



Premarital Sexuality, Gender Relations and Unplanned Pregnancies in Sexual Double Standards

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Abstract. Boys and men are believed to be praised and positively attributed by others for illegitimate sexual encounters, while girls and women are seen to be demeaning and stigmatized for similar behavior. In other words, men are rewarded for sexual activity, and women are devalued for the same activity. Sexual double standards are related to standard gender stereotypes: sex and desire are not what women expect but men. In order to promote gender equality, get rid of this prejudice, and let women have as much sexual freedom as possible, this research focuses on identifying the inequities in SDS and proposing solutions. Community college students ($n = 408$) evaluated the target regarding unintended pregnancies to understand people's perceptions of men and women who became pregnant before marriage in different relationships. Women are generally less favorable than men. The results suggest that while men and women who cause unintended premarital pregnancies have different relationships, women should also have the right to pursue their own will. It will take a long time for this double standard to disappear, but the purpose of this research is to help every woman be able to be more confident in sexual issues and stand on an equal footing with men so that sex is not a complex topic for women to talk about.

Keywords: Sexual double standards, unintended pregnancies, gender difference, adoption, and Intimacy between men and women

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Premarital Sexuality, Gender Relations and Unplanned Pregnancies in Sexual Double Standards

In the past, there was often concern that excessive population growth would have negative global effects. However, the fact is that many demographers approve that the total fertility rate, or the number of children an average woman of reproductive age has, is falling. If this number drops below 2.1, the overall size of the population will begin to decline. "This change may take decades, but once it begins, the population decline will spiral exponentially." [1]. According to the 2014 Planned Parenthood Research Program, 85 million pregnancies, or 40 percent of all pregnancies, failed in 2012. Of these, 50 percent ended in abortion, 13 percent ended in miscarriage, and 38 percent resulted

in an unplanned birth [2]. Abortion is not uncommon these days, but people have diverse views on abortion, which is also accompanied by some psychological problems for women. The issue of abortion has captured the attention of the mass media because it fundamentally challenges the basic ideas of Christianity. It directly challenges the notion that a woman's raison is to have children. It has focused national attention on women's bodies in a way no other issue has. This study puts forward theoretical hypotheses based on literature review, scenario comparison, and quantitative analysis. The modified evaluation of people scale explores among college students whether sexual double standards exist in the different evaluations of men and women when it comes to unintended pregnancy caused by premarital men and women acceptance.

Research from sexual double standards (SDS) shows that traditional gender expectations persist. Women are judged more harshly than men for engaging in similar sexual behaviors [3]. When so-called sexual liberation was at its zenith, free love (usually meaning how much sex a person wants to have and with whom is the person's freedom) poses a face-to-face problem for women with unplanned pregnancies. Before discussing any possibility of a sex equation regarding free love, women first need access to safe and effective contraceptives and facilities to perform abortions. In 1995, Hynie and Lydon's approach investigated whether contraceptive behavior in a causal relationship affects participants' psychology. They argue that using female condoms means women are more willing to engage in casual sexual activity [4]. In a nationwide online study of 135 men who had an abortion, 48% of men said they opposed their partner's abortion, and 69% said they experienced moderate to very high levels of stress following an abortion [5].

Unintended pregnancy is a concern for both men and women in a relationship. People have different opinions about what happens between men and women. Previous research has covered comparing men and women in terms of enthusiasm when having sex and evaluation of women bringing condoms [3,4]. Our research now focuses on unwanted pregnancies. In order to promote gender equality, establish proper awareness and solutions for unwanted pregnancy and protect women from abortion and public opinion pressure, our research questions focus on exploring are women and men perceived differently for having/leading to unintended pregnancy in casual or serious relationships before marriage?

1.2 Sexual Double Standards Evaluation

As a sexual attitude, the double standard of sex refers to the gender difference in the permissibility of sexual behavior and stricter standards for women. Specifically, it can be divided into the difference in the tolerance of certain sexual behaviors between men and women and the difference in the evaluation of the same sexual behaviors between men and women. The stricter standards for men are seen as a reverse sexual double standard [6]. In layman's terms, this double standard is: the more sexual activity men are, the better, and the less sexual activity women are, the better. This double standard is deeply planted in people's brains, but people may not have noticed or have not noticed this problem; they just think it is justified and taken for granted.

2 PRESENT WORK

The existence of SDS subtly affects people's subconscious judgment. This study compared men's and women's perceptions in unintended pregnancy and examined the relationship between these perceptions across a fixed social background, age, and educational level. The current study investigates whether people recognize SDS in varying degrees of relationship commitment. People say that the relationship between the sexes is equal, but women themselves bear the risks and harm caused by pregnancy. The main question is whether women and men in casual and committed relationships before marriage are valued differently for or for causing unintended pregnancy. After determining the experimental sample population, our primary responsibility is to manipulate the gender of the participants and collect their evaluations of men and women in different relationships.

The research predicts that the results of Kenrick and Trost will be replicated in females. The results of Kenrick and Trost indicate that in the case of casual mating, females should be more selective in choosing mates than males because women are more likely to make parental investments. Participants may therefore perceive a woman with an unwanted pregnancy as a sexually active woman and may perceive the woman as imprudent and mature [7]. Therefore, Hypothesis 1: In casual relationships, women who have unintended pregnancies will be viewed less positively than men who lead unintended pregnancies due to sexual double standards. Secondly, because men and women in serious relationships are both expected to have equal parental investment, even when they are expected to conceive, they are blessed [8]. Hypothesis 2: In serious relationships, women and men who have/lead to unintended pregnancies will not be viewed differently. The third condition is that the relation type is not mentioned. People consider them to be careless about casual sex and thus be more sexually permissive. As Barash and Lipton [6] point out, "a man who is successful with many women is likely to be seen as just that—successful... [whereas] a woman known to have 'success' with many men is... likely to be known as a 'slut.'" Hence Hypothesis 3: If the relationship type is not mentioned, women who have unintended pregnancies will be viewed less positively than men who lead unintended pregnancies.

3 METHOD

This research has two goals. The first thing is to briefly review the importance and existence of double standards regarding sexuality. Based on the previous discussion, the findings on the double standard do not strongly support its existence, as people are now more driven towards equality between men and women and are not biased against women in the past. Next, this research examined the perceptions of men and women who had unintended pregnancies before marriage. The research aims to correct perceptions of gender inequality and protect women from public opinion pressure.

3.1 Participant

This work used G*Power 3.1 to estimate the sample size for the current study and used a single sample in this survey. The sample was from community college students of both sexes, all Caucasian ranging from 18-24 years old. All participants were heterosexual. They all come from community colleges and have low education and entry requirements. Our sample selection guarantees the similarity of most backgrounds. Doing so maximally controls the effect of variables on the results. The estimation is the effect size of $d=.4$. The result is that 136 participants in each group will allow us to achieve a statistical power of 0.95 using t-tests between two groups. Since the research have three scenarios, this research needs to recruit 408 participants. For insurance, the sample will recruit at least 500 participants to allow potential invalid/incomplete data.

3.2 Design

The researcher used a 2 (target gender: male and female) x 3 (unintended pregnancy scenario: casual relationship, committed relationship, no relationship type information) x 4 (assessment: value, likeability, success, intelligence) mixed design. The research set up three scenarios that will be an inter-theme design. Participants will be randomly assigned to three scenarios containing 136 participants. Gender differences will be by design within the subject. After reading the scenarios, participants will be asked to rate male and female targets using a modified evaluation of the population scale [9]. After collecting the data, researchers perform statistical analysis on the data. (See Figure 1)

Modified Evaluation of People Scale (Marks & Fraley, 2005)

Instructions

Please evaluate the person you thought about using the following statements.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Subscale 1: Values

1. This person is trustworthy
2. This person is respectful
3. This person is immoral*
4. This person is dishonest*
5. This person is careless*
6. This person is dependable

Subscale 2: Subjective perceptions (Likability)

1. This person gets along well with others
2. I distance myself from this person*
3. I like this person
4. This person is socially competent
5. I like being around this person

Subscale 3: Success

1. This person performs well in everything he/she does
2. This person is successful
3. This person is a high achiever
4. This person has a bright future
5. This person is lazy*

Subscale 4: Intelligence

1. This person is intelligent
2. This person makes a lot of mistakes*
3. This person is good at analyzing situations
4. This person is bright

Note. *Reverse keyed.

Fig. 1. Modified Evaluation of People Scale [9] (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-005-1293-5>)

3.3 Procedure

In this work, a mixed design was employed to obtain data on independent and dependent variables. The first step is to collect basic information about the participants through a questionnaire. Secondly, participants will be randomly assigned to three scenarios, each scenario containing 136 participants.

3.4 Three scenarios

Casual relationship.

Daniel and Jenny were both college students who graduated last year. Daniel majored in computer science, while Jenny was a finance major. They both got employed after graduation. Daniel and Jenny met each other at a party one night. They really hit it off! They not only found that they were from the same college but also discovered similar hobbies. They talked a lot and stayed until the party ended. Daniel offered to walk Jenny home. He tarried because neither he nor Jenny wanted to end the conversation. Under the dim light, they kept talking and started to make out. Things had gotten carried away since that night. Jenny found that she was pregnant because they had sex on the night Daniel stayed. They were planning what they should do next.

Serious relationship.

Daniel and Jenny were both college students who graduated last year. Daniel majored in computer science, while Jenny was a finance major. They both got employed after graduation. Daniel and Jenny met each other at a party one night. They really hit it off! They not only found that they were from the same college but also discovered similar hobbies. They talked a lot and stayed until the party ended. After that, they started dating and committed a formal relationship in sophomore year. This is the fourth year that they have been together. Recently, they planned to get engaged, and they visited each other's parents. They also decided to live together. One week before, Jenny found that she was pregnant because they had sex on the night they moved into the same house. They were planning what they should do next.

No information.

Daniel and Jenny were both college students who graduated last year. Daniel majored in computer science, while Jenny was a finance major. They both got employed after graduation. Daniel and Jenny met each other at a party one night. They really hit it off! They not only found that they were from the same college but also discovered similar hobbies. They talked a lot and stayed until the party ended. They are in a relationship. One week before, Jenny found that she had Daniel's child because they had sex one night. They were planning what they should do next. Gender differences will be by design within the theme. After reading the scenarios, participants will be asked to rate male and female targets using a Modified Evaluation of People scale.

3.5 Debriefing Statement

Thank you for participating in this experiment. This experiment aimed to test for the existence of sexual double standard (SDS) and to discuss the differences in people's judgments of the presence of SDS in different degrees of relationship. SDS refers to the fact that women are held to stricter standards in both sexes than men. In our experiments, we assigned participants to three conditions (casual relationship, serious relationship, and no relationship type information). Next, we asked participants to rate male and female targets for unintended pregnancies. By comparative analysis of the collected data, the researchers determined the presence of SDS. Please confirm that you would like us to use your assessment in our analysis. If you identify a target before the experiment, please report it to us. The experiment is over. Thank you for your participation.

3.6 Measurement

The dependent variable will be measured by a Modified Evaluation of People scale [9]. The dependent variable was the participant's overall evaluation of the goal in values, peer popularity, power/success, and intelligence. Each domain will contain several statements, with participants rating the objectives using a Likert scale - 1 (least disagree) to 7 (most agree). For example, areas of value will be assessed by asking participants to rate statements that "this person is trustworthy." The Peer Popularity field will contain statements such as "This person has many friends." The field of success will have the statement, "This person is successful." The intelligence field will state, "The person is smart." After the experiment, students and Internet participants were fully debriefed, given feedback on their responses, and thanked for their participation.

After data collection, the first analysis measures the difference between the two data sets by comparing the means of the two data sets with a t-test. In the 3 categories, there are two sets of data. Take the average of the two sets of data for comparison. This time the independent variable is gender, and the dependent variable is the evaluation score. In the second data set, one-way ANOVA was used to compare the variability of the data. This time the independent variable is relationship types, and the dependent variable is the difference score (Men and Women).

Researcher would perform an operational check after the experiment to see if the participants correctly identified the relationship type. The questions would be like "What type of relationship do you think the goal is?" researcher will also perform a memory test after the experiment. The test will ask participants about their names, majors and how they met. These will indicate whether the participant is following the study.

Data Exclusion: Participants will be excluded if they:

- Do not agree to participate in research
- under 18
- Incomplete questionnaires (<80%)
- Inability to correctly identify relationship types in casual/serious situations
- no memory test (wrong two or more questions)

4 RESULT

After data collection, the first analysis measures the difference between the two data sets by comparing the means of the two data sets with a t-test. The T-test scores are based on value, likability, success, intelligence, and categories. Through the numerical values of these 4 categories, the researchers will give an objective measurement score. In the three categories, there are two sets of data. Take the average of the two sets of data for comparison. In the case of Casual, men: 5.5 and women: 4.2. In the case of committed, Men: 5.7 and women: 5.6. In the case of no information, men: 5.5 and women: 4.5. In the horizontal heavier, data shows that the men's ratings are numerically similar in all cases. In the second data set, one-way ANOVA was used to compare the variability of the data. In the case of Casual, the difference score = 1.3. In the committed case, the difference score = 0.1, and in the case of no information, the difference score = 1.0. From several different scores, the difference between men and women is the largest in the casual case. (see Figure 2)

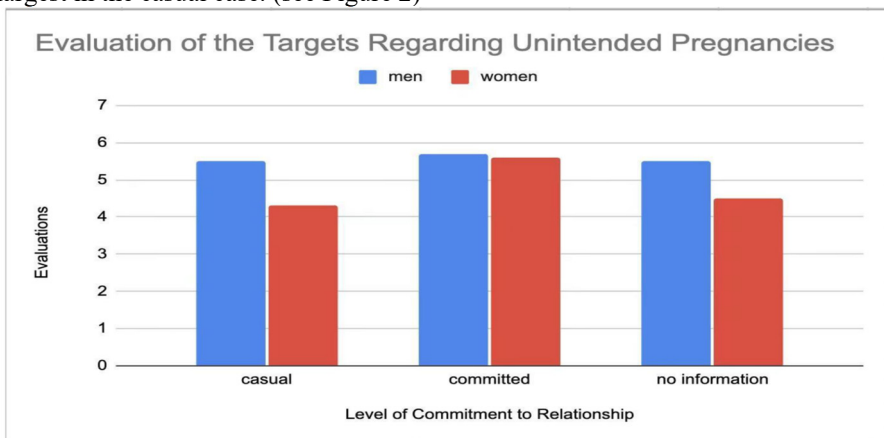


Fig. 2. Evaluation of the Target Regarding Unintended Pregnancies (Self-composed)

5 CONCLUSION

In the predicted results, our assumptions hold. Moreover, there are two unexpected findings. First, there is no significant change in evaluating men's unintended pregnancy before marriage under various circumstances. Second, men rated higher than women in all cases (although not significantly in the Committed case). The data without mentioning the relationship type and the casual relationship are very similar. Combining a study by Marks and Fraley examining whether the commonly held belief that existential double standards can lead to a bias in their confirmation, individuals tend to notice messages that confirm double standards. The male or female target in their study reported their own sexual experiences and mentioned five positive reactions or comments and five adverse reactions or comments made by others about their behavior.

Confirmation of the gender double standard was biased, as participants recalled more negative comments than positive comments on female targets, more positive comments on male targets than female targets, and more negative comments on female targets than male targets [10]. Based on these results, Marks and Fraley recommend that researchers consider this bias and avoid it by replicating everyday life contexts in their studies rather than investigating sexual double standards in artificial settings such as laboratories. Our study may also be affected by SDS, so women consistently rated lower than men, especially in the case of casual and no information. In Committed alone, men and women received nearly equal ratings.

There are still many limitations to our study. The questionnaire we use is less implicit than IAT. Our sample is collected from a specific community college, mainly young people in North America. People in different regions/countries have different perceptions of unintended pregnancy, possibly influenced by their cultural background. So our results are less general and cannot be generalized to all populations. Future research can involve the study of cross-culture. Additionally, previous research has shown that one's sexual experience affects people's endorsement of SDS. This is the missing factor in the research. In addition, our no-information scenario does not fully reflect no information, which can be biased toward the casual case. Moreover, because participants are required to assume what this condition is, participants will have personal biases in their judgment of the scene.

Finally, in the description of the scene we set, although in casual sex, the relationship between men and women is also described as being very compatible, which may also be a factor that affects the participants' judgment. On top of that, people are influenced by social expectations that may lead to answers that are not true. The participant's responses were designed to meet society's expectations. Because women usually receive more negative evaluations than men, in the experiment, it should be improved to give the subjects five positive and negative evaluations of men and women respectively before letting the subjects be evaluated. It is to make the subjects feel that their societal evaluations are almost the same, to make their evaluations more accurate, and to follow their ideas.

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