Who are you &
Who do you choose to be?
Self-presentation in the online dating environment

Qing Chang
Advisor: Prof. Alexandra Solomon
Instructor: Prof. Joseph P. Ferrie

June 6, 2012
## Contents

Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................. 2

Abstract .................................................................................................................................. 3

1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 4

2. Literature Review ................................................................................................................. 6

3. Hypotheses and Methodology ............................................................................................... 9
   3.1 Hypotheses ......................................................................................................................... 9
   3.2 Methodology ...................................................................................................................... 9
      3.2.1 Participants and Procedure .......................................................................................... 10
      3.2.2 Measures ................................................................................................................... 11

4. Results and Analysis ............................................................................................................. 16
   4.1 Summary .......................................................................................................................... 16
   4.2 Coding .............................................................................................................................. 17
   4.3 Data Analysis .................................................................................................................... 21
      4.3.1 H1 .............................................................................................................................. 21
      4.3.2 H2 .............................................................................................................................. 22
      4.3.3 H3 .............................................................................................................................. 23

5. Discussion ............................................................................................................................ 23

6. Conclusion ............................................................................................................................ 27

References .................................................................................................................................. 30

Appendix .................................................................................................................................. 33

Appendix I .................................................................................................................................. 33
Appendix II .................................................................................................................................. 39
Appendix III ............................................................................................................................... 40
Appendix IV ............................................................................................................................... 41
Appendix V ............................................................................................................................... 42
Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my advisor, Prof. Alexandra Solomon for her invaluable guidance, insights and encouragement throughout the past year. Her patience and support motivated me to overcome all the difficulties and this thesis would not be possible without her. I would also like to thank Prof. Eli Finkel for his generous sharing of his work that inspires me to start this research project. I am also grateful to Mrs. Dacey for her generous funding of the Michael F. Dacey Research Grants that enables me to distribute surveys and pursue my research goals. In addition, I would like to thank Damir Utrzan, Nicholas S. Getzendanner and Prof. Benjamin J. Gorvine for their kind assistance in my thesis writing process. Last but not least, I would like to thank Prof. Joseph P. Ferrie, Prof. William Rogerson and Sarah M. Ferrer for their patient guidance and assistance throughout my years at Northwestern University.
Abstract

As online dating services become increasingly popular, is perceived deception online – the old social stigma associated with Internet dating – still a prevalent phenomenon nowadays? This paper studies the discrepancy between true personalities and online identities of Internet daters, and examines their self-presentation strategies. 311 eligible participants took part in the survey online and yielded supportive conclusions for the hypotheses. Regression analysis suggested that there is a moderate level of discrepancy between the true personalities and the online identities of Internet daters, and such discrepancy is affected by various factors including self-perception, use motives, personalities and criterion for ideal partners. Moreover, there exists a negative correlation between the discrepancy and the number of exclusive relationships formed through online dating websites, implying that it is probably more beneficial for Internet daters to present themselves genuinely online.
1. Introduction

With the rapid increase of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and increasing pace of working life, online dating is shaking off its social stigma and becoming more and more popular nowadays. Here we define online dating as a purposeful form of making contact and communicating with new people through a specifically designed internet site, usually with the objective of developing a personal, romantic or sexual relationship (Barraket & Henry-Waring, 2008). Currently there are hundreds of online dating websites, including the major ones such as match.com and eHarmony.com, providing users with opportunities to present their personalized profiles, review the profiles of others, search for prospective partners based on particular characteristics, send expressions of interest to other users, and facilitate synchronous (eg. Instant messaging) and asynchronous (eg, email) communication between users (Barraket and Henry-Waring, 2008). Ubiquitous access to the Internet, affordable subscription fee, exposure and opportunity to evaluate the large base of potential partners, and sophisticated self-presentation options of online dating websites appeal to millions of users as a convenient, flexible and efficient way to meet new people and search for life partners (Ellison, Heino and Gibbs, 2006). In 2003, at least 29 million Americans used an online dating service. This number has risen exponentially in the past decade. By the beginning of year 2012, just for eHarmony.com itself, the number of paid subscribers has reached 1.5 million – there are definitely more non-paying members.

Delayed responses, lack of cues in communication and diminished importance of physical characteristics make interactions in cyberspace significantly different from those in realspace. Research has shown that online dating website users employ a variety of self-presentation strategies, and that cyberspace respondents were more likely to engage in
misrepresentation in various areas than realspace respondents (Cornwell and Lundgren, 2001). Although some people allege that deception is pervasive in these dating systems and that has created a negative stereotype associated with their users, studies have shown that although some willful deception occurs at times, most of what appears to be deception actually results from effects of the media and peculiarities of the process of presenting oneself online (Fiore, 2008). There are many factors, such as personality, motives for using online dating services, seriousness in romantic relationships and past experiences that might affect one’s self-presentation strategies (Arertz, Demuth, Schmidt and Vierlein, 2010).

Therefore, my research aims to examine whether there are significant discrepancies between dating website users’ true personalities and their online identities. My research will further evaluate whether the existence of such discrepancy is determined by a variety of factors including self-perception, personality, use motive, seriousness in romantic relationships, and criteria for ideal partners. Additionally, my research will also study whether there is a correlation between the discrepancy and the short run and long run success in dating.

This paper is structured as follows: Section Two reviews the existing literature on deception and self-presentation in the online dating era, especially the work that served as the main inspiration for the survey I devised for this paper; Section Three lays out the hypotheses and the methodology I am using to examine the research question; Section Four describes the data, outlines the coding process and provides details of the regression analysis on the cleaned data; Section Five discusses the implications of the results; Lastly, Section Six identifies limitations of the study and concludes the research.
2. Literature Review

When online dating service first emerged in 1990s and early 2000s, it carried on the negative social stigma associated with traditional printed personal advertisements and perceived risks of deception online. Donn and Sherman conducted two studies in 2002 to examine young adults’ attitudes and practices about using the Internet to facilitate the formation of intimate relationships. They found that undergraduate students had more negative attitudes towards online matchmaking services than graduate students did and that participants in general expressed significant concerns about deceptions in the online dating environment.

However, in the past decade, with the technological innovations, growing popularity of media and social networking websites, as well as decreasing opportunities in finding life partners through friends or in the offices, Internet dating seems to have shed off its social stigma and become an increasingly pervasive means through which people seek for romantic partners (Finkel, et al., 2012). Does this suggest that nowadays deception is no longer a major concern for online dating users? Researches have shown mixed answers to this question.

Toma and Hancock compared specific physical characteristics of participants with their constructed online profiles in 2008 and discovered pervasive biased reporting online - 1/3 of the profile photos used on the dating websites were inaccurate, while 81% of the users lied about their physical appearance. A study examining the physical characteristics of a much larger sample of Internet daters (n = 21745) in comparison with the national averages found that men lied more about their height while women lied more about their weight (Hitsch, Hortaçsu, & Ariely, 2010). On a similar note, in a survey conducted by Madden and Lenhart in 2006, more than half of the internet users agreed that many online dating website users lied about their marital status. Though Internet daters seem to be more honest about their personalities rather
than appearance, researches have shown that internet dating also facilitates deceptive self-presentation in non-physical aspects. In the study examining how individuals’ reported personality characteristics and self-reported attractiveness change when they believe they are completing a dating profile rather than a personality questionnaire, men tend to change their self-reported personality characteristics to attract a potential date. They reported higher agreeableness and lower neuroticism to present themselves as a kind and emotionally stable partner when they expected to meet a date (Guadagno, Okdie, & Kruse, 2011).

However, Ellison and his colleagues investigated self-presentation strategies among online dating participants by conducting, transcribing, coding and analyzing qualitative telephone interviews with 34 active online-dating website users in 2006. They disproved previous statements that Internet daters “frequently, explicitly and intentionally ‘lied’ online”, as they needed to balance the potential benefits of using self-enhancing profiles against the future risks inherent in misrepresentation. The research identified lack of nonverbal cues and greater control over self-presentation inherent in the medium as the main reasons that users adopted self-image management strategies. They also suggested that social norms, pressure of exaggeration and nature of interpersonal perception promoted unintentional misrepresentation or perceived deception even without outright lies. Therefore, Internet daters might choose to create an online identity different from their true selves because of the “norm” that everyone is adopting certain deceptive self-presentation strategies or because of their inaccurate self-perception in the first place.

Many others researches recently supported Ellison’s view and identified additional factors that affected Internet daters’ self-presentation strategies that led to the perceived deception in the online dating environment.
In 2010, Arertz and his colleagues studied hundreds of German participants to identify different user types and use motives through cluster analysis. As different types of users possess different characteristics and motives, and engage in different usage patterns, they might also manage their images online differently for their individual interests. The questionnaire designed to measure use motives, personality, scalability and view on importance of relationship in their research served as the main inspiration and base model of my survey used in this thesis.

Meanwhile, studies suggested that background similarities remained as a key predictor of the relationship satisfaction for individuals involved in online romantic relationships, implying that criterion of individuals’ ideal partners could potentially affect their self-presentation strategies (Anderson & Emmers-Sommer, 2006). With the availability of customized search functions on online dating websites, people would opt to present themselves truthfully in order to find partners with similar interests to achieve higher relationship satisfaction. Or they may opt to associate themselves with certain characteristics and views in order to attract people with their aspirational qualities.

With the increasing popularity of the online dating services, the number of studies on the deception and self-presentation topic has exploded in the past decade. However, most of them relied on qualitative data collected from interviews or controlled experiments with fewer than 100 subjects, implying a relatively less comprehensive or rigorous analysis. Other more quantitative analyses are only found in foreign research using foreign data, which is not very representative of the US landscape of Internet dating. Hence, inspired by the model proposed by Arertz and his colleagues, my paper takes a more quantitative approach by analyzing a larger number of data collected through surveys distributed to users of major online dating websites in the United States.
3. Hypotheses and Methodology

3.1 Hypotheses

The findings in the literature reviewed in Section Two lead to the following hypotheses of my thesis:

**H1:** There is a moderately significant discrepancy between the true selves and online images of most online dating website users.

**H2:** The existence of discrepancy varies significantly with various factors, including but not limited to self-perception, personality, use motives, seriousness in romantic relationships, employment and current marital/relationship status, past encounters through dating websites, and criteria for ideal partners of online dating website users.

**H3:** The success rate in gaining immediate popularity online (defined by number of relationships) formed through online dating services, and in forming exclusive long-term relationships (defined by whether the participant is currently dating exclusively with someone online) is correlated with discrepancy between the online profiles and the true selves of Internet dating service users.

3.2 Methodology

To test these hypotheses, a survey questionnaire was designed to measure and quantify the characteristics of true selves, self-perception, online images, personalities, use motives, past experiences, seriousness regarding relationships, criteria for ideal partners and demographic information of online dating system users. The questionnaire was modeled after the one created
by Arertz, Demuth, Schmidt and Vierlein (2010), and it featured a range of multiple choice and short answer questions. The complete survey is included in Appendix I.

3.2.1 Participants and Procedure

To reach a large number of participants with diverse backgrounds within a short period of time, I published my survey and collected data through the Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) website. MTurk is an emerging online data collection portal that effectively recruits a fairly large and demographically diverse pool of participants who complete studies online for a small amount of credit rewards through MTurk’s integrated compensation system. MTurk has become increasingly popular among researchers in psychology and other social sciences as it seems to yield promising findings with high quality data in a rapid and inexpensive way. A number of scholarly literature recently suggested that MTurk participants are more diverse than the standard Internet and American college student samples. Although the compensation rate and task length affect participation of studies on MTurk, the data collected through MTurk has been found to be at least as reliable as data obtained via traditional survey methods (Burhmester, Kwang, Gosling, 2011).

Therefore, with the generous funding of a Michael F. Dacey Research Grant and the kind assistance of the psychology department at Northwestern University, I created my survey on Qualtrics, published it on MTurk, agreed to pay each participant $2.0 worth of electronic credit and collected data from more than 450 participants in two days.

In order to reach the targeted community of online dating website users, I set up two screening questions to limit the pool of survey takers. Only people who are currently active users of the online dating websites or past users who are dating exclusively someone met online were
eligible to participate in the survey. Out of more than 450 responses, 311 participants were found to be eligible. After cleaning the data, 306 observations were used in running regression analysis.

3.2.2 Measures

Participants were required to answer a total of 20 questions (including the two screening questions carefully designed to select the sample for this study), which took a participant approximately 10-15 minutes on average to complete the survey.

**Discrepancy:** The difference between the values of true selves and online images gives the value of discrepancy, the dependent variable in the model.

**True selves:** The 44-item Big Five Inventory (BFI), reviewed by John, Naumann, and Soto (2008), was incorporated into the survey (Question 9(a)) to assess the true personality of the participants. The Big Five framework of personality traits (Costa & McCrae, 1992) has emerged as a robust descriptive model for understanding personality as well as the relationship between personality and various other research topics such as academic behaviors, development and job performances (Thoresen, Bradley, Bliese & Thoresen, 2004). The Big Five factors are openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Each factor can be further broken down into explicit personality traits that help us better understand the personality of the participant. All responses were scored on a 5-point scale with response options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Using BFI is a means of circumventing participants’ efforts at self-presentation in order to ascertain their true personality, which is used as the benchmark to determine discrepancy between the true selves and the online images.

**Online images:** Two questions (Question 10 and 12) were designed to obtain an overall idea of the online image that participants tried to create on the virtual space. Question 10 asks the
participant to state how they would like the other to perceive them after the first interaction online or in person. Question 12 concentrates on the self-presentation strategy of participants by asking for five representative words or phrases and an optional display of their descriptive online profiles. Responses to Questions 10 and 12 were then coded and assigned a numeric value corresponding to the different categories of the big five traits in order to quantify the variable of online images.

Responses to these two questions depict the image participants deliberately manipulated in front of their potential partners. They reflect whom the participants chose to be or aspired to be online. These questions were intentionally placed after the 44-item big five test, further away from the self-disclosure measure in Question 8, to hide the real objective of this survey so as to “bypass” participants’ efforts in self-presentation even under an anonymous survey condition such as this one. The descriptive online profile collected in Question 12(b) aimed to gather more information about the online images of participants to facilitate the coding process. However, due to privacy reasons, this is an optional question.

**Perception:** Question 8 was designed to obtain a qualitative characterization of the participants using five words or phrases to reveal how they perceive themselves. Responses were coded in the same way as those of questions regarding online images with the details illustrated in Section Four. This question is important as discrepancy between the true selves and online images of participants could be partially attributed to the participants’ unawareness of their own personality/character, implying that it is not necessary the case that every discrepancy results from the participant’s deliberate deception or intentional self-image management.

**Personality:** True personalities of participants were measured using the big five test (BFI) mentioned above, and each big five factor served as an independent variable in the model
to determine the power of different personality traits in explaining discrepancy.

*Use motives:* Arertz, Demuth, Schmidt and Vierlein (2010) generated 22 items in order to assess use motives of online dating users. A factor analysis yielded four factors, which explained 54% of the variance in the sample. These four factors were: communication, presentation and confirmation, longing and loneliness, and amusement. Considering the length of the survey, I chose to include six major items from across the four factors in Question 7. Example items included “I use online dating website to communicate with others” (communication), and “I use online dating websites because I feel lonely” (longing and loneliness). The six items were carefully chosen so that they would retain the internal validity of the original 22 items (the total scale of original 22 items reached a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.85).

*Seriousness in relationship:* This was measured via five self-generated items inspired by the survey items used by Arertz, Demuth, Schmidt and Vierlein (2010). The items reached a satisfactory internal reliability with the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.84. Due to time constraints in the survey, five questions were chosen with example items including “I am only happy when I am in a relationship.” All responses were scored on a 5-point scale with response options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), consistent with the response format in Question 9(a).

*Criteria for ideal partners:* Two questions were designed to measure the qualities that participants are seeking in an ideal partner. Question 9(b)(7) to 9(b)(9) were self-generated items on three spectrums that a person would possibly look for in a relationship, namely compatibility, attractiveness and similarity in personality. Example items included “It is very important for me to find an attractive partner.” All responses were scored on a 5-point scale with response options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), consistent with the response format in Question 9(a). Question 11 was designed to allow a more qualitative description of participants’
ideal partners so as to facilitate the coding process.

**Honesty:** Question 9(b)(6) is designed to measure participants’ views on the significance of honesty when relating to a partner. All responses were scored on a 5-point scale with response options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), consistent with the response format in Question 9(a). The higher the score, the more importantly one perceives honesty in front of his or her significant other, and thus possibly the less likely one would create and use a discrepant online profile.

**Past experiences of using online dating services:** Four questions were designed to measure the participants’ overall experiences of Internet dating services. Question 5 and 6 measured the intensity of usage by asking participants to report the duration and frequency of using online dating portals. Question 14 allowed participants to provide descriptive responses about their past encounters with discrepancies between online profiles and real people when using dating websites. This question was designed based on the intuition of game theory that it is an optimal strategy for people to use discrepant profiles online given that other users adopt this strategy, leading to the equilibrium that everyone (or in reality, the majority of dating website users) would be better off creating an image that deviates from their true selves. However the extent to which they deviate could depend on their past successful or bad encounters online. In addition, participants were also asked to rate whether they have enjoyed their experiences of using online dating portals in Question 9(b)(10), using the same five-point scale from Question 9(a). The overall satisfaction of their experiences helped facilitate the coding process in question 14.

**Demographics:** Demographic information of participants was collected via standard questions regarding gender, age, education, relationship and marital status, race and employment status, serving as basic independent variables in the model.
**Success rate:** This variable was analyzed under three categories.

(a) **Gaining immediate popularity:** This variable is operationalized and quantified in Question 13 as the number of relationships formed online. The response included various types of relationships, such as casual dating, exclusive romance, sexual relationship and even close friendship. The higher the number of relationships a participant formed through online dating websites, the greater immediate popularity he or she gained through his/her online images. This measure was based on the assumption that an appealing online profile could attract more hits and further successful manipulation of images in the first few interactions online could lead to successful short-term relationships of various types. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that online images, playing a critical part in participants’ abilities to gain immediate popularity, could potentially motivate the appearance of discrepant profiles.

(b) **Forming long-term exclusive relationships:** This variable was measured via Question 2 regarding whether the participant is currently in an exclusive relationship with someone met through an online dating website.

(c) **Achieving the primary purpose of using online dating websites:** This variable was measured via the self-generated Question 9(b)(11) on the same five-point scale as that used in Question 9(a). This item was analyzed together with the use motive variable to evaluate the correlation between different user groups and discrepancy between online images and the true selves of participants.
4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Summary

The data collected came from a diverse group of participants that I believe is representative of the Internet dating community. Out of the 311 qualified participants, 251 people were active users, and the other 60 people were exclusively dating with someone they met through online dating websites. While Match.com remains the most popular site among all, many people who were exclusively dating indicated that they used OkCupid.com instead, possibly due to the increasing number of free full-featured dating services it started to provide a few years ago. PlentyofFish was the most frequent name that appeared under the category of “Others” which is not surprising given that PlentyofFish has been noted to become a staple in the free dating site world.

In my sample, there are slightly more male than female participants (185 men and 126 women) with an average age of 28.7 years old. Most (n=165) have obtained or is pursuing a college degree or higher. The majority of the participants are white and single. Although most of them seem to be relatively newer users of Internet dating websites (133 have been using the Internet dating services for 6 months or less), 27 participants have used the dating services for 3 years or longer. The result is also fairly intuitive that participants who are currently dating exclusively have used the dating websites for a longer time than the others do. An average participant in my sample used the dating websites for 0 to 5 hours every week, while the mode group indicated their primary motive for using the websites as making new friends or finding a casual dating partner.
4.2 Coding

Due to the qualitative nature of my survey, there was significant amount of coding completed to quantify the values of various variables for regression analysis.

**Personality:** Scores for the Big Five test were calculated according to the standard scoring key (refer to Appendix II) and each participant received a score out of 5 for each of the five factors, Extraversion (E), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), Neuroticism (N) and Openness (O). Each factor is a continuous variable used as the explanatory variable in the regression.

\[
\text{extraversion} \in [1, 5] \text{and extraversion} \in \mathbb{D}
\]
\[
\text{agreeableness} \in [1, 5] \text{and agreeableness} \in \mathbb{D}
\]
\[
\text{conscientiousness} \in [1, 5] \text{and conscientiousness} \in \mathbb{D}
\]
\[
\text{neuroticism} \in [1, 5] \text{and neuroticism} \in \mathbb{D}
\]
\[
\text{openness} \in [1, 5] \text{and openness} \in \mathbb{D}
\]

**True selves:** I created two subcategories for each of the Big Five factors, namely low pole and high pole, and thus 10 subgroups in total with low pole extraversion being group 1 and high pole openness being group 10. Participants receiving a score lower than 2.5 out of 5 for a given personality factor were put into the low pole group of that factor. Participants receiving a score higher than 2.5 out of 5 for a given personality factor were put into the high pole group of that factor. For example, a person with a 1.6 score in Extraversion and 3.7 score in Openness was put into the groups of low pole extraversion (group 2) and high pole openness (group 10), and thus assigned the values 2 and 10 accordingly. Consequently, every participant received a five-number True-self series with each of the five numerical values matching each of the Big Five personality traits. This coding was necessary because it allowed me to measure discrepancy and
self-perception in a convenient and systematic way.

**Online identities:** I used the work of John, Naumann and Soto (2008) on the integrative Big-Five trait taxonomy as well as many other resources to generate a list of adjectives describing each of the ten subgroups of traits (refer to Appendix III). Referring to this list, every adjective or phrase in Questions 10 and 12(a) was matched into one of the ten subgroups and assigned the corresponding group value. For example, the participant used the word “outgoing” to describe himself in his online profile. Since outgoing is a word found in the adjective list under high pole extraversion, it means that his online identity belonged to the subgroup of high pole extraversion and thus received a value of 2. Since each participant was asked to describe themselves using five words, one would adopt the value of a five-number Online-identity series, similar to the format of “2, 4, 6, 7, 10”.

Interestingly, there were usually repeated numbers in this series (such as “2, 4, 4, 10, 10”) because people tended to use more positive words such as kind-hearted and helpful, both adjectives of subgroup 4, to describe themselves rather than group 8 words such as emotional or insecure. It is important to note that some descriptive words did not fit into any subgroup, especially terms describing physical appearances such as beautiful and sexy. Those words were simply not coded into a numerical value. However, five observations were dropped completely from regression analysis because those participants used more than three non-fitting words that I believe would severely affect the accuracy of coding. Thus, 306 observations were used in my regression analysis of Hypothesis II instead.

**Discrepancy:** Discrepancy was then measured by comparing the five-number series of Big Five values and the online identities under each Big Five factor. For example, if a participant obtained value 1 in the True-self series but reported a value 2 in the Online-identity series, the
participant would be coded to have a discrepancy value of 1. This coding makes sense because an introverted person (value 1 implying low pole extraversion) reporting himself as an extravert in his profile (value 2 implying high pole extraversion) indicates a discrepancy between his true personality and his online identity. It is worth noting that I did not “punish” a participant if he or she did not report a score in every category. That is, a person reported his online identity as “2, 4, 4, 4, 6” would still be grouped under “no discrepancy” as long as his True-self series also includes 2, 4 and 6. It doesn’t matter whether one stressed on certain positive traits and omitted the negative ones, because my research focused on whether there exist outright lies (reporting oneself as an extrovert when he/she is actually an introvert) in one’s online identity.

\[
\text{discrepancy}_i \in [0, 1]
\]

\[
\text{where discrepancy}_i = 0 \text{ where there is no discrepancy}
\]

\[
\text{discrepancy}_i = 1 \text{ where discrepancy exists}
\]

**Perception:** This variable represents the existence of discrepancy between one’s perceived self and true self. Similar to the variable of discrepancy, perception is evaluated by comparing the five-number True-self series and the Perceived-self series, which is derived from the qualitative responses of Question 8.

\[
\text{perception}_i \in [0, 1]
\]

\[
\text{where perception}_i = 0 \text{ where there is no discrepancy}
\]

\[
\text{perception}_i = 1 \text{ where discrepancy exists}
\]

**Seriousness in relationship:** Coding for seriousness in relationship was done in five steps. First, I reversed scores for Question 9(c)3 to 9(c)5 by subtracting the reported value from 6. Thus, a person reporting a value 2 (disagree) in Question 9(c)5 would receive a reversed score of 4 (= 6 - 2). Second, I converted all updated scores into percentages. Third, I reweighed each
question according to the intensity of preferences conveyed through it - Question 9(c)1 and 9(c)5 with a weight of 5, Question 9(c)2 and 9(c)4 with a weight of 4 and Question 9(c)3 with a weight of 3. Fourth, I summed up the scores across the five questions to obtain a continuous variable with values ranging from 5.6 to 21. Last, I further classified participants into five levels of seriousness, consistent with other scales used in the survey – participants receiving the lowest level of scores (5.6 - 8.6) were assigned a score of 1 (not serious at all) and participants receiving the highest level of scores (18 – 21) were assigned a score of 5 (very serious).

\[ \text{seriousness} \in [1,5] \text{ and seriousness} \in \mathbb{Q} \]

**Honesty:** Question 9(c)6 measured how important being honest to his/her significant other is to the participant.

\[ \text{honesty} \in [1,5] \text{ and honesty} \in \mathbb{N} \]

**Criteria for Ideal Partners:** Question 9(c)6 to 9(c)9 measured the importance of three criteria for finding partners to a participant, namely similar personality, attractiveness and compatibility. The higher the score, the more important the criterion is to the participant in searching for his/her ideal partner.

\[ \text{Similar personality: samepers} \in [1,5] \text{ and samepers} \in \mathbb{N} \]

\[ \text{Attractiveness: attractive} \in [1,5] \text{ and attractive} \in \mathbb{N} \]

\[ \text{Compatibility: compatible} \in [1,5] \text{ and compatible} \in \mathbb{N} \]

**Use motives:** Question 7 measured participants’ primary purpose of using online dating websites. It is constructed as a categorical variable.

\[ \text{usemotives}_i \in [1,7] \]

where \( \text{usemotives}_i = 1 \) when the purpose is to find a potential spouse

\( \text{usemotives}_i = 2 \) when the purpose is to make new friends
Demographics: Age was used as a continuous variable ranging from 15 to 80. All the other demographics were included in the analysis as categorical variables.

Age: $\text{age} \in [15, 80]$ and $\text{age} \in \mathbb{N}$

Gender: $\text{gender}_i \in [0, 1]$

$\text{gender}_i = 0$ for male and $\text{gender}_i = 1$ for female

Current marital / relationship status: $\text{relationship}_i \in [1, 6]$

$\text{relationship}_i = 1$ for single, never married, 2 for in a serious relationship, 3 for engaged, 4 for married, 5 for separated, 6 for divorced

Employment status: $\text{employment}_i \in [1, 6]$

$\text{employment}_i = 1$ for employed full time, 2 for employed part time, 3 for unemployed, 4 for student, 5 for homemakers, 6 for retired

4.3 Data Analysis

4.3.1 H1 – Is there any discrepancy between participants’ online profiles and their true personalities?

Out of 306 participants, 83 have a discrepancy value of 1, suggesting that 28% of the participants used a discrepant online profile.
4.3.2 H2 – How does discrepancy vary against different explanatory variables?

A fixed effect regression model is used to determine the correlation between the dependent variable, discrepancy, with various explanatory variables. Since discrepancy is a binary variable, logistic regression was used and the regression model is as below:

\[
\text{discrepancy}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot \text{perception}_i + \beta_2 \cdot \text{extraversion} + \beta_3 \cdot \text{agreeableness} \\
+ \beta_4 \cdot \text{conscientiousness} + \beta_5 \cdot \text{neuroticism} + \beta_6 \cdot \text{openness} \\
+ \beta_7 \cdot \text{usemotives}_i + \beta_8 \cdot \text{seriousness} + \beta_9 \cdot \text{honesty} \\
+ \beta_{10} \cdot \text{samepers} + \beta_{11} \cdot \text{attractive} + \beta_{12} \cdot \text{compatible} \\
+ \beta_{13} \cdot \text{gender}_i + \beta_{14} \cdot \text{age} + \beta_{15} \cdot \text{relationshipship}_i \\
+ \beta_{16} \cdot \text{discrepancy}_i + \varepsilon_0
\]

The regression result (shown in Appendix IV) shows a large log likelihood of -135.02268 as well as a relatively high LR Chi-square of 88.98. We can thus conclude that the model stated above is statistically jointly significant and we can reject the null hypothesis that discrepancy is not affected by the proposed explanatory variables. The results show that several independent variables, including the existing discrepancy between self-perception and the true selves (perception), the agreeable personality (agreeableness), the neurotic personality (neuroticism), the use motive of making new friends or dating casually (usemotives2), seriousness regarding relationships (seriousness), importance of attractiveness in searching for ideal partners (attractive), age (age), the divorced relationship status (relationship6) and the status of working part time (employment2) and homeworker (employment5), have indicated significant correlation with discrepancy at the 5% or 10% level. These variables possess significant explanatory and predicting power of the existence of
discrepancy between one’s true personality and online images.

4.3.3 H3 – Does discrepancy affect short term and long term success rate in finding a partner online?

**Short-term success:** Fixed effect regression using the model below was employed to measure how the number of short-term relationships obtained varied along with discrepancy.

\[ \text{consrsucc} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \times \text{discrepancy}_i \]

**Long-term success:** Fixed effect regression using the model below was employed to measure the correlation between exclusive long-term relationship formation and the existence of discrepancy.

\[ \text{lrsuccess}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \times \text{discrepancy}_i \]

308 observations were used in the regression and the results (shown in Appendix V) show that discrepancy has a significant impact (\(\beta_0 = 6.7(1.0), \beta_1 = -3.6(1.9)\)) on short-term success rate at the 6% level, while its impact on the long-term success rate is not significant.

5. Discussion

The data analysis results make a lot of sense intuitively and thus fairly satisfying. All three hypotheses (H1, H2, H3) could be accepted to a large extent.

When re-assessing H1, 28% of discrepancy rate seems not as high as the deception rate suggested in some earlier studies. For example, Toma and Hancock showed in their study in 2009 that 1/3 of the photographs used by online dating users in their profiles are not accurate, and again in 2010 that 81% of online daters lied about their weight, height or age. Our survey does not necessarily imply inconsistency with Toma and Hancock’s research because their research used a relatively small sample (fewer than 60 participants) and focused on more
quantifiable data comparison such as photographs, weight and height of participants, while my
survey focused on the personality aspect which was harder to be quantified but worthy to look
into. Participants in my survey described their experiences of using online dating websites as
well as the encounters of inaccurate self-presentation in Question 14. More than half of the
participants reported that most dates they met through dating websites were pretty similar to their
online profiles, especially in terms of personality, though it seemed to be common that there was
some discrepancy in terms of appearance, consistent with the research done by Toma and
Hancock.

The qualitative responses delivered the consensus among online dating users that in
general, people could tolerate slight discrepancy between online identities and the true
personalities of the other users. However, Internet dating service users who intentional
manipulated their online images could either be easily screened out by more experienced users,
or leave very bad impressions to other people. Thus people with discrepant profiles did not
necessarily benefit from seemingly more attractive profiles but usually end up suffering from a
lower number of dates formed through Internet dating services, compared to those who appeared
to be sincere and genuine by using relatively truthful profiles. This intuition is consistent with the
regression results derived from testing H3 that people with discrepant profiles formed around 4
(rounded up from 3.6) dates fewer than people with no discrepant profiles did through online
dating websites. The insignificant regression result of long-term success rate against discrepancy
was probably due to the fact that discrepancy plays a far less important role in determining the
compatibility and happiness in long-term interaction than during short-term interaction between
two people.

Let us take a closer look at the explanatory variables that yielded significant regression
results under H2. The factor of perception has a p-value of 0.000 suggesting that the discrepancy between self-perception and the true self of a participant is almost perfectly collinear with the discrepancy between his/her true self and online profile. This result is intuitive, as a person who perceived himself in a wrong or incomplete way would inevitably create an image entailing at least the same, if not higher, level of discrepancy. Though this result seems trivial, it infers that quite an amount of discrepancy between the claimed and actual variables observed online might be attributed to the unconsciously wrong self-perception rather than intentionally willful deception.

Moreover, personality also has a pretty significant correlation with the existence of discrepancy. The logistic regression under H2 suggests that for every 1 unit increase in the neuroticism score of a participant, the possibility of finding discrepancy in his/her online profiles increases by 0.56. In contrast, for every 1 unit increase in the agreeableness score of a participant, the possibility of the existence of discrepancy decreases by 0.56. These results make sense as well since participants in the high pole neuroticism group are more emotionally unstable than the other people, and their lack of confidence would probably motivate them to create a more appealing image to hide their inner insecurity. On the contrary, participants with high pole agreeableness were known for being genuine and sincere, and thus they are less likely to create discrepant profiles online.

By further testing interactions between the variables of personalities and other demographics using ANOVA command, I found that the categorical variable of marital/relationship status interacts significantly with neuroticism (Prob > F = 0.002). Participants who are separated have the highest neuroticism score, that is, most emotionally unstable while the neuroticism score of participants who are divorced is not much lower either.
This helps explain partially about the fact that divorced people have a higher tendency to use discrepant profiles than people who are single and unmarried (odds ratio increases by 1.4). It could also be attributed to the divorced group’s desire to shake off their past, recreate a new identity and live a better life.

Interpretation of the significant impact of variables usemotives2 and seriousness on discrepancy also matches to each other. Participants who use online dating websites primarily for making new friends or finding casual dating partners (usemotives2) have a 0.9 smaller possibility to use discrepant profiles than participants who aim to find potential spouses online do.

Similarly, the coefficient of seriousness implies that for every unit increase in the seriousness level of a participant, there is a 0.3 increase in possibility that discrepancy would occur in his or her case. This unexpected finding is probably due to the fact that the self-generated questions to measure seriousness are partially correlated to the desirability of one to be constantly engaged in serious relationships. Thus, the eagerness in looking for a relationship might motivate the participant to manipulate his/her online image to make it more appealing to draw attention from potential dates, resulting in the observed discrepancy.

In addition, participants who set attractiveness as an important criterion in searching for ideal partners also tend to have higher discrepancy in their self-presentation schemes ($\beta_{11} = 0.4$). Intuitively, one might be motivated to manipulate their images in order to make himself/herself look more appealing in order to draw attention from and match the high standard of the attractive people.

Furthermore, participants who are part-time workers or homeworkers have much higher odds ratio to use discrepant profiles than participants working full time, shown by the increase in odds ratio of 1.1 and 2.1 at a 1% and 2% significance level respectively. Possible explanations
include that homeworkers or part-time workers have more time than full-time workers to manipulate their online images, and that part-time workers and homemakers would also have higher desire to glorify their images due to their potentially lower confidence level than the full-time workers do in the real world.

Age remains to be the last statistically significant result in this regression analysis. For every unit increase in age, there is a 0.04 increase in odds ratio for discrepancy to be observed. Some possible explanations are that older people have an increasing need to hide some information such as age and that older people are generally more experienced in adopting self-presentation strategies.

6. Conclusion

The data set I collected contains a comprehensive amount of information that can be used for further research. For example, as Ellison, Toma & Hancock suggested in their studies in 2011, many online dating users would love to view themselves as honest but still adopt self-presentation strategies in the meantime, and thus they often resolve to “use equivocation, or statements that are neither true nor deceptive”. This view is consistent with my dataset in which the adjectives participants chose to describe themselves often concentrated in a few personality subgroups such as high pole agreeableness (such as kind and patient) and high pole openness (such as adventurous). Further regression analysis can be conducted by separating participants who did not use obviously discrepant profiles into two groups depending on how well-rounded their online profile is, as many participants complained in their qualitative responses that many Internet dating service users exaggerated their strengths and omitted their shortcomings that lead to biased self-presentations.
Further research can also be done to test the internal validity of the self-generated questions, as well as reaching to larger internet dating service user population to yield more statistically significant results. Survey, as a self-reporting measure, also involves systematic self-presentation bias that could be reduced by adopting various methods of research to yield more promising findings. If there was more time, coding of the survey responses could be completed and verified by multiple coders to ensure the objectivity and accuracy in coding.

Despite of all the limitations and room for further research, the data I collected has yielded quite satisfying results to test my three hypotheses. In conclusion, there is a moderately low level of outstanding discrepancy between the online profiles and the true selves of the participants. The discrepancy is significantly affected by various factors, including discrepancy between self-perception and the true selves, neurotic and agreeable personality, seriousness regarding relationship, use motives, age, and attractiveness as an important criterion in searching for ideal partners, as well as employment and relationship status. Moreover, manipulation of online images does not necessarily benefit participants forming more short-term relationships. There are a lot of subtleties in interpreting human interaction, especially with the improving technology in CMC, and that increases the difficulty of coding in this project. However, that is also what keeps this topic interesting and worthy to be studied further.

The key takeaway of this research is that one would not need to lie in order to fit in the culture of the online dating community since most Internet daters are presenting themselves (at least their personalities) accurately as far as they can, given the peculiarities of virtual communication. Therefore, one does not need to worry too much about other users’ dishonesty or the risks of presenting his or her true self online. Though the negative correlation between deception and the number of relationships formed online does not imply causal relationships
between the two, the results still suggests that it is probably more beneficial for one to present themselves genuinely on the dating websites.
References


Sage publications.


Appendix I  Survey Questionnaire

1. Are you currently an active user of online dating websites?
   1) Yes
   2) No

2. Are you currently / Have you been in an exclusive relationship with someone that you met through an online dating website?
   1) Yes
   2) No

3. How many online dating websites are you using?
   1) 1
   2) 2-3
   3) >3

4. Which online dating website are you using primarily?
   1) Match.com
   2) Chemistry.com
   3) eHarmony
   4) Zoosk
   5) OkCupid.com
   6) Other
      Please specify:

5. How long have you been using online dating websites?
   1) < 6 months
   2) 6 months – 1 year
   3) 1-3 years
   4) > 3 years
6. On average how many hours do you spend on online dating websites every week?
   1) 0-2 hours
   2) 3-5 hours
   3) 6-10 hours
   4) 11-15 hours
   5) > 15 hours

7. What is your primary purpose of using online dating websites?
   1) I am using it to find a potential spouse
   2) I am using it to make new friends
   3) I am using it because I feel bored
   4) I am using it to find sexual partners
   5) I am using it to exchange information with others
   6) I am using it because I feel lonely
   7) I am using it because of other reasons
      Please specify:

8. Please use FIVE words / short phrases to describe your personality:

9 (a). Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am someone who…
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>_____ Is talkative</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>_____ Tends to be lazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>_____ Tends to find fault with others</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>_____ Is emotionally stable, not easily upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>_____ Does a thorough job</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>_____ Is inventive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>_____ Is depressed, blue</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>_____ Has an assertive personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>_____ Is original, comes up with new ideas</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>_____ Can be cold and aloof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>_____ Is reserved</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>_____ Perseveres until the task is finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>_____ Is helpful and unselfish with others</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>_____ Can be moody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>_____ Can be somewhat careless</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>_____ Values artistic, aesthetic experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>_____ Is relaxed, handles stress well.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>_____ Is sometimes shy, inhibited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>_____ Is curious about many different things</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>_____ Is considerate and kind to almost everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>_____ Is full of energy</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>_____ Does things efficiently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>_____ Starts quarrels with others</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>_____ Remains calm in tense situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>_____ Is a reliable worker</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>_____ Prefers work that is routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>_____ Can be tense</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>_____ Is outgoing, sociable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>_____ Is ingenious, a deep thinker</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>_____ Is sometimes rude to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>_____ Generates a lot of enthusiasm</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>_____ Makes plans and follows through with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>_____ Has a forgiving nature</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>_____ Gets nervous easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>_____ Tends to be disorganized</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>_____ Likes to reflect, play with ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>_____ Worries a lot</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>_____ Has few artistic interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>_____ Has an active imagination</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>_____ Likes to cooperate with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>_____ Tends to be quiet</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>_____ Is easily distracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>_____ Is generally trusting</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>_____ Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9(b) Here are a number of statements that you may agree or disagree with. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) _____ I am only happy when I am in a relationship.
2) _____ I am happier when I am married or have a stable relationship.
3) _____ I am happier dating casually rather than having a serious relationship.
4) _____ I am happy as long as I have one or more sexual partners.
5) _____ I am fine if I am single forever.
6) _____ Lying to my significant other is unacceptable.
7) _____ I would like to find a partner who has similar personality as I do.
8) _____ It’s very important for me to find an attractive partner.
9) _____ It’s very important for me to find a compatible partner.
10) _____ I have enjoyed my experience using online dating websites.
11) _____ I have achieved my primary purpose of using online dating websites.

10. After the first phone conversation / online chat / meeting with your date, what are the FIVE words / short phrases you would like your date to use to describe you?

11. What are the FIVE words / short phrases that you would use to describe your ideal partner?

12(a). Please choose FIVE words / short phrases from your online dating profile that you think best describe your personality:

12(b). In the box below, please paste your profile (descriptive profile if possible; private information, such as name, excluded) on the online dating websites (Optional):

13. How many people have you formed relationship with through an online dating website?
14. After chatting online or meeting your dates in person, did you find them similar to or different from the description in their online profiles? Please describe briefly:

Now we would like to learn more about your demographics:

15. What is your gender?
   1) Male
   2) Female

16. What is your age?

17. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   1) Less than high school
   2) High school/GED
   3) Some college
   4) 2-year college (Associates)
   5) 4-year college (BS/BA)
   6) Master’s degree
   7) Doctoral degree
   8) Professional degree (MD, JD)

18. What is your current relationship / marital status?
   1) Single, never married
   2) Married
   3) Separated
   4) Divorced
   5) Widowed

19. What is your race?
   1) Asian / Pacific Islander
   2) Black / African American
   3) Latino / Hispanic
4) Middle Eastern
5) Indigenous / Native American
6) White
7) Multiracial

20. How would you describe your current employment status?
1) Employed full time
2) Employed part time
3) Unemployed / Looking for work
4) Student
5) Homemaker
6) Retired
Appendix II  Big Five Scoring Key

To score the BFI, first reverse-score all negatively-keyed items: (item number refers to Q9(a))

Extraversion: 6, 21, 31
Agreeableness: 2, 12, 27, 37
Conscientiousness: 8, 18, 23, 43
Neuroticism: 9, 24, 34
Openness: 35, 41

To recode these items, you should subtract your score for all reverse-scored items from 6. For example, if you gave yourself a 5, compute 6 minus 5 and your recoded score is 1. That is, a score of 1 becomes 5, 2 becomes 4, 3 remains 3, 4 becomes 2, and 5 becomes 1.

Next, you will create scale scores by averaging the following items for each B5 domain (where R indicates using the reverse-scored item).

Extraversion: 1, 6R, 11, 16, 21R, 26, 31R, 36
Agreeableness: 2R, 7, 12R, 17, 22, 27R, 32, 37R, 42
Conscientiousness: 3, 8R, 13, 18R, 23R, 28, 33, 38, 43R
Neuroticism: 4, 9R, 14, 19, 24R, 29, 34R, 39
Openness: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35R, 40, 41R, 4
Appendix III  Big Five Adjectives List*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-83</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>Talkative</td>
<td>-52</td>
<td>Faulty</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>Sympathetic</td>
<td>-.58</td>
<td>Careless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-80</td>
<td>Reserved</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>-48</td>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>Appreciative</td>
<td>-.53</td>
<td>Disorderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-75</td>
<td>Shy</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>-45</td>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>Affectionate</td>
<td>-.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-71</td>
<td>Silent</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>-45</td>
<td></td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>Soft-hearted</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>Slipshod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-67</td>
<td></td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Outgoing</td>
<td>-45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>-.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With-</td>
<td></td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>Outspoken</td>
<td>-45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>Calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-66</td>
<td>Retiring</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>-45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Forceful</td>
<td>-38</td>
<td>Unkind</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td>Forgetful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>Show-off</td>
<td>-33</td>
<td>Cruel</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>Forgiving</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>Sociable</td>
<td>-31</td>
<td>Stern</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>Spunky</td>
<td>-28</td>
<td>Thankless</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Good-natured</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>-24</td>
<td>Stingy</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>Noisy</td>
<td>-21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>Bossy</td>
<td>-17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>-67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>Unselfish</td>
<td>-56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>Praising</td>
<td>-51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Based on John (1980). These items were assigned to one Big Five domain by at least 90% of the judges and thus capture the most prototypical (or central) content of each Big Five domain. The factor loadings, shown here only for the expected factor, were obtained in a sample of 140 males and 140 females, each of whom had been described by 10 psychologists serving as observers during an assessment weekend at the Institute of Personality and Social Research at the University of California at Berkeley (see also John, 1989).

* This is an excerpt from “Paradigm Shift to the Integrative Big-Five Trait Taxonomy: History, Measurement, and Conceptual Issues.” (pp. 15). This is the basic, but not exhaustive list of the adjectives used in coding.
### Appendix IV  H2: Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>discrepancy</th>
<th></th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>discrepancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>perception</td>
<td>1.434***</td>
<td>(0.34)</td>
<td>attractive</td>
<td>0.386**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extraversion</td>
<td>-0.050</td>
<td>(0.23)</td>
<td>compatible</td>
<td>0.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agreeableness</td>
<td>-0.556*</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conscientiousness</td>
<td>-0.343</td>
<td>(0.31)</td>
<td>age</td>
<td>0.041*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neuroticism</td>
<td>0.561**</td>
<td>(0.24)</td>
<td>relationship2</td>
<td>-0.297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>openness</td>
<td>-0.209</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
<td>relationship3</td>
<td>1.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usemotives2</td>
<td>-0.869**</td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
<td>relationship4</td>
<td>0.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usemotives3</td>
<td>-0.198</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>relationship5</td>
<td>-0.826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usemotives4</td>
<td>-0.654</td>
<td>(1.37)</td>
<td>relationship6</td>
<td>1.355*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usemotives5</td>
<td>-0.911</td>
<td>(0.60)</td>
<td>employment2</td>
<td>1.126**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usemotives6</td>
<td>-0.490</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>employment3</td>
<td>0.494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usemotives7</td>
<td>-1.186</td>
<td>(1.38)</td>
<td>employment4</td>
<td>0.512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seriousness</td>
<td>0.293*</td>
<td>(0.16)</td>
<td>employment5</td>
<td>2.080**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honesty</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>(0.17)</td>
<td>constant</td>
<td>-3.336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samepers</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Log Likelihood: -135.02  LR chi2 (28): 88.98
Observations: 305.00  Prob>chi2: 0.0000
Pseudo R2: 0.2478

* *, **, *** indicates significance at the 90%, 95%, and 99% level, respectively
## Appendix V  H3: Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>consrsucc</th>
<th>lrsuccess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>discrepancy</td>
<td>-3.595*</td>
<td>-0.263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.88)</td>
<td>(0.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of observations</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.0118</td>
<td>0.0076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.0086</td>
<td>0.0043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-stat</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob &gt; F</td>
<td>0.0519</td>
<td>0.1273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates significance at the 90% level