

1 Who are you trying to impress? When does showing skin increase attractiveness in social
2 media.

3 Nathaniel Phillips¹ & Joerg Rieskamp¹

4 ¹ University of Basel

5 The first author is at the Economic Psychology department at the University of Basel.

6 Author Note

7 Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Nathaniel Phillips ,
8 Missionsstrasse 62A 4053 Basel Switzerland . E-mail: nathaniel.phillips@unibas.ch

Abstract

Does the presence of skin help or hurt dateability ratings in social media profiles? To answer this question, we had 1,000 participants access how dateable people were based on their Facebook profiles. We found strong evidence for an interaction between sex and skin. When men did not wear shirts, their dateability scored decreased. For women, the effect was reversed.

Keywords: apa, R, markdown

Word count: X

Who are you trying to impress? When does showing skin increase attractiveness in social media.

Nudity has long been studied in the psychological literature (Alexander & Judd, 1986; LaTour, 1990), usually in the context of advertising. Social media sites such as Facebook are ways for people to express and advertise themselves to their peers. People's behavior on Facebook has been measured with respect to personality types. For example, Ross et al. (2009) found that personality factors were not very influential on Facebook use.

Similar to social media sites such as Facebook, online dating has become a popular medium for people to connect. For example Ellison, Heino, and Gibbs (2006) studied how people present themselves in online dating profiles.

However, no researchers have studied the connection between nudity and social media. The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent nudity affects perceptions of dateability in social media. In the study, we asked single participants to view Facebook profiles of people that were either wearing a shirt or not in their profile picture. They then rated how dateable each person was.

Method

Participants

1000 participants were recruited from the University of Basel to participate in the study in exchange for 5 Swiss Francs. The mean age was 22 and there were 479 females.

Materials

Each profile was displayed as a static screenshot. The primary measure was a dateability score on a scale from 0 to 100.

Procedure

Participants viewed a static profile for 60 seconds. When the profile disappeared, participants gave their ratings.

Results

A histogram of dateability scores is presented in Figure 1. The mean dateability score was 54.

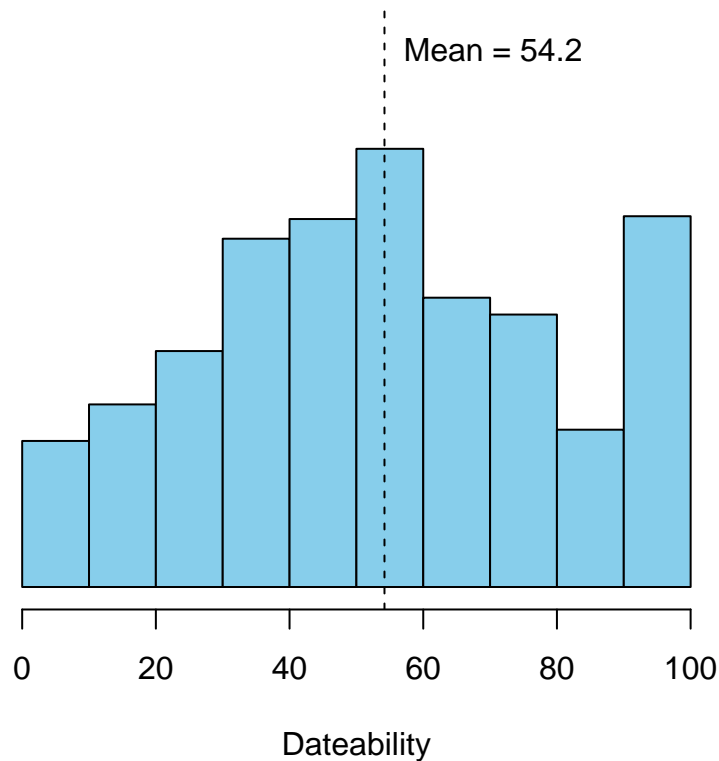


Figure 1. Distribution of dateability scores

Next we looked to see if there was a relationship between whether a person wore a shirt in their profile photo or not on their dateability scores. A pirateplot showing distributions of scores split by sex and whether people wore a shirt or not is presented in Figure 2:

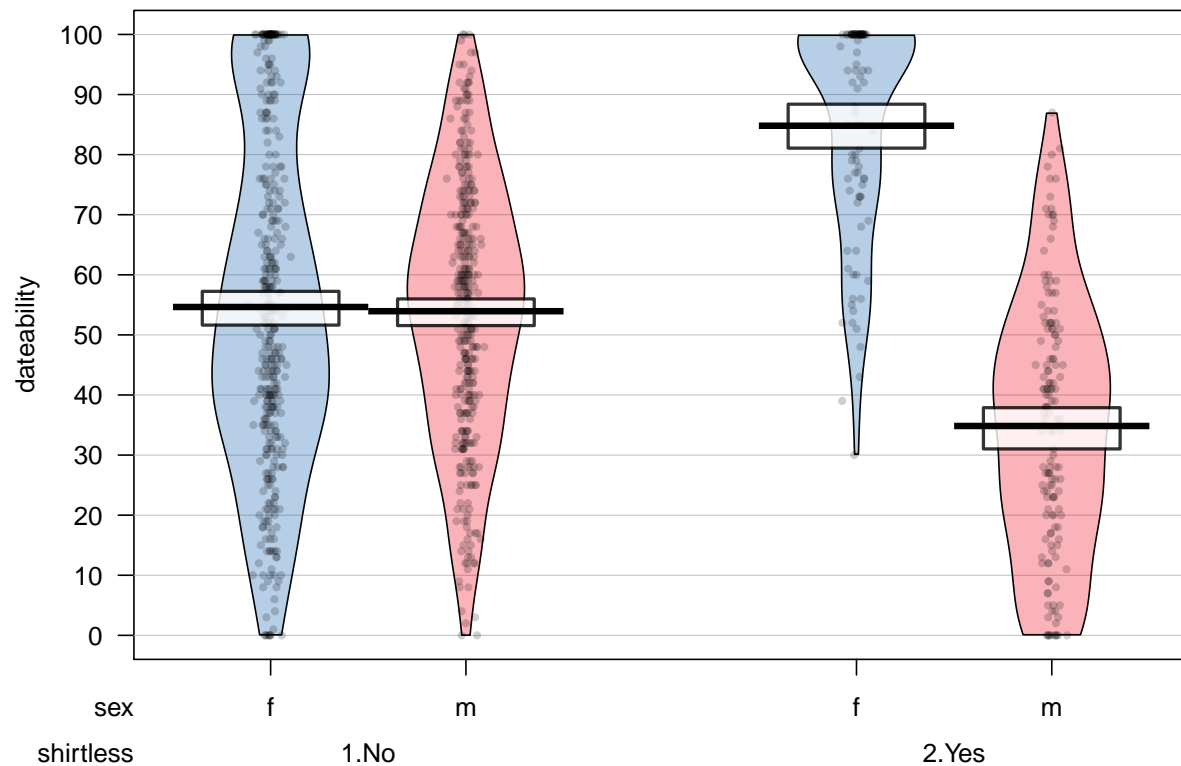


Figure 2. Distribution of dateability scores by sex and shirt. The data clearly show that not wearing a shirt increases scores for women, but decreases scores for men.

Descriptively, the data show a clear interaction between sex and shirt wearing. To test this interaction, we conducted an ANOVA. The ANOVA showed a significant interaction between sex and shirt wearing on scores (see Table 1).

The relationship between age and dateability is shown in Figure 2. A correlation test showed that the relationship was non-significant ($t(998) = 1.5$ $p = 0.13$)

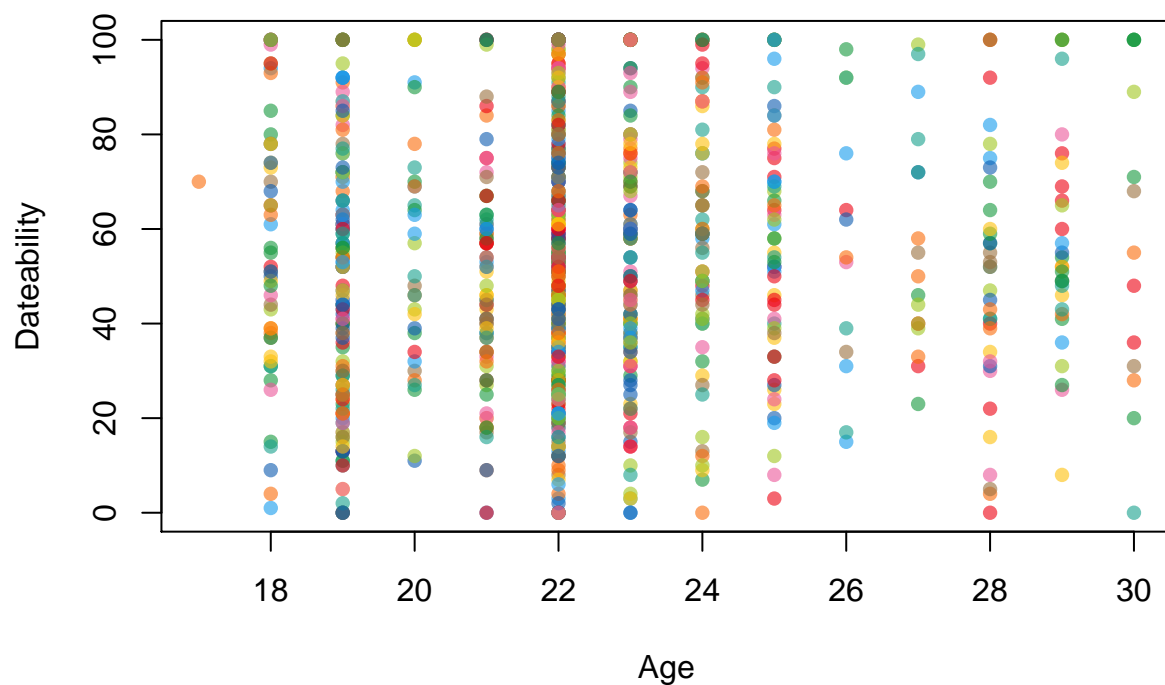
Discussion

This fake study showed an interesting interaction between nudity and sex on attraction in social media profiles. More (real) research is needed.

Table 1

ANOVA on dateability ratings

Effect	F	df_1	df_2	MSE	p	η_G^2
Sex	62.69	1	996	582.46	< .001	.059
Shirtless	0.42	1	996	582.46	.515	.000
Sex \times Shirtless	183.79	1	996	582.46	< .001	.156

*Figure 3.* Relationship between age and dateability. The relationship was not significant.

References

56

- 57 Alexander, M. W., & Judd, B. B. (1986). Differences in attitudes toward nudity in
58 advertising. *Psychology: A Journal of Human Behavior*.
- 59 Ellison, N., Heino, R., & Gibbs, J. (2006). Managing impressions online: Self-presentation
60 processes in the online dating environment. *Journal of Computer-Mediated*
61 *Communication*, 11(2), 415–441.
- 62 LaTour, M. S. (1990). Female nudity in print advertising: An analysis of gender differences
63 in arousal and ad response. *Psychology & Marketing*, 7(1), 65–81.
- 64 Ross, C., Orr, E. S., Sisic, M., Arseneault, J. M., Simmering, M. G., & Orr, R. R. (2009).
65 Personality and motivations associated with facebook use. *Computers in Human*
66 *Behavior*, 25(2), 578–586.