

Speed Dating Experiment - Capstone Data Story

Jose Reyes – Dec. 2017

Springboard Data Science Career Track

The speed-dating dataset utilized for this study was obtained from the Kaggle website and contains 195 variables and 8,378 rows.¹ This dataset is a collection of 4-minute dating encounters by 551 individuals (274 men and 277 women) participating in twenty-one speed dating events, referred to as “waves”, held between 10/16/2002 and April 7th, 2004.

Who are the participants?

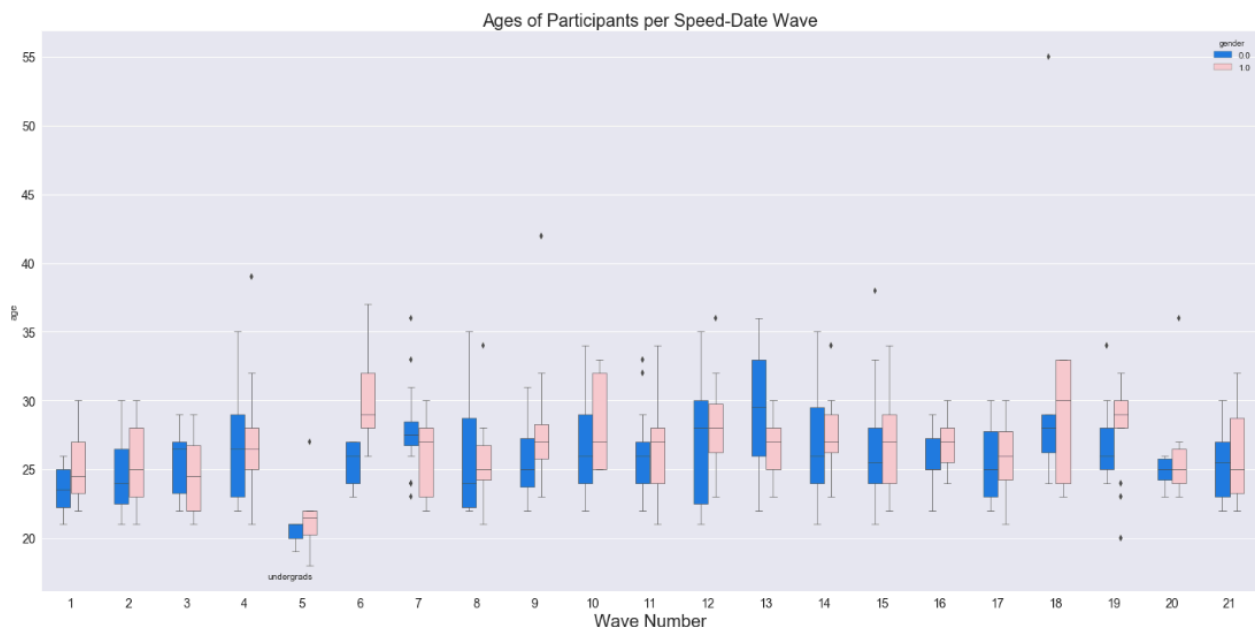
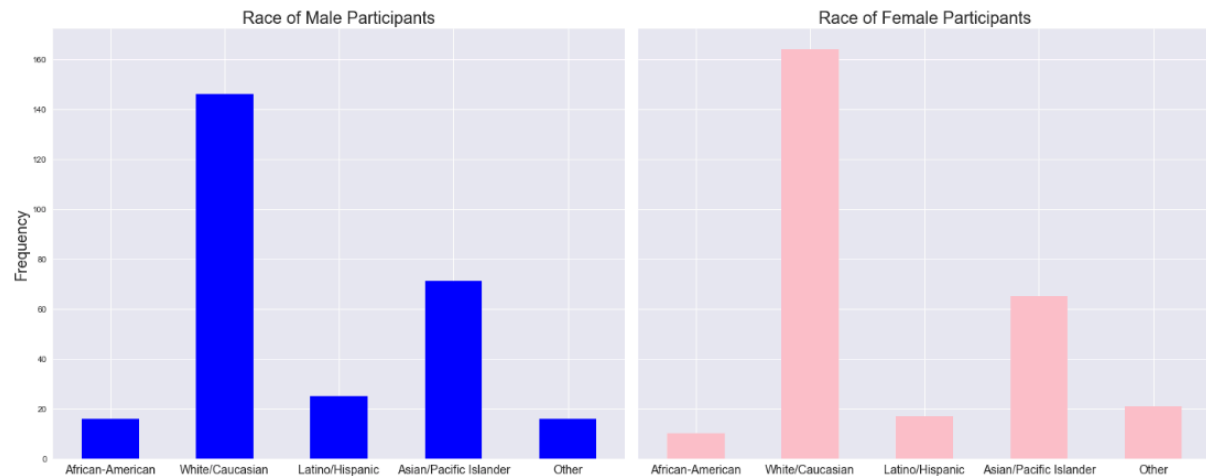
The participants of this study are primarily a mix of graduate and undergraduate students from Columbia University. The majority of the participants identify themselves as White/Caucasian with Asian/Pacific Islander being the next highest ethnic demographic among the participants. This break-down in ethnic and gender demographics reflects the current trends observed by the National Center for Education Statistics.²

Initial analysis of the age for each gender shows that overall the female population was slightly older and had a higher age variance than the male population with the median age of the male participants being 26.0 and the average being 26.14. Conversely, the median age of the female participants is 27.0 with the average being 26.59. A few participants were outside for the traditional college age with one male participant being 55 and one female participant being 42; these participants were not excluded from the analysis as they were assumed to be graduate college students. The box plots, shown below, illustrate these findings. Wave 5 is important to note as it comprised of only college undergrads that mainly belong to the traditional college age of 18-22, however this wave also follows the trend of an older and more age-variant female population.

	African-American	White/Caucasian	Latino/Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	Other
Male	16	146	25	71	16
Female	10	164	17	65	21

¹ <https://www.kaggle.com/annavictoria/speed-dating-experiment>

² https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010015/indicator6_24.asp

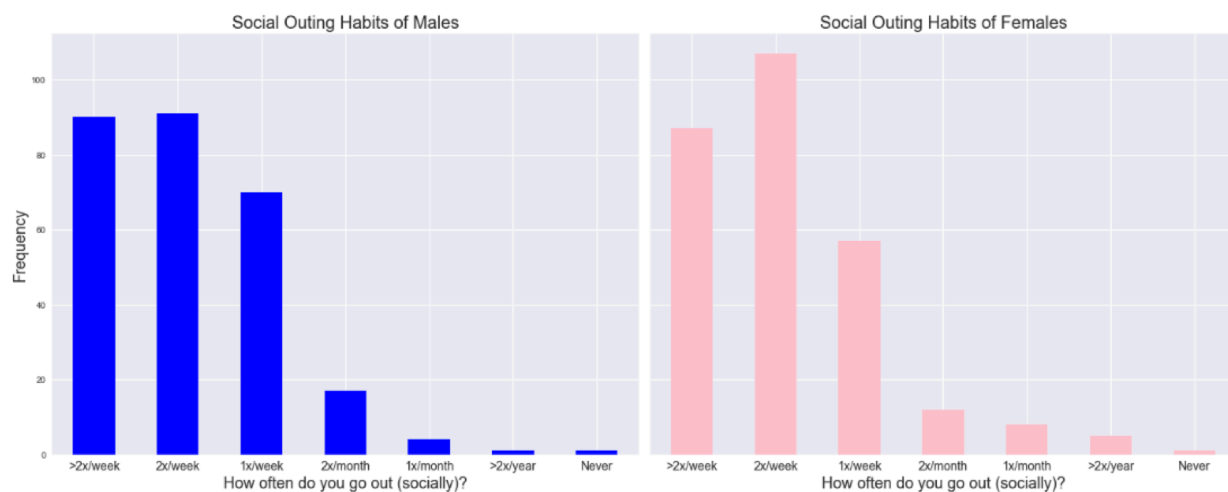


What are the social habits and why are they participating in these speed-dating events?

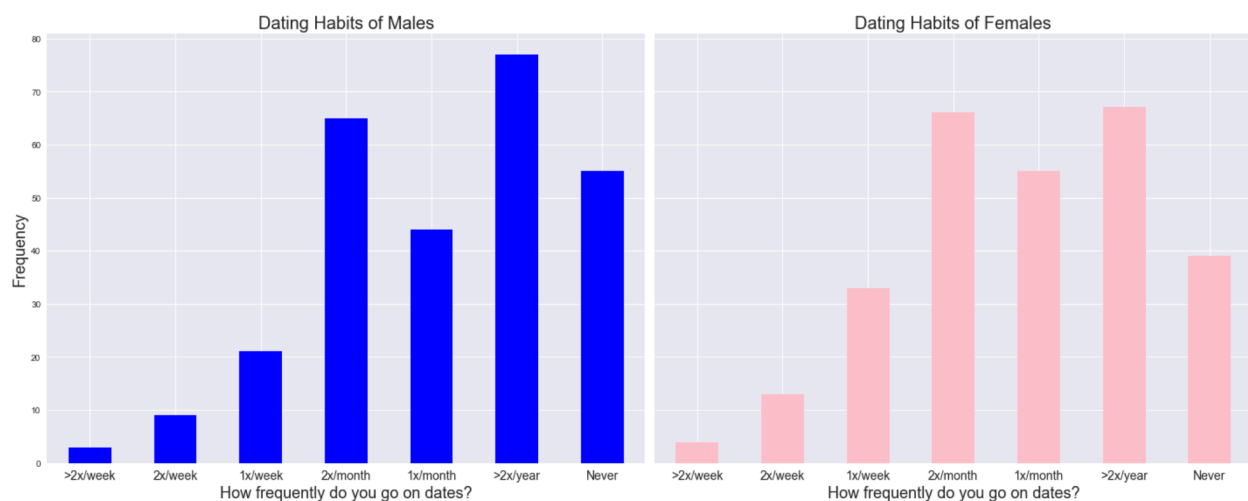
The large number of the participants enjoy an active social life with the majority of participants reporting as going out socially at least once a week or more. While women do report going out socially at least twice a week more so than the men, there is no major difference between social outings among the genders. Interestingly the trends flip when it comes to dating with the majority participants reporting as dating less frequently than going out socially.

While some observable gender differences in dating frequency exist, overall the dating frequency for both genders is relatively equal. What is interesting is that a sizable portion of the participant pool reports as rarely dating which creates the speculation that participation in these events provides an opportunity to go out socially and meet new people. In fact, for both men and

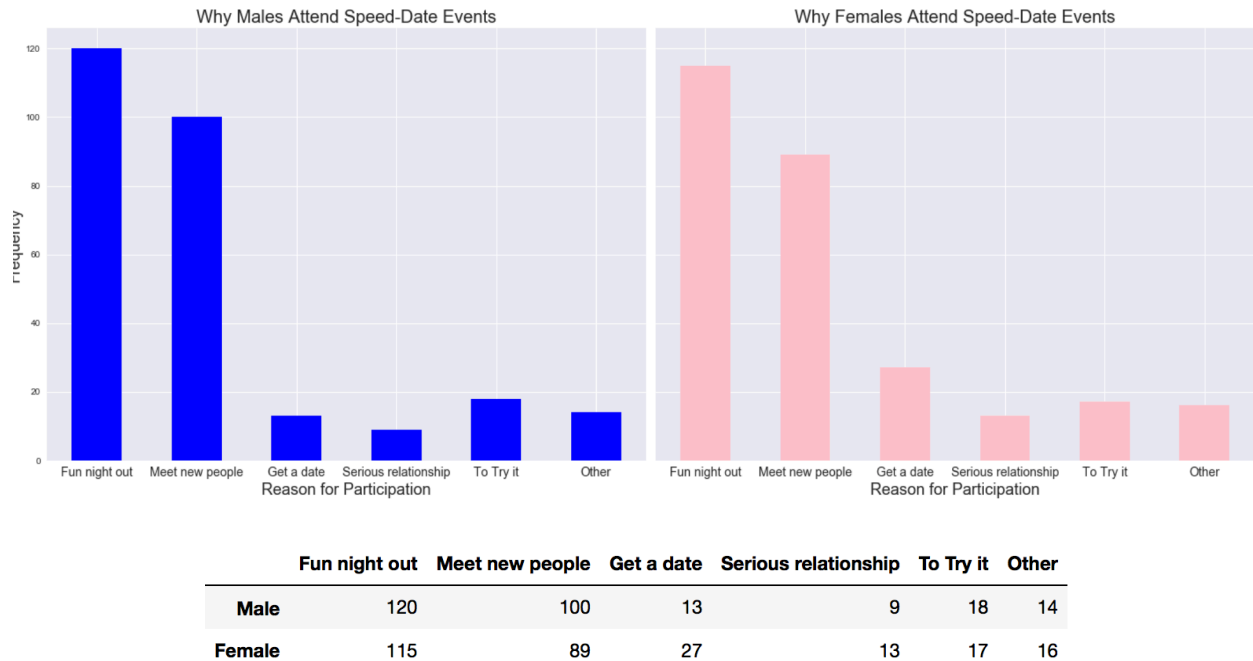
women, the primary reasons for participating in these speed-dating events was enjoyment and to meet new people. Very few participants had anterior motives for participation and even fewer were deliberately looking for a romantic connection in these events; this indicates that these event were mostly marketed as a fun way to meet new people or the participants perceived them as such.



	>2x/week	2x/week	1x/week	2x/month	1x/month	>2x/year	Never
Male	90	91	70	17	4	1	1
Female	87	107	57	12	8	5	1



	>2x/week	2x/week	1x/week	2x/month	1x/month	>2x/year	Never
Male	3	9	21	65	44	77	55
Female	4	13	33	66	55	67	39



Summary

The participants of these speed dating events are socially-active, mainly college-age individuals mostly looking for a fun night out and an opportunity meeting new people. The typical participant is an approximately 26 year-old Caucasian individual whose social and dating habits of are mostly inversely proportional. Despite some variations, the overall the ethnic and behavioral trends identified in this dataset are consistent with the clientele of college-targeted speed-dating events.