Gender Differentials in Sociability Indices among Undergraduates Psychology Students in Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Oluwafisayo A. Adebimpe [a*], Oluwatoba S. Elegbeleye [b], Matthew O. Olasupo [b], Stephen I. Babatunde [c] and Oladayo A. Taiwo [d]

[a] *Department of Psychiatry, College of Health Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria.*
[b] *Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.*
[c] *Department of Psychology, Faculty of Art, Social and Management Sciences, Atiba University, Oyo State, Nigeria.*
[d] *Department of Psychiatry, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Teaching Hospital, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria.*

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Original Research Article

_____

Corresponding author: Email: oaadebimpe @lautech.edu.ng, oluwafisayoadebimpe@gmail.com;

ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of gender differentials on sociability indices among undergraduate students in a Nigerian university. The findings of this study focused on individual factors inherent in developing good social skills. An understanding of people's perceptions of social interaction and the role played by their belief system would help in planning intervention programmes that should be beneficial to society. Generally, dominance is usually difficult to be established in a social group without the group members' attention. Males have been found to assume dominance in relationships by utilizing verbal interruption. They are more likely to use conversation as a method of gaining information and establishing status Females may report higher levels of trust in short-duration virtual teams because they are initially more trusting.

The findings revealed that there was a gender difference between male and female students in terms of sociability. The mean scores of the male students among the items were higher than that of female students. There was a statistically significant difference between the scores (t = 1.723, df = 48, p < 0.01), (t = 1.033, df = 48, p < 0.036). The mean scores of the female students among the items were lower than that of male students on Gender differences and Gender sensitivity in friendship making. There was a statistically significant difference between the scores (t=2.269, df = 47, p < 0.00). The result of the one-way analysis of variance showed that there was a significant relationship between the sex of the student and attitude towards making and keeping friends (F (1, 48 = 4.112, p < 0.048). There was a significant relationship between the tribe of the student and having opposite sex friend (F (1, 47 = 4.830, p < 0.033).There was also a significant relationship between religion (F (2, 46 = 4.147, p < 0.02) and tribe (F (2, 46 = 5.928, p < 0.01) of the students with sociable characteristics. The study concluded that gender differential is an important factor in establishing consistency and feelings of connectedness among individuals. The findings also gave an insight to the understanding of psychological processes that underlie the adoption of positive social identity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender is a social construct based on society's identification of categories that have been defined as male and female. In the dominant culture, gender has been based traditionally on a binary reading of social roles [1,2]. Socialisation into these gender roles is a life-long practice with reinforcement and modification of the gender scripts occurring throughout the lifespan [3-6]. Gender is designated at the birth of a child. The critical indicator in our culture is visible sex organs. For both adults and children, however, the lines of demarcation between the genders are made very clear if imperceptible to most. "Gendered social arrangements are justified by religion and cultural productions and backed by law, but the most powerful means of sustaining the moral hegemony of the dominant gender ideology is that the process is made invisible" [5]. From this perspective, there are only three categories of gender – male, female, and the deviant other. The deviant category would incorporate a variety of groups including individuals who define themselves as lesbians, homosexuals, bisexuals, cross-dressers, transgendered individuals, or androgynous people – essentially anyone not socially defined as heterosexual. It would also include those people who fail to perform the role script that is prescribed for that particular gender – men not seen to behave in a "manly" fashion and women seen not to behave in a "womanly" fashion. This deviant category, however, would also include a third group -- those who suffer from gender misattribution, people who are not correctly identified by members of society. Their role scripts are misread or misinterpreted by individuals in their social groups.

Moreover, these scripts are made up of many elements including appearance, behaviour, attitudes, and so on. Social animals, like humans, need to interact with others, but this is not always possible. When genuine social interaction is lacking, individuals may seek out or use sources of interaction that co-opt agency detection mechanisms vis-à-vis the human voice and images of people, called social snacking. Limited social contact is problematic for any social species. When people lack social contact they have psychological and health dysfunctions [7-13]. These dysfunctions often manifest themselves in the form of depression, grief,

anxiety, and loneliness [14,15,4,16,17]. People have a fundamental need for affiliation that stems from the benefits of group living (Adam 2023), [18-20].

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Gendered behaviour is best understood as a product of social roles within society. These gender roles or sex-typed expectations influence men's and women's psychology through social interactions, self-regulation, and hormonal fluctuations. Certain factors are attributed to gender gaps and stereotyped images of the sexes in society. This can account for sex differences in mate preferences, behavioural styles in groups, the experience of emotion, and group performance. There is a need for future work which will integrate these approaches of minority influence, persuasion, social impact, the structure of social influence, and expectation states of individuals.

2. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. There will be gender differences among male and female students in terms of sociability
2. There will be no relationship between socio-demographic variables and sociability

2.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the attitude of psychology students towards making and keeping friends;
2. Investigate the relationship between the socio-demographic variables and group membership social behaviour ;
3. To determine the gender sensitivity in friendship keeping among the male and female students;
4. Determine attitudinal and behavioural consistency in keeping friends.

2.2 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Osun State. The institution is situated in the southwestern geographical region of Nigeria. The university is a federal university with a population of approximately 30,000 people. It offers both postgraduate and undergraduate programmes.

2.3 Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. It examined the role of gender differentials in sociability indices among undergraduate psychology students at Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife. The inference about the relationship among variables was made without direct intervention from the concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables. Data were collected from fifty (50) three hundred-level male and female students through self-administered questionnaires. The independent variables were a social profile, gender information, attitudinal consistency of friendship, and group member functions while the sociability indices served as the dependent variable. The sociodemographic variables were age, sex, marital status, religion, tribe, and family type.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The research was a cross-sectional study conducted at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State. The convenience sampling technique was used for the male and female students. This comprised 25 males and 25 females in three hundred-level psychology students.

2.5 Participants

The participants consisted of 50 students recruited from the Department of Psychology. Participants' ages ranged from 16 to 35 years old. 24% were less than 20 years, 54% were between the age of 20-25years, 16% and 6% were between, the ages of 26-30 and 31-35 respectively. Most of the participants were single (82%), and 18% were married. The majority of the respondents were Christians (76%), 22% were Muslims, and 2% practiced traditional religion. 74% were Yoruba while 22%and 4% were Ibo and Hausa respectively. 66% are from monogamous family settings while 34% are from polygamous families.

2.6 Instruments

The research instrument was self-administered paper and pencil questionnaires divided. The first part contains the socio-demographic variables such as age, sex, marital status, religion, tribe, and family type. Respondents were asked to choose between yes and no as well as answer open-ended questions. Questions on information on social profiles determined by their attitude

towards making and keeping friends, gender sensitivity as regards friendship making, behavioural consistency of friendship making, and self-evaluation of social profile.

2.7 Sociability Scale

The Sociability Scale was developed by the Elegbeleye O.S. The modified scale consists of 25 items covering all the five sections reflected in the scale. Subjects were asked to indicate their responses in yes and no format responses. The total score for each subject on the scale ranged from 95. A score range of 20-30 is rated as poor social performance; 31-40 needs counselling adjustments, 41-50 needs to work harder, and 50-60 is on the average with room for adjustment. 61-70 are socially adjustable; 71-85 are well adjusted while 81-85 was perfect. To ascertain the psychometric properties scale, a pilot study was carried out on a randomly selected 60 male and 35 female undergraduates with a mean age of 21 the test-retest returned a correlation coefficient of r=0.76, error of variance of content alternate form reliability produced a correlation coefficient of r=0.86, error of homogeneity r=0.87. Drawing 20 subjects from two groups (social deviants and undergraduates a pilot study has conducted the scores were correlated to produce a criterion validity coefficient of r=0.25.

2.8 Analysis of Data

An analysis of variables was used to compare different group means of socio-demographic variables and also the comparison of the different group means of the study. Data were subjected to univariate and bivariate (simple percentage, one-way ANOVA, and independent sample t-test) analysis using appropriate statistical tests. Statistical significance was determined at 0.05 levels. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL) Version 16 was used for the analysis of the data.

2.8.1 Socio-demographic variables

The socio-demographics include age, sex, marital status, religion, tribe, and family type. The mean age of the students was 23.1 years and the standard deviation was 0.430116. The frequency and percentage constitution of each of these variables are presented in Table 1.

The sample consisted of 50 students, with participants' ages ranging from 16 to 35 years old. 24% were less than 20 years, 54% were between the age of 20-25years and 16%, and 6% were between, the ages of 26-30 and 31-35 respectively. Most of the participants were single (82%), and 18% were married. The majority of the respondents were Christians (76%), 22% were Muslims and 2% practiced traditional religion. 74% were Yoruba while 22%and 4% were Ibo and Hausa respectively. 66% are from a monogamous family setting while 34% are from a polygamous family.

2.9 Hypothesis Testing 1

There will be gender differences among male and female students in terms of sociability: An independent sample test (T-test) was carried out to compare different group means of the variables. Table 2 shows that the mean scores of the male students among the items were higher than that of female students. There was statistically significant between the scores (t=1.723, df=48, p < 0.01), and (t=1.033, df=48, p< 0.036). The hypothesis is accepted.

2.10 Gender Differences and Gender Sensitivity in Friendship Making

The mean scores of the female students among the items were lower than that of male students on item 8. There is statistically significant difference between gender difference among male and female students and gender sensitivity. There was statistically significant between the scores (t=2.269, df=47, p < 0.00), The hypothesis is accepted.

There was statistically significant difference between gender difference among male and female students and consistency of friendship. There was statistically significant between the scores (t=1.286, df=45, p < 0.009), The hypothesis is accepted.

2.11 Gender Differences and Group Membership

Table 5a shows that the mean scores of the female students among the items were higher than that of male students on item 16. There was statistically significant between the scores (t=1.255, df=48, p < 0.16). While on item 17 that the mean scores of the male students among the items were higher than that of female students. There was statistically significant between the scores and (t=1.620, df=47, p< 0.01). The hypothesis is accepted.

Table 1. Socio-demographic data

Variables	Levels	Frequency	Percentages
Age	Less than 20	12	24%
	20-25	27	54%
	26-30	8	16%
	31-35	3	6%
	Total	**50**	**100.0%**
Marital Status	Single	41	82%
	Married	9	18%
	Divorced	-	-
	Widowed	-	-
	Total	**50**	**100.0%**
Religion	Christianity	38	76%
	Islam	11	22%
	Traditional	1	2%
	Total	**50**	**100.0%**
Tribe	Yoruba	37	74%
	Ibo	11	22%
	Hausa	2	4%
	Total	**50**	**100.0%**
Family	Monogamy	33	66%
	Polygamy	17	34%
	Total	**50**	**100.0%**

Table 2A. Gender differences and attitude towards keeping friends

Keeping friends	Sex: male or female	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Do you have friends in your neighbourhood	male	25	**2.7600**	.66332	.13266
	female	25	**2.3600**	.95219	.19044
Can you keep a friendship for a long time(say for five years)	male	25	**2.9200**	.40000	.08000
	female	25	**2.7600**	.66332	.13266
Have you ever kept the kind of friendship?	male	25	**2.9200**	.40000	.08000
	female	25	**2.7600**	.66332	.13266

Table 2B. Independent Sample Test (T- test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Keeping friends (items 1-7)									Lower	Upper	
do you have friends in your neighbourhood	Equal variances assumed	13.501	.001*	1.723	48	.091	.40000	.23209	-.06665	.86665	
can you keep a friendship for a long time(say for five years)	Equal variances assumed	4.637	.036*	1.033	48	.307	.16000	.15492	-.15149	.47149	
have you ever kept the kind of friendship?	Equal variances assumed	4.637	.036*	1.033	48	.307	.16000	.15492	-.15149	.47149	

Table 3. Gender differences and Gender sensitivity in friendship making

Gender sensitivity (items 8,12,13)	Sex: male or female	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Was this long time friend of yours of the same sex	Male	25	**2.8400**	.55377	.11075
	female	24	**2.3333**	.96309	.19659

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
Gender sensitivity		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
(items 8,12,13)									Lower	Upper	
Was this long time friend of yours of the same sex	Equal variances assumed	26.891	**.000***	2.269	47	.028	.50667	.22329	.05747	.95586	

Table 4. Consistency of friendship and Gender differences

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Consistency of									Lower	Upper
are you still close to this friends of yours?	Equal variances assumed	7.363	.009*	1.286	45	.205	.26812	.20855	-.15192	.68815

Table 5. Data statistics

Consistency	Sex: male or female	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
are you still close to this friends of yours?	male	24	2.8333	.56466	.11526
	female	23	2.5652	.84348	.17588

Table 5a. Gender differences and Group membership

Group membership	Sex: male or female	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
is it important to you that you must be the leader of whichever group you belong?	Male	25	2.2800	.97980	.19596
	Female	25	2.6000	.81650	.16330
have you ever belonged to a formally organised social group?	Male	25	2.8400	.55377	.11075
	Female	24	2.5000	.88465	.18058

Table 5b. Data statistics

Group membership		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
is it important to you that you must be the leader of whichever group you belong?	Equal variances assumed	6.288	.016*	-1.255	48	.216	-.32000	.25508		-.83288	.19288
have you ever belonged to a formally organised social group?	Equal variances assumed	12.324	.001*	1.620	47	.112	.34000	.20992		-.08230	.76230

Table 6. ANOVA Table Showing the Influence of tribe of students and gender sensitivity in making friends

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Do you have opposite sex friends?	Between Groups	3.426	2	1.713	6.452	**0.004***
	Within Groups	11.152	42	0.266		
	Total	14.578	44			

Table 7. ANOVA Table Showing the Influence of family type of students and gender sensitivity in making friends

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Do you have opposite sex friends?	Between Groups	1.472	1	1.472	4.830	**0.033***
	Within Groups	13.106	43	0.305		
	Total	14.578	44			
Are your opposite sex friends more than your same sex friends	Between Groups	4.417	1	4.417	4.726	**0.035***
	Within Groups	44.863	48	0.935		
	Total	49.280	49			

Table 8. Marital status and group membership

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Do you possess any of the characteristics listed above	Between Groups	0.698	1	0.698	6.599	**0.013***
	Within Groups	4.975	47	0.106		
	Total	**5.673**	**48**			

Table 9. ANOVA table showing the influence religion of students and group membership

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
to what degree?	Between Groups	2.001	2	1.001	4.147	**0.022***
	Within Groups	11.101	46	.241		
	Total	13.102	48			

Table 10. ANOVA showing the Influence of tribe of students and group membership

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
What social characteristics do you think describe a sociable?	Between Groups	1.740	2	0.870	5.928	**0.005***
	Within Groups	6.750	46	0.147		
	Total	8.490	48			

2.12 Tribe and Gender Sensitivity in Making Friends

There was a significant relationship between the tribe of the student and having opposite sex friend (F (2, 46 = 1.903, p < 0.004).

2.13 Family Type and Gender Sensitivity in Making Friends

There was a significant relationship between the tribe of the student and having opposite-sex friends. The item was found to be highly significant P < 0.033 (F(1,47=4.830, P<0.033). There was a significant relationship found within the group's tribe of the student and having a more opposite-sex friend. The item was found to be highly significant P < 0.035 (F(1,48=4.726, P<0.035).

2.14 Marital Status and group Membership

There was a significant relationship between the marital status of the student and those who possess sociable characteristics (F(1,47=6.599, P<0.013).

2.15 Religion of Students and Group Membership

There was a significant relationship between the religion of the student and those who possess sociable characteristics (F (2,46 = 4.147,p < 0.02).

2.16 Tribe of Students and Group Membership

There was a significant relationship between the tribe of the student and those who possess sociable characteristics (p < 0.01) (F (2, 46 = 5.928, p < 0.01).

3. RESULTS

Research Hypothesis Testing 1: The research hypothesis which stated that there will be gender differences among male and female students in terms of sociability was accepted. An independent sample test (T-test) was carried out to compare different group means of the variables. Table 2 shows that the mean scores of the male students among the items were higher than that of female students. There was a statistically significant difference between the

scores (t = 1.723, df = 48, p < 0.01), (t = 1.033, df = 48, p < 0.036)). The hypothesis was accepted.

Research hypothesis 2 which stated that there will be gender differences and gender sensitivity in friendship-making among the male and female students was accepted. The mean scores of the female students were lower than that of male students. There is a statistically significant difference between gender difference among male and female students and gender sensitivity. There was a statistically significant difference between the scores (t = 2.269, df = 47, p < 0.00), The hypothesis was accepted.

Based on the consistency of friendship and gender differences, there was a statistically significant difference between gender differences among male and female students and consistency of friendship (t = 1.286, df = 45, p < 0.009), The hypothesis was accepted.

In terms of gender differences and group membership, the results show that the mean scores of the female students among the items were higher than that of male students on item 16. There was a statistically significant between the scores (t = 1.255, df = 48, p < 0.16). While on item 17 that the mean scores of the male students among the items were higher than that of female students. There was a statistically significant between the scores (t=1.620, df = 47, p < 0.01). The hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 2: There will be no relationship between socio-demographic variables and sociability among male and female students. The hypothesis was rejected.

The result of the one-way analysis of variance showed that there was a significant relationship between sex and attitude towards making and keeping friends (F (1, 48 = 4.112, p < 0.048); sex of the students and long time friendship of the same sex (F (1, 47 = 5.149, p < 0.02); tribe of the student and having opposite sex friend (F (2, 46 = 1.903, p < 0.004); tribe of the student and having opposite sex friend (F (1, 47 = 4.830, p < 0.033).

There was also a significant relationship found within the group, tribe of the student, and having more opposite-sex friends F (1, 48 = 4.726, p < 0.035).

There was a significant relationship between the marital status of the student and those who

possess sociable characteristics ($F_{(1, 47)} = 6.599$, $p < 0.013$) and also between religion ($F_{(2, 46)} = 4.147$, $p < 0.02$) and tribe ($F_{(2, 46)} = 5.928$, $p < 0.01$) of the students with sociable characteristics.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study contribute to the understanding of psychological processes that underlie the adoption of positive social identity. It has also helped to identify the impact of gender differential in establishing consistency and feelings of connectedness among individuals.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. Altohami WMA. A cross-cultural linguistic analysis of the gendered representations of "Wife" in Egyptian Arabic and American English Proverbs, Cogent Arts and Humanities. 2023;10(1).
Available:https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2174481

2. Bem SL. The Lenses of Gender. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 1974. The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 1993;42:155-162.

3. Steeves K. Symbolic Interactionism. In: Okoko JM, Tunison S, Walker KD. (eds) Varieties of Qualitative Research Methods. Springer Texts in Education. Springer, Cham; 2023.
Available: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-04394-9_71

4. Teneva N, Lemay EP. Projecting loneliness into the past and future: implications for self-esteem and affect. Motiv Emot. 2020;44:772–784.
Available: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-020-09842-6

5. Lorber J. Paradoxes of Gender. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press; 1994.

6. Blumer H, Symbolic Interactionism: Perspectives and Method. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall; 1969.

7. Gafoor SA. Workplace loneliness and employee creativity from a positive perspective, Business International Journal of Research In Business and Social Science 2020;{9}:244-262

8. Wright S, Silard A. Unravelling the antecedents of loneliness in the workplace. Human Relations. 2021;74(7):1060–1081.
Available:https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726720906013

9. Heu LZ, Van Zomeren, Hansen N. Lonely Alone or Lonely Together? A Cultural-Psychological Examination of Individualism–Collectivism and Loneliness in Five European Countries, Journal of Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin. 2018;45: 780 - 793.
DOI:10.1177/0146167218796793

10. Zaitchik ST. The Impact of Attachment Style on Joint Identity. Open Access Master's Theses. Paper 1625.
Available:https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/theses/1625; 2009

11. Bowlby J. A secure base. New York, NY: Basic Books. Solving loneliness, Evolutionary Psychology – ISSN 1474-7049. 1988;6.2008:-649-,1988

12. Hazan C, Shaver PR. Attachment as an organizational framework for research on close relationships. Psychological Inquiry. 1994;*5*:1-22.

13. Perlman D, Peplau LA. Loneliness research: A survey of empirical findings. In Peplau LA, Goldston SE (Eds.) Preventing the harmful consequences of severe and persistent loneliness.. Rockville, MD: National Institute of Mental Health. 1984;13-46

14. Davis A, Albert G, Arnocky S. The links between fear of missing out, status-seeking, intrasexual competition, sociosexuality, and social support, Current Research in Behavioral Sciences. 2023;4.
Available:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.crbeha.2023.100096.

15. Arslan G. Mediating role of the self–esteem and resilience in the association between social exclusion and life satisfaction among adolescents Personality and Individual Differences. 2019;151:109514.

16. Baumeister RF, Tice DM. Anxiety and social exclusion. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology. 1990;9:165-195.

17. Leary MR. Responses to social exclusion: Social anxiety, jealousy, loneliness, depression, and low self-esteem. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology. 1990;9:221- 229.

18. Baumeister RF, Leary MR. The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. Psychological Bulletin. 1995; 117:491- 529.

19. Elegbeleye, OS, Human Behaviour Analysis; The Scientific Alternative, Inaugural Lecture Series 254, Obafemi Awolowo University Printing Press, Ile-Ife Nigeria; 2013.

20. Elegbeleye, OS, Sociability Inventory (SI) ISBN 978-978-088. Adeleye Printing Service Ibadan; 2008.

Peer-review history:
The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/99327