EFFECTS OF REGULATORY FOCUS IN ONLINE DATING

by

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Abstract

The present research examined whether the individual differences in a motivational orientation, termed regulatory focus, shape online dating strategy, which in turn impact online dating outcomes. Regulatory focus theory posits that promotion-focused individuals use eager strategies to maximize potential gains, whereas prevention-focused individuals use cautious strategies to avoid potential loss. In a sample of 163 current online daters, regulatory focus predicted how people used filters and browsed dating profiles, but not how people corresponded and set up dates with other users. Specifically, promotion focus was associated with carefully screening few online profiles, whereas prevention focus was associated with using more filters and quickly skimming through many profiles. As well, regulatory focus predicted different online dating outcomes. Promotion focus predicted higher perceived online dating success but fewer romantic partners, whereas prevention focus predicted a lower likelihood of going on a date. These associations remained significant when controlling for extraversion and neuroticism.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1 Online Dating

Can we find love online? Thirty-six percent of Canadians seem to think so (Thottam, 2016). Online dating has indeed become the second most common way for singles to meet potential partners, replacing many traditional means including through friends or family (Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012). In North America, the combination of an increasing single population, decreasing leisure time, and reduced stigma associated with online dating has contributed to online dating’s popularity (Whitty & Carr, 2006; Brym & Lenton, 2001; Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006; Smith & Anderson, 2016). But what are the odds of finding a romantic partner through these dating websites?

In a recent survey of dating website users, 44% of 115,000 respondents reported having developed long-term relationships through online dating (Meltzer, 2016). In other studies, however, one-third of online daters reported failing to ever go on a date with someone they met online (Brym & Lenton, 2001; Smith & Anderson, 2016). This varying success rate is puzzling given online daters’ ready access to an unconventionally large pool of singles who are motivated to start romantic relationships. That is, online daters dedicate an average of 11.9 hours browsing profiles and messaging other users (Frost, Chance, Norton, & Ariely, 2008), and spend roughly $243 annually on these websites (Statistic Brain, 2017). I propose that it is the strategy that people use on dating websites that underlies varying dating success.

1.1 Online Dating Strategies

Prior to the advent of online dating, individuals were limited to more traditional modes of meeting people and found potential partners through friends, family connections, religious or social organizations, work, or meeting face-to-face in social environments (Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012). Individuals were most likely to date the people they came into close proximity to in their daily life (Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012). Online dating, in contrast, offers individuals the opportunity to connect with thousands of strangers who provide a trove of information about themselves, ranging from physical appearance to fundamental values, all within a profile that can be examined carefully even before a first date. Finding potential dates is no longer bound by
geographical areas or social circles (Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012). Online daters are never short of diverse options or options that meet specific needs and interests (e.g., through dating websites for people of specific religions). It is unclear, however, how individuals navigate this large pool of data on potential partners. What strategies do they use to sift through this massive amount of information prior to first meetings and how do these different strategies contribute to dating success?

On the one hand, online dating could be a numbers game; some people may browse many profiles quickly, correspond enthusiastically with a variety of potential dates, and arrange as many dates as possible. Such a strategy may indeed dramatically increase the number of people one goes on a date with, thereby increasing the odds of finding a romantic partner. On the other hand, online dating could involve a more selective process; some people may carefully screen dating profiles to capitalize on instant access to potential dates’ information available prior to face-to-face meetings, cautiously decide whom to contact, and go on dates with a selected few. Such a strategy may effectively shortlist the most likely candidates for romantic partners, thereby increasing the efficiency of finding a romantic partner. To date, it remains unclear what strategies online daters use and how these dating strategies are associated with individual difference variables and online dating outcomes.

In my thesis, I examined the possibility that individuals’ regulatory focus would influence their choice of strategy. In his analysis of regulatory focus, Higgins (1997, 1998) posits that people pursue their goals differently based on their dominant motivational orientations, namely promotion and prevention. Promotion focus is characterized by eager pursuit of growth and advancement with a heightened sensitivity to positive outcomes. Promotion-focused individuals therefore seek out gains and avoid the possibility that they may lose out on a desired outcome. In contrast, prevention focus is characterized by vigilant pursuit of safety and security with a heightened sensitivity to negative outcomes. Thus, prevention-focused individuals avoid losses, and are concerned about the possibility that they may end up with an undesired outcome. These strategic inclinations—achieving positive outcomes and avoiding negative outcomes—may be especially relevant in the world of online dating, in which individuals strive to match themselves with a desirable romantic partner and avoid a mismatch with an undesirable romantic partner. Given their distinct concerns, individuals with varying degrees of promotion and prevention focus may take very different approaches across the key stages of online dating.
1.1.1 Online Dating Behaviours as a Function of Regulatory Focus

When promotion-focused and prevention-focused individuals use online dating, they may share the goal of finding a compatible partner; they may, however, use different strategies to achieve their goals. For promotion-focused individuals who are sensitive to positive outcomes (Higgins, 1997; Molden & Winterheld, 2013), countless online profiles represent potential missed opportunities as much as they represent opportunities for romantic encounters. Therefore, I hypothesized promotion focus would be associated with a tendency to browse as many profiles as possible in order to minimize the missed opportunities (i.e., avoiding nongain). Similarly, promotion focus would be associated with engaging in online communication with as many users as possible to maximize the chances of finding the right person (i.e., gain). Given that promotion-focused individuals prefer switching tasks for potential gains (Liberman, Idson, Camacho, & Higgins, 1999), I hypothesized that promotion focus would be associated with fast “modality switching” (i.e., transitioning from online to offline interactions; Finkel, Eastwick, Karney, Reis, & Sprecher, 2012) as offline dates constitute a possibility of advancement (i.e., gains).

For prevention-focused individuals who are sensitive to negative outcomes (Higgins, 1997), each profile bears the risk of a bad date. I hypothesized that prevention focus would be associated with a tendency to study online profiles carefully to make sure each candidate offers a good prospect for a romantic relationship. Moreover, online messaging would serve as an extension of ensuring the online correspondent would lead to a relationship partner (i.e., avoiding losses). As such, I hypothesized that prevention-focused individuals would be cautious about progressing to the next stage and delay modality switching until they were certain that transitioning to offline dates would not jeopardize the online relationship (i.e., nonlosses).

In sum, I hypothesized that regulatory focus would be associated with different sets of online dating strategies. Specifically, promotion focus would be associated with the “eager strategy” aimed at maximizing the likelihood of finding good matches and minimizing missed opportunities. Prevention focus, on the other hand, would be associated with the “cautious strategy” aimed at ensuring the interaction partner would not be a bad date and the likelihood of potential date developing into a romantic relationship was high.
In my thesis, I focused on four stages of online dating: filter setting, profile browsing, messaging, and modality switching. I predicted that promotion-focused individuals would set relatively few filters, in order to avoid missing out on a potential date. In addition, I predicted that promotion-focused individuals would browse many profiles, and message frequently, but perhaps less selectively, in an effort to find a good match. Finally, I predicted that they would arrange more dates, to maximize the likelihood of finding a partner. In contrast, I predicted that prevention-focused individuals would set more filters in an effort to rule out undesirable dates. They would browse profiles carefully and message only selectively, to avoid making contact with bad matches. Finally, I predicted that their online correspondence would rarely lead to actual dates due to their concerns about the risks of bad dates.

1.2 Online Dating Success

I further examined whether these strategies would, in turn, lead to different online dating outcomes. On the one hand, viewing many profiles and messaging many potential dates might be especially likely to lead to actual offline dates; to the extent that one is not selective in making dates, however, these offline experiences may be unlikely to result in an actual relationship. On the other hand, a more cautious and selective approach may help one rule out clear “dealbreakers” and identify more appropriate dating partners; if, however, one is overly risk-averse, one may miss key opportunities for meeting suitable partners.

1.2.1 Personality Traits

Neuroticism has repeatedly been shown to predict poor romantic outcomes (e.g., Karney & Bradbury, 1995), whereas extraversion has been linked to short-term mating success (Schmitt, 2008). Past research has shown these personality traits have been linked to prevention focus and promotion focus, respectively (Grant & Higgins, 2003). Thus, I assessed Big Five personality traits (i.e., extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness) to rule out the possibility that any differences in strategies and success would be accounted for solely by extraversion and neuroticism.
Chapter 2
Present Research

The purpose of the present research was to examine the roles of regulatory focus in predicting online dating strategies and success. To fulfill varying needs of advancement and security, promotion focus and prevention focus should predict different approaches of navigating online dating, which in turn should produce different dating outcomes. To this aim, four hypotheses were tested: 1) Promotion and prevention orientations differentially predict online dating strategies, 2) the relationships between regulatory focus and online dating strategies exist over and above differences in extraversion and neuroticism 3) regulatory focus predicts different dating outcomes (success), and 4) the relationships between regulatory focus and online dating success would be mediated by online dating strategies. That is, promotion-focused individuals will use strategies aimed at maximizing the chances of finding good matches, which in turn will lead to a higher number of dates with more people but a lower likelihood of developing a long-term relationship; prevention-focused individuals will use strategies aimed at minimizing the chances of ending up with a poor match, which in turn will lead to a lower number of dates but a higher likelihood of finding a romantic partner.

2 Method

2.1 Participants
Two-hundred six current online daters were recruited through Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to complete an online survey about their online dating experience. Participants were eligible for the study if they had used or were using online dating sites that offer algorithm-selection (e.g., eHarmony, PlentyOfFish) or self-selection (e.g., OkCupid). Thirty-five participants who had only used location-based dating platforms (e.g., Tinder, Bumble) were excluded from the main analysis because such platforms are less amenable to the use of specific promotion and prevention strategies such as filter setting. Six participants were deemed careless respondents as they failed a standard attention check recommended by Meade & Craig (2012) and therefore were excluded prior to hypothesis testing, leaving a total sample of 163 participants. Our study’s 22% exclusion rate is within the expected range reported by previous research on online studies (Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2012).
Participants were 76 female and 87 male (\(M_{\text{age}} = 34.14\), age range: 21-72 years) individuals currently using online dating websites (\(M_{\text{use duration}} = 14.20\) months, \(SD = 11.70\)). Included (\(N = 163\)) and excluded (\(N = 43\)) participants did not differ on education levels, average incomes, and our key predictor variables (regulatory focus, extraversion, and neuroticism; \(Fs < 2.82, ps > .09\)).

2.2 Procedure and Materials

Participants first completed a pre-screening questionnaire which asked whether and how often they used online dating, their motives for using online dating (e.g., finding a romantic partner vs. finding a casual sex partner), and the kinds of sites they used. Those who met the eligibility criteria (i.e., currently or have been using online dating sites) were redirected to the online survey page hosted by Qualtrics. Participants completed a set of individual difference measures, including regulatory focus (Winterheld & Simpson, 2011), the Big Five personality inventory (BFI-10; Rammstedt & John, 2007), attachment-related anxiety in romantic relationships (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000), beliefs about romantic relationships (ITR-22; Knee, 1996), fear of being single (FBS; Spielmann et al., 2013), a self-reported mate value (MVI-7; Kirsner, Figueredo, & Jacobs, 2003), self-esteem (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965), rejection sensitivity (A-RSQ; Berenson et al., 2009), and perfectionism (PSP; Hewitt et al., 2003)\(^1\). They next completed a survey in which they indicated the strategies they used when finding a partner online and their success in going on dates and finding a romantic partner.

2.2.1 Regulatory Focus in Relationships Measure

Regulatory focus was assessed using a modified version (Regulatory Focus in Relationships Scale; Winterheld & Simpson, 2011) of Lockwood et al.’s Regulatory Focus Scale (2002). The 15-item measure was modified to capture strategic inclinations in romantic relationships with seven prevention- and eight promotion-items. The items were rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale, anchored at 1 (\textit{strongly disagree}) and 7 (\textit{strongly agree}). The two subscales are conceptualized as orthogonal and tapping into individual’s promotion-focused (e.g., “In general, I am striving to nurture, grow, and enhance my relationships”) and prevention-focused romantic...

\(^1\) My thesis is a subset of a larger study examining individual differences in online dating strategies and outcome. Measures that were not the central focus of the present research (e.g., perfectionism measures) were not analyzed, therefore not discussed further.
motivations (e.g., “In general, I am striving to protect and stabilize my relationships”). Both subscales had good internal reliabilities (promotion focus, $\alpha = .82$; prevention focus, $\alpha = .86$).

Some past researchers have computed a Regulatory Focus Index (RFI) by subtracting standardized prevention scores from standardized promotion scores and used this difference score as a measure of dominant regulatory focus (e.g., Avnet & Higgins, 2006; Bohns & Higgins, 2011; Higgins et al., 2001). Promotion and prevention focus, however, are not conceptualized as bipolar (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Haws, Dholakia, & Bearden, 2010; Higgins, 1997). As in previous research using this scale (Winterheld & Simpson, 2011), promotion and prevention scores in my sample were modestly correlated, $r(161) = .16$, $p = .05$. Accordingly, I computed promotion and prevention scores separately rather than creating a single measure of dominant regulatory focus.

2.2.2 Personality Measure

Extraversion and neuroticism were measured using BFI-10 (Rammstedt & John, 2007). Participants self-rated how much adjectives related to extraversion (e.g., “outgoing, sociable”) and neuroticism (e.g., “gets nervous easily”) described their personalities using a five-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). Both extraversion and neuroticism had adequate inter-reliabilities ($\alpha = .71$).

2.2.3 Online Dating Questionnaire (See Appendix A)

After completing the individual difference measures, participants next completed a set of items regarding their online dating strategies. There were two measures of participants’ filter use. Filters are a dating website tool that allows site users to shortlist dating profiles based on attributes the users indicate as desirable or undesirable in potential partners. For example, a nonsmoker might filter out profiles of individuals who indicate that they are smokers. The first measure was a self-report in which participants indicated how many filters they use on a 3-point scale with labels “none,” “few,” and “lots.” Then they were given a list of 24 filters—such as age, education level, and ethnicity—that are frequently available in dating websites, and were asked to indicate all the ones they would normally use by checking them off on the list. The number of filters could range from a minimum of zero (i.e., participants using no filters) to a maximum of 24 (i.e., participants checking off all 24 filters). The average number of filters participants selected was 8.26 ($SD = 5.29$).
Next, participants completed a set of items that assessed their preferred strategies across three key stages of online dating: Profile browsing, messaging, and modality switching. Each stage was treated as a subscale of the measure which together comprised the online dating strategy as a whole. Participants indicated the extent to which each statement described their usual way of navigating online dating sites on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = disagree strongly, 7 = agree strongly).

The profile browsing subscale assessed the amount of time and effort participants invested in screening dating profiles (e.g., “I tend to read each profile very carefully, considering everything the person writes,” “I typically give each profile a quick run-through but don’t pore over every detail” (reverse-scored)). The messaging subscale measured how online daters corresponded with other site users (e.g., “I only respond when someone sends me a message if I’m sure that I really want to get into a conversation,” “I almost always respond when someone sends me a message” (reverse-scored)). The modality switching subscale examined the process of arranging face-to-face meetings (e.g., “I am careful to make sure I really want to meet someone before I go on a date with someone,” “I am happy to go on lots of dates to find the right person” (reverse-scored)). Subscale intercorrelations are presented in Table 1. All three subscales had acceptable to good reliabilities (αs = .73 – .85) as shown in the diagonal matrix of Table 1. Two of eight messaging subscale items that had item-total correlations below the recommended .40 (i.e., rs < .26; Ladhari, 2010) were dropped, which increased the subscale’s Cronbach’s alpha from .78 to .80.

2.2.4 Subjective Online Dating Success (See Appendix B)

Finally, participants completed a set of items aimed at assessing their success in online dating. The online dating success questionnaire was designed to examine participants’ subjective success in finding relationship partners through online dating (e.g., “I have had a lot of success in messaging back and forth with people,” “I am satisfied with my online dating experience”). Three items were adopted from the strategic success subscale of Gibbs et al.’s Perceived Success measure (2006). Participants indicated how much they agreed with 19 statements using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = disagree strongly, 7 = agree strongly). One item was deleted as it had an item-total correlation below .40 (i.e., r = .15; Ladhari, 2010). The resultant measure had an excellent reliability (α = .95).
2.2.5 Online Dating Outcome

Participants were also asked to report on their online dating outcomes. They indicated whether they had gone on a date with someone they met through online dating and recorded the number of people they had gone on first dates with. Those who answered “yes” to the first question were asked if they had gone on multiple dates with any of those people and the number of people they had gone on repeated dates with. Then they indicated whether they had developed a serious/committed romantic relationship with someone they met through online dating and the number of these romantic partners.

2.3 Data analysis

I used R (3.4.1, R Core Team, 2017) and the R-packages bindrcpp (0.2, Müller, 2017), boot (1.3.19, Davison & Hinkley, 1997), dplyr (0.7.2, Wickham, Francois, Henry, & Müller, 2017), lattice (0.20.35, Sarkar, 2008), MASS (7.3.47, Venables & Ripley, 2002), plyr (Wickham, 2011; 1.8.4, Wickham et al., 2017), pscl (1.4.9, Zeileis, Kleiber, & Jackman, 2008), and sandwich (2.4.0, Zeileis, 2004, 2006) for analyses in this thesis.

3 Results

3.1 Online Dating Use

On average, participants used more than one dating site simultaneously ($M_{sites} = 2.69$, $SD = 1.46$) and 59.3% reported that they used online dating at least 3 to 5 times a week. The most popular reasons for using online dating was to meet new people (18.40%), followed by to experiment with online dating (18.40%), and to casually date (15.50%).

3.2 Online Dating Strategy

The online dating strategy questionnaire measured how people navigated three key stages of online dating, namely profile browsing, messaging, and modality switching. Each stage, therefore, was treated as an independent variable that made up the online dating strategy as a whole. For the profile subscale, lower scores indicate a tendency to quickly browse through dating profiles, whereas higher scores indicate a tendency to invest time and effort in screening prospective partners by carefully reading each profile in detail. For the messaging subscale, lower scores indicate contacting other site users frequently and rather indiscriminately, whereas
higher scores indicate more selectivity in messaging and responding to online messages. For the modality switching subscale, lower scores indicate a more casual strategy of setting up dates with a variety of individuals, whereas higher scores indicate setting up only a few dates with individuals who have been carefully screened in advance.

3.2.1 Online Dating Strategy and Individual Difference Predictors

Although the current research included measures of insecure attachment styles (ECR-R; Fraley et al., 2000), self-esteem (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965), rejection sensitivity (A-RSQ; Berenson et al., 2009), fear of being single (FBS; Spielmann et al., 2013), and implicit theories of interpersonal relationships (ITR-22; Knee, 1996), the main focus of my thesis focuses on the effects of regulatory focus and their correlates (i.e., extraversion and neuroticism) on online dating experience. Exploratory correlational analyses on the associations between aforementioned individual difference variables and online dating strategy subscales and online dating outcomes were conducted and the results are presented in Appendices C and D.

3.2.2 Online Dating Strategy and Regulatory Focus

I hypothesized that promotion and prevention focus would predict different online dating strategies during the key stages of filter setting, profile browsing, messaging, and modality switching. I predicted that promotion-focused individuals would be more likely to use fewer filters, skim through many profiles, correspond with more people, and set up more dates. Conversely, I predicted that prevention-focused individuals would be more likely to set more filters, browse few profiles carefully, engage in more selective messaging, and go on dates with only a few individuals.

3.2.2.1 Analytic Strategy

For each online dating stage, I used a similar analytic approach. I conducted a regression analysis in which I entered extraversion and neuroticism in the first step. I then entered promotion and prevention focus simultaneously in the second step. This enabled me to test whether promotion and prevention independently predicted use of each strategy, over and above extraversion and neuroticism. Although the predictor variables were moderately correlated, the variance inflation factors were all below the recommended 2.5 (i.e., < 1.70; Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 1998).
3.2.2.2 Filter Use

I first examined whether filter use was differentially predicted by regulatory focus. The first measure of filter use rank-ordered participants into three groups based on their reported amount of filter use: 1) “none”, 2) “few”, and 3) “lots.” Therefore, I conducted an ordinal logistic regression with a logit link function. Filter use was modelled as a function of promotion and prevention focus, controlling for their respective covariates, extraversion and neuroticism. As shown in Table 2, promotion focus did not predict the amount of filter use \((b = 0.19, \text{SE} = 0.20, p = 0.34, \text{Odds Ratio} = 1.20:1)\). As hypothesized, prevention focus predicted more filter use \((b = 0.36, \text{SE} = 0.17, p = .03, \text{Odds Ratio} = 1.43:1)\) when promotion focus and other covariates (i.e., neuroticism and extraversion) were held constant. The number of filters\(^2\) participants reported using replicated the result above; promotion focus did not significantly predict how many filters participants chose \((b = 0.04, \text{SE} = 0.03, z (158) = 1.18, p = .24)\) but prevention focus predicted using more filters \((b = 0.09, \text{SE} = 0.03, z(158) = 3.30, p < .001)\). The estimates for the full model are summarized in Table 3.

3.2.2.3 Online Dating Questionnaire Subscales

I then examined whether online dating strategy was differentially predicted by promotion and prevention focus. To account for correlations between the three subscales, a multivariate regression was conducted where the online dating strategy in profile browsing, messaging, and modality switching was regressed simultaneously on promotion and prevention focus. With the use of Pillai’s criterion, online dating strategy was predicted by promotion focus, \(F(3, 158) = 13.27, p < .001\) and prevention focus, \(F(3, 158) = 13.95, p < .001\), but not by their interaction, \(F(3,157) = 2.07, p = .11\). As well, regulatory focus significantly predicted online dating strategy as a whole, above and beyond its covariates (i.e., extraversion and neuroticism) \(F(6, 158) = 9.57, p <.001\).

\(^2\)The number of filters participants selected on of the list of 24 filters represents a count variable which violates a normality assumption necessary for traditional regression analyses. Therefore, the number of chosen filters was analyzed using a Poisson regression with a log link function.
3.2.2.3.1 Profile Browsing

Regulatory focus differentially predicted how people browsed dating profiles; however, the directions of these associations were not consistent with my predictions. Contrary to my hypothesis, promotion focus did not predict skimming through many profiles; rather, it predicted carefully browsing of a few profiles, $b = 0.42, SE = 0.08, t(158) = 5.33, p < .001$. Prevention focus instead predicted browsing profiles more superficially, $b = -0.23, SE = 0.07, t(158) = -3.34, p = .001$. Neither extraversion nor neuroticism significantly predicted the profile browsing strategy ($ps > .11$).

3.2.2.3.2 Messaging

The association between promotion focus and the messaging subscale was not significant ($b = -0.14, SE = 0.11, t(158) = -1.28, p = .20$). The hypothesized association between prevention focus and a selective messaging practice was also not supported ($b = -0.08, SE = 0.09, t(158) = -0.91, p = .36$). Neither extraversion nor neuroticism significantly predicted the messaging strategy ($ps > .21$).

3.2.2.3.3 Modality Switching

Inconsistent with my hypothesis, promotion focus was not associated with arranging face-to-face meetings with many users, $b = 0.09, SE = 0.09, t(158) = 1.01, p = .32$. Prevention focus was also not associated with cautiously setting offline dates, $b = 1.12, SE = 0.07, t(158) = 1.59, p < .11$. Neuroticism was not a significant predictor of modality switching ($p = .18$); however, extraversion was a significant predictor of a tendency to arrange face-to-face meetings with many people ($b = -0.18, SE = 0.07, t(158) = -2.38, p = 0.02$).

Taken together, regulatory focus predicted patterns of filter use and profile browsing when extraversion and neuroticism were held constant. Prevention-focused online daters used more filters and were more likely to skim through more profiles than promotion-focused online daters. Regulatory focus did not significantly predict strategies in messaging and modality switching when extraversion and neuroticism were controlled for.
3.3 Online Dating Success

Can promotion and prevention focus differentially predict online dating success, above and beyond personality traits? To test this, four separate analyses were conducted to predict perceived success and three online dating outcomes (i.e., going on a date, going on repeated dates, and finding a serious relationship partner) with promotion and prevention focus as the predictor variables and extraversion and neuroticism as their covariates.

3.3.1 Perceived online dating success.

In online dating, the instant access to a large pool of potential dates, which would otherwise be limited by time and geography, fulfills the promotion goals of exploring as many options as possible (Finkel et al., 2009). To the extent that promotion-focused individuals can scan through a variety of potential dates and go on more dates, they may feel like their online dating experience is more successful. Thus, I hypothesized that promotion focus would predict higher subjective online dating success. I tested my prediction using a hierarchical multiple regression analysis. To ensure that the online dating success was not entirely attributable to the individual differences in extraversion and neuroticism, they were entered as the covariates in the first step and regulatory focus was entered in the subsequent step. Although promotion focus was highly correlated with these covariates as shown in Table 4, the collinearity statistics (i.e., Tolerance and VIF) were all within the acceptable limits (Hair et al., 1998) and the average tolerance statistic was below 1 (i.e., 0.77; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Extraversion and neuroticism accounted for 23.39% of the variance in subjective online dating success ($R^2 = .24$). Extraversion was a positive predictor of perceived online dating success ($b = 0.24, SE = 0.09, t(160) = 2.78, p = .01$), whereas neuroticism was a negative predictor ($b = -0.43, SE = 0.10, t(160) = -4.42, p < .001$). These two covariates remained significant ($p < .01$) after promotion and prevention were entered in step 2. Consistent with my hypothesis, promotion focus significantly predicted online dating success, over and above extraversion, $b = 0.33, SE = 0.10, t(158) = 3.50, p < .001$. Prevention focus, on the other hand, was not a significant predictor of perceived online dating success, $b = 0.09, SE = 0.08, t(158) = 1.21, p = .23$. Regulatory focus accounted for an additional 8.2% of the variance in online dating success, and this change in $R^2$ was significant, $F(2,158) = 9.47, p < .001$. Overall, the four
independent variables explained 31.59% of variance in subjective online dating success, \( F(4,\ 158) = 18.24, \ p < .001 \). The parameter estimates are summarized in Table 5.

3.3.2 Online Dating Outcomes

I argued that promotion focus and prevention focus would predict different dating outcomes. Specifically, I hypothesized that promotion focus would predict a higher likelihood of going on a date with more people but a lower likelihood of developing a romantic relationship through online dating. I further hypothesized that the opposite would be true for prevention focus, which would be associated with a lower likelihood of going on date and lower number of dates, but a higher likelihood of finding a romantic partner. Driven by a heightened need to explore and actively pursue opportunities for good dates, promotion-focused online daters may indeed enjoy the short-term success of going on more dates with more people. The same need, however, may be detrimental in the long-run; promotion-focused online daters may continue attending to and pursuing other potential dates readily accessible through dating websites (Finkel et al., 2009). Conversely, cautious prevention-focused online daters may not enjoy the initial success of going on as many dates as the promotion-focused individuals; however, they may be better able to rule out bad dates and develop a lasting romantic relationship.

3.3.2.1 Analytic Strategy

To test these predictions, a zero-adjusted negative binomial (ZANB) model was used. The ZANB model simultaneously predicts the likelihood of the outcome occurring as a binomial model and the number of the outcome occurring as a count model. Thus, the binomial model with a logit link function predicts the likelihood of online dating outcomes ever happening (e.g., the likelihood of ever going on a date), whereas the count model with a negative binomial distribution predicts the number of online dating outcomes among those who have achieved given outcomes (e.g., number of relationship partners among those who had developed romantic relationship). Non-nested likelihood ratio test (Vuong, 1989) indicated that the ZANB model was superior to a standard negative binomial model (\( ps < .02 \)) except for the date outcome, which was only marginally significant (\( z = -1.59, \ p = .06 \)). Across all the analyses, extraversion and neuroticism were entered as covariates to examine the variance in dating outcomes uniquely explained by regulatory focus. Furthermore, 5,000 bootstrapped resamples were used to estimate regression coefficients’ standard errors and 95% confidence intervals.
3.3.2.2 Going on dates

Contrary to my prediction, promotion focus did not predict a higher likelihood of going on a date ($b = 0.31, SE = 0.35, 95\% CI [-0.28, 1.12], Odds Ratio = 1.36:1$). Instead, prevention focus predicted lower chances of ever going on a date, $b = -0.60, SE = 0.35, 95\% CI [-1.45, -0.05], Odds Ratio = 0.55:1$. That is, every unit decrease in prevention focus increased the odds of going on a date by 50%. Among those who did go on a date, number of dates were not predicted by promotion focus ($b = 0.16, SE = 0.17, 95\% CI [-0.21, 0.44]$) or prevention focus ($b = -0.20, SE = 0.12, 95\% CI [-0.42, 0.04]$). Regulatory focus was not a significant predictor of a number of people they went on repeated dates with or the probability of going on repeated dates.

3.3.2.3 Developing serious relationships

My hypothesis that prevention focus would predict a higher likelihood of developing a romantic relationship was not supported ($b = -0.12, SE = 0.16, 95\% CI [-0.45, 0.19]$). Among those who had developed romantic relationships, promotion focus predicted having fewer serious relationship partners, $b = -0.40, SE = 0.21, 95\% CI [-0.90, -0.06]$. Prevention focus did not significantly predict the number of serious relationships, $b = -0.18, SE = 0.17, 95\% CI [-0.44, 0.22]$.

I conducted a post hoc analysis to better understand what the number of romantic partners might reflect. Specifically, I examined whether a number of relationship partner was inversely related to the average duration of relationships, such that a higher number of romantic partners represented having multiple short-term relationships and a lower number represented having a few long-term relationships. In my sample of 57 participants who had met serious relationship partners through online dating, the number of relationship partner ranged from one to five with a mode of 1 partner ($M = 1.72, SD = 1.06$). The average duration of the committed relationships was 15 months ($SD = 21.55$). The analysis revealed that participants’ numbers of relationship partners and the average durations of these relationships were not correlated, $r(161) = 0.06, p = .44$. Moreover, the average duration of relationships was not significantly predicted by any of the predictor variables ($ps < .26$). The results suggest that having fewer romantic partners may reflect committing to fewer relationships.
In sum, regulatory focus differentially predicted relationship outcomes; however, the specific associations I had predicted between regulatory focus and dating success were not supported. Rather, the results revealed that prevention focus was associated with the reduced chances of ever going on a date and promotion focus was associated with having fewer serious romantic relationship partners when covariates of extraversion and neuroticism were held constant. The estimates for each online dating outcome are summarized in Tables 6–8.

4 Discussion

I investigated how people use online dating to meet their romantic goals. I posited that individual differences in regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997) would influence online dating strategies which in turn would lead to different online dating outcomes. As hypothesized, regulatory focus predicted distinct sets of online dating strategies during the stages of filter setting and profile browsing. In messaging and modality switching stages, the effects of regulatory focus were not significant when its covariates (i.e., extraversion and neuroticism) were controlled for. Moreover, the directions of the associations between regulatory focus and online dating strategies were inconsistent with my predictions. Compared to promotion-focused online daters, prevention-focused online daters set more filters as expected; however, they were not more likely to screen dating profiles more carefully. Instead, they were more likely to skim through online dating profiles, whereas promotion-focused online daters studied few dating profiles more carefully. When the effects of extraversion and neuroticism were controlled for, regulatory focus no longer predicted how people corresponded and set up offline dates with other site users. The findings suggest that regulatory focus makes a significant contribution in predicting the overall online dating strategy through its effects on how people shortlist and browse dating profiles, but not through how people message other users and arrange face-to-face meetings.

Although the hypothesized positive association between promotion focus and subjective online success was supported, the predicted dating outcomes as a function of regulatory focus were not supported. To my surprise, regulatory focus did not predict higher chances of successful outcomes; instead, promotion focus predicted having fewer romantic partners, and prevention focus predicted lower chances of ever going on a date through online dating.

Promotion and prevention focus predicted online dating strategy as a whole, above and beyond extraversion and neuroticism. Their effects were, however, limited to how people filtered and
screened dating profiles; regulatory focus was not a significant predictor during the subsequent stages of online correspondence and modality switching when extraversion and neuroticism were controlled for. Although prevention focus did not predict going on fewer dates, it did predict a lower likelihood of ever going on a date when other covariates, including extraversion—a strong predictor of short-term mating success (Buss & Barnes, 1986)—did not. Only promotion focus but not neuroticism—the most reliable predictor of poor relationship outcomes (Karney & Bradbury, 1995)—predicted fewer serious relationship partners. Although many of my hypotheses were not supported, my findings highlight unique roles of regulatory focus in the context of romantic relationships. Future research should investigate the complex interplay between the effects of regulatory focus across different stages of relationship development.

4.1 Limitations and Future Directions

The current research was largely exploratory with a new measure designed to examine different strategies online daters might use. Although all subscales of online dating questionnaire showed acceptable reliabilities and associations with individual difference variables in the expected directions, the validity of the measure should further be tested with confirmatory factor analyses across different samples.

In the present study, I examined regulatory focus as a predictor of different online dating strategies and success. It may be that other individual difference variables will prove more important in determining the strategies that individuals choose to pursue. For example, gender differences in online dating strategy may resemble the traditional gender roles of male assertiveness and female passivity as reported in past studies (e.g., Fiore, Taylor, Zhong, Mendelsohn, & Cheshire, 2010). Self-esteem and attachment styles may be important predictors of online dating strategies as the preliminary correlational analyses in Appendix C show. Moreover, future research should address whether regulatory focus interacts with other individual difference variables to differentially predict online dating strategies.

Although one of the eligibility criteria for this study was using online dating for the purpose of finding a potential partner (e.g., to casually date or find a marriage partner), the individual differences in what constituted as “online dating success” was not accounted for. Different definitions of online dating success may indeed underlie the discrepancies between perceived online dating success and actual online dating outcome, as was the case for promotion-focused
participants in this study. An open-ended question on how participants define online dating success should be included to account for the individual differences.

The current research had an assumption that people would use similar online dating strategies across time. This assumption was based on past research demonstrating the stabilities of personality traits (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999) and chronic regulatory focus (Haws et al., 2010) to the extent that these individual differences would, in turn, shape online dating strategies. A future study should address if the assumed stability of online dating strategy is warranted by conducting a longitudinal study.

4.2 Conclusion

The present research explored whether individual differences in promotion and prevention focus would shape how people navigate online dating. However, the association between regulatory focus and the profile browsing strategy were inconsistent with my prediction: Promotion focus predicted careful screening, whereas prevention focus predicted quick skimming of dating profiles. Independent of their effects on online dating strategies, promotion focus predicted higher perceived online dating success; yet this was not substantiated by the actual dating outcomes. Promotion focus instead predicted fewer committed relationships and prevention focus predicted a lower likelihood of ever going on a date with someone they met through online dating.
References


Appendices

Appendix A. Online Dating Questionnaire

Profile Browsing Subscale

1. I prefer dating sites that have profiles that are short and easy to scan.
2. I prefer dating sites that use profiles that provide a lot of information
3. I consider all parts of the profile, not just the photo
4. I focus on the photo and don’t spend much time on the rest of the profile.
5. I tend to read each profile very carefully, considering everything the person writes
6. I typically give each profile a quick run-through but don’t pore over every detail

Messaging Subscale

R 1. I am happy to respond to anyone who sends me a message.
R 2. I almost always respond when someone sends me a message
R 3. I often send messages out to people
4. I am very selective about responding to messages.
5. I rarely message anyone back through online dating.
6. I am very cautious about responding to messages.
* 7. I go through many profiles before I select someone to contact.
* 8. I respond only when I’m sure that I really want to get into a conversation with the person.

Modality Switching Subscale

1. I am cautious about setting up dates through online dating.
2. I make sure I really want to meet someone before I go on an offline date with that person.
3. I try to avoid dating someone if I’m not very sure the date will go well.
4. I want to avoid bad dates at all costs.
5. I am afraid of having negative dating experiences – I’d rather avoid dating altogether than risk bad dates
6. I would rather avoid going on a date with someone I met online than risk bad dates.
7. I think it is risky to go out and meet someone new because it might not work out.
8. I am very selective about whom I date.
R 9. I am happy to go on lots of dates to find the right person
R 10. I avoid meeting anyone unless I’m sure they are a really good possibility
R 11. I am willing to have some bad dates along the way as long as I meet the right person in the end.
R 12. I think it’s fun to go out and meet someone new, even if it doesn’t work out.
R 13. I am willing to go on lots of dates to find the right person.
R 14. I’m willing to go on a date with someone even if I’m not very sure that he/she is “perfect.”

Note. Items were not presented in the following order. Items marked with (R) were reverse-scored.
*Items 7 and 8 of messaging subscale were removed due to low item-total correlations.
Appendix B. Online Dating Success Questionnaire

1. Online dating is effective at helping me achieve my romantic goals.
* 2. My relationships that start through online dating often end after the first date.
  3. I am satisfied with my online dating experience.
  4. I will use (or continue using) online dating in the future.
  5. I would recommend dating websites to my friends and family.
R  7. I have not had much success in messaging back and forth on dating websites.
a  8. I have developed a strategy or strategies for online dating.
R  9. Online dating is not really helping me connect with possible dating partners.
   10. I have already had a lot of success with online dating.
   11. I feel like online dating is helping me to get in touch with people whom I can date.
R  12. I am not convinced I will find a relationship partner through online dating.
a  13. I feel I am able to achieve my relationship goals through online dating.
   14. I am sure that I will meet someone special through online dating.
R  15. I don't feel like online dating has been very successful for me.
   16. I feel like I have connected with a lot of great people through online dating.
   17. I feel like online dating works well for me.
R  18. I feel like I have not made any meaningful connections through online dating.
a  19. I feel hopeful about meeting someone special through online dating.

Note. The order of items was randomized across participants.
*item #2 removed due to low item-total correlation.
aQuestions are adopted from revised perceived success questionnaire (Gibbs, Ellison, & Heino, 2006).
Items marked with (R) are reverse-scored.
### Appendix C. Full table of individual differences in online dating strategies

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**Note.** *p < .05; **p < .01. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively.

*a Coefficients represent estimated Poisson regression coefficients regressing the filter number, a count variable, on each predictor variables.
## Appendix D. Correlation table of individual differences in online dating outcomes

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<td>.28**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Promotion Focus</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Prevention Focus</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.17*</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Extraversion</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Neuroticism</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-.46**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Self-Esteem</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>-.42**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>-.67**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Anxious Attachment</td>
<td>-.33**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td>-.65**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Avoidant Attachment</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>-.47**</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Rejection Sensitivity</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Fear of Being Single</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td>-.39**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>-.52**</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Mate Value</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.161*</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>-.59**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>-.49**</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**M**  
4.68  
5.35  
3.91  
3.23  
2.33  
21.16  
3.1  
2.94  
9.13  
2.71  
1.58

**SD**  
1.24  
0.95  
1.24  
1.13  
0.98  
6.7  
1.42  
1.2  
4.15  
1.13  
0.83

**Note.** *p < .05; **p < .01. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively.

^a Coefficients represent point-biserial correlation coefficients ($r_{pb}$) as the outcome variables were dichotomous (each outcome coded as 0 = no, 1 = yes).
### Table

**Table 1**

*Correlations Between Online Dating Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Profile Browsing</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>(0.73)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Messaging</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>(0.80)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[.06, .36]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Modality Switching</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>(0.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[.00, .30]</td>
<td></td>
<td>[0.54, .72]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.*  *p* < .05; **p* < .01.

Entries on the diagonal matrix in brackets are Cronbach’s alpha. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each correlation coefficient.
Table 2

Summary of Ordinal Logistic Regression for Variables Predicting Filter Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threshold</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>SE b</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI Lower</th>
<th>95% CI Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no vs. few filters</td>
<td>-2.27</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-8.52</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>few vs. lots of filters</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-1.20</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention Focus</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>2.15*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Focus</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05. OR = Odds Ratio. CI = Confidence interval.
Table 3

*Summary of Poisson Regression for Variables Predicting Number of Filters Chosen*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE b</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>2.10*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>76.46</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>2.05 - 2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>0.02 - 0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.99</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.11 - 0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention Focus</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>0.03 - 0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Focus</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-0.03 - 0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p* < .05. **p** < .001. CI = Confidence interval.
Table 4

*Univariate and Bivariate Statistics for Regulatory Focus and Covariates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Promotion Focus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prevention Focus</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Extraversion</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Neuroticism</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-.46**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p* < .05; **p* < .01. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. *VIF* = Variance inflation factor.
### Hierarchical Multiple Regression Assessing the Relationship Between Regulatory Focus and Online Dating Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>$b$ (95% CI)</th>
<th>$\beta$ (95% CI)</th>
<th>$sr^2$ (95% CI)</th>
<th>$r$ (95% CI)</th>
<th>Fit</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>4.67** [4.51, 4.84]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.24** [0.07, 0.41]</td>
<td>0.22 [0.06, 0.37]</td>
<td>0.04 [-.01, .09]</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>-0.43** [-0.63, -0.24]</td>
<td>-0.34 [-0.50, -0.19]</td>
<td>0.09 [.01, .17]</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = .23**$

95% CI [.12, .33]

| (Intercept)       | 4.67** [4.51, 4.83] |                  |                |            |     |            |
| Extraversion      | 0.22** [0.06, 0.38] | 0.20 [0.06, 0.35] | 0.03 [-.01, .08] | .37**      |     |            |
| Neuroticism       | -0.40** [-0.61, -0.18] | -0.31 [-0.48, -0.15] | 0.06 [-.00, .12] | -.44**     |     |            |
| Promotion focus   | 0.33** [0.15, 0.52] | 0.26 [0.11, 0.40] | 0.05 [-.00, .11] | .41**      |     |            |
| Prevention focus  | 0.09 [-0.06, 0.25] | 0.09 [-0.06, 0.25] | 0.01 [-.01, .03] | -.05       |     |            |

$R^2 = .32**$

$\Delta R^2 = .08**$

95% CI [.19, .41]

95% CI [.01, .15]

**Note.** *p < .05; ** p < .01.

All predictors were centered at their means. A significant $b$-weight indicates the beta-weight and semi-partial correlation are also significant. $b$ represents unstandardized regression weights; $\beta$ indicates the standardized regression weights; $sr^2$ represents the semi-partial correlation squared; $r$ represents the zero-order correlation. $LL$ and $UL$ indicate the lower and upper limits of a confidence interval, respectively.
Table 6

Zero-Adjusted Model Predicting Going on a Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of dates</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(N = 142)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE b</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2.05**</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.53**</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.42*</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Odds of going on a date</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(N = 163)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE b</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2.17*</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>-0.60*</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

All variables were centered at their means. Standard errors, odds ratios, and confidence intervals are estimated with 5,000 bootstrapped samples. OR = Odds Ratio. CI = confidence interval.
Table 7

Zero-Adjusted Model Predicting Going on Repeated Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>95% CI Lower</th>
<th>95% CI Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of repeated dates (N = 124)</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>1.26**</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>-0.21*</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Odds of going on repeated dates (N = 163)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>95% CI Lower</th>
<th>95% CI Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>1.37***</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.46*</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p <.05. **p <.01.
All variables were centered at their means. Standard errors, odds ratios, and confidence intervals are estimated with 5,000 bootstrapped samples. OR = Odds Ratio. CI = confidence interval.
Table 8

Zero-Adjusted Model Predicting Finding a Serious Relationship Partner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of relationship partner ($N = 57$)</th>
<th>$b$</th>
<th>SE $b$</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.37*</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>-0.40*</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.44</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Odds of developing relationship ($N = 163$)</th>
<th>$b$</th>
<th>SE $b$</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>-0.66**</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.
All variables were centered at their means. Standard errors, odds ratios, and confidence intervals are estimated with 5,000 bootstrapped samples. OR = Odds Ratio. CI = confidence interval.