



The Research on Sexual Double Standard between Men and Women

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Abstract. The unintended pregnancy has become a hot issue these days, while attitudes towards unintended pregnancy between men and women still have conflicts and a wide gap. So this work determines to find out the reasons of the formation of the divergence in the point of view of Sexual Double Standard(SDS) and the solutions to fill up the gap. In this study, mock diaries of a girl taking about her unintended pregnancy were given to both genders from young adults in China and commitments will be collected. Data will be collected through scales measuring the level of pessimistic commitments that men and women give through the experiment. At last the study drew a conclusion about the inequality that women are facing these days about unintended pregnancy because of genders, traditional culture, living environment and so on. The results will be helpful in stimulating the women's equal rights movement and the improvement in sex education.

Keywords: sexual double standard, gender discrimination, unintended pregnancy

1 Introduction

The global pregnancy rate decreased only slightly from 2008 to 2012, after declining substantially between 1995 and 2008. Eighty-five million pregnancies, representing 40 percent of all pregnancies, were ended in miscarriage, and 38 percent resulted in unplanned birth [1]. In 2022, abortion laws were reenacted in the US. From the study by Gilda Sedgh, Susheela Singh, and Rubina Hussain, if a woman gives birth at least two years before she wants to have a child, she is classified as inappropriate; In Australia, Europe and the United States, any birth that was wanted later is not appropriate. All induced abortions are considered as unwanted pregnancies.[1]. In 2021, the accidental pregnancy rate of women aged 15-44 in the world will be 53 per 1000, excluding China, it will be 61 per 1000[1]. Africa has the highest incidence rate (80 cases) and Europe and Oceania have the lowest (45 cases). In traditional societies (such as Eastern European and South American countries), the contraceptive prevalence rate is relatively high [2]. In Eastern Europe, unplanned birth can be avoided through artificial abortion. The survey in 2011 found that thousands of women die from unsafe abortion every year, and millions of women suffer from non fatal health consequences. In the United States,

there are many examples of non family planning and delayed prenatal care, low incidence of breast-feeding and poor duration of maternal mental health care[3]. Although it is not easy to obtain causal relationships in unplanned delivery events, the study found that these causal relationships weakened after controlling for unexpected pregnancy factors, such as women's social-economic status[4]. It is difficult to summarize the reasons for the causal relationship: Firstly, the intensity of different women's willingness to bear may be different; secondly, the feeling of women in treating a specific pregnancy may change with the passage of time in a woman's life[4]; thirdly, the degree of wrong century used to define unexpected pregnancy may also vary in different studies, which will affect the results [4]. And men's attitudes were still excluded from most pregnancy categories according to planned status. So this research is to promote gender equality, to investigate how different opinions men and women will have towards males and females in unintended pregnancy and to protect women from abortion and public opinion pressure. And to investigate whether men and women are perceived differently for leading to unintended pregnancy in casual or committed relation before marriage.

2 Method

2.1 Participants

204 male and 204 female college students aged between 18 and 24 from a college in China will be chosen. So 408 participants in total. These students are considered to have similar living background and education level. The reason for not choosing the students from other countries is that the students in China can be more easily generalized, for example, the students study in the UK may come from other different countries with different culture, so that it will hard to generalize to all the English people.

2.2 Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Participants would evaluate women less favorable when unintended pregnancy happened in casual relation than men.

Hypothesis 2: Participants' evaluation of unintended pregnancy about men and women would have no difference in a long-term serious relation because they are both expected to have equal parental investment.

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, because people consider them to be careless about their casual sex and thus be more sexually permissive.

2.3 Material

The participants will be given 3 relationships about the unintended pregnancy of two people. 408 participants will be randomly allocated into 3 groups equally, 136 people in each group.(effect size =0.4, alpha error=0.05, statistic power=0.93) [5]. After

reading the 3 relationships, they are asked to make comments and give out scores based on their attitudes about the party in the unintended pregnancy. The relationships are disguised as 3 pieces of diaries. Before participating the experiment, there is a debriefing statement: Thank you for participating in this experiment. This experiment is designed to test whether people's endorsement of sexual double standard (SDS) exists and varies between different levels of commitment to relationships. SDS describes the situation where women are judged more harshly than men for engaging in sexual behaviors. In this experiment, participants are going to be assigned into three scenarios (casual relationship, serious relationship, no information of relationship type) when unintended pregnancies happened. Then they will be asked to rate both the male and female targets. By comparing the mean scores that each target received, it will be able to analyze whether SDS exists in each relationship type. Please confirm that you are willing to let us use your evaluation results in our analyze. If you recognize the aim prior to the experiments, please report to us. The experiment has concluded. Thank you for your participation. letting participants know the true aim may cause demand characteristic but will make the experiment more ethical for making the participants fully informed.

2.3.1 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.

2.3.2 Serious relationships.

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. They had been dating since freshmen year 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.

2.3.3 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. 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.

2.4 Data analysis

The participants were asked to evaluate the male and female targets using the modified evaluation of people's scale. The scale is used to collect quantitative data about participants' comments towards the two people[6].

The commitments made by the participants may be affected under the society expectations [7]. For example, women usually receive more negative evaluations than men, so in this experiment, the participants will be asked to give five positive and negative evaluations about men and women before asking them to evaluate. This is to make the participants feel that their evaluations in society are almost the same, and to make their evaluations more authentic and follow their own ideas. After answering the questions, they are asked if they tried to guess out the true aim of the experiment or not, the participant who guessed out the true aim will be deleted to reduce the demand characteristics.

The participants are going to give their comments as shown in the Figure 1 [8]. They are asked to evaluate the 3 relationships using these 7 statements, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. And they will pick out one statement from each of the subscale. Then their results will be collected and calculated the mean score they give to Jenny and Daniel by using normal distribution, and results will be plotted in the Figure 2.

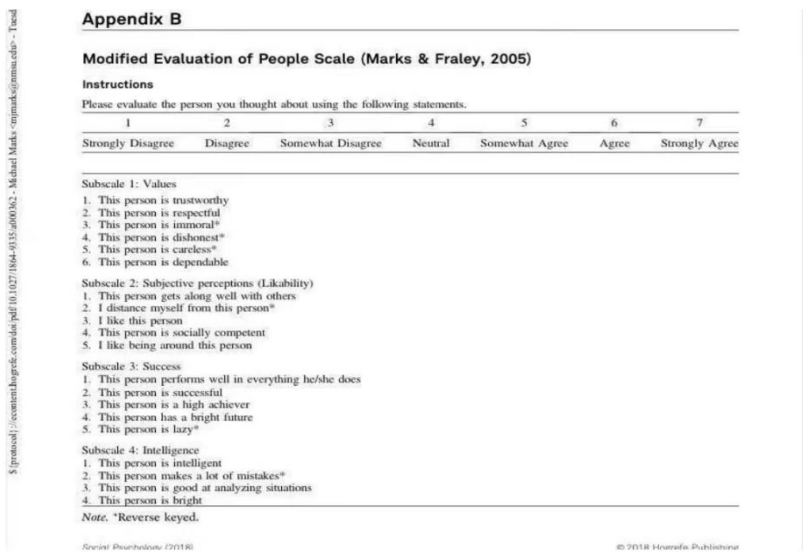


Fig. 1. Modified Evaluation of People Scale [8]

3 Predicted results

The predicted results are showed on the scale. Firstly, the attitudes of unintended pregnancy towards Jenny will be negative, for Daniel the attitudes will be positive, due to the gender discrimination, restrictions and fetters towards female these days [9].

Secondly, the level statements used by participants about Jenny will be generally higher than Daniel. Results like ‘Jenny should be more careful with her own body’ or ‘Jenny has been too low self-respect’ and so on. While the attitudes towards Daniel will be more inclusive. Most of people will think Daniel was just being less careful [10]. Thirdly, the words participants used to describe Jenny will be more pessimistic than Daniel. The scores (using the normal distribution to calculate the mean scores) get by Jenny will be lower than Daniel [11].

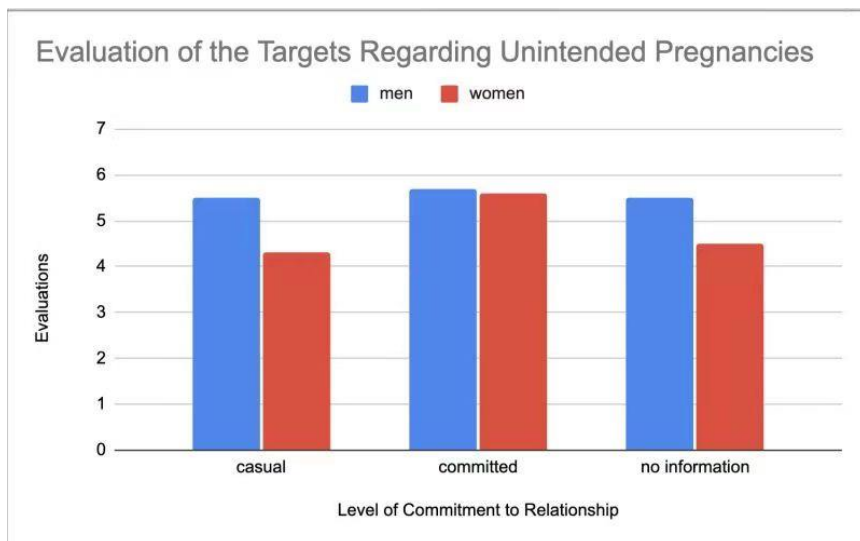


Fig. 2. Attitudes towards both genders in 3 different elation ships. (Self-painted)

4 After the experiment

Participants were asked whether they tried to guess out the true aim of the study, this step was done to reduce the demand characteristic which lead by participants who try to alter their answers for knowing the true aim and want to show their best aspects.

5 Conclusion

More than half of the students gave pessimistic commitments towards Jenny about being pregnant unintentionally for many factors like family education, living environment and acquired opinions of value [12]. The study uses a large sample size, so the results can generalize to most Chinese college students, which means the experiment is representative. The results excluded the answers from the participants that admitted to try to guess out the true aim of the experiment that will affect the results, and used the objective data analysis, so the study has a high validity. The participants are given a debriefing statement, so that the ethical issue can be reduced. However, the study only used the college students, so the results can not generalize to all students and all people. The

results can be applied to our real life. For the results shows the inequality and the gender discrimination the women are facing today, so it can inspire students in school and make people realize they should be aware of this phenomenon, learn to treat different genders equally, and inspire students in school to reduce the sexual double standards and improve the women's equal right movements [13].

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