

George Woodruff

Psychology 101

April 14, 2019

A. Making Observations and Generating Questions

In this paper, the authors make the argument that both men and women view attractiveness and ambition in the opposite gender as attractive qualities. Past research showed that physical attractiveness was important to both genders as well (although it is marginally more important to men than to women), and social status influenced women's opinions of the other person, whereas it did not influence men (Li et al.). Another study (done by Brand, Bynatsos, D'Orazio, and DeShong in 2012) showed that online dating does not level the playing field between unattractive people and attractive people. The hypothesis for this was that online dating would level the playing field because unattractive people could show their better characteristics, but in fact it did not, because the more attractive people were more confident in their autobiographies, and thus seemed more attractive to females.

B. Formulating a Hypothesis

In this study, the researchers predicted that both physical attractiveness and ambition described by the potential partner in their autobiography would have an effect on both men's and women's perceptions of that person's attractiveness.

C. Testing the Hypothesis

The researchers gathered a sample of students from the university, which was a convenience sample of students around. This was an even mix of all the races and

ethnicities on campus at the time, with a little bit from almost every group. From this group, they were randomly assigned into treatment groups. After the groups were assigned, they were asked several questions about the online profiles in order to determine the likability of each person. They conducted the study by having each participant sit in front of a computer with a dating profile on it, then to look at the profile and read it, then fill out a questionnaire about the profile. On each profile, the researchers put either an attractive or unattractive picture as the profile, then put either an ambitious or unambitious profile autobiography.

In general, the people who viewed the more attractive profile (both men and women) rated the profile higher, and those who viewed the less attractive person rated the profile lower. These were also the same for those who were given the profile with a more ambitious profile description, for both men and women. There was not a significant difference between the results for men and women when given these different variables. For all the results, the p value was below 0.001, which is a very low p value. This means that the results, there was a 0.1% probability that these results would be obtained purely by chance if they did not accurately reflect the population that the sample was taken from.

D. Drawing Conclusions

In their discussion section, the researchers describe how the variables of ambition and physical attractiveness both play a part in the measurement of interpersonal attraction, but they are independent of each other, and thus can be compared. They state that the influence of them together/on each other is not statistically significant. They also state that their hypotheses that the effects of

physical attraction would be higher for men and ambition would be higher for women were not supported by the data. These findings are similar to findings from other studies, thus supported the past research. They also claim some limitations, including the fact that this was only a simulation, and the participants were aware of this, so they did not set up a date with the person, which could have also affected how they viewed the person both physically and in terms of ambition.