Correlational Study between Emotional Intelligence and the Use of Online Dating.

Aleksander E. Mansdoerfer[7]

This study sought to answer if there is a correlational relationship between an individual's emotional intelligence quotient and individual use of dating applications such as tinder or bumble. Participants from the Lindenwood University Participant Pool and the researcher's social network were asked to answer anonymously to a two-part survey. The first part of the survey had the participants self rate their emotional intelligence by answer nineteen questions, and the second part of the study asked questions about an individuals habits and experience with online dating applications. A total of 77 participants completed the study, and their ages ranged between 18 and 55 years old. Upon the completion of statistical analysis, no statistically significant was found though more data could be collected and

The experience of finding a suitable mate has regularly changed based on the social or cultural advancements of the time. In prehistoric times, it was likely based more about strength and competition. With the introduction of civilization more complex rules came into play regarding finding a mate. A few decades ago individuals could send in personality questionnaires to a company would find them potential "matches" (Schwartzman 2013). In today's age of cellular devices, those over the age of 18 can consent to dating applications on their phones and be part of the massive sociological phenomena of assessing compatibility with those up to 100 mi away. This advancement, as some would call it, cuts out the middle company and opens the selection process to find a potential mate to the widest it has possibly ever have been.

In the past decade and a half, psychologists and sociologists have begun asking some questions in an effort to understand the current era of dating and the introduction of dating apps and social media. One of the first examinations of those who use the new dating world looked

[7]Aleksander E. Mansdoerfer, Department of Psychology, Lindenwood University, St. Charles MO. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Aleksander Mansdoerfer, Department of Psychology, Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO 63301. Email: aleksandermansdoerfer@gmail.com

into the website MySpace and the engagement of users in romantic conversations on the platform. In a study of Californian undergraduate students, Dong, Urista & Gundrum (2008) found that those who had high self-esteem were less likely to engage in online romantic conversations, and in turn those with a lower self-esteem were more likely to engage. Though their research was limited to one university, it started a particular mode of thinking that was investigated by other researchers (Dong et al. 2008). In a similar but more comprehensive study, Rosen, Cheever, Cumming & Felt (2007) expanded the investigation from trying to understand the new phenomena to doing a compare and contrast between traditional live dating and using and online service or app. What they found is that those in both realms of dating often base their decisions off of similar factors specifically image and age. However, the romantic occurrences in the online dating platforms progressed much faster than the traditional dating ones (Smith & Anderson, 2016).

The idea behind this is that those online are more willing to self-disclose were going to able to maintain a strong healthy conversation that could take place in a continuous fashion over the period of a few days. However, since traditional daters preferred the face-to-face interaction and relied on aligning schedules and the immediate possibility of rejection the relationships took longer to develop (Rosen et al. 2007).

That willingness to self-disclose is the key for any relationship, and especially so for those where your interactions with someone are based on messages as opposed to face-to-face interaction. One could argue that the better one was at self-disclosing and presenting themselves and reading other people that may contribute to the rapid advancement of relationships that start online. In Goleman's novel (1995) Emotional Intelligence is described as having four branches: perception of emotions, facilitating thought through emotion, understanding emotion, and

managing emotion. Goleman (1995) goes onto explain how emotional intelligence is a separate

and distinct from a standard intelligence score, even going so far as to assess that Emotional

Intelligence is a much better indicator as to whether or not someone gets promoted at work, let

alone gets hired in the first place. But what about whether or not someone gets a date, especially

as the dating world continues to evolve into a more digital experience? At the time, they found

that just like self-esteem, emotional intelligence was negatively correlated with using MySpace

for romantic conversations (Dong et al,. 2008). Beranay, Oberst, Carbonell, & Chamarro (2009)

asked the question, what kind of people use the Internet and social media in general? Although

their study specifically examined college students in the social science fields at a particular

university, they were able to support their hypothesis that those who regularly engage in internet

use are more prone to exhibit social disorders as described in the DSM-V. In more specific

terms, the students were more likely to exhibit less self-esteem, more loneliness, more

depression, and anxiousness, sleep deprivation (Beranay, et al. 2009).

Despite the research that was done in the beginning of social media, researchers

continued to ask the questions to understand a trend that was not slowing down, especially with

the firestorm that was Tinder that took the world in 2012. In the years since the formation of

Tinder, the perception of online dating has gained some popularity and support among the

general population (Smith & Anderson 2016). As part of this surge, a group of researchers found

that those who are extraverted, open to new experiences, comfortable with internet usage, and

secure in their attachments, would be more likely to experiment with online dating (Blackhart,

Fitzpatrick, & Williamson, 2014). Of the subjects that responded to various questionnaires, 66%

felt that the rise of dating apps granted them a sense of "control" over their dating experience.

One could argue that in a world without smartphones that meeting the "right one" was based on

hundreds of variables and circumstances far outside of an individual's control. For example, in a romantic movie the characters might 'magically' meet on a bus because the other one had their car not start that particular morning. Instead, with the introduction of dating applications, that magical happenstance is greatly reduced. This change in perspective could definitely be contributing to the steady rise of the trends (Hobbs, Owen, & Gerber 2017). Hobbes et al. (2017) showed that there was perhaps more to be gained from the evolution of dating than the service being more for those who are anti-social as Dong et al. (2008) and Rosen et al. (2007) suggested. In addition, one of the more recent pieces of research regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and online dating took the question a step back. Is there even a relationship at all between dating and emotional intelligence? Smieja and Stolarski (2016) were able to draw a limited conclusion that there was evidence for assortative dating based on emotional intelligence with the strongest amount of support for one's ability to perceive emotions as the strongest indicator of one's dating trends and patterns.

As time continues to pass, and more apps like Tinder, Bumble, Grindr, Match.com, and dozens of other dating services enter the market and gain in varying amounts of popularity, we as researchers should continue to adapt and gain more information. Because of this inherent demand of a changing environment, and the recent research that demonstrates a change from the initial hypotheses, my research project seeks to add further data. My hypothesis is that those who use online dating apps and meet people will have a higher emotional intelligence than those who do not use the dating apps or do not meet people through the apps they do use. To accomplish this, participants over the age of 18 will be anonymously asked to complete a four-part anonymous survey that will ask them to self-rate their emotional intelligence based on 19 questions, followed by a series of questions about their use of online dating applications.

Method

Participants

Eighty-Three adults over the age of 18 (27 men, 54 women, 2 other), Mode: 18-24 years old) were recruited through the Lindenwood Participant Pool via Sona Systems and through the social media service Facebook. Participants that were recruited through the Lindenwood Participants Pool received 1 point of extra credit for their participating course. Individuals that were recruited through Facebook received no compensation. All participants took the same survey.

Materials and Procedures

The survey that was given to participants was created on Qualtrics on April 18[h], 2019, and was made up of four parts. The first part of the survey was the consent form and demographic questions including the age range they fell within, and their gender. Upon completing the demographic and consent forms, the participants were given the Self- Related Emotional Intelligence Scale, Bracket et al (2006) (Appendix 1). Brackett et al. (2006) did their own emotional intelligence assessment back in 2006 that broke down emotional intelligence into 19 questions. Upon completing the Self-Rated Emotional Intelligence scale, Participants will be asked a series of questions I, as the researcher, gauged their use of reasoning for use or not use of dating apps and if they achieved they have ever or are currently achieving the desired reasons for originally beginning to use the dating applications.

Results

Upon the completion of the recruitment period, the number data collected was downloaded from Qualtrics. The first test was descriptive statistics of the Emotional Intelligence score (M=64.6506, SD=8.5859), Age (Mode: 18-24), and what number of the sample had used a

dating app before hand (No=32, Yes=51). In addition, as part of the research I asked participants

who had answered 'Yes' (Y=51, N=32) to using a dating app before, how far their interactions

went (Table 1), and what their intentions were for using the dating app (Table 2). Participants

were able to give multiple responses to their motivations for using a dating app thus the results

totaling more than 83. Finally, a one-tailed *t*-test assuming unequal variances was applied to the

Emotional Individual Emotional Intelligence scores and how far the individuals went with their

interactions ($t(43) = .4258$, $p = .3362$) (Table 3). The data that resulted from the analysis

demonstrated that there was not a statistically significant correlational relationship between

Emotional Intelligence and dating app usage, resulting in a failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Discussion

The results of my statistical test did not support my hypothesis that those who use dating

apps are less emotionally intelligence, and those that do use it find my success with a greater

emotional intelligence. I believe this could have been due to some data collection errors. The

first error of my study is the result of using a self-rated emotional intelligence test. At the

beginning of my research I discovered that there are companies online that charge hundreds of

dollars to asses the emotional intelligence of employees at a particular business, and these

emotional intelligence test take hours to complete because they are administered by trained staff

using a variety of methods. My study relied on individuals assessing themselves and being

honest as part of a fifteen minute survey. Without increased funding and human resources doing

a large scale more accurate test could be difficult. In addition, there was a large gap in responses

from the 25-44 age groups. These two interesting pieces of data gives me an insight as a

researcher into a combination of two postulated explanations: My social media connections has a

large age group gap, and potentially those in the age group 25-44 are potentially less likely to

respond to surveys that may be related to their personal dating habits. I think in a future study I could potentially find more statistically significant results by expanding my study to include more participants. One of the ways I could do this is sharing the study on social media pages for singles of all age groups. In addition, expanding my emotional intelligence test to be more interactive such as actually having a participant do the things they were asked about their capability of doing could cut out some of their personal bias about their own abilities. Finally, my study was posted very late in the semester and was not available for very long. If I were to repeat this study, I would need to spend a significant amount of more time preparing so that the study could be available for longer so that more people could access it. Though there is still a possibility my hypothesis will remain unsupported, by doing these things I can be more confident in my results. I plan on continuing to research emotional intelligence and online dating trends independently and review this study at a later date.

References

Blackhart, G. C., Fitzpatrick, J., & Williamson, J. (2014). Dispositional factors predicting use of online dating sites and behaviors related to online dating. *Computers in Human Behavior. 33,* 113-118. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2014.01.022

Brackett, M. A, Rivers, S. E., Shiffman, S., Lerner, N., & Salovey, P. (2006) *Self- Related Emotional Intelligence Scale – Revised. Retrieved from PsycTESTS*. doi:10.1037/t01746-000

Dong, Q., Urista, M. A., & Gundrum D. (2008). The impact of emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and self-image on romantic communication over MySpace. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 11,* 577-578. doi:10.1089/cpb.2007.0154

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam.

Hobbs, M., Owen, S., & Gerber., L. (2017). Liquid love? Dating apps, sex, relationships and the

digital transformation of intimacy. *Journal of Sociology 53 (2)*, 271-284.

doi:10.1177/1440783316662718

Rosen, L.D., Cheever, N. A., Cummings, C., & Felt, J. (2007). The impact of emotionality and

self-disclosure on online dating versus traditional dating. *Computers in Human Behavior,*

24, 2154-2157. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2007.10.003

Schwartzman, N. (2013) Infographic. XOXOM: A history of love and technology- [Infographic].

PBS: POV: Retrieved From: http://archive.pov.org/xoxosms/infographic-technology-

dating/

Smieja, M., & Stolarski, M. (2016, February). Assortive mating for emotional intelligence.

Current Psychology, 37, 180-187. doi:10.1007/s12144-016-9501-8

Smith, A. & Anderson, M. (2016). Five facts about online dating. *Pew Research Center,* Feb 16,

2016. Retrieved from: http://pewrsr.ch/21DBK5F

Table 1

How far Online Interactions Progressed

Never met in real life	35
Met for Coffee	8
Had a few dates	7
One night Stand	10
Long Term Relationship	10
Married	3
Not applicable.	10

Table 2.

Reason for using a Dating App

Looking for a relationship	59
To go on dates	45
Sex	18
Making new Friends	28
An Excuse to Go out	14
To get a free meal	8
Marriage	12

Table 3

	Variable 1	*Variable 2*
Mean	60.65625	59.94117647
Variance	75.71673387	23.17647059
Observations	32	51
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	43	
t Stat	0.425775663	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.33619748	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070703	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.67239496	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692199	

Appendix 1

Qualtrics Survey

○ **Emotional Intelligence and Dating Apps**

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q12 Informed Consent Form

Introduction

The researcher conducting this project is an undergraduate student at Lindenwood University who is enrolled in the PSY48300: Senior Thesis course. The purpose of this survey is to gather data regarding individual emotional intelligence and their use of dating apps. The results of this survey will be published at the Lindenwood University Research Conference.

Procedures

This survey asks you to respond to a few demographic items as well as questions that will assess Emotional Intelligence and about your feelings and use of dating apps. This survey can be used in order to see whether there is a relation between Emotional Intelligence and a person's use

of dating apps. This questionnaire will be conducted with an online Qualtrics-created survey, and should not take any more than 10-15 minutes of your time.

Risks/Discomforts

There are no known risks associated with this study, because no personally identifiable data is being collected at any point, thus there is no risk of dating habit data being disclosed. If you do not feel comfortable completing any part of this survey, you are free to skip any questions or withdraw without penalty.

Compensation and Benefits

If you are a Lindenwood student recruited through the Lindenwood Participant Pool (LPP) you will earn 1 bonus point toward your LPP participating course. If you are not recruited through the LPP you will receive no compensation. However, you will also gain experience taking part in a psychological survey project and potentially learn more about the field. There will also be a score presented at the end of the survey that will represent your emotional intelligence quotient. If you are interested in learning more about this project or would like to learn about the results of this project once completed, please contact Aleksander Mansdoerfer at AEM987@Lindenwood.edu

Confidentiality

No personally identifying information will be collected, including your IP Address. All data obtained from participants will be kept confidential and will only be reported in an aggregate format (by reporting only combined results and never reporting individual ones). All

questionnaires will be concealed, and no one other than the researchers listed below and their course professor, Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair. The data collected will be stored in the HIPPA-compliant, Qualtrics-secure database until it has been deleted by the primary investigator.   Questions about the Research   If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Aleksander Mansdoerfer at AEM987@Lindenwood.edu or direct your inquiries to the course professor, Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair at mnohara-leclair@lindenwood.edu or (636) 949-4371.

 ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

 Clicking on the "Agree" button below indicates that you have met all of the criteria below:

• You have read the above information.

• You voluntarily agree to participate.

    ○ Agree (1)

    ○ Disagree (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Informed Consent Form Introduction   The researcher conducting this project is an undergraduate s... = Disagree

Q11 How old are you?

○ 18-24 (1)

○ 25-30 (2)

○ 31-35 (3)

○ 36-40 (4)

○ 41-45 (5)

○ 46-50 (6)

○ 55-60 (7)

○ 60+ (8)

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Block 2

Q1 The following set of items pertains to your insight into emotions. Please use the rating scale

below to describe how accurately each statement describes you. Describe yourself as you

generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future.

	Rating Scale				
	Very Inaccurate (1)	Moderately Inaccurate (2)	Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate (3)	Moderately Accurate (4)	Very Accurate (5)

By looking at a person's facial expressions, I recognize the emotions he or she are experiencing. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I am a rational person and I rarely, If ever, consult my feelings to make a decision. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I have a rich vocabulary to describe my emotions. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

I have problems dealing with my feelings of anger. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
When someone I know is in a bad mood, I can help the person calm down and feel better quickly. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

When making decisions, I listen to my feelings to see if the decision feels right. (7)

○   ○   ○   ○   ○

I could easily write a lot of synonyms for emotion words like happiness and sadness. (8)

○   ○   ○   ○   ○

I can handle stressful situations without getting too nervous. (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I know the strategies to change or improve other people's moods. (10)	○	○	○	○	○
I can tell when a person is lying to me based on his or her facial expressions. (11)	○	○	○	○	○

I am a rational person and don't like to rely on my feelings to make decisions. (12) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○

I have the vocabulary to describe how most emotions progress from simple to complex feelings. (13) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○

| I am able to handle most upsetting problems. (14) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

I am not very good at helping others to feel better when they are feeling down or angry. (15)   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

My quick impressions of what people are feeling are usually wrong. (16)   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

My "feelings" vocabulary is probably better off than most other peoples' "feelings" vocabulary. (17)

○   ○   ○   ○   ○

I know how to keep calm in difficult or stressful situations. (18)

○   ○   ○   ○   ○

I am the type
of person to
whom others
go to when
they need   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○
help with a
difficult
situation.
(19)

Q2 What gender do you identify as?

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

○ Other (3)

○ Prefer not to say (4)

Q4 How often are you on the Internet?

○ Never (1)

○ Rarely (2)

○ Sometimes (3)

○ Often (4)

○ Always (5)

Q5 Have you ever used a dating app or website?

○ No (1)

○ Yes (2)

Q6 What is, or would be, your intention on a dating app or website? Select all that apply.

☐ A relationship (1)

☐ To go on dates (2)

☐ A One night stand (3)

☐ Make new friends (4)

☐ An excuse to get out (5)

☐ To get a free meal (6)

☐ Marriage (7)

☐ To learn what you are looking for in a partner (8)

☐ Other (9) _____

☐ Not Applicable (10)

Q7 Have you ever met someone in real life you met online? And if so how far did the

interactions go?

○ No (1)

○ Once, just for coffee (2)

○ A few dates (3)

○ Hooked up with someone (4)

○ Had a long term relationship (5)

○ Married the person (6)

○ Not applicable (7)

Q8 How likely are you to recommend a dating app(s) or website to another person?

○ Extremely likely (1)

○ Moderately likely (2)

○ Slightly likely (3)

○ Slightly unlikely (4)

○ Moderately unlikely (5)

○ Extremely unlikely (6)

Q9 Which dating app have you used? Check all that apply

☐ Tinder (1)

☐ Bumble (2)

☐ Grindr (3)

☐ Plenty of Fish (4)

☐ Match.com (5)

☐ League (6)

☐ Religion specific dating services. (7)

☐ Farmersonly (8)

☐ OKcupid (9)

☐ Other (10) _____

End of Block: Block 3

_____

Start of Block: Block 1

Q14 Feedback Letter

        Thank you for participating in my study. The results will be used in order to determine if

there is a correlation between a person's emotional intelligence and whether or not they use

online dating apps.

Please note that I am not interested in your individual results; rather, I am only interested in the results of a large group of responses, of which you are now a part of. No identifying information about you will be associated with any of the findings.   Thank you again for your valuable contribution to this study.

Sincerely,

Principal Investigator:

Aleksander Mansdoerfer 314-477-8484 (AEM987@lindenwood.edu)

Supervisor:

Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair 636-949-4371 (mnohara-leclair@lindenwood.edu)

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 4

Q17 The Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EQ) displayed next is based on your answers and based on a 95-point system. EQ is distinct from a standard intelligence quotient (IQ) as standard IQ refers to your ability to acquire, process, and apply new information, Whereas EQ is your ability to: understand/express your own feelings, understand other people's motions, regulate your own emotions in a healthy way, and assist others in working through their own emotions. For the 95-point system, the higher the score, the higher the EQ.