



Why are dating apps more widely used than friendship apps?

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Introduction

Background

- Adults 18-39 years old are loneliest.^(1,2)
- Loneliness is detrimental to physical & mental health.^(3,4)
- Friendship buffers against loneliness.⁽⁵⁾
- 40% of heterosexual couples meet on dating apps.⁽⁶⁾
- Dating apps have 25x more users than friendship apps.⁽⁷⁾

Research Question

- Why is dating app usage significantly higher than friendship app usage?

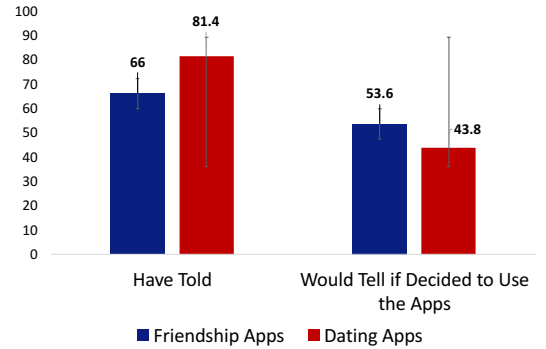
Hypotheses

- H1: Friendship apps are highly stigmatized.
- H2: People prioritize finding romantic & sexual partners more than friends.

Friendship apps are more stigmatized and less well-known than dating apps.

Results Continued

Prolific: % of Participants Who Have Told or Would Tell Friends and/or Family About Their Friendship & Dating App Usage



Methods

Sample

- Prolific: U.S. adults 18-39 years old (n = 299)

Survey

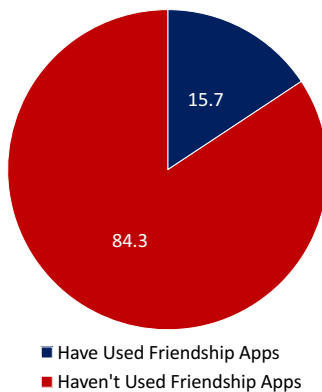
- Original quantitative & qualitative measures, Short-form UCLA Loneliness Scale, Satisfaction With Life Scale, Patient Health Questionnaire 9

Results

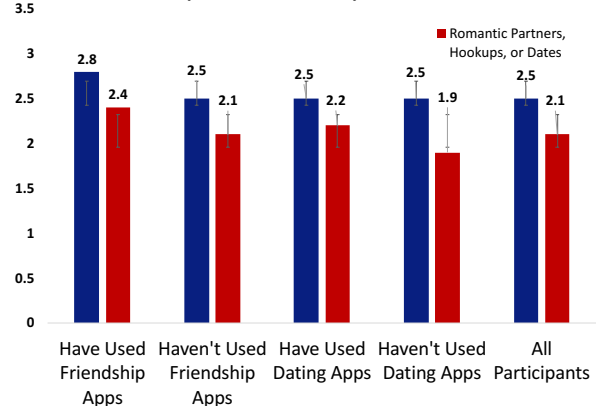
Qualitative Data

- **#1 Reason for not using friendship apps:** Participants had not heard of or did not know much about friendship apps (30.2%)
- **#1 Reason participants had not told or would not tell loved ones about friendship app use:** Embarrassment & concern that loved ones would judge them

Prolific: % of Participants Who Have & Haven't Used Friendship Apps



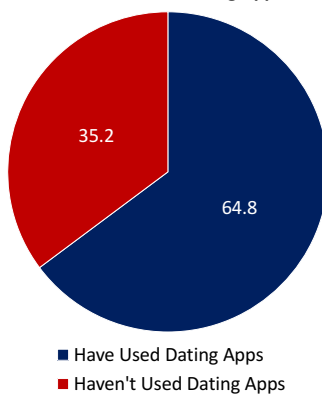
Prolific: Mean Prioritization of Friendship & Non-platonic Relationships



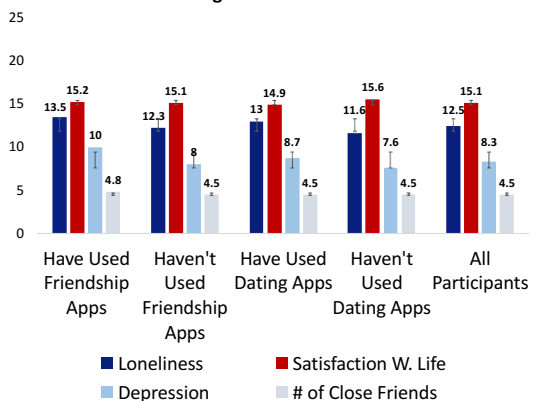
Discussion

- **H1: Confirmed** - Friendship apps are more stigmatized than dating apps.
- **H2: Rejected** - Participants prioritize close friends more than non-platonic relationships
- **Additional Findings:**
 - A primary reason for lack of friendship app usage = lack of awareness
- **Future Research:**
 - Conduct interviews to further understand why friendship apps have more stigma than dating apps
 - Investigate how dating apps became de-stigmatized

Prolific: % of Participants Who Have & Have Not Used Dating Apps



Prolific: Well-being Measures & # of Close Friends



References

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7. Smith, C. "Increasing Bumble Statistics and Facts." *DMR*, 1 Mar. 2020. [explore@dmr.com/index.php/bumble-statistics-facts/](https://www.dmr.com/index.php/bumble-statistics-facts/).