members' research was mutually beneficial. Students gained experiences to compete for graduate programs, and faculty have students to assist them with their research (Horodnic & Zait, 2015).

In addition to the changing dynamics regarding what was expected of a research mentor, there was a dramatic increase in the number of women who entered the field of psychology. In 1975, only 30% of the Ph.D.s. in psychology were awarded to women; however, in 2008, 70% of the Ph.D.s. were awarded to women (Willyard, 2011), and in 2015, 72% of the doctoral degrees in psychology were awarded to women (Cope et al., 2016). There was also an increase in the number of women hired at universities in tenure-track positions in psychology. In 2013, females with Ph.D.s accounted for only 35.5% of the tenured faculty in academia. This percentage dramatically increased in the 2017–2018 academic year. Females outnumbered males in the academic ranks for all positions (62% of new assistant professors, 62% assistant professors, and 55% associate professors). Only 44% of full professors were female (Christidis et al., 2018; National Science Foundation, 2016). Despite the dramatic changes in the composition of the faculty, and the changing roles of both students and research faculty, women still account for less than half of the tenure track full professors in psychology. It is possible that the influx of female faculty into the field has changed the way students view their mentors. However, researchers have not examined the effects of these changes.

The effects of mentoring have been examined among both graduate and undergraduate students. Researchers have found that students with mentors were more satisfied with their programs than students who were not mentored, and those who were mentored benefitted from their mentoring experiences (Clark et al., 2000). Students who were mentored were more likely to be productive in terms of authoring research presentations and publications, and they had stronger professional and critical thinking skills than those who were not mentored in research (Clark et al., 2000; Hollingsworth et al., 2002; Kardash, 2000). Most students also rated their mentoring relationships as positive (Clark et al., 2000). Johnson et al. (2000) found that doctoral students rated the most important attributes of their mentors as: mentor acceptance, direct training, role-modeling, providing opportunities, and sponsorships. However, Clark et al. (2000) found that doctoral students listed the most important characteristics of mentors as being supportive, intelligent, and knowledgeable.

Investigators have examined gender differences in mentoring relationships for both undergraduate and graduate students. Clark et al. (2000) examined mentoring among recent graduates from a doctoral program (Ph.D. and PsyD) in clinical psychology. They found that 14% of the respondents had been assigned to their mentor, 43% initiated the mentor relationship, and 35% reported that the relationship was mutually initiated. Females were more likely than males to attribute their success to their mentors. In addition, male and female graduate students did not differ in the likelihood of having a mentor, although male respondents were more likely to have male mentors, and female respondents were more likely to have female mentors. This gender preference was also found among undergraduate students (Bailey et al., 2016) and among clinical graduate students who were enrolled in Psy.D. and Ph.D. programs (Mangione et al., 2018). However, student success did not vary as a function of a mentor's gender (Mangione et al., 2018), and the number of students with mentors did not differ as a function of the gender of respondents (Clark et al., 2000).

Some researchers have found that gender influenced undergraduate research assistants' ability to bond with, perceive, and value their research mentors (Byars-Winston et al., 2015). Byars-Winston et al. (2015) examined mentees' perceptions of their mentoring relationship to post-baccalaureate outcomes. No significant differences were found as a function of gender (Byars-Winston et al., 2015). However, Decastro et al. (2013) found that women in academia believed having more than one mentor was beneficial, specifically having a female mentor.

Cronan-Hillix et al. (1986) examined students' views of mentoring in research among graduate students. They found that 53% of the students had mentors; however, only 13% of the mentors were female. Research focused

on mentoring in psychology has not examined the effects of the increased numbers of female students and mentors in the field. In addition, few researchers have included both graduate and undergraduate students to determine whether their views of mentoring differ as a function of their educational level. The purpose of the present study was to examine students' views of mentors since the dramatic increase of both female students and female faculty in the field of psychology among undergraduate, master's and doctoral students.

2. Method

Participants

The participants were 227 psychology students who were either majoring in psychology or enrolled in a psychology graduate program at one of two large western universities during the 2017 academic year. Both universities had enrollments over 30,000; both universities had Ph.D. programs. One university had one Ph.D. program in psychology; the other had six Ph.D. programs in psychology. 82 of the participants were women, and the mean age was 24.05 years (range 18 to 56 years). The participants were undergraduate (71%, n = 161), master's (14%, n = 31), and doctoral (15%, n = 35) level students. All doctoral students were enrolled in a Ph.D. program. Among graduate students, 44% (n = 29) were enrolled in clinical, 8% (n = 5) in industrial/organizational, 11% (n = 7) in learning and cognition, 19% (n = 13) in social, 5% (n = 3) in developmental, and 13% (n = 9) other.

Measures

The questionnaire used in the Cronan-Hillix et al. (1986) study was modified for the present study and prepared using Qualtrics. The questionnaire assessed the students' involvement in research, their perceptions of mentoring, and their relationships with their mentors. The modifications made to the Cronan-Hillix et al. (1986) questionnaire included assessing: whether the respondents major was psychology (yes or no), in which university the student was enrolled, ethnicity, employment, educational status (undergraduate, master's, or doctoral), area of research interests, whether the mentor's area of research was the same or different, length of time worked with mentor, how much effort they thought that their mentor had or would make in helping the student: get into a graduate program, obtaining an internship, postdoctoral position, and obtaining a good job in their field.

Students who indicated that they had a mentor were asked: the sex of their mentor, how many years their mentor had been at the university, how long they had known their mentor, how long they had worked with their mentor, and their mentor's academic level. Students were asked to indicate

yes or no to the following reasons for choosing their mentor. These reasons were: a) mentor was an inspiring instructor; b) interested in mentor's area of research; c) mentor sought out student to work with him/her; d) mentor recruited student to the program; and e) student sought out mentor because of similar interests. Student respondents also were asked to rate, using a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*No interest*) to 10 (*A great deal of interest*) their mentor's interests in: a) their future; b) helping them get into a graduate program; c) helping them obtain an internship; d) helping them obtain a postdoctoral position; and e) helping them find a good job in their field. Students were also asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with their mentor, using a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 *(Extremely dissatisfied*) to 10 (*Extremely satisfied*), and to rate the extent to which they would like to be like their mentor (1 = *Not at all* to 10 = *Very much*).

Student respondents without mentors were asked to indicate yes or no to the following reasons for not having a mentor: a) have not been in the university long enough; b) do not feel the need for a mentor; c) the program does not encourage mentoring; and d) have not been able to find a satisfactory mentor. Students were also asked to list the five most important characteristics of a good and bad mentor.

Procedure

The undergraduate advisor, master's coordinator, and the director of clinical training from both institutions were asked to send a letter, via email, to all undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students, inviting them to participate in the study. The letter was from a professor in the psychology department, indicating that she was conducting a study on mentoring. Students were told that the questionnaires would take about 10 minutes to complete, that the information provided would be kept anonymous and confidential, and that their information would be collected through Qualtrics. A link for the questionnaire was included in the letter. As an incentive to participate, students were told that four respondents would be randomly selected to receive a $25 Starbucks gift card.

3. Results

Mentorship Prevalence

52% of the students did not have a mentor. The percentages of students with mentors differed by education level, $\chi^2(2) = 83.98$, $p < .001$, Cramer's $V = .608$ (see Figure 1). Among graduate students, 95.45% ($n = 63$) reported having a mentor. Two of the students without mentors were master's-level students. One doctoral student reported not having a mentor. Among undergraduate students, 28.57% ($n = 46$) reported having a mentor.

Student Sex and Mentor Sex

Most mentors (61.3%) and students (81.5%) were female. There was not a significant difference between the proportions of students with a mentor by sex, $\chi^2(2) = 2.64$, $p = .267$. Nor were there differences in education level by sex or in the proportions of mentorship by sex within education levels, Undergraduate: $\chi^2(2) = .465$, $p = .793$; Masters: $\chi^2(1) = .875$, $p = .250$; Doctoral: $\chi^2(1) = .257$, $p = .612$. Sex match of mentor and student was statistically probable, $\chi^2(1) = 4.086$, $p = .043$, $\phi = .210$ (see Figure 2). Female mentors were more likely than expected to take female students and male mentors were more likely than expected to take male students (64.5% of dyads were sex-concordant). Student sex did not predict the likelihood of not having a mentor because a satisfactory mentor could not be found, $\chi^2(2) = .857$, $p = .651$.

Effects of Student and Mentor Sex on Perceptions, Interactions, and Productivity

Factorial analyses of variance were performed to evaluate whether mentor and student sex affected a variety of satisfaction and interaction measures. Mentor and student sex did not affect: a) importance of mentor, $F(3, 82) = 1.176$, $p = .324$; b) desire to be like mentor, $F(3, 86) = 1.121$, $p = .345$; c) satisfaction with mentor, $F(3, 86) = .843$, $p = .474$; d) perceived interest in future, $F(3, 88) = .114$, $p = .952$; or e) satisfaction with university, $F(3, 82) = 1.459$, $p = .232$ (see Table 1). Mentor and student sex did not significantly impact reported interactions with mentors with respect to: a) discussing research, $F(3, 82) = .913$, $p = .438$, b) discussing coursework, $F(3, 81) = .649$, $p = .586$, c) discussing plans of study, $F(3, 81) = 1.039$, $p = .380$, d) being sought out by one's mentor to discuss research, $F(3, 81) = .598$, $p = .618$, or e) socializing outside of academics, $F(3, 81) = .895$, $p = .447$ (see Table 1). Neither mentor nor student sex affected students' perceptions of: a) the most important thing one's mentor does for one: mentor sex, $\chi^2(6) = 8.216$, $p = .223$; student sex, $\chi^2(6) = 3.697$, $p = .718$; b) the five most important characteristics of a good mentor (using Bonferroni-adjusted, family-wise $\alpha = .01$; see Table 2); or c) the five most important characteristics of a bad mentor (using Bonferroni-adjusted, family-wise $\alpha = .01$; see Table 2). Poisson regressions revealed no significant effects of mentor and student sex on the total count of publications, Wald $\chi^2(3) = 4.04$, $p = .258$, or conference presentations, Wald $\chi^2(3) = 1.64$, $p = .651$. Logistic regression showed no effects of student and mentor sex on the probability of working on a publication with one's mentor presently, $\chi^2(3) = 1.20$, $p = .752$.

Effects of Student and Mentor Sex on Students' Reasons for Choosing Their Mentor

Mentor sex did not relate to choosing a mentor for being: a) an inspiring instructor, $\chi^2(1) = .042$, $p = .838$; b) recruited by the mentor, $\chi^2(1) = .974$, $p = .324$; c) sought out by students for similar interests, $\chi^2(1) = 2.172$, $p = .141$; d) assigned as an assistant to the mentor, $\chi^2(1) = 0$, $p = 1$. Male mentors were more likely than expected and female mentors were less likely to be chosen because the student found their area of research interesting, $\chi^2(1) = 5.477$, $p = .019$, $\phi = .244$. Female mentors were more likely than expected and male mentors were less likely than expected to be chosen because the student reported being sought out by the mentor, $\chi^2(1) = 4.564$, $p = .033$, $\phi = .223$.

Based on these findings, three-way tests of independence were performed. Each of these tests was statistically significant. The first three-way contingency was among student sex, mentor sex, and being sought out by a mentor. Female students were significantly more likely to be sought out by a female mentor than by a male mentor, $\chi^2(1) = 4.068$, $p = .044$, OR = 4.6. However, although the general tendency for female mentors to seek students out existed among male students too, male students were not significantly more likely to be sought out by a female mentor than by a male mentor, $\chi^2(1) = 1.806$, $p = .179$, OR = 3.3. The difference between these odds ratios was statistically significant, Cochran's $\chi^2(1) = 5.87$, $p = .015$. These results show that, although female mentors seek out students more than male mentors generally, this pattern was statistically significant only for female students.

The second three-way contingency was among student sex, mentor sex, and choosing a mentor because the mentor's research was interesting. For male students, the odds of endorsing this statement was three times greater for those with male mentors than for those with female mentors; however, this was not statistically significant, Fisher's $\chi^2(1) = .755$, $p = .560$, OR = 3. For female students, the odds of endorsing this statement was 4.59 times greater for those with male mentors than for those with female mentors, and this difference was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 4.068$, $p = .044$, OR = 4.59. The difference between these odds ratios was statistically significant, Cochran's $\chi^2(1) = 4.814$, $p = .028$. These results show that, although male mentors are more likely to be chosen because their research is perceived as interesting, this pattern was statistically significant only for female students.

4. Discussion

The findings from the present study indicated that nearly half of the student respondents had mentors. About 80% of the students with mentors were female, and 60% of their mentors were female. These findings are consistent with those of Willyard (2011), who reported that the proportion of females

who entered the field of psychology increased over the previous 40 years. Despite the dramatic increases, our findings indicated that male and female students did not differ in the likelihood of having a mentor, even as a function of students' education level. However, students reported that female mentors were more likely to take female students, and male mentors were more likely to take male students. This finding corroborates the findings of other researchers at both the undergraduate (Bailey et al., 2016) and graduate (Clark et al., 2000) levels. However, some researchers found that, when students and mentors were matched on gender, students reported receiving more help than when they were not matched on gender (Blake-Beard et al., 2011). Interestingly, in our study, average levels of satisfaction with mentors and engagement in discussion with mentors for research, academics, and socializing did not differ as a function of student or mentor sex or sex-matching. This would suggest that students feel equally able to seek help through discussing relevant issues with mentors of either sex.

In the present study, female mentors were more likely to seek out students than male mentors; however, when examined in a three-way test of independence, this pattern was moderated by student sex. Thus, there were not significant differences by mentor sex in the likelihood of seeking out male students, but female mentors were significantly more likely than male mentors to seek out female students. One possible explanation for this finding is that female faculty are more comfortable expressing their opinions or interests to students, specifically female students, as a function of cultural norms in our society or sex differences in self-disclosure. Researchers have shown that females are more likely to self-disclose (Dindia & Allen, 1992; Dindia et al., 2002; Horne & Johnson, 2018), particularly with other females (Onnela et al., 2014), and a professor's self-disclosure of interest in a student during interviews could easily be perceived as "seeking out" the student. It could also be that female mentors desire, consciously or unconsciously, to continue to recruit new women into the field of psychology for various reasons, including the historical dominance of males in psychology or the current social movements to recruit women into STEM disciplines (Beede et al., 2011).

On the other hand, male mentors were more likely than female mentors to be selected because their research was interesting to the student. However, this was only statistically significant for female students in the three-way analysis. Although, this seems somewhat inconsistent with a previously conducted large, cross-discipline study that indicated that the presence of female mentors increased female student interest in the respective field (Bettinger & Long, 2005), these data were taken from student records of freshmen, and interests were indicated by the students' majors. However, in the present study specific mentor-mentee relationships in psychology were examined, not macrocosmic processes of sex-based interest in certain

academic disciplines. It is also possible that when students are reading a mentor's work and do not know the mentor personally, implicit sex biases may have an effect that diminishes or disappears once a personal connection is established. Hence, the effects exist only in "selection" outcomes and not in "relationship" outcomes (e.g., discussion, admiration, productivity, etc.).

Female students have been drawn and continue to be drawn to psychology as a discipline. This has occurred, in part, as a function of decreasing gender bias in STEM disciplines (Ceci et al., 2014). However, that does not mean that implicit biases may not persist. Researchers have shown that science faculty exhibit a gender bias in experimental conditions, favoring males for a laboratory manager position (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). Similarly, Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2013) found that scientific publications authored by males were perceived as being of greater scientific quality, especially if the field was male-typed, and that collaboration was desired more strongly from these male authors. However, there were no significant differences by sex of the reader. Thus, this finding may explain the finding from the present study that male mentors were more likely than female mentors to be selected by students because their research was interesting. However, this does not explain the fact that the effect was stronger (and only significant) for female students in our study. Additionally, it is not clear at this time in history whether psychology should be considered male-typed – although in the context of scientific research this may persist. However, Williams & Ceci (2015), replicating Moss-Racusin et al.'s (2012) approach, found a strong faculty preference for women in STEM fields. Because of the mixed findings regarding gender biases in academic settings, more research is needed.

Another possible explanation for this finding could be that females exhibit strong gender-stereotyped conceptions in science contexts, and they are more likely to view themselves as deviating from these types than males (Ehrlinger & Dunning, 2003; Ehrlinger et al., 2018). However, if female students perceive themselves as failing to adhere to the stereotypical traits of good scientists or feel less competent in these domains (e.g., Blanch et al., 2008), it is not unreasonable to assume that this perception may extend to *other females* too. This dilemma of internalized stereotypes regarding science, and perceived deviations from these stereotypes among females may be one possible explanation, but further research is needed.

Although, overtly, females are more likely to oppose and to call for social change related to gender bias in science, and males are more likely to rationalize or to reject the existence of any gender bias (Handley et al., 2015; Moss-Racusin et al., 2015), internalized implicit biases among women also seem to persist – particularly against themselves as individuals. Thus, without criticizing explicit institutional efforts requiring gender equity in practices which are effective in altering males' behaviors related to gender bias (Isaac

et al., 2009), there may be a need for *individual*, not just *institutional*, change in the way that females may view themselves as a result of historical gender biases. If this narrative accurately reflects the operating phenomena, this suggests that additional efforts to remediate gender bias should be multifaceted. Efforts to deconstruct the notion of a "prototypical scientist" should be employed. In addition, actions to increase females' feelings of competence and sense of "fit" in science should be undertaken – perhaps particularly earlier in development than college (e.g., Ceci et al., 2014). However, another issue is that women who are perceived as "self-promoting" or "dominant" tend to be judged more negatively than their male peers who are similarly perceived. Thus, efforts must be made to neutralize judgments and encourage the equal evaluation of males and females (Isaac et al., 2009; Williams & Tiedens, 2016). Issues surrounding science, gender, and bias are complex, hence the need for institutional and individual (e.g., Carnes et al., 2015) remediations.

Although there were isolated effects of student and mentor sex on aspects of the mentoring relationship, the clear majority of outcomes revealed no significant effects of student or mentor sex. It was extremely encouraging to find that the sex of the mentor and student did not affect students' perceptions of the importance of their mentors, their desire to be like their mentors, satisfaction with their mentors, perceived interest in their future, the number of publications authored, or their satisfaction with their university. It was also encouraging that the sex of the student was not related to the inability to find a satisfactory mentor. A final noteworthy finding is that sex of the mentor and student did not affect perceptions of the most important characteristics of a good or bad mentor or how mentors contribute to their mentees' development. Previous researchers have supported this finding (Clark et al., 2000); however, in an older study, researchers found that male psychologists were more likely to have a role model and to have received multiple types of faculty support as graduate students than female psychologists (Cohen & Gutek, 1991). Thus, the finding that psychology students are satisfied with their mentors irrespective of student or mentor sex indicates that psychology has done well in transitioning from a male- to a female-dominated profession.

5. Limitations

There were limitations in the present study. The small number of male students limits the generalizability of the findings and the power of analyses conducted *within* male students and male mentors. Male students exhibited patterns that matched those of female students (i.e., the moderation was quantitative in nature), but these patterns did not achieve significance in the analyses considering males only. With a larger sample of male students, it is

possible that these moderation effects would not survive. It is advisable to consider the magnitudes of differences (i.e., the effect sizes) for these effects, not just the significance of the tests, in understanding the possible implications for the field. However, these findings do have an empirical framework upon which they can be supported; thus, it seems the findings and possibilities merit consideration and future research. Additional research should be conducted, including examination in other disciplines, and these findings should be weighted appropriately, given this limitation. The measure employed had limited reliability and validity. In addition, only two large western public universities were included in the study.

6. Future Directions and Conclusions

The findings from the present study indicated that the sexes of students and mentors (as well as sex-matching) had minimal effects on student-mentor relationships; however, the findings did indicate that student and mentor sex may affect the student-mentor selection process and should be explored further in future studies. In summary, the findings from the study indicated that psychology has adapted well to the dramatic increase in the number of both female faculty and students in the field, and to the shift from a male-dominated to a female-dominated profession in terms of mentor-mentee relationships. More research is needed to examine whether sex of students and mentors have any effects on student-mentor relationships in other academic disciplines.

Author Contributions
All authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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Table 1 Descriptive statistics for tests of mentor and student sex on various outcomes

		Student sex	
		Male students	Female students
Outcome	**Mentor sex (↓)**	*M(SD)*	*M(SD)*
Importance of mentor (1–6)	Male mentors	5.75(.452)	5.30(.926)
	Female mentors	5.10(.738)	5.37(.915)
Desire to be like mentor (1–10)	Male mentors	8.62(1.938)	7.30(2.204)
	Female mentors	8.30(1.567)	7.91(2.390)
Satisfaction with mentor (1–10)	Male mentors	8.92(1.115)	8.09(2.410)
	Female mentors	9.00(1.414)	8.61(1.820)
Mentor's interest in your future (1–10)	Male mentors	8.31(1.548)	8.43(2.019)
	Female mentors	8.70(1.494)	8.37(1.743)
Satisfaction with university (1–10)	Male mentors	8.33(1.155)	8.26(1.453)
	Female mentors	7.60(1.350)	8.59(1.360)
I seek mentor out to discuss research ideas (1–5)	Male mentors	4.08(.669)	3.87(1.254)
	Female mentors	3.90(.876)	3.49(1.519)
I seek mentor out to discuss coursework (1–5)	Male mentors	2.42(.900)	2.65(1.191)
	Female mentors	2.90(.568)	2.90(1.317)
I seek mentor out to discuss plan of study (1–5)	Male mentors	3.50(1.087)	3.00(1.00)
	Female mentors	3.30(.483)	3.45(1.154)
Mentor seeks me out to discuss research ideas (1–5)	Male mentors	3.58(.900)	3.17(1.230)
	Female mentors	3.30(.949)	3.07(1.269)
I socialize with mentor outside of academic setting (1–5)	Male mentors	1.92(.996)	2.39(.988)
	Female mentors	2.50(.850)	2.42(1.059)

Table 2 Mentor and student sex on positive and negative traits of mentors classifications

	Mentor sex			Student sex		
	χ^2	*df*	*p*	χ^2	*df*	*p*
Positive traits						
Good personality	2.958	5	.706	11.174	6	.083
Interested	1.967	5	.854	3.218	7	.864
Knowledgeable	11.070	5	.050	9.546	7	.216
Accessibility	5.113	6	.529	6.022	7	.537
Reliability	8.939	6	.177	7.552	7	.374
Negative traits						
Bad personality	5.280	5	.383	7.072	6	.314
Inaccessibility	5.504	5	.358	.547	6	.997
Uninterested	6.096	6	.412	12.818	6	.046
Unknowledgeable	3.328	6	.814	5.732	7	.571
Not sharing	1.687	6	.946	5.352	7	.617

Figure 1 Frequency of students reporting having a mentor by educational status

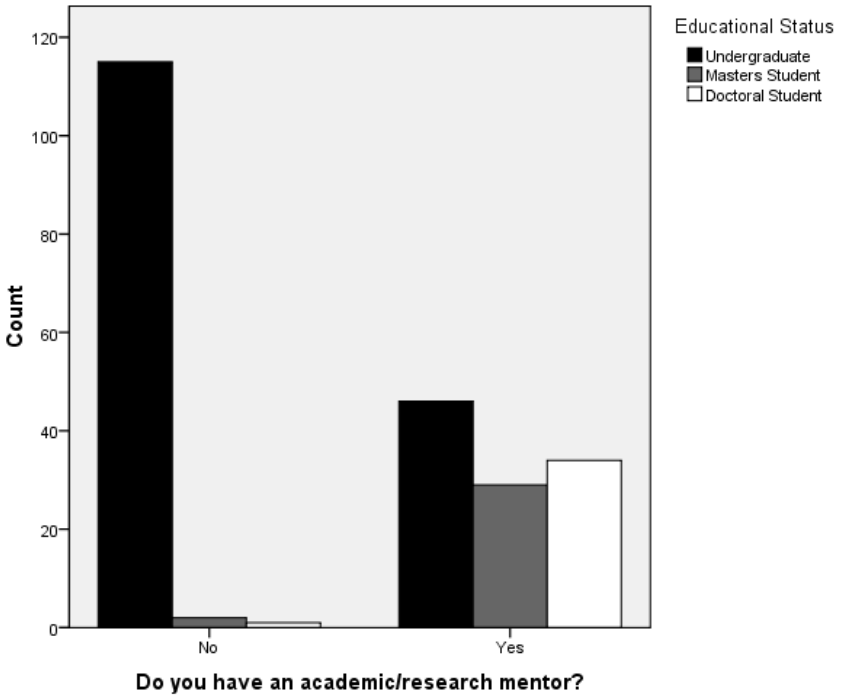
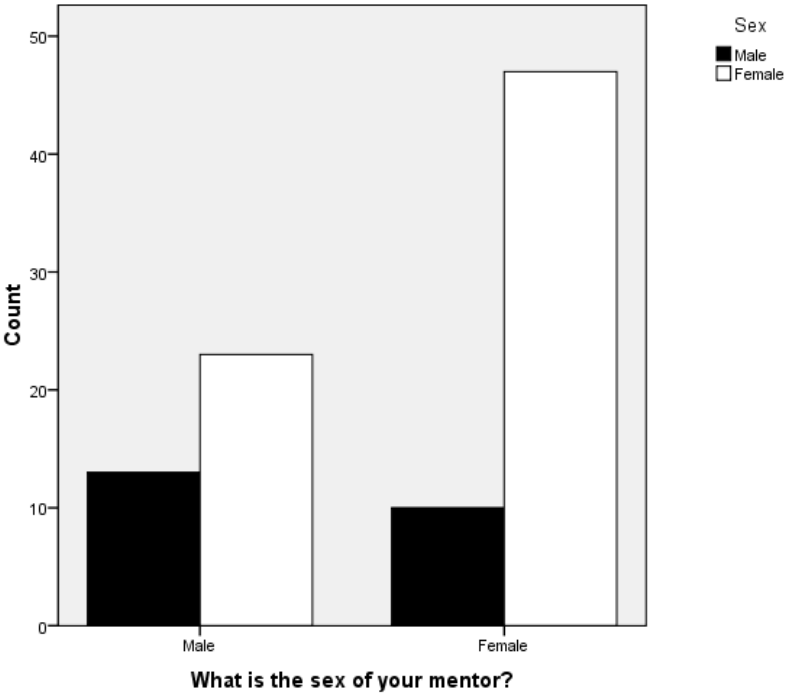


Figure 2 Students' sex and mentors' sex concordance rates



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The Impact of Gender Stereotypes on the Appraisal of Civic Virtue Performance

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ABSTRACT. When employees perform organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs), they go above and beyond their formal job requirements in a manner that benefits the organization. Research suggests that performing OCBs can positively impact one's performance appraisal ratings. Other research suggests that, due to gender stereotypes, male and female performers may not benefit from OCB performance identically. We investigated, experimentally, the impact of ratee gender on the appraisal and reward of civic virtue performance. Students viewed a video of a male or female instructor that included a brief lecture as well as additional statements, which in the experimental conditions, manipulated civic virtue. The female performing civic virtue was rated higher on competence, overall performance, and suitability for promotion than the male performing civic virtue and the male and female performing no civic virtue. Further, competence mediated the effect of the conditional relationship between civic virtue and ratee gender on overall performance ratings, which in turn predicted promotion ratings. Our findings suggest that, notwithstanding the well-evidenced relationship between gender stereotypes and bias against women in the workplace, gender stereotypes may also, under certain conditions, operate to their advantage. Further studies are needed to determine whether this phenomenon would hold when there is a significant delay between the observation and appraisal of performance.

Keywords: gender differences; gender stereotypes; civic virtue; organizational citizenship behaviour; performance appraisal

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1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) are extra-role behaviours that contribute to organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff et al., 2000). A well-studied phenomenon in management literature, OCB performance, or going above and beyond one's in-role job requirements (Organ et al., 2006), is especially crucial in the knowledge economy (Dekas et al., 2013). OCB can also increase perceived service quality (Kwak & Kim, 2015; Messersmith et al., 2011), customer satisfaction (Fisher et al., 2010), and market performance (Chuang & Liao, 2010). Multiple studies have found a positive relationship between OCB and various unit- and organizational-level performance measures, both operational and financial (for an extensive review, see Podsakoff et al., 2013). Hence, it is unsurprising that OCB has been found to influence performance appraisal ratings and pay and promotion decisions (e.g. Allen, 2006; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). The significant impact of OCB performance on career success makes it imperative to further examine the possibility that male and female employees may not benefit from OCB performance equally, as suggested by limited prior research (Allen, 2006; Heilman & Chen, 2005). Such investigation can contribute to our understanding of gender discrimination that persists in contemporary workplaces (Heilman & Caleo, 2018).

OCBs are extra-role, meaning that they are not the required tasks, duties, or responsibilities set out in a job description, which are referred to as in-role. Some examples are participating in voluntary skills training, speaking highly of the organization to organizational outsiders, and accepting changes that may inconvenience the individual but benefit the organization (Organ et al., 2006; Podsakoff et al., 2000). In the present study we examine civic virtue, or active involvement in the political or governance process of the organization (Hanson & Borman, 2006; Organ et al., 2006). Civic virtue comprises behaviours such as making suggestions for improvements at work, voicing opinions about issues the workplace, encouraging others to voice their opinions, and voluntarily joining committees (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Podsakoff et al., 2000).

The main objective of this study is to examine the differential effects of civic virtue performance on perceptions of competence, overall performance ratings, and promotion recommendations for women and men. One reason why engaging in OCBs may not may not benefit male and female employees equally is that some OCBs, including civic virtue, are gender-typed, and therefore expected of one gender more so than the other (Heilman & Chen, 2005). For example, prior research has demonstrated that the helping form of OCB is expected of women more than men (Kidder & McLean-Parks, 2001). The helping form of OCB involves such behaviours as voluntarily helping

coworkers who are overloaded or helping to orient new coworkers when it is not required (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Limited research has demonstrated that helping is more likely to be noticed and rewarded when performed by men because it is unexpected (Heilman & Chen, 2005).

The behaviours involving in the helping form of OCB are consistent with the female communal stereotype. The behaviours involved in civic virtue performance, on the other hand, are consistent with the male gender stereotype of agency and research suggests that civic virtue is expected of men more than women (e.g. Punia & Shyam, 2017). Civic virtue is incongruent with the communal female gender stereotype (Eagly, 1987; Heilman, 1983). For that reason, it should have a greater positive effect on evaluations of the performance of females than males. Studies investigating the influence of gender stereotypes on performance appraisal have largely focused on how they lead to bias and discrimination against women (e.g. Heilman et al., 2004). We examine how gender stereotypes may advantage female employees when performing certain behaviours in the workplace.

We begin with a discussion of the outcomes of civic virtue performance before examining the effects of gender stereotypes on the relationship between civic virtue and perceptions of competence, performance ratings, and promotion recommendations. We then delineate our method and results before discussing the theoretical and practical implications of our findings.

2. Outcomes of OCB Performance

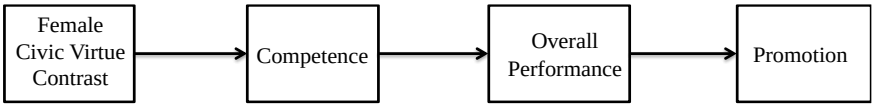
OCB was initially defined as discretionary behaviour not formally subject to sanction or reward (Organ, 1988). However, subsequent empirical findings challenged this conceptualization. MacKenzie et al. (1991; 1993) demonstrated that in managerial evaluations of the performance of insurance sales persons, OCB accounted for more variance than objective sales data. Subsequent studies demonstrated that OCB explains variance in overall performance ratings over and above that explained by task performance (Lowery & Krilowicz, 1996; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). More recent research continues to support the relationship between OCB and performance ratings (Oh et al., 2015; Vilela et al., 2008), including meta-analyses (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Citizenship behaviours may also impact informal evaluations of performance as at least one study found civic virtue to influence perceptions of competence (Stamper & Van Dyne, 2001).

Supervisors search for information on OCBs when evaluating the performance of subordinates and this information has a substantial impact on performance ratings (Conway, 1999; Werner, 1994). OCBs can cause performance evaluators to inflate either overall performance ratings or ratings on specific in-role performance items that most closely resemble the citizenship

behaviors (Sulsky et al., 2002). Performance evaluators also take OCBs into account when making reward allocation decisions (Korsgaard et al., 2010). Numerous studies have found OCBs to be positively related to pay raises and promotions (e.g. Allen, 2006; Allen & Rush, 1998; Orr et al., 1989).

As discussed below, we predict that civic virtue performance will interact with the gender of the performer to influence perceptions of the performer's competence, which will impact overall performance ratings, which will in turn affect promotion recommendations. These relationships are displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Conceptual model



3. Gender Stereotypes and Evaluation of Civic Virtue Performance

A number of studies within management literature have examined the potential impact of gender on OCB. These studies have largely investigated whether male or female employees perform more OCB (e.g. Clarke & Sulsky, 2017). Scant research, however, has examined whether gender influences the outcomes of OCB performance. As discussed above, OCB performance can positively impact one's career success. However, the results of at least two studies suggest that the performer's gender may influence this relationship. Lovell et al.'s (1999) field study found OCB and performance ratings to be significantly correlated. However, they also found that although female employees were rated higher than their male counterparts on OCB performance, they did not receive higher performance evaluations. Allen (2006) similarly found that gender moderated the relationship between OCB performance and promotion such that it was stronger for males than females.

Both of the aforementioned studies employed composite measures of OCB and did not account for the gendered nature of specific types of OCB. Heilman and Chen's (2005) experimental study demonstrated that engaging in the helping form of OCB positively impacted men's performance evaluations but not women's evaluations. Failure to engage in helping behaviour, on the other hand, had a negative effect on women's evaluations but not on men's evaluations. The study's findings also indicated that helping was rated less optional for women than for men. Therefore, since helping behaviour is prescribed for women, they were not rewarded for performing it, but were penalized when they didn't. This phenomenon results from the operation of gender stereotypes.

Men are stereotyped as possessing agentic traits: strong, ambitious, assertive, independent, and decisive (Eagly, 1987, 2009; Heilman, 1983). On the other hand, the communal stereotype attributed to women is comprised of such traits as compassion, kindness, helpfulness, understanding, and warmth (e.g. Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006; Eagly, 1987; Heilman, 1983). A recent empirical study suggests that the agency and communality stereotypes of men and women, respectively, remain pervasive today (Clarke & Arnold, 2017).

The behaviours involved in civic virtue are agentic and considered to be a gender-congruent OCB for men and not for women. Hence, both empirical and experimental studies have found that men are presumed to engage in more civic virtue than women (Ehrhart & Godfrey, 2003; Eagly, 2009; Heilman & Chen, 2005; Kidder & McLean Parks, 2001; Punia & Shyam, 2017). For example, in a recent study employing a sample of employed adults in the United States, both self-reported and coworker-reported ratings indicated that males engaged in more civic virtue at work than females (Clarke & Sulsky, 2017). Therefore, just as helping behaviour is more likely to be noticed and rewarded when performed by males (Heilman & Chen, 2005), civic virtue should be more likely to be noticed and rewarded when performed by females. Industrial and organizational psychology literature on performance appraisal explains why this is so.

Several cognitive tasks precede the actual performance appraisal: relevant performance information must be identified, organized, stored, and later recalled (Feldman, 1981). This cognitive model of performance appraisal is regularly applied in management research (e.g. Christensen & Whiting, 2018; Schuh et al., 2018). Performance appraisal is not entirely conscious and deliberate (Enzle & Schopflocher, 1978), rather both automatic and controlled processes occur. According to Feldman (1981), when information is consistent with expectations it is recognized and stored automatically. It is only when we encounter information that is inconsistent with our expectations that "a controlled process is evoked that requires conscious direction and decision making" (Feldman, 1981: 129).

When an evaluator encounters information (e.g. the employee engaged in helping behaviour) that is consistent with a pre-existing belief (e.g. the employee is female), this information will be recognized and stored as part of an automatic, nondeliberate process. However, when unexpected information is encountered (e.g. the employee engaged in civic virtue behaviour), the controlled process is triggered and conscious deliberation is necessary to organize and store the data, increasingly the likelihood it is later recalled at the time of appraisal.

Research has demonstrated support for an automatic process being used for expected information and a controlled process for unexpected. Because it requires greater effort for encoding, unexpected or inconsistent information

is more likely to be recalled (Srull & Wyer, 1989; Wyer & Srull, 1989). This also appears to be the case for stereotype-incongruent information (Garcia-Marques & Mackie, 1999); with stereotype-incongruent information triggering a deliberate, controlled process. This means that gender stereotype-inconsistent OCB's are more likely to trigger the deliberate, controlled process, causing that unexpected information to be recognized, stored, and recalled when judgments are formed about competence and performance.

In sum, we predict that female performers of civic virtue will receive higher competence ratings, overall performance ratings, and promotion recommendations than male performers of civic virtue, as well as males and females that do not perform civic virtue. Finally, we expect to find a serial mediation where competence ratings mediate the effect of the conditional relationship between performer gender and civic virtue on overall performance ratings, which will in turn predict promotion recommendations.

Hypothesis 1: Females performing civic virtue will receive higher (a) competence ratings, (b) overall performance ratings, and (c) promotion recommendations, than males performing civic virtue and females and males performing no OCBs.

Hypothesis 2: The contrast of the female civic virtue condition with the male civic virtue and control conditions will predict competence ratings, which in turn will predict overall performance ratings. Overall performance will then predict recommendations for promotion.

4. Method

4.1 Participants

We recruited university and college students of at least 19 years of age through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk is a crowdsourcing internet marketplace where 'Requesters' post tasks that they need completed and 'Workers' voluntarily complete those tasks, called 'Human Intelligence Tasks' or 'HITS', for payment by the Requesters. Many researchers recruit study participants through MTurk (see, e.g., Karim et al., 2014). Some scholars believe that MTurk samples are more representative of the U.S. population than in-person convenience samples (Buhrmester et al., 2011) and provide more reliable data (Behrend et al., 2011). Others have described MTurk as allowing for experimental control while also providing a naturalistic setting (Aguinis & Edwards, 2013).

The MTurk workers that consented to participate in the study totalled 130, resulting in 122 completed surveys. Participants were 50% female (male = 59, female = 61, other = 2). 87.8% indicated that their sexual orientation was heterosexual (heterosexual = 107, homosexual = 4, other = 11). Age ranged

from 19 to 55 with a mean age of 25 years. The ethnicity of our participants was as follows: 68.9% Caucasian, 10.7% Hispanic, 9% African American, 9% Asian, and 2.5% other. 68.6% were university students and 31.4 % were college students. The distribution of full-time and part-time students was: full-time = 72.5% and part-time = 27.5%.

4.2 Procedure

Our recruitment posting on MTurk advised prospective participants that the study was about job performance and involved watching a brief video then completing a questionnaire. MTurk Workers interested in participating in the study clicked the link to the study materials on SurveyMonkey. Workers who consented to participate in the study watched a video of a university instructor giving a brief lecture on whistleblowing,[1] read a brief summary of the instructor's teaching file, and then completed a questionnaire containing the measures listed below. Participants were paid 1.00 USD each for their participation.

We employed a between-participant experimental design with four conditions: (1) female instructor control (no civic virtue), (2) male instructor control (no civic virtue), (3) female instructor exhibiting civic virtue, and (4) male instructor exhibiting civic virtue.

Each participant watched a video of either a male or female university instructor, of similar age and ethnicity, giving an identically worded 4-minute lecture on whistleblowing, ostensibly before a class of students. Each instructor was recorded once giving the lecture and this recording was used in all conditions so that the lecture, and therefore task performance, would be identical across conditions. In the civic virtue conditions, the professor also made several statements that exhibited civic virtue behaviour:

> I know the audio-visual equipment doesn't function well in this classroom. I and other professors have been complaining about it for some time. I have taken it upon myself to research the cost of upgrading the equipment and have requested a meeting with the Dean to discuss the possibility of me chairing a fundraising committee to raise the money to get new equipment installed.

To counterbalance the order of the manipulation (i.e. the instructor's statements regarding civic virtue performance), in half of the videos the manipulation came before the lecture and in half the videos the manipulation came after the lecture. Statements about a midterm exam were included in the control condition to ensure the videos were about the same duration across conditions (i.e. approximately 4.5 minutes). The statements were identical for both instructors.

Also included was a brief written summary of the instructor's teaching file, which, in the experimental conditions, reinforced the civic virtue manip-

ulation. We alternated the order of the written summary and the video lecture so that approximately half of the participants read the summary first and then watched the video and half of the participants watched the video first and then read the summary. To determine whether the order of the video and summary influences ratings, we performed t-tests on all dependent variables and likeability across the two order conditions and found no significant differences ($p > .05$). Finally, participants completed the questionnaire on which they evaluated the instructor on the measures listed below.

4.3 Measures

Competence. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the instructor they viewed in the video was competent on a 5-point scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

In-role performance. To measure in-role performance, we averaged the ratings on five in-role performance items. Participants rated the instructor on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) on five in-role performance dimensions: "The instructor responded to students' questions effectively"; "The instructor treated students respectfully"; "The instructor stimulated my interest in learning the subject matter of the course"; "The instructor communicated course concepts effectively"; and "The lecture was well organized". These items were adapted from the actual evaluation form that students at one of the researchers' institutions regularly use to evaluate instructors. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .70.

Overall performance. Participants rated the instructor's overall job performance on one item: "Overall the quality of instruction was…", on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

Recommend for promotion. Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that they would recommend the instructor for a promotion (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Demographics. Participants indicated their age, gender (male, female or other), sexual orientation (homosexual, heterosexual, or other), ethnicity (African American, Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic, or Other), whether they were in university or college, and whether they were a full-time or part-time student.

Civic virtue manipulation check. To verify whether we had successfully manipulated civic virtue, we provided participants with a general definition of organizational citizenship behaviour as well as a definition of civic virtue and asked participants whether the instructor in the video engaged in civic virtue. The definition of OCB provided was: "Organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) are voluntary behaviours we perform at work that contribute

to organizational effectiveness". The definition of civic virtue and manipulation check question were: "The civic virtue form of OCB involves volunteering for committees and making suggestions for improvements at work. Do you think the instructor in the video engages in civic virtue?" Participants responded to each item on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Likability. To rule out a possible alternative explanation for our findings, we asked participants the extent to which the agreed or disagreed that the instructor was likable (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

5. Results

5.1 Manipulation Check

We confirmed successful manipulation of civic virtue by performing an independent samples t-test comparing the civic virtue manipulation check. The result is statistically significant: $t(120) = -9.372$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2 = .42$, with the civic virtue condition receiving higher ratings ($M = 4.40$) than the control condition ($M = 3.27$).

Means are reported in Table 1 and correlations appear in Table 2.

Since the extent to which participants found the instructor to be likable was correlated with the dependent variables, we ran a one-way ANOVA comparing likability ratings across conditions. There was no statistically significant difference (F (3, 118) = .651, p = .58).[2]

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations by Instructor Gender

		OCB Condition	
Variable	**Instructor Gender**	**No OCB**	**Civic Virtue**
Job Performance	Male Instructor	3.84 (.62)	4.06 (.39)
	Female Instructor	3.90 (.54)	4.09 (.45)
Overall Job Performance	Male Instructor	3.88 (.74)	4.03 (.70)
	Female Instructor	4.00 (.76)	4.32 (.56)
Competence	Male Instructor	4.13 (.73)	4.25 (.62)
	Female Instructor	4.17 (.71)	4.47 (.51)
Promote	Male Instructor	3.47 (.78)	3.55 (.67)
	Female Instructor	3.55 (.87)	3.90 (.66)
Likable	Male Instructor	3.93 (.58)	4.09 (.52)
	Female Instructor	3.97 (.63)	4.10 (.61)

Table 2 Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Civic virtue	-	-	1							
2. Instructor gender	-	-	-.02	1						
3. Competence	4.26	.65	.16	.10	1					
4. Overall job performance	4.06	.70	.17	.15	.48**	1				
5. Promote	3.61	.76	.14	.15	.49**	.66**	1			
6. In-role performance	3.97	.51	.20*	.04	.44**	.67**	.53**	1		
7. Likable	4.02	.58	.13	.02	.25**	.25*	.25**	.50**	1	
8. Participant age	24.80	5.12	-.10	-.08	-.21*	-.06	-.01	-.09	-.03	1

*Correlation is significant at p <.05 (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at p <.01 (2-tailed).

5.2 Hypotheses Tests

Prior to testing the hypotheses, we performed a Levene's test for homogeneity of variance for each of the dependent variables. The test statistics were not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Visual inspection of the descriptive variances (see Table 3) confirms this finding. Thus, a pooled error term was employed for all the tests reported below.

In Hypothesis 1, we predicted that the female engaging in civic virtue will (a) be perceived as more competent, (b) receive higher overall performance ratings, and (c) be more likely to be promoted, than the male engaging in civic virtue, and the male and female engaging in no OCB. We performed three one-tailed planned comparisons contrasting the female instructor civic virtue group to the other three groups. The results are statistically significant for competence ($t(118) = 1.738$, $p = .043$, $\eta^2 = .02$), overall performance ($t(119) = 2.426$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2 = .05$), and promotion ($t(120) = 2.432$, $p = .008$, $\eta^2 = .05$). Examination of the means reported in Table 1 indicates that the female instructor civic virtue group has the highest mean competence, overall performance, and promotion ratings. These findings support Hypothesis 1.

Table 3 Descriptive Variances

		OCB Condition	
Variable	**Instructor Gender**	**Control**	**Civic Virtue**
Job Performance	Male Instructor	.38	.15
	Female Instructor	.29	.20
Overall Job Performance	Male Instructor	.55	.49
	Female Instructor	.58	.31
Competence	Male Instructor	.53	.38
	Female Instructor	.50	.26
Promote	Male Instructor	.61	.45
	Female Instructor	.76	.44
Likable	Male Instructor	.34	.27
	Female Instructor	.40	.37

Hypothesis 2 predicts a serial mediation where the civic virtue contrast influences competence ratings, which in turn predict overall performance ratings, and overall performance ratings influence recommendations for promotion. We tested this serial mediation model using the Process macro for SPSS (version 3.0; Hayes, 2018). We entered the conditional relationship between gender and civic virtue as the independent variable, competence as the first mediator, overall performance as the second mediator, and promotion recommendations as the final outcome variable. The results of the analysis are reported in Table 4.

As indicated in Table 4 and Figure 2, the results of the serial mediation analysis support our model. There is no significant direct effect of the conditional relationship between gender and civic virtue on promotion ratings, c' = .024, $t(117)$ = .804, p = .423. There are two significant indirect effects. The first, supporting hypothesis 2, is the indirect effect of the conditional relationship on promotion ratings through the serial mediators of competence and overall performance, $a_1b_1c_1$ = .0202. For this indirect effect, the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, based on 10,000 bootstrap samples, is above zero (.0018 to .0407; see Hayes, 2018).

Competence ratings also have a direct effect on promote ratings as can be seen from the significant indirect effect of civic virtue on promote ratings through competence, c_2 = .0173. The bootstrap confidence interval for this indirect effect is above zero (.0029 to .0436). The total indirect effect is .0690 and its bootstrap confidence interval is also above zero (.0231 to .1195).

Figure 2 Statistical Model

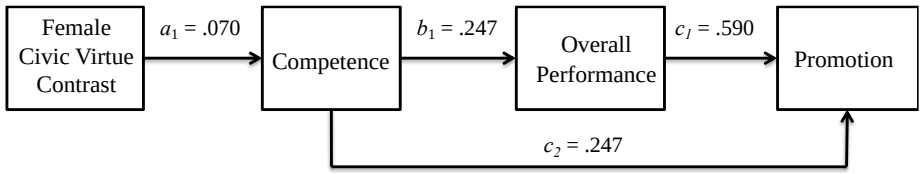


Table 4 Direct and Indirect Effects Model Coefficients for Serial Multiple Mediator Model Depicted in Figure 2

	Consequent														
	Competence (M_1)					Overall Performance (M_2)					Promote (Y)				
Antecedent	Coeff.	*SE*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI	Coeff.	*SE*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI	Coeff.	*SE*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI
Contrast (X)	.070	.03	.041	.003	.137	.053	.03	.106	-.012	.118	.024	.03	.423	-.035	.083
Comp. (M_1)	--	--	--	--	--	.247	.09	.006	.072	.423	.247	.09	.006	.072	.423
Overall (M_2)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.590	.08	<.001	.425	.755
Constant	4.257	.06	<.001	4.141	4.373	1.976	.38	<.001	1.232	2.720	.172	.38	.648	-.574	.918
	R^2 = .035 $F(1,119) = 4.266$, $p = .041$					R^2 = .248 $F(2,118) = 19.439$, $p < .001$					R^2 = .478 $F(3,117) = 35.673$, $p < .001$				

Note. Contrast = Female civic virtue contrast, Comp. = Competence, Overall = Overall performance.
X = independent variable, Y = dependent variable, M_1 = mediator 1, M_2 = mediator 2
LLCI = lower level of confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of confidence interval; Level of confidence = .95

5.3 Additional Analyses

To confirm that the female instructor in the civic virtue condition was not rated higher on in-role performance than the other conditions, we performed a planned comparison with the mean of the five in-role performance items as the dependant variable. The result is not significant ($p > .05$).

Focusing on the female instructor engaging in OCB, we examined whether the performance of civic virtue accounted for incremental variance in overall performance ratings beyond that accounted for by in-role performance. We formed two groups with the participants of the female instructor civic virtue condition in one group and the participants of the other three conditions in another group. We then performed a regression analysis with in-role performance and group as predictors of overall performance. The result is statistically significant. Both in-role performance ($t(118) = 9.958$, $p. = .000$, $\Delta r^2 = .46$) and group ($t(118) = 2.023$, $p = .023$, $\Delta r^2 = .02$) account for incremental variance in overall performance ratings.

6. Discussion

We found that the female instructor performing civic virtue, a gender-incongruent OCB, received higher competence, overall performance, and promotion ratings than the male instructor performing civic virtue and the male and female instructor performing no OCB. This was found despite no difference in likability or in-role performance ratings across conditions. Further, the female instructor's civic virtue performance accounted for unique variance in her overall performance ratings beyond that accounted for by her in-role performance. We argue that the male-typed civic virtue behaviour was unexpected of the female instructor and, according to social cognitive theories of performance appraisal (Feldman, 1981), more likely to be noticed, encoded, and later recalled during evaluation than when performed by the male instructor.

We believe this study makes a unique contribution to both the management and gender issues literatures as little work has addressed how the gender-type of an OCB may moderate its relationship with positive outcomes for the performer. This is also the first study to examine the impact of gender-typed OCB performance on perceptions of competence and suggests another mechanism through which OCB influences performance evaluations other than liking, as has been previously investigated in the literature (Johnson et al., 2002). Finally, research on gender stereotypes and performance appraisal generally focuses on resulting bias and discrimination against women in the workplace. For example, women successful in male-typed jobs can be viewed as unlikable and interpersonally hostile, making them less likely to be promoted than their male counterparts (Heilman et al., 2004). Our findings

elucidate a context within which gender stereotypes may actually advantage female employees.

Perhaps the most significant limitation of our findings is inherent in the study design. In the experiment, participants formed judgments based on more limited information than raters would have in the field. When cognitive processing demands are higher, we tend to recall more stereotype-consistent information than inconsistent information. The converse is true when processing demands are low: more stereotype-inconsistent information is recalled than stereotype-consistent information (Dijksterhuis & Van Knippenberg, 1995). In an actual performance appraisal context, cognitive processing demands may be higher due to the number of employees to be evaluated, the amount of information available about each employee, and time demands, leading to greater reliance on stereotypes when forming judgments.

Further, the entire rating process was conducted in a restricted timeframe. That is, participants formed judgments of the professors' performance almost immediately after observing their performance. In reality, judgments about a target's performance are formed based partially on current information and partially on memory (Feldman, 1981). In such a situation, gender-stereotype inconsistent information may be ignored. In fact, stereotype activation can cause the formation of memories of stereotype-consistent behaviours to be recalled even if they were not actually observed (Feldman, 1981). This may result in a female employee's civic virtue behaviour being ignored during performance evaluation. Field studies are necessary to determine whether our findings can be generalized to performance appraisal in the field as well as to other occupations and workplaces.

Another limitation of our study is the employment of promotability perceptions as the sole outcome of the performance appraisal process. This is a limitation for several reasons. Within the post-secondary context, performance appraisal ratings would also affect tenure decisions and students would not make promotions decisions regarding faculty. In other employment contexts, performance appraisals also influence the distribution of pay raises and bonuses. Finally, factors other than job performance are likely to determine whether an individual is promoted, such as likability, politics, or seniority.

The task-like wording of the item used to measure overall performance may account for the small effect sizes. An item that elicited a judgment of overall performance rather than teaching performance may have better captured participants' general impression of the instructor and resulted in larger effect sizes. That being said, the fact that we found the relationship with such a restrictively worded overall performance item suggests that the relationship may be more robust, and our test was conservative. The small effect sizes may also be explained by the high in-role performance ratings of the instructors that left little room for civic virtue to enhance ratings.

The use of single-item measures for the dependent measures is another potential limitation. However, some researchers argue that the concern over single-item measures is overstated (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007) and that single-item scales perform sufficiently well when the underlying construct is homogenous (Loo, 2002). We believe that the use of single-item measures was conducive to capturing global, overall impressions of competence, performance, and suitability for promotion.

Finally, the decision to direct the student participants to rate the instructors from a management perspective may have sacrificed some ecological validity. However, it was still likely a more natural research context than having participants experienced in performance appraisal rate university instructors. Any source of performance appraisal data is likely to have knowledge of only a subset of the behaviours constituting performance, particularly subordinates and customers. The university instructors were appraised only on the teaching dimension of performance, and not research or service, and university and college students are arguably the best source of evaluation of teaching.

It is hoped that this study will aid in clarifying the gendered nature of OCB and gender effects in the evaluation of its performance. The results of our investigation of civic virtue suggest that the effects of OCB on performance evaluations and reward allocation decisions may depend on both employee gender and the gender-type of the OCB. Given the significant implications of these decisions for career success, field studies are needed to further elucidate the relationships between OCB, performance appraisals, and gender stereotypes.

Author Contributions
All authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

NOTES

1. The lecture script and file summaries are available from the corresponding author upon request.

2. Because participant gender may account for variance in ratings or interact with the independent variable in predicting the dependent variables, we ran exploratory analyses for all reported hypothesis tests including participant gender. Neither the main effects nor interactions are statistically significant. Thus, participant gender is not included as a factor in the analyses.

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Parental Engagement with Social Media Platforms: Digital Mothering, Children's Online Privacy, and the Sense of Disempowerment in the Technology-Integrated Society

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ABSTRACT. Empirical evidence on parental engagement with social media platforms has been scarcely documented in the literature. Using and replicating data from CBBC Newsround, ComRes, C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, EZShield, Nominet, Ofcom, Statista, and Sukk and Soo (2018), we performed analyses and made estimates regarding parents' sharenting practices, frequency with which parents upload photos or videos of their children to the Internet, opinions on privacy settings and sharing personal photos/videos (%, adults), children's awareness of technical mediation, and how children feel about having their pictures posted online (%). Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

Keywords: sharenting; online privacy; social media; disempowerment; technology

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1. Introduction

Taking into account the cutting-edge technology-integrated setting, parents can immediately get backing from a significant audience, e.g. by sharenting (typically using social network sites to distribute information concerning one's child). (Fox and Hoy, 2019) Youngsters are frequently irritated with their parents' sharenting routines, which result in privacy boundary conflict between the former and the latter. (Lipu and Siibak, 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Parents configure the online personality of their young adolescents by distributing pictures and narratives about them, and thus sharenting may bring about annoyance among children. (Ouvrein and Verswijvel, 2019) Parents of pre-teens of all ages employ social media for diverse relevant topics associated with child health without clarifying them with their physician. (Bryan et al., 2019) Young adolescents believe that parents share posts about them on social media because of comforting advice, social and impression management, and data-recording reasons. (Verswijvel et al., 2019) Sharenting should be an essential component of child raising rhetoric and legal analysis of the antagonism between juveniles' rights and parental rights, encompassing a moral responsibility to proceed with judicious tact and with thorough concern for the pre-teens' safety and protection. (Steinberg, 2017)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

Using and replicating data from CBBC Newsround, ComRes, C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, EZShield, Nominet, Ofcom, Statista, and Sukk and Soo (2018), we performed analyses and made estimates regarding parents' sharenting practices, frequency with which parents upload photos or videos of their children to the Internet, opinions on privacy settings and sharing personal photos/videos (%, adults), children's awareness of technical mediation, and how children feel about having their pictures posted online %. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

4. Results and Discussion

Social media and distributing images and stories about children are an integral constituent of current childcare. (Sivak and Smirnov, 2019) Parents who regulate their children's non-public information and agree to its online sharing do not seriously protect the latter's data privacy. (Gligorijević, 2019) Interpersonal privacy management is no so relevant when managing barriers with peers than when organizing sexual materials and handling personal information disseminated by parents. (De Wolf, 2019) (Tables 1–8)

Table 1 Children's awareness of technical mediation

	Children who are aware of such technology usage (%)	Parents who use such technology (%)
Technology to track child location (GPS)	11	18
A service or contract that limits the time children spend on the Internet	10	14
Parental controls or other means of keeping track of websites or apps	9	17
Parental controls or other means of blocking/filtering some types of website	7	18

Sources: Sukk and Soo (2018); our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 2 Does sharenting help during the parenting process?

59%	Of parents share information about their children's accomplishments online.
64%	Of mothers are sharing their parenting experiences online. Common sharenting topics on social media include: putting kids to bed (22%), nutrition/eating tips (34%), discipline (14%), daycare/pre-school (11%), and behavior problems (9%).
74%	Of parents say social media helps them learn what not to do.
62%	Of parents say social media helps them get advice from other, more experienced parents.
65%	Of parents are worried about someone finding out private information about their children online.
71%	Of parents are worried about someone sharing photos of their child.
77%	Of parents on social media know of another parent who has shared too much information about a child online.
57%	Of parents on social media know of another parent who offered personal information that could identify a child's location online.
21%	Of parents on social media know of another parent who has shared inappropriate photos of a child online.
49%	gave embarrassing information about a child.

Sources: EZShield; C.S. Mott Children's Hospital; our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 3 Frequency with which parents upload photos or videos of their children to the Internet (%)

Few times a day	3
Every day or almost every day	4
2–3 times a week	7
Once a week	10
2–3 times a month	28
Once a month	23
Once in a few months	21
Once a year or less often	3
I don't know	1

Sources: Statista; our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 4 How children feel about having their pictures posted online

34%	feel embarrassed, anxious or worried when their parents post pictures of them.
39%	feel sad, anxious or nervous when a picture of them they did not like was shared on social media.
22%	are not affected if someone posted a photo of them online that they weren't happy with.

Sources: ComRes; CBBC Newsround; our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 5 Opinions on privacy settings and sharing personal photos/videos (%, adults)

I am confident in my privacy settings.	77
Personal photos and videos should be shared only with friends.	75
I don't mind sharing personal photos and videos with everyone.	8
It is OK to share a photo/video of other people without their permission.	6

Sources: Ofcom; our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 6 Online habits regarding the sharing of images

44%	prefer to keep their family photos and videos away from social media for reasons of privacy.
39%	of parents say they share photos of their children.
47%	said their children are happy for them to do so.
87%	said they only share things their children would be happy with.

Sources: Ofcom; our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 7 Children's digital rights

Have you ever shared photos of your children on social media?	Yes, 54%
Have you ever stopped to think and/or ask how they would feel about it?	Yes, 17%
Have you ever thought about where these photos might end up?	Yes, 14%

Sources: Nominet; our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 8 Parents' sharenting practices (%)

I did it to keep in touch with family and friends.	34
My child asked me to post the photos/videos online.	7
My child asked me to remove something I posted about them online.	27
I regretted something I shared about my child/children online.	11
I asked my child if it was OK in advance.	7
I never ask my child in advance if it is ok to post photos or videos of him or her.	26
I didn't show my child's face clearly in photos.	4
I don't see anything much to worry about when sharing the photos of my child online.	7
None of these.	1

Sources: Sukk and Soo (2018); our survey among 4,400 individuals conducted May 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Social media offers a realm for parents to disclose experiences and get backing as regards child-rearing. (Lazard et al., 2019) Everyday mothers tend to comply with the paradigm set by the mumpreneur bloggers, distributing pictures and narratives associated with their young children. (Archer, 2019) Children represent the first generation of datafied individuals even before they are brought into this world, being compelled into digitally being involved in society (Burwell et al., 2018; Parks and Barta, 2018; Popescu, 2018; Reshe, 2017; Steinberg, 2017) via the information traces generated, gathered, and processed without their acceptance or supervision. (Barassi, 2019)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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All authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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Is Sexting a Deviant Behavior? Taking and Sharing Nudes, Bodily Self-Expression, and Gendered Social Meanings

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ABSTRACT. This article presents an empirical study carried out to evaluate and analyze sexting as a possible deviant behavior. Building my argument by drawing on data collected from DrEd, MediaSmarts, Netsafe, Our Watch, Plan International Australia, Relationships Australia, and YouGovOmnibus, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding level of agreement with statements about the sharing of nudes (%). Data collected from 4,200 respondents are tested against the research model by using structural equation modeling.

Keywords: sexting; deviant behavior; bodily self-expression; gender; social meaning

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1. Introduction

Due to the expansion of digital technology (Bohuslava et al., 2018; Krizanova et al., 2019; Lăzăroiu et al., 2017; Nica, 2017; Nordberg, 2017), teen sexting takes place quite often, constituting a growing movement, in consonance with the prevalence of smartphone ownership in youngsters. (Strasburger et al., 2019) Participating sexting consolidates the likelihood of persevering in getting involved in it. (Casas et al., 2019) Getting offensive sexts, or sexting under threatening, is related to significant depression, restlessness, stress indications, and decreased self-esteem, generating psychological distress. (Klettke et al., 2019) Engaging in sexting progresses constantly from pubescence into emerging adulthood. (Choi et al., 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Sexting represents a new manner of exploring sexuality among teenagers that can be related to coercive behaviors. (Ojeda et al., 2019) Youth sexting constitutes a gendered practice in which male adolescents can pursue social capital via sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit material, whereas young women are easily affected by social shaming and ill-treatment. Denouncing gendered harm necessitates a re-validation of feminine sexuality and bodily features away from representations of risk and humiliation. (Setty, 2019) Positive predictors of sext sharing without permission encompass sexual activity and coming into possession of distributed sexts, in addition to positive subjective principles and positions. (Clancy et al., 2019)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

Building my argument by drawing on data collected from DrEd, MediaSmarts, Netsafe, Our Watch, Plan International Australia, Relationships Australia, and YouGovOmnibus, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding level of agreement with statements regarding the sharing of nudes (%). Data collected from 4,200 respondents are tested against the research model by using structural equation modeling.

4. Results and Discussion

Insights of social media utilities, public consequences and contiguous cultural values to sexting are essential sources of knowledge employed interpret sexting as misbehavior. (De Ridder, 2019) For female teenagers, self-objectification is positively related to appreciative positions towards sexting, which additionally predicts two kinds of reasons to participate in sexting, i.e. when there is confidence in the sexting partner and when it is brought about by specific cues. For male teenagers, integration of media values is positively related to sexting attitudes. (Speno and Aubrey, 2019) (Tables 1–9)

Table 1 Parental involvement (Yes, %)

Are there rules in your home about treating people with respect?	81
Are there rules in your home about sexting?	32
Have you ever had a discussion with your parent(s) or guardian(s) about sending sexts?	31
Have you ever had a discussion with your parent(s) or guardian(s) about whether it is right or wrong to share a sext that was sent to you without asking permission from the person in it?	26

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 2 Which, if any, of the following is your single biggest social media regret? (%)

I didn't properly consider a response and I sounded foolish	39
I made a comment in the heat of the moment and offended a friend	19
I made a comment in the heat of the moment and I may have offended many people	21
I sent sexting messages and I am fearful that they may be shared	7
I shared pictures or messages that may affect my relationship with my family or partner	8
I shared pictures and messages that may affect my reputation at work	6

Sources: YouGovOmnibus; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 3 Does sexting more often make sex better? (%)

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
Daily	2	7	14	22	57
Weekly	3	8	17	34	38
A few times a month	4	11	20	30	35
Once a month	4	13	22	29	32
A few times a year	6	15	24	26	29
Once a year	7	16	26	26	25
A few times in my life	8	18	28	30	16

Sources: DrEd; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 4 Having solicited sexts shared (%)

	Never sent	Don't know	No	Yes
Has a person that you have sent a sext to ever forwarded it to someone without your consent?	64	14	19	3
Has a person that you have sent a sext to ever shown it to someone without your consent?	64	12	16	8
Has a person that you have sent a sext to ever posted it without your consent in an online or offline public space, such as a social network or video-sharing site?	64	7	21	8

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 5 Level of agreement with statements regarding the sharing of nudes (%)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
This is a good way to explore things about yourself as you grow up	21	39	20	9	1
It is ok to keep nudes that have been sent to you long after you received them	31	41	21	6	1
Information and advice for young people tackles these issues well	4	18	41	32	5
Adults overreact about this sort of thing	15	38	20	21	6
People should be punished for threatening to share images	1	2	8	50	39
It's not a problem as everyone does it	33	47	10	8	2
There's a lot of pressure to send nude or nearly nude images/videos	14	30	29	21	6

Sources: Netsafe; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 6 Receiving sexts (Yes, %)

Have you ever received a third-party sext (one you received from someone other than the original sender)?	40
Have you ever received an unsolicited sext (one you had not asked the recipient for)?	47
Have you ever received a solicited sext (one you had asked the sender for)?	38
Have you ever received a sext of any kind?	68

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 7 It's the original sender's fault if a sext gets shared around. They shouldn't send sexts if they don't understand the risks. (%)

Strongly disagree	14
Disagree	16
Undecided	27
Agree	29
Strongly agree	14

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 8 Girls are often pressured to take sexy photos of themselves and share them. (%)

Strongly agree	14
Agree	41
Neither agree, nor disagree	27
Disagree	12
Strongly disagree	5
Don't know	1

Sources: Plan International Australia; Our Watch; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 9 Sexts received by number of senders (%)

	Men	Women
No sexts received in last 3 years	11	7
Yes, from more than 5 people	4	7
Yes, from 2 to 5 people	62	54
Yes, from 1 person	23	32

Sources: Relationships Australia; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Sexting is taking place among a large amount of teenagers. (Patchin and Hinduja, 2019), and can be related to psychological distress. (Dodaj et al., 2019) Cyberbullying and sexual demanding are both associated with escalated involvement in sexting over time. (Gámez-Guadix and Mateos-Pérez, 2019) Sexting within the marital relationship is likely not to optimize conjugal contentment. (Jeanfreau et al., 2019)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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Is Sharing Nude Content a Problematic Behavior? Self-Made Sexually Explicit Pictures, Gendered Risks of Harm, and Online Victimization

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ABSTRACT. This article reviews and advances existing literature concerning the relationship between self-made sexually explicit pictures, gendered risks of harm, and online victimization. Using and replicating data from DrEd, MediaSmarts, Our Watch, Plan International Australia, Relationships Australia, Statista, Strohmaier et al. (2014), and Survata, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding perceived frequency of sharing sexts by peers and close friends (%), sexting by relationship status (yes, %), and the most common online sexual risks experienced by U.S. Internet users (%). Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

Keywords: nude content; problematic behavior; self-made sexually explicit picture

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1. Introduction

Both sexting pressure and sexual intimidation are considerably and separately associated with adverse mental health symptoms, sexual issues, and attachment abnormality. (Ross et al., 2019) Teenagers may participate in sexting as a social routine, unrelated to annoyance or image-based abuse. (Roberts and Ravn, 2019) Cybergossip and eagerness for being admired represent relevant components for sexting in young women. (Casas et al., 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

A routine assimilated by numerous teenagers is that of sexting and the dissemination of incomplete or fully nude pictures (selfies) that are not inevitably preserved within private spaces, being at risk of being distributed publicly (Ionescu, 2018; Kmecova, 2018; Lăzăroiu, 2018; Nica et al., 2014; Žurga, 2017), with important psychosocial repercussions for adolescents involved. (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2019) Sexting is related to incidences of immoderate sexual behavior. (Strasburger et al., 2019) Affective components inherent in sexting behaviors may be appropriate in grasping what prolongs and prevents sexting. (Howard et al., 2019)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

Using and replicating data from DrEd, MediaSmarts, Our Watch, Plan International Australia, Relationships Australia, Statista, Strohmaier et al. (2014), and Survata, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding perceived frequency of sharing sexts by peers and close friends (%), sexting by relationship status (yes, %), and the most common online sexual risks experienced by U.S. Internet users (%). Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

4. Results and Discussion

Sexting represents a manner of exhibiting sexuality associated with romantic interaction. (Yépez-Tito et al., 2019) and may be employed by grownups in an endeavor to sexually engage with children. (Muncaster and Ohlsson, 2019) Sexting may generate profound repercussions entailing adolescents with sexually explicit material that can be shared publicly and then exploited as a starting point for ill-treatment. (Barrense-Dias et al., 2019) Teenagers' participation in online sexual behaviors is shaped by their age-linked fervor to explore, construe, and put forward their own sexual identity. (Marengo et al., 2019) (Tables 1–12)

Table 1 Who did you send sexual pictures of yourself to? (%)

Boyfriend/Girlfriend	61
Female friend	29
Male friend	24
Person you are in love with	22
Person you don't know (well)	4
Group of friends	5

Sources: Statista; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 2 Why did you sext? (%)

Mutual interest between exclusive romantic partners	47
Impress/Flirt with someone I liked	39
Felt compelled to respond to a sext I received	12
Peer pressure	2

Sources: Strohmaier et al. (2014); my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 3 Parts of the body exposed in people's sext photos (%, by gender)

	Men	Women
Face	19	14
Breasts/Chest	26	54
Genitals	31	9
Butt	8	17
Fully nude	16	6

Sources: DrEd; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 4 Have you ever sexted? (%)

	Single	Committed	Married
Never	52	44	64
Yes, I have sent sexts	8	12	7
Yes, I have received sexts	9	10	3
Yes, I have received and sent sexts	31	34	26

Sources: Survata; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 5 Sext senders' sharing experiences vs. sext sharers' sharing behaviors (%)

	Have you had a sext shared?	Have you shared a sext you received?
Solicited, electronic	16	26
Solicited, in person	18	23
Solicited, public	11	12
Unsolicited, electronic	20	16
Unsolicited, in person	16	16
Unsolicited, public	19	7

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 6 Girls feel comfortable reporting incidents of abusive online behavior (%)

Strongly agree	4
Agree	14
Neither agree, nor disagree	17
Disagree	54
Strongly disagree	8
Don't know	3

Sources: Plan International Australia; Our Watch; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 7 Having unsolicited sexts shared (%)

	Don't know	No	Yes
Has a person that you have sent a sext to ever posted it without your consent in an online or offline public space, such as a social network or video-sharing site?	19	50	41
Has a person that you have sent a sext to ever shown it to someone without your consent?	22	35	43
Has a person that you have sent a sext to ever forwarded it to someone without your consent?	18	60	42

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 8 Perceived frequency of sharing sexts by peers and close friends (%)

	All/Nearly all	Most	Half	Some	A small#	None/Never
Number of people your age who share sexts	3	11	14	37	31	4
Number of close friends who have shared a sext of someone	3	7	11	14	23	42

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 9 Girls often receive uninvited or unwanted indecent or sexually explicit material (%)

Strongly agree	23
Agree	40
Neither agree, nor disagree	26
Disagree	7
Strongly disagree	2
Don't know	2

Sources: Plan International Australia; Our Watch; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 10 Number of U.S. states with state sexting laws as of October 2019 (by policy)

Sexting law	25
Includes sexting	9
Addresses under 18 sending	24
Addresses under 18 receiving	22
Penalty: diversion	12
Penalty: informal	12
Penalty: misdemeanour	16
Penalty: felony	6
Revenge porn law	42

Source: Statista.

Table 11 Sexting by relationship status (Yes, %)

Other	2
Married	14
Long-term relationship	22
Casual/Dating relationship	19
Just started seeing someone	17
Not in a relationship	26

Sources: Relationships Australia; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 12 The most common online sexual risks experienced by U.S. Internet users (%)

Unwanted sexting (received)	27
Sexual solicitation	18
Unwanted sexting (sent)	16
Sextortion	4
Revenge porn	2

Sources: Statista; my survey among 4,600 individuals conducted May 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Sexting is a kind of gender practice with gendered risk of repercussions that can be demoralizing and stressful for both men and women. (Ricciardelli and Adorjan, 2019) Teenagers who send sexually explicit material are more predisposed to disclose sexual activity than young people who do not. (Handschuh et al., 2019) Sexual minority teens tend to send, receive, and demand self-made sexually explicit images via digital media. (Ouytsel et al., 2019)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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Author Contributions

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and approved it for publication.

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Gendered Power Relations and Inequalities in Youth Sexting Culture: Objectification of Feminine Sexuality, Self-Discovery and Intimacy, and Social Shaming

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ABSTRACT. Based on an in-depth survey of the literature, the purpose of the paper is to better understand the relationship between objectification of feminine sexuality, self-discovery and intimacy, and social shaming. Using and replicating data from MediaSmarts, Miami University, Netsafe, Our Watch, Pew Research Center, Plan International Australia, Relationships Australia, Strohmaier et al. (2014), and Statista, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding personal experiences with different behaviors related to the sharing nudes in the past 12 months (yes, %), main reasons for sexting by gender (%), and share of 15–24 year olds who posted sex photos or videos online (by gender and age). Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

Keywords: sexting; inequality; self-discovery; objectification; intimacy; social shaming

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1. Introduction

Sexting represents the sharing of sexually explicit self-made images through technological devices. (Shafer, 2019) Sexting entails the embodiment of a person's sexuality before the eyes of other people and consequently bolsters objectification, while the reality of the anatomy in sexting smooths the path of the exploration of sexual subjectivity. (Liong and Cheng, 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Sexting behavior is recurring in teens and co-develops with genital contact behavior throughout uneven routes of sexual advancement. (Steinberg et al., 2019) Sexting with a partner can be predicted by age and significant adaptability, whereas forwarding of sexts without permission can be positively predicted by involvement. (Bianchi et al., 2019) Sexting teenagers may be exposed to (cyber)bullying/harassment. (Ouytsel et al., 2019a) For teenagers, sexting is separately related to unfair and harmful sexual relationships, e.g. sexual abuse and intimate partner violence. (Titchen et al., 2019) Regularization and inclination to sext have a relevant predictive capacity among male teenagers. (Casas et al., 2019)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

Using and replicating data from MediaSmarts, Miami University, Netsafe, Our Watch, Pew Research Center, Plan International Australia, Relationships Australia, Strohmaier et al. (2014), and Statista, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding personal experiences with different behaviors related to the sharing nudes in the past 12 months (yes, %), main reasons for sexting by gender (%), and share of 15–24 year olds who posted sex photos or videos online (by gender and age). Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

4. Results and Discussion

Sending sexts may symbolize a manner to convey feelings among teenagers who necessitate sexual and physical closeness within their romantic relationships. (Ouytsel et al., 2019b) The body is essential in the fashioning and carrying out of having value (Hayes and Jandrić, 2017; Jouët, 2018; Lăzăroiu et al., 2018; Leskaj, 2017; Mircică, 2017) and of representing a risk when participating in sexting (Ravn et al., 2019), the latter behavior having adverse outcomes for teenagers' well-being by intensifying the risk of being subject to both cyberbullying abuse and objectionable online sexual solicitations. (Marengo et al., 2019) Teenage sexting is considerably related to with sexual activity, numerous sexual partners, absence of contraception use, offending behavior, internalizing issues, and substance utilization. (Mori et al., 2019) Rationales for sexting involvement are possibly context specific in post-pubescence. Sexting beyond a romantic relationship predicts diminished perceived risk and increased perceived advantage of getting involved in concrete risky sexual behaviors. (Brodie et al., 2019) (Tables 1–11)

Table 1 Should sexting be prosecuted? (%)

Sexting by minors should be a prosecutable offense	39
Sexting should not be a prosecutable offense	34
Prosecution should depend on certain factors	27

Sources: Strohmaier et al. (2014); my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 2 Personal experiences with different behaviors related to the sharing nudes in the past 12 months (Yes, %)

Asked someone for nude or nearly nude images or videos of them	4
Been asked for nude or nearly nude images or videos of someone else	5
Been asked for nude or nearly nude images or videos of yourself	15
Shown from your device any nude or nearly nude images or videos to someone else	6
Shared online any nude or nearly nude images or videos of someone else	4
Sent any nude or nearly nude images or videos of yourself	4
Received nude or nearly nude images or videos you did not ask for	14

Sources: Netsafe; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 3 Who sends and receives sexts?

76%	of students surveyed said it's acceptable to sext while in a relationship.
27%	found it acceptable to sext while not in a relationship.
84%	did not know if a sext they sent had been forwarded.
52%	sent or know someone who sent a sext beyond its intended recipient.

Sources: Miami University; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 4 Having sexts shared (%, sext senders only)

	I have sent an unsolicited sext	I have sent a solicited sext
Someone has electronically forwarded without my consent a sext I sent them.	59	41
Someone has shown someone else without my consent a sext I sent them.	61	39
Someone has posted to a public space without my consent a sext I sent them.	54	46

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 5 It is acceptable for a boyfriend to ask you to share photos of yourself naked (%)

Strongly agree	1
Agree	5
Neither agree, nor disagree	12
Disagree	28
Strongly disagree	52
Don't know	2

Sources: Plan International Australia; Our Watch; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 6 Have shared a sext (%)

Third-party, public	9
Third-party, in person	12
Third-party, electronic	11
Unsolicited, public	8
Unsolicited, in person	14
Unsolicited, electronic	12
Solicited, public	6
Solicited, in person	14
Solicited, electronic	10

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 7 How likely would you be to share a sext if… (%)

	Unlikely/Very unlikely	Likely/Very likely
the person in it was a close friend?	92	8
the person in it was a student at your school?	88	12
the person in it was a stranger?	86	14

Sources: MediaSmarts; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 8 Main reasons for sexting by gender (%)

	Men	Women
To feel sexy or confident	14	19
I was pressured to send it	1	8
To get or keep a person's attention	57	40
As a sexy present	12	17
Because I received one	11	7
To be fun/flirty	7	9

Sources: Relationships Australia; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 9 Share of 15–24 year olds who posted sex photos or videos online (by gender and age)

	Men 15–17 years old	Men 18–24 years old	Women 15–17 years old	Women 18–24 years old
Themselves naked	4	12	4	3
Their partners naked	2	9	3	2
Games with their partners	1	5	2	1

Sources: Statista; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 10 Use of smartphone for sexting (by age, %)

	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+
Have ever received sexts	46	37	17	6	3	1
Have ever sent sexts	28	17	6	3	1	1
Have ever forwarded sexts	7	11	3	1	1	1

Sources: Pew Research Center; Statista; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 11 Teenagers who have filmed, photographed, shown or broadcast their games or sex with their boyfriend/girlfriend (%)

Filmed or photographed your games or sex with your boyfriend/girlfriend	14
Shown to relatives/friends (without distributing them) photos or videos of your games or sex with your boyfriend/girlfriend	6
Posted online photos or videos of your games or sex with your boyfriend/girlfriend	2

Sources: Statista; my survey among 4,400 individuals conducted June 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Sexting is a risk-informed practice that is established in the constitution of gender. (Ricciardelli and Adorjan, 2019) Male teenagers are generally at irrelevant risk of harm and can derive value from sexting, as opposed to female adolescents. Comprehending male teenagers' routine of youth sexting culture concerns grasping how patterns of heterosexual masculinity permeate and influence adolescents' experiences and perceptions. (Setty, 2019)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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Initiating Sexual Behaviors with Online Dating Partners: Stereotypical Gender Norms, Intimate Personal Data, and Romantic Compatibility

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ABSTRACT. Despite the relevance of initiating sexual behaviors with online dating partners, only limited research has been conducted on this topic. Using and replicating data from Pew Research Center, we performed analyses and made estimates regarding % of U.S. adults in each group who have used online dating sites, % of teens with current or prior romantic experience who have broken up with someone or been broken up with in certain ways, and % of boys/girls who would usually take a particular approach to ask someone out on a date. The results of a study based on data collected from 4,200 respondents provide support for our research model. Using the structural equation modeling and employing the probability sampling technique, we gathered and analyzed data through a self-administrated questionnaire.

Keywords: sexual behavior; online dating partner; intimate personal data; intimacy

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1. Introduction

Dating apps have similar characteristics with social and communication ones for carrying through interaction between their users to disseminate personal data and to network. (Cahyani et al., 2019) Displaying personal relations on mobile phone-based dating and hook-up apps substitutes the craving for love and amorous entanglement to a realm surpassing such online platforms. (Krüger and Spilde, 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Dating apps determine the most likely marital status of the user and peer group. (Atkinson et al., 2018) Men are generally not hard to please on online dating platforms. (Sevi et al., 2018) Distress to comply with heterosexual social standards and the configuration of the available dating pool are instrumental in bisexuals' choice to be romantically linked with the opposite sex. (Wu et al., 2019) Gay dating apps enable users to falsely reinforce their perceived positive self-image. (Zervoulis et al., 2019) Experiencing hostile behaviors (Burwell et al., 2018; Chijioke et al., 2018; Krizanova et al., 2019; Lăzăroiu et al., 2017; Popescu, 2018) while online dating represents an unambiguous likelihood. (Duncan and March, 2019)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

Using and replicating data from Pew Research Center, we performed analyses and made estimates regarding % of U.S. adults in each group who have used online dating sites, % of teens with current or prior romantic experience who have broken up with someone or been broken up with in certain ways, and % of boys/girls who would usually take a particular approach to ask someone out on a date. The results of a study based on data collected from 4,200 respondents provide support for our research model. Using the structural equation modeling and employing the probability sampling technique, we gathered and analyzed data through a self-administrated questionnaire.

4. Results and Discussion

Dating apps are frequently employed to meet romantic and sexual partners, constituting an increasingly fashionable kind of advanced media that supplies a digital platform where users can assess other individuals with regard to numerous characteristics (e.g. physical appearance). (Tran et al., 2019) People who meet their romantic partner on a mobile phone-based dating and hook-up app tend to persist in their pursuit for a romantic entanglement, without regard to already being in a steady relationship. (Alexopoulos et al., 2020) Gay dating apps are gradually substituting gay bars and saunas as a manner to hang around with and find romantic and sexual partners. (Dubov et al., 2018) (Tables 1–7)

Table 1 % of U.S. adults in each group who have used online dating sites (%)

Men	21
Women	18
Race/Ethnicity	
White, Non-Hispanic	21
Black, Non-Hispanic	17
Hispanic	11
Age	
18–24	14
25–34	20
35–44	16
45–54	12
55–64	6
65+	2
Education attainment	
No high school diploma	7
High school grad	11
Some college	21
College+	17
Household income (year)	
Less than $30,000	19
$30,000–$49,999	16
$50,000–$74,999	23
$75,000+	12
Urbanity	
Urban	21
Suburban	17
Rural	12

Sources: Pew Research Center; our survey among 4,200 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 2 Among Internet users or cell owners who are single and looking or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less, the % who have…

	Broken up with someone by email, text, or online message	Had someone break up with you by email, text, or online message
Men	19	20
Women	21	18
Age		
18–29	24	29
30–49	18	11
50–64	5	7

Sources: Pew Research Center; our survey among 4,200 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 3 Internet users in each group who have done the following… (%)

	Search for info online about someone you dated in the past	Flirt with someone online
Single and looking	43	56
Single, not looking	36	44
Married/partnered 10 yrs or less	28	29
Married/partnered >10 yrs	19	8

Sources: Pew Research Center; our survey among 4,200 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 4 % of teens with current or prior romantic experience who have broken up with someone or been broken up with in the following ways

	Have broken up with someone	Have been broken up with
In person	67	62
By phone call	23	21
By text message	22	20
Just drifted away	12	11
By private message on social media	7	6
By changing Facebook relationship status	6	5
By posting a status update	4	3
By posting an image	2	2
Have not broken up with anyone	17	14

Sources: Pew Research Center; our survey among 4,200 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 5 % of all teens who showed romantic interest in someone by …

Flirting with them or talked to them in person	60
Friending them on Facebook or other social network	54
Liking, commenting, or otherwise interacting with them on social media	52
Sharing something funny/interesting with them online	47
Sending them flirtatious messages	32
Making a music playlist for them	12
Sending them sexy or flirty pictures or videos of themselves	9
Making a video for them	5

Sources: Pew Research Center; our survey among 4,200 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 6 % of boys/girls who would usually take the following approach to ask someone out on a date

	Boys	Girls
Ask them in person	72	30
Send them a text message	24	18
Wait for them to ask you first	4	52

Sources: Pew Research Center; our survey among 4,200 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 7 % of teens in each age group with past/current dating experience

	13–14	15–17
Current, serious	7	16
Current, not serious	4	11
Have dated in past	10	14

Sources: Pew Research Center; our survey among 4,200 individuals conducted June 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

As the technology regarding dating apps never ceases advancing, and users are coming to be gradually busy, single individuals are finding it more straightforward and more satisfactory to use online platforms to hang around with and find dates. (Anderson et al., 2018) Unsafe sex sometimes is related to the adoption of geosocial networking apps. (Chan, 2019) Women may experience sexist harassment (e.g. verbal maltreatment, objectionable explicit material, and indelicate sexual solicitations) from male users on online dating platforms. (Thompson, 2018)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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Author Contributions

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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Commodifying Intimate Relationships through Geosocial Networking Mobile Apps: Data-driven Dating, Sexual Sociality, and Online Body Objectification

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ABSTRACT. I draw on a substantial body of theoretical and empirical research on commodifying intimate relationships through geosocial networking mobile apps, and to explore this, I inspected, used, and replicated survey data from Pew Research Center, performing analyses and making estimates regarding % of U.S. adults in each group who have used mobile dating apps, % in each age group who have ever used an online dating site and/or mobile dating app, and % of teens with relationship experience who spend time with a significant other in certain ways. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data and test the proposed conceptual model.

Keywords: geosocial networking mobile app; data-driven dating; sexual sociality

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1. Introduction

Online dating websites constitute a kind of profit-oriented digital culture. (Liu, 2019) Dating apps represent a type of cutting-edge media that supplies a digital setting where users are being assessed mainly in conformity with their physical appearance. (Tran et al., 2019) Online dating confers women an enhanced degree of option and command in finding potential romantic partners. (Thompson, 2018) Men who have sex with men dating apps and platforms are a compelling tool to further infection prevention initiatives in outbreaks. (Ruscher et al., 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Dating apps are frequently thoroughly or entirely image-focused, their harnessing entailing instantaneous positive/negative user feedback. (Griffiths et al., 2018) Nearly all dating site users, instead of going straightly from identifying a possible relationship candidate in a virtual marketplace to an offline meeting, get involved in interaction by employing the prompt or asynchronous messaging system, or text messaging, in advance of planning to meet personally. (Antheunis et al., 2019) Online dating sites and hook-up apps designed to enable romantic or sexual encounters offer users the chance to promote themselves as potential dates and to inspect the possible matches available to them online. (Alexopoulos et al., 2020) The commercialization of gay dating apps has surpassed physical hookups and consolidated as a sizeable realm of affective demands, which integrate mating, close relationships, emotion, and money. (Wang, 2019)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

I inspected, used, and replicated survey data from Pew Research Center, performing analyses and making estimates regarding % of U.S. adults in each group who have used mobile dating apps, % in each age group who have ever used an online dating site and/or mobile dating app, and % of teens with relationship experience who spend time with a significant other in certain ways. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data and test the proposed conceptual model.

4. Results and Discussion

Various online dating websites may have related to them distinct patterns and stories with reference to the kind of romantic relationship furthered by their technology and operability. (Silva et al., 2019) Online sexual communities, having intrinsic neoliberal values, are social entities that facilitate and restrict advancement of the commercial intermediary of the self. (Kong, 2019) The sudden increase of dating websites and mobile dating apps builds on features of intimacy, suggesting new issues, e.g. how social systems harmonize and regulate their most intimate relationships. (Mackinnon et al., 2018) Dating apps can effortlessly single out men who have sex with men, but there are still conflicts between the capacity to offer information at a timely moment via dating platforms, when users are interacting with new sexual and romantic partners, and the likelihood to negatively shape the app user's experience. (Kesten et al., 2019) (Tables 1–6)

Table 1 % of U.S. adults in each group who have used mobile dating apps

Men	11
Women	7
Race/Ethnicity	
White, Non-Hispanic	7
Black, Non-Hispanic	11
Hispanic	8
Age	
18–24	9
25–34	16
35–44	8
45–54	2
55–64	2
65+	1
Education attainment	
No high school diploma	9
High school grad	11
Some College	8
College+	9
Household income (year)	
Less than $30,000	11
$30,000–$49,999	13
$50,000-$74,999	14
$75,000+	9
Urbanity	
Urban	11
Suburban	10
Rural	8

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 2 % of teens with/without dating experience who have let someone know they were interested in or attracted to them by…

	Dating experience	No dating experience
Flirting or talking in person	88	34
Friending them on social media	79	31
Liking, commenting, or interacting online	76	27
Sharing funny or interesting items online	69	24
Sending flirtatious messages	61	12
Making a music playlist for them	12	4
Sending sexy or flirty pictures or videos	19	3
Making a video for them	14	4

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 3 % in each age group who have ever used an online dating site and/or mobile dating app

	2013	2015	2018
18–24	10	27	40
25–34	22	22	29
35–44	17	21	27
45–54	8	13	18
55–64	6	12	17
65+	3	3	4

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 4 % of teen daters who have experienced the following from a current or former romantic partner, and whether it occurred during or after the relationship…

	During	After
Checked up with you multiple times per day asking where you are, who you are with, or what you are doing.	24	3
Read your text messages without your permission.	14	1
Used the Internet or text messages to try to pressure you into sexual activity you did not want to have.	8	3
Made you remove former girlfriends or boyfriends from your friends list on social media.	8	2
Demanded to know the passwords to your email and Internet accounts.	6	2
Contacted you on the Internet or your cellphone to threaten to hurt you.	3	6
Used information posted on the Internet against you, to harass or embarrass you.	4	5
Called you names, put you down or said really mean things to you on the Internet or your cellphone.	10	16
Spread rumors about you on the Internet or on the cellphone.	4	14

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 5 % of teens with relationship experience who spend time with a significant other in the following ways

	Every day	Every few days	Less often
Text messaging	87	11	2
Talking on the phone	47	41	12
In person	14	66	20
Social media	57	32	11
Instant messaging	32	48	20
Video chat	14	24	62
Messaging applications	27	59	14
Email	3	14	83
Video games	5	11	84

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 6 % of SNS/Twitter users who have used a social networking site to…

	Check up on someone you used to be in a relationship with	Post details or pictures from a date
18–29	52	36
30–49	34	18
50–64	18	8
65+	11	2

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

On online dating platforms, the pool of possible dates is enlarged further than the user's current contacts, whereas matching algorithms enable a real-time customization of the virtual marketplace (Bohuslava et al., 2018; Lăzăroiu, 2018; Meilă, 2018; Mihăilă et al., 2018; Nica et al., 2014; Nica, 2017) to separate out unsuitable sexual and romantic partners according to pre-established standards. (Anderson et al., 2018) Lonely users may display high degrees of confidence on dating apps, attempting to find an acceptable match and hoping to develop their social arrangements through the network association utility provided by the platforms. (Coduto et al., 2019) The adoption of gay dating apps among men who have sex with men may have both rewarding and adverse consequences depending upon their arguments for harnessing them and the incidence/persistence of their use. (Zervoulis et al., 2019)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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Author Contributions

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and approved it for publication.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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Geolocation-based Phone Dating Apps, Digital Intimacies, and Social Matching Systems in the Online Sexual Marketplace

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ABSTRACT. I develop a conceptual framework based on a systematic and comprehensive literature review on the relationship between geolocation-based phone dating apps, digital intimacies, and social matching systems in the online sexual marketplace. Building my argument by drawing on data collected from Pew Research Center, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding % of U.S. adults who personally know someone who has been in a long-term relationship or married someone they met through an online dating site or app and among teens who have met a partner or hookup online, the site(s) on which they met (# of mentions). The data for this research were gathered via an online survey questionnaire and were analyzed through structural equation modeling on a sample of 4,200 respondents.

Keywords: geolocation-based phone dating app; digital intimacy; sexual marketplace

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1. Introduction

Dating apps are extremely image-centric. (Griffiths et al., 2018) Online dating services are generally coherent manners for members of certain groups to find partners in a possible dating pool. (Anderson et al., 2018) Significant degrees of body appreciation are associated with being implausible to employ condoms, whereas significant degrees of body image self-consciousness are associated with being implausible to be examined for HIV and STIs. (Winter et al., 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Dating apps are substituting the influences that family and confidants had in times past in harmonizing couples: among the users who interact online, the percentage who has met via the intervention of go-betweens has decreased lately. (Rosenfeld et al., 2019) Internet websites and mobile apps may promote superior socializing and sexual arrangements between potential romantic and sexual partners, while possibly being an unreliable setting that encourages and facilitates sexual risk-taking. (Tsai et al., 2019) Mobility, accessibility, closeness, and visual are the leading benefits that may shape romantic and sexual encounters via mobile dating applications. (Timmermans and Courtois, 2018) Harnessing of gay dating apps may assist users in fulfilling their emotional demands by supporting men who have sex with men meet other individuals and maximize prospects for them to unhesitantly express themselves sexually. (Zervoulis et al., 2019)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

Building my argument by drawing on data collected from Pew Research Center, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding % of U.S. adults who personally know someone who has been in a long-term relationship or married someone they met through an online dating site or app and among teens who have met a partner or hookup online, the site(s) on which they met (# of mentions). The data for this research were gathered via an online survey questionnaire and were analyzed through structural equation modeling on a sample of 4,200 respondents.

4. Results and Discussion

Mobile dating apps harness recommendation algorithms to offer users a huge amount of potential matches that possibly have the highest probability of matching purposefully. (Levy et al., 2019) On online dating platforms users can circumvent social barriers and established cultural values to reconfigure unconventional gender roles in constituting romantic relationships. (Chen, 2019) Prescriptive user approaches and behaviors act towards the intrinsic components of geosocial networking apps to shape bodily perceptions in a manner that is dissimilar in form or strength from social impact through offline exchanges. (Filice et al., 2019) Gay male users have progressively confidence in geosocial networking apps to organize sexual networks. (Cascalheira and Smith, 2019) Lonely users may be vulnerable concerning unregulated harnessing of mobile dating apps. (Coduto et al., 2019) (Tables 1–6)

Table 1 U.S. adults who personally know someone who has been in a long-term relationship or married someone they met through an online dating site or app (%)

	2005	2013	2018
Men	12	26	39
Women	17	31	48
Race/Ethnicity			
White, Non-Hispanic	16	33	47
Black, Non-Hispanic	7	16	22
Hispanic	16	19	27
Age			
18–29	14	31	42
30–49	17	34	47
50–64	17	26	35
65+	7	20	27
Education attainment			
No high school diploma	4	16	34
High school grad	9	20	40
Some college	15	32	54
College+	27	41	69
Household income (year)			
Less than $30,000	9	20	44
$30,000–$49,999	17	31	67
$50,000–$74,999	19	35	76
$75,000+	22	40	85
Urbanity			
Urban	17	29	48
Suburban	15	29	51
Rural	11	27	44

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 2 % of SNS/Twitter users with recent dating experience who have used a social networking site to…

	Total	18–29	30–49
Get more info about someone you were interested in dating	34	44	28
Ask someone out on a date	18	19	17
Follow or friend someone/a friend suggested you might like to date them	14	21	11

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 3 % in each group who agree that …

	Have used online dating	Have not used online dating
Online dating is a good way to meet people.	78	52
Online dating helps people find a better match for themselves.	59	47
Online dating is easier and more efficient than other ways.	57	39
Online dating is more dangerous than other ways of meeting.	42	54
Online dating keeps people from settling down.	27	30
People who use online dating are desperate.	12	22

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 4 Among teens who have met a partner or hookup online, the site(s) on which they met

Site	# of mentions
Facebook	48
Instagram	11
Other chat/social media	8
Twitter	6
Gaming	3
Kik	3
Unspecified	7

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 5 % of all teens

	Age 13–14	Age 15–17
Flirting with them or talking to them in person	47	69
Friending them on Facebook or other social network	42	68
Liking, commenting, or otherwise interacting with them on social media	41	62
Sharing something funny or interesting with them online	32	51
Sending them flirtatious messages	19	42
Making a music playlist for them	4	11
Sending them sexy or flirty pictures or videos of themselves	2	15
Making a video for them	3	5
Something else we have not talked about	2	3

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

Table 6 % of teens with relationship experience who have shared the following online with a significant other

Funny stuff	54
Things you are thinking about	65
What you are doing, seeing, or eating	72
Stuff going on with other friends	64
Where you are	43
Information needed for school	21
Difficulties with your family	38
Personal things about your health	4
Religious content	2
Political content	2

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,200 individuals conducted May 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Self-perceived favorable outcome on an online dating platform is a relevant predictor of assessments of a user's personality (Chijioke et al., 2018; Lăzăroiu et al., 2017; Macháček, 2017; Nica et al., 2014; Roca-Sales and Lopez-Garcia, 2017) and dating setting. (Alexopoulos et al., 2020) Ill-treatment on dating apps represents a kind of gender regulation, as some male users react to normative sexual politics with undisguised objectification. (Thompson, 2018) There are links between the harnessing of mobile dating apps for gay male users and self-perceived virility, manifested homonegativity, and body discontentment. (Miller and Behm-Morawitz, 2019)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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Author Contributions

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and approved it for publication.

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The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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Falling in Love with Algorithmic Compatibility in a Digital Dating Landscape: Sexually Affective Data, Networked Intimacy, and Online Gendered Identity Constructions

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of this study was to empirically examine the relationship between sexually affective data, networked intimacy, and online gendered identity constructions. Building my argument by drawing on data collected from Pew Research Center, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding % of U.S. adults within each group who have ever used an online dating site or mobile dating application and % of all teens who have blocked or unfriended someone on social media who was flirting in a way that made them uncomfortable. The structural equation modeling technique was used to test the research model.

Keywords: algorithm; digital dating; sexually affective data; networked intimacy

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1. Introduction

Geolocation-based dating apps provide multifarious ways to meet a massive pool of possible romantic or sexual partners and/or hook up (Vares, 2018), while processing sensitive information (e.g. relationship status) in addition to actual location data (Brandtzaeg et al., 2019), thus offering a feasible choice for finding dates directly and shortly, but may be in conjunction with particular HIV infection risk behaviors. (Queiroz et al., 2019)

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Pivoting between generating persistent experiences and using irritating barriers, online dating platforms may transfer and commercialize user spaces, groups, social fashioning, and behaviors, pretending increased connectivity. (Aunspach, 2019) The perceived insistence on insubstantial sexual relationships may discourage users to fulfill their emotional demands, e.g. intimacy and relevant connectivity. (Zervoulis et al., 2019) Anxieties with respect to users' sexual expression have become definite around digital routines and technologies, including dating apps. (Albury, 2018) The convergence between queer male realms and technology confirms that sociotechnical devices will steadily clarify how online space shapes the experienced practice of multifarious mobile phone-enabled dating app users. (Miles, 2018)

3. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

Building my argument by drawing on data collected from Pew Research Center, I performed analyses and made estimates regarding % of U.S. adults within each group who have ever used an online dating site or mobile dating application and % of all teens who have blocked or unfriended someone on social media who was flirting in a way that made them uncomfortable. The structural equation modeling technique was used to test the research model.

4. Results and Discussion

Geolocation-based dating apps focus mainly on casual sexual encounters and less on more intimate connections and draw attention to physical features, making users easily affected by common sense based on unimportant characteristics (e.g. ethnicity or body type). (Mutchler et al., 2018) Users are not docile target markets that are predisposed to being assessed in conformity with algorithmically filtered data, but can capitalize on the supplied information to dating apps to determine the algorithmic dating results. (Wang, 2018) Harnessing a mobile dating app often but being unsuccessful in obtaining significant or appealing matches is not questioning the present or subsequent relationship advancement. (Alexopoulos et al., 2020) Body typing, generation gap, racial discrimination, and HIV stigma are reflected in gay male users' self-performance on geolocation-based phone dating apps. (Conner, 2019) Men who have sex with men who claim employing online sources to meet dates are more expected than other such individuals to document behaviors that maximize STD/HIV risk, and also participate in behaviors that may diminish risk, e.g. STD testing. (Kachur et al., 2019) (Tables 1–8)

Table 1 % of Internet users in each group who have done the following…

	Have searched online for info about past relationship	Have flirted online
Men	26	31
Women	30	24
Race/Ethnicity		
White, Non-Hispanic	28	24
Black, Non-Hispanic	31	35
Hispanic	27	36
Age		
18–24	37	54
25–34	42	48
35–44	36	31
45–54	26	18
55–64	20	12
65+	12	8
Education attainment		
No high school diploma	30	33
High school grad	21	24
Some college	33	36
College+	34	27
Household income (year)		
Less than $30,000	33	35
$30,000–$49,999	29	27
$50,000–$74,999	28	30
$75,000+	29	23
Urbanity		
Urban	33	32
Suburban	31	27
Rural	20	21

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 2 Among cell owners who are single and looking or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less, the % who have…

	Asked someone out by calling them on your cell phone	Asked someone out by sending a text message
Men	64	42
Women	44	36
Age		
18–29	60	52
30–49	55	35
50–64	45	22

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 3 % of all teens who …

Have never been in a romantic relationship	14
Have not met a romantic partner online	59
Have met a romantic partner online	27

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 4 % of U.S. adults within each group who have ever used an online dating site or mobile dating application

Never been married	49
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	37
Married/Living with partner	14

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 5 % of all teens

Searched for info online about someone they are currently dating or interested in	34
"Followed" or "friended" someone because one of their friends suggested they might want to date that person	22
Searched for info online about someone they dated or hooked up with in the past	16

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 6 % of all teens who have blocked or unfriended someone on social media who was flirting in a way that made them uncomfortable

	Boys	Girls
Age 13–14	14	34
Age 15–17	25	42

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 7 % of teens who would usually take the following approach to ask someone out on a date

Ask them in person	54
Don't ask – wait for them to ask you	22
Send them a text message	19
Call them on the phone	12
Get one of your friends to ask them	11
Send a message on a social networking site	10
Ask some other way	3

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

Table 8 % of teens with relationship experience who

Felt closer to their significant other because of exchanges or conversations they had online or by text.	74
Resolved an argument with their significant other online or by texting that they were having difficulty resolving in person.	52
Texted their significant other while they were hanging out in person.	49
Felt that their significant other was distracted by their cellphone when they were together.	39
Found out that their significant other was doing something online that was upsetting to them.	29

Sources: Pew Research Center; my survey among 4,700 individuals conducted June 2019.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Online dating platforms are a concretization (Bohuslava et al., 2018; Jandric and Hayes, 2017; Kmecova, 2018; Krizanova et al., 2019; Nica, 2017) or conceptualization of the sexual marketplace. (Thompson, 2018) The transfer of information on the geolocation-based phone dating app tends to be an expression of a concern for a romantic or sexual relationship. (Levy et al., 2019) Online dating apps may further impermanent sexual encounters. (Anderson et al., 2018) In endeavoring to circumvent maintaining an isolated network, lonely users may additionally seclude themselves while striving to find a romantic or sexual partner. Users increasingly search information on and get in contact with such possible dates via smartphone dating apps. (Coduto et al., 2019)

Note

The interviews were conducted online and data were weighted by five variables (age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and geographic region) using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect reliably and accurately the demographic composition of the United States. The precision of the online polls was measured using a Bayesian credibility interval.

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