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No Changes in Speed and Selectivity in Mobile Dating Choices Over Time

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Abstract

In speed-dating, the selectivity of liking a partner is relatively constant across events, but individuals change to faster, non-compensatory decision-making strategies to evaluate partners. Online, individuals have more romantic options, which can also lead the use of non-compensatory decision-making strategies. Some studies have also found lower selectivity in larger choice sets. These patterns should accelerate as cognitive load increases over the course of the experiment, with less time and lower selectivity for partner choice as search continues. We tested this hypothesis using a popular, mobile-based dating application. Forty users spent five minutes evaluating and liking or disliking a sequential stream of real profiles within the application. We compared the ratio of likes to dislikes and time spent evaluating individual profiles and found that users spent nearly identical amounts of time evaluating individual profiles and similar levels of selectivity over the course of the experiment. We compare our results to speed-dating.