



Research Article

© 2020 Hetsroni et.al.

This is an open access article licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Received: 27 September 2019 / Revised: 5 December 2019 / Accepted: 7 December 2019 / Published: 10 January 2020

Stereotypical Gender Attributions across Sexual Orientations on Tinder: Evidence from Turkey

Amir Hetsroni

*Ph.D., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem;
Associate Professor, Department of Media and Visual Arts
Koç University, Rumelifeneri, Sarıyer Rumeli Feneri Yolu, 34450 Sarıyer, İstanbul, Turkey*

Meriç Tuncez

*MFA, Bilkent University, Doctoral Student,
Department of Media and Visual Arts,
Koç University, Rumelifeneri, Sarıyer Rumeli Feneri Yolu, 34450 Sarıyer, İstanbul, Turkey*

Mina Özdemir

*BA, Koç University,
Graduate of the Department of Media and Visual Arts,
Koç University, Rumelifeneri, Sarıyer Rumeli Feneri Yolu, 34450 Sarıyer, İstanbul, Turkey*

Doi: 10.36941/mjss-2020-0002

Abstract

In this study we examine the accuracy of stereotypical gendered attributions of Tinder users and compare them across sexual orientation lines. We randomly sampled 2,539 Tinder users from Turkey and analyzed their photos for decorative artifacts. The results indicate a significant difference between heterosexual women and lesbians, with the latter adopting less feminine decorative artifacts and displaying more masculine decorative artifacts. The differences among men are not as drastic, however, homosexuals were still slightly more likely to feature feminine and gender-neutral decorative artifacts. No systematic difference was detected in masculine decorative artifacts among men. Overall, female Tinder users featured more gender-neutral decorative artifacts than males, regardless of sexual orientation. The results are discussed in relation to culture and stereotypes.

Keywords: *Tinder; Content analysis; Turkey; Homosexuality/Heterosexuality; Gender*

1. Introduction

Human beings have invented creative ways to attract potential mates, just like animals display visible cues such as male peacocks' tail feathers that promote their appeal to females. Social and evolutionary pressures may push human species to invest resources in self-presentation techniques suitable for attracting potential mates like dressing up, applying make-up, etc. Examples can be found in various media conduits (Galante, 2012). In the past, personal ads published in newspapers specified relationship seekers appearance. The introduction of the internet led to the emergence of online dating websites where people post pictures of themselves alongside a short description. A

matching algorithm is then used to locate compatible partners (Blackwell, Birnholtz & Abbott, 2014). By the end of the first decade of the 2000s, the appearance of smartphones, social media networks and geo-social networking services paved the road to the emergence of location-based real-time dating apps. The first apps targeted mainly gay men (e.g. Grindr), but apps that target the heterosexual population like Tinder (launched in 2012) soon followed (Sumter, Vandenbosch & Ligtenberg, 2016). While the original purpose of the app was to build a location-based social networking platform, it quickly became clear that date searching (including short term and even one night stand) is its predominant use (Orosz, Tóth-Király & Bóthe & Melher, 2016) and what makes it popular (Fruhlinger, 2018).

The goal of this article is to explore Tinder users' impression management strategies as evidenced and differentiated by the interaction between gender and sexual orientation. Since Tinder is primarily a visual platform, we concentrate on analyzing how users present themselves on their main profile pictures dismissing the marginal often left blank text space. We examine visual presentation across gender and sexual orientation lines.

1.1 Online Dating Platforms

The use of online dating websites and location-based dating apps has risen in recent years. In the United States alone 15% of the adults are willing to confess that they have at least once used an online dating site or application. Young adults (18-24 years) constitute the majority of online dating service users. Over half of Tinder users belong to this age bracket (Dredge, 2015). Although online dating, and specifically Tinder usage, is becoming more popular in recent years among older people the vast majority of users are still in their twenties (Smith & Anderson, 2016).

The presentation of users in dating websites and apps is partly guided by scripts of gender roles and sexual orientation (Ting-Toomey 1999; 2005). The two main sexual orientations, which may exhibit different courtship habits are heterosexuality and homosexuality. Historically, homosexuality has been defined with effeminate behaviour in contrast with heterosexuality, which is more masculine emphasizing manliness and physical strength (Connell 1990; Kimmel 1994). Studies that focused on gay men's personal advertisements in dating websites and apps discovered that the most romantically undesirable characteristics of gay men are stereotypically feminine attributes (Clarkson, 2006; Taywaditep, 2002), and that the majority of gay men look for masculine traits in their partners and claim to possess masculine traits for themselves (Bailey, Kim, Hills & Linsenmeier, 1997).

Tinder is targeted at both homosexual-identified and heterosexual-identified people. It is uniquely positioned in terms of its application design and matching algorithm presenting a binary system of "Like" or "Not" where users rate (by swiping right or left) the perceived attractiveness of potential mates after examining a visual and textual profile (Orosz et al., 2016). This binary logic of the swipe gesture made Tinder famous (Fruhlinger, 2018) and differentiates it from competitors (David & Cambre, 2016). Another distinct feature of Tinder is its partial integration with Facebook in order to combat deception and misuse of private photos (Sumter et al. 2016). This posits Tinder as relatively more reliable platform than competing apps. Bosker (2015) regarded Tinder as a "judging app" in which users are presented with dating candidates. The judgment in Tinder is based almost entirely on profile pictures. Only if both users judge each other's profile as YES, then a match is obtained, and a conversation where the candidates may express their verbal skills may begin (Orosz et al., 2016).

While both genders and sexual orientations need to make a quick judgment based mostly on pictures, their considerations might be different (Sumter et al., 2016). To understand that we need to look at the literature concerning gender differences in mate selection. For example, the physical need of sexual satisfaction is particularly prominent among men (Baumgartner, Valkenburg & Peter, 2010), while financial status and stability are more important to women (Tolman, Striepe & Harmon, 2003). Gender differences determine the type of visual signs selected by the dating candidate for his or her profile since these signs serve as the "selling points" (Sumter et al., 2016). It all comes down to

impression management or self-presentation that is inherently similar in dating websites and apps to face-to-face romantic interactions (Toma, Hancock, & Ellison, 2008). In face-to-face interactions, as Goffman (1959) argued, individuals guide other people's impressions of themselves through manipulating appearance, context and behavior. The virtual surroundings offer increased control over what is portrayed and what is omitted (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006) and enables a somewhat unrealistic presentation of the candidates by featuring old photos, omitting fatty body parts from the pictures, and using camera angles that mask lower body height (Orosz et al., 2016). Consequently, in Goffmanian terms, Tinder is an arena where users do their best to provide an attractive self-presentation in order to enhance their market value and mating success.

Research on personal ads that preceded the Internet age revealed that dating candidates tend to adhere to traditional gender roles. Men promised to offer instrumental benefits such as financial security, and women were offering expressive and communal benefits like nurturing (Lance, 1998). Gay men displayed extended concern for physical characteristics such as body shape. Lesbians, on the other hand, indicated a lower amount of sexualization and concern about body shape. Sexual and physical dimensions of attractiveness were found to be more salient among gay men in accordance with homosexual male culture that promotes a lean and muscular body shape (Kimmel & Mahalik, 2005) than among heterosexual males. The latter, on the other hand, exhibited greater admiration to a long-term and committed relationship while gays were more often seeking partners for transient or sexually promiscuous relationships (Barry, 2017).

1.2 *Sexual Orientation and Stereotypes*

A stereotype is "a heuristic that allows us to simplify our world and form quick judgments about other people based upon their group membership" (Khan, Benda & Stagnaro, 2012, p.3). Many stereotypical assumptions are made about people based on their gender and their sexual preference. For instance, lesbians are presumed to have more masculine attributions compared to women who are romantically interested in men. Gay men are stereotyped to have more feminine and less masculine attributions compared to men, who are romantically interested in the opposite sex (Shively, Rudolph, & De Cecco, 1978). Some argue that the stereotypes made about homosexual men and women are not accurate because the attributes are made from a heteronormative standing point (Klein, 2017), however, a study that measured similarities and differences of stereotyping and self-stereotyping among heterosexual and homosexual men found that heterosexual men stereotype gay men the same way that gay men stereotype other gay men (Simon & Hamilton, 1994). Therefore, it can be argued that gay people do conform to the stereotypical assumptions that are made about them (Bickford, 1999). Most important in our case is the manifestation of sexual orientation stereotypes in dating websites and apps, which has been pointed out by relationship experts in the popular press (Barry, 2017).

1.3 *Turkey: The Geo-Cultural Context of our Study*

Before we pose our research questions and hypotheses, few words are due about the geo-cultural context of the study. We conduct this research in Turkey, a secular Muslim country (according to its constitution) built after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Often described as a hybrid of Europe and the Middle East due to its geographical location and history, Turkey has served as a battleground of a culture war between western liberal ideals and Muslim foundations. Homosexuality is a good showcase of this war. Even though Turkish law does not ban homosexuality, there are also no rules against discrimination of gays and lesbians (Cunningham, 2016). The foreign press often reports on cases where gays are physically attacked because of their sexual preference (Öktem, 2008) and a recent survey noted that as many as 84% of Turkish citizens do not want to have to live next door to members of the LGBT community (Country policy and information note Turkey: Sexual orientation and gender identity, 2017).

Turkish culture, by all means, favors heterosexuality, which is deemed to be a natural basis of family life. In contrast, homosexuality is viewed as playground (in the best-case scenario) and as religious deviance (in the worst-case scenario). Homosexuality is also often viewed as a threat to masculinity, which is glorified in patriarchal culture. Some Turkish families threaten and even dismiss their own family members, if they come out of the closet. It is common, particularly in rural areas, for “honor” killings to take place, where family members kill their homosexual relative in order to gain back the “honor” of the family and cleanse its “sins”. Thus, homosexuals often hide their identity from their families and also in workplaces where discrimination because of sexual orientation is common (Öztürk, 2011). The outcome is that homosexuality is practically invisible in most parts of the country and remains visible only in few districts of the bigger cities - Istanbul, Izmir, and Ankara that partly serve as “safe haven” for homosexuals.

2. Research Questions and Hypotheses

We pose three research hypotheses with a directional prediction and ask three research questions where the scholarship accumulated hitherto does not suffice to make an unequivocal prediction.

2.1 *H1: Feminine Artifacts among Male Tinder Users*

We cogitate that the frequency of feminine decorative artifacts among gay men who are Tinder users will be higher than their frequency among heterosexual male who use the app. The basis of this hypothesis is the stereotype according to which homosexual men decorate themselves more often with feminine artifacts (Bickford, 1999; Shively, Rudolph, & De Cecco, 1978).

2.2 *H2: Feminine Artifacts among Female Tinder Users*

We presume that the frequency of feminine decorative artifacts among lesbian Tinder users is lower than among heterosexual females who use the app. The basis of the hypothesis is the stereotype according to which homosexual females less often wear typical female jewelry (Barry, 2017).

2.3 *H3: Masculine Artifacts among Female Tinder Users*

We hypothesize that the frequency of masculine decorative artifacts among lesbian Tinder users is higher than it is among heterosexual females who use the app. The renowned stereotype according to which lesbians adopt masculine attributes (Barry, 2017) serves as basis of the hypothesis.

2.4 *RQ1: Masculine Artifacts among Male Tinder Users*

We ask whether there is a difference in the frequency of masculine decorative artifacts between homosexual and heterosexual male Tinder users. While stereotypes about gays' tendency to enhance their appearance by adding decorative artifacts is common (see Bickford, 1999; Shively, Rudolph, & De Cecco, 1978), the scientific scholarship has so far refrained from actually testing them. Therefore, we pose a question without making a preliminary prediction.

2.5 *RQ2: Gender-Neutral Artifacts among Male Tinder Users*

Since no research on the connection between tattoos and piercings and men's sexual orientation exists, we ask without positing a preliminary prediction whether there is a difference in the prevalence of gender-neutral decorative artifacts between gays and heterosexual males.

2.6 RQ3: Gender-Neutral Artifacts among Female Tinder Users

We inquire whether there is a difference in the prevalence of gender-neutral decorative artifacts between lesbians and heterosexual women. Due to the lack of previous research on the topic, the question is proposed without forecasting the answer.

3. Method

We randomly sampled the profiles of 560 heterosexual men, 571 homosexual men, 560 heterosexual women and 848 homosexual women Tinder users from Turkey. The age of the users ranged between 18 years old and 69 years old with a mean of 25.3 years old. Four research assistants used a blank Tinder account for gathering the data for the research. Two-thousand five-hundred and thirty-nine users' profiles were coded. After dividing them into four groups based on gender and sexual orientation (homosexual men, heterosexual men, homosexual women, and heterosexual women) we analyzed the physical attributions in their profile picture, which served as *unit of analysis*, into three categories: *masculine decorative artifacts*, *feminine decorative artifacts* and *gender-neutral decorative artifacts*. Masculine artifacts consisted of *muscle exposure* (yes/no) and *facial hair* (yes/no). All the men were coded in this category, but women were only coded for muscle exposure. Feminine artifacts consisted of *long hair* (longer than shoulders/ shorter than shoulders), *earrings* (yes/no), *make-up* (yes/no) and *lipstick* (yes/no). All the women were coded in this category, but men were excluded from make-up and lipstick. Gender-neutral artifacts included *tattoos* (at least one/none) and *piercings* (at least one/none). Both females and males were coded in this category. This classification of decorative artifacts is based on the literature concerning dress code, decoration and gender (Lindemuth, Thomas, Mates & Casey, 2011)

Each Tinder profile was coded separately by two different coders, who were not privy to the study's hypotheses and questions and were trained in using the coding book on 100 profiles that were not part of the sample. To assess *coding reliability*, we computed *Cohen's Kappa* coefficient for each category. The values - fluctuating from $\kappa=.902$ (for muscle exposure) to $\kappa=.977$ (to facial hair) - indicate adequate reliability.

4. Results

Table 1: Body Decoration of Tinder Users by Sexual Orientation (N=2,539)

		Heterosexual Men (n=560)	Homosexual Men (n=571)	Heterosexual Women (n=560)	Homosexual Women (n=848)
Gender-Neutral Artifacts	Tattoos	2.0%	5.4%	6.1%	8.1%
	Piercings	0.0%	4.2%	9.2%	10.4%
Masculine Artifacts	Muscle Exposure	15.3%	14.1%	2.6%	1.0%
	Facial Hair	81.3%	82.4%	----	----
Feminine Artifacts	Long Hair	2.8%	6.9%	69.5%	59.5%
	Earrings	4.4%	10.2%	37.1%	41.5%
	Make-up	----	----	69.9%	62.5%
	Lipstick	----	----	91.4%	58.5%

The results of the coding appear on Table 1. A series of *Mann Whitney tests* for ordinal scales and *chi-*

square analyses for nominal data were performed to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses.

4.1 H₁: Feminine Artifacts among Male Tinder Users

The first research hypothesis (H₁) predicted that the frequency of feminine decorative artifacts among homosexual men who use Tinder would be higher than their frequency among heterosexual men who use the app. After computing an index of feminine decorative artifacts consisting of long hair, earrings, make-up and lipstick and ranging from 0 (when none of the artifacts was identified) to 3 (when all of them were present) a Mann-Whitney test for ordinal scales with Z approximation was conducted. The results are significant {Z=4.78, P<.001}. This means that in Tinder homosexual men are more likely than heterosexual men to be pictured with feminine decorative artifacts. More specifically, when it comes to *Long hair*, while only 2.8% of the heterosexual men display long hair, the figure is as high as 6.9% among homosexuals. The difference between the groups is significant { $\chi^2_{(df=1)} = 10.8$ P<.001}, but the effect is small (Cramer's V=.094). When it comes to *Earrings*, we divide the male sample into two groups (those who wear earrings and those who do not) and see that while only 4.4% of the heterosexual Tinder male users are wearing earrings, among homosexuals the rate mounts up to 10.2%. This difference is significant { $\chi^2_{(df=1)} = 14.3$ P<.001}, but the effect, again, is not particularly large (Cramer's V=.112).

4.2 H₂: Feminine Artifacts among Female Tinder Users

The second research hypothesis (H₂) predicted that the frequency of feminine decorative artifacts among lesbian Tinder users would be lower than among heterosexual female Tinder users. After computing an index of feminine decorative artifacts consisting of long hair, earrings, make-up and lipstick and ranging from 0 (when none of the artifacts was identified) to 4 (when all of them were present), a Mann-Whitney test for ordinal scales with Z approximation was performed. The results are significant {Z=2.0, P=.04}. This means that lesbian Tinder users are less likely than heterosexual women who use the app to be featured with feminine decorative artifacts. To further examine distinctions between heterosexual females and homosexual females in hair length, we divide the female sample into two groups based on hair length (longer than shoulders vs. shorter than shoulders) and run a chi-square analysis. The results indicate that 69.5% of the heterosexual females have long hair whereas among homosexual female Tinder users the figure (59.5%) is lower. The difference between the groups is significant { $\chi^2_{(df=1)} = 16.44$ P<.001 Cramer's V=.101}. Hence, heterosexual women are more likely than lesbians to have long hair. To examine differences in earrings, we split the female sample into two groups (no earrings vs. with earrings) and run a chi-square analysis. The results show that 41.5% of the lesbians are wearing earrings, while among the heterosexual women the figure is only 37.1%. However, the difference between the groups is not significant { $\chi^2_{(df=1)} = 1.469$ P=.225}. To inspect differences in applying make-up, we divide the female sample again into two groups (with make-up vs. without make-up) and run a chi-square analysis. The results indicate that 69.9% of the heterosexual females are pictured with make-up. Among the lesbians the figure is only 62.5%. The difference between the groups is significant { $\chi^2_{(df=1)} = 10.5$ P<.001 Cramer's V=.082}. Finally, to examine differences in applying lipstick, we split the female sample into two groups (with lipstick vs. without lipstick) and run a chi-square analysis. While 58.5% of the lesbians are applying lipstick, among heterosexual women the figure is as high as 91.4%. The difference between the groups is significant { $\chi^2_{(df=1)} = 140$ P<.001 Cramer's V=.336}. This means that heterosexual women are more likely than lesbians to wear lipstick.

4.3 H₃: Masculine Artifacts among Female Tinder Users

The third research hypothesis (H₃) predicted that the frequency of masculine decorative artifacts

among lesbian Tinder users would be higher than among heterosexual females who use the app. Specifically, to inspect differences between heterosexual women and homosexual women in applying masculine decoration we look at muscle exposure and divide the female sample into two groups – those who expose muscles vs. those who do not. Only 2.6% of the heterosexual women exposed muscles, but among homosexual women the figure (1%) was even lower. The difference between the groups is significant $\{\chi^2 (df=1) = 5.69 P=.017 \text{ Cramer's } V=.060\}$. Therefore, it can be argued that heterosexual women are slightly more likely to expose muscles in their Tinder pictures in comparison with homosexual women, although the rate of muscle exposure is generally low among women.

4.4 RQ1: Masculine Artifacts among Male Tinder Users

The first research question (RQ1) asked if there is a difference in the prevalence of masculine decorative artifacts between homosexual and heterosexual male Tinder users. After computing an index of masculine decorative artifacts consisting of muscle exposure and facial hair and ranging from 0 (when none of the artifacts was identified) to 2 (when both of them were present), a Mann-Whitney test for ordinal scales with Z approximation was performed. The results are not significant $\{Z=.04, P>.05\}$. Therefore, according to our statistics, homosexual male Tinder users are not different from heterosexual males in applying masculine decorative artifacts. When we look closely at the numbers of the two groups, we notice the similarity: 81.3% for heterosexual men vs. 82.4% for gays in facial hair; 15.3% for heterosexual men vs. 14.1% for gays in muscle exposure.

4.5 RQ2: Gender-Neutral Artifacts among Male Tinder Users

The second research question (RQ2) asked whether there is a difference in the prevalence of gender-neutral decorative artifacts between homosexual and heterosexual male Tinder users. After computing an index of gender-neutral decorative artifacts consisting of tattoos and piercings and ranging from 0 (when none of the artifacts was identified) to 2 (when both of them were present), a Mann-Whitney test for ordinal scales with Z approximation was performed. The results are significant $\{Z=3.25, P<.05\}$. This means that there is a significant difference between homosexual and heterosexual male Tinder users in the prevalence of gender-neutral decorative artifacts. To further examine differences in piercings, we divide the male sample into two groups (with piercings vs. without piercings) and run a chi-square analysis. While none of the heterosexual men was pictured with piercings (excluding earrings), 4.2% of the homosexuals had a photo of themselves with this decorative artifact. The difference between the groups is significant $\{\chi^2(df=1) = 25.2, P<.001 \text{ Cramer's } V=.060\}$. To inspect differences between heterosexual males and gays in tattoos, we divide the male sample into two groups (with tattoos vs. without tattoos) and run a chi-square analysis. Whilst 2% of the heterosexual men had tattoos, among the gays the figure was as high as 5.4%. Yet, the difference between two groups is not significant $\{\chi^2(df=1) = 0.87 P=.35\}$. We conclude that in both gender-neutral artifacts homosexual male Tinder users overtake heterosexual males, but the differences are significant only in piercings.

4.6 RQ3: Gender-Neutral Artifacts among Female Tinder Users

The third and final research question (RQ3) asked whether there is a difference in the prevalence of gender-neutral decorative artifacts between homosexual and heterosexual female Tinder users. After computing an index of gender-neutral decorative artifacts consisting of tattoos and piercings and ranging from 0 (when none of the artifacts was identified) to 2 (when both of them were present), a Mann-Whitney test for ordinal scales with Z approximation was performed. The results were not significant $\{Z=1.40, P>.05\}$. This means that lesbians and heterosexual female Tinder users do not differ in the likelihood to be pictured with gender-neutral decorative artifacts. When we look closely at specific indicators, we see that the figures in both groups are almost similar: 8.0% for lesbians vs.

6.1% for heterosexual women in tattoos; 10.4% for lesbians vs. 9.2% for heterosexual women in piercings.

5. Discussion

By content analyzing the profile pictures of over two-thousand and five-hundred Tinder users from Turkey we examined the accuracy of stereotypical visual attributions pertaining to sexual orientation and related to the self-presentation of dating candidates across the genders. Compared to heterosexual women, lesbians less often apply most of the feminine decorative artifacts and more often display masculine decoration, but there is no difference between the two groups of women in adopting gender-neutral decorative artifacts. Among men, gays score higher than heterosexuals in all kinds of decoration but only in piercings (a gender-neutral decorative artifact) the difference passes the significance threshold. All in all, differences between the genders are by far larger than within them. For example, while the share of homosexual men with long hair was 8.5 times approximately smaller than the share of lesbians with long hair, the share of heterosexual men with long hair was only 2.5 times approximately smaller than the share of homosexual men with long hair.

What we actually asked in this study was to what extent renowned sexual orientation related stereotypes are manifested in raunchy dating app in a conservative society like Turkey where stereotypes are notably present in everyday life (Engin & Pals, 2018). Therefore, we expected to find considerable differences between homosexual and heterosexual Tinder users across gender lines. We found them among women, as lesbians less often displayed feminine decoration and more often exposed their muscles. The trend was less significant among men. Assuming that homosexual men in Turkey are not always thrilled to publicly identify as such (Country Policy and Information Note Turkey: Sexual orientation and gender identity, 2017), the difference between the genders i.e. why homosexuals do not adopt feminine decoration like lesbians adopt masculine decoration can be explained by societal sanctions typical of Turkish culture (Öztürk, 2011). In a patriarchal society like Turkey that glorifies masculinity (Engin & Pals, 2018) the high prevalence of facial hair (81.3% of the heterosexual males and 82.4% of the gays in our study) is not surprising. Homosexual men might feel pressed to keep their identities undisclosed (Paechter, 2006), whereas women's lack of conformation to gender stereotypes is viewed as less publicly problematic since it does not directly attack the masculine hegemony (Costa, 2016). Since the 1930s, it is common for Turkish women to wear pieces of men's attire such as trousers, regardless of their sexual preference (Arvanitidou & Gasouka, 2013). Therefore, lesbians can more easily fly under the radar and avoid getting identified as lesbians (something that is not culturally favored), if they wear masculine garments. Men, on the other hand are more prone to be labeled as gay, when they apply stereotypical female artifacts (Barry, 2017).

This brings us to the most notable gender difference. In all the decorative artifacts (with the exception of muscle exposure), women scored higher than men regardless of sexual orientation. Furthermore, the differences between the genders excelled inter-gender differences pertaining to sexual orientation. This can be explained by the fact that according to Islam, (which is the predominant religion in Turkey) any form of decoration that is typically worn by women is forbidden to men. Any feminine embellishment or something that may make men look like the opposite sex is forbidden (Earrings for Men - Islam Question & Answer, 2019). The rate of earrings among women is quite high (hovering around 40%) but very low among men. While religious rules and customs do not allow men to dress themselves with garments that are also worn by women, this clerical ordinance does not apply to women (Marcus, 1992). Indeed, a respected share of the women in our sample (around 40%) did lack one of the typical feminine characteristics - long hair. Still, women outnumber men in feminine decoration artifacts, namely long hair and earrings (see Table 1). Yet, despite the low prevalence across the board of gender-neutral decoration (e.g. tattoos and piercings) - less than 10% in any of the groups - which can be explained by the fact that in Islam any form of body modification is forbidden to both genders (Are Tattoos Haram in Islam - Islam Question & Answer, 2019), here too women outnumber men { $Z=7.6, P<.001$ }.

In Goffmanian terms (see Goffman, 1959), a Turkish man (heterosexual or homosexual), who wants to impress potential love mates in a dating app, tries to "look like a man" and stay away even from gender-neutral decoration, while a Turkish woman enjoys some flexibility in appearance. Interestingly, none of the genders attempts to look particularly muscular (The rate of muscle exposure is less than 15% in both genders) – perhaps because Turkey is not a sport-driven culture (Aslan et al., 2008).

The key to understanding gender differences in this study and the tendency of gays not to adopt opposite sex decoration in large numbers is the need to conform to conservative societal standards in order to avoid imaginary and not so imaginary sanctions (Engin & Pals, 2018; Öktem, 2008). Will this trend prevail in cultures that are less patriarchal and less conservative? Further research is needed to answer the question.

References

- Aslan, D., Özcebe, H., Temel, F., Takmaz, S., Topatan, S., & Şahin, A. et al. (2008). What influences physical activity among elders? A Turkish experience from Ankara, Turkey. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 46(1), 79-88. doi:10.1016/j.archger.2007.03.001
- Are Tattoos Haram in Islam - Islam Question & Answer. (2019). Retrieved from <https://islamqa.info/en/answers/20283/are-tattoos-haram-in-islam>
- Arvanitidou, Z., & Gasouka, M. (2013). Construction of gender through fashion and dressing. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. doi:10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n1p111
- Bailey, J., Kim, P., Hills, A., & Linsenmeier, J. (1997). Butch, femme, or straight acting? Partner preferences of gay men and lesbians. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73(5), 960-973. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.73.5.960
- Barry, B. (2017). *What Happens When Men Don't Conform to Masculine Clothing Norms at Work?* Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2017/08/what-happens-when-men-dont-conform-to-masculine-clothing-norms-at-work>
- Baumgartner, S. E., Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2010). Unwanted online sexual solicitation and risky sexual online behavior across the lifespan. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 31(6), 439-447. doi:10.1016/j.appdev.2010.07.005
- Blackwell, C., Birnholtz, J., & Abbott, C. (2014). Seeing and being seen: Co-situation and impression formation using Grindr, a location-aware gay dating app. *New Media & Society*, 17(7), 1117- 1136. doi:10.1177/1461444814521595
- Bickford, John H. (1999). Stereotype conformity in gay people and the homosexual identity development process. *Unpublished Master's Thesis*. University of Massachusetts at Amherst, MA. Retrieved from: <https://scholarworks.umass.edu/theses/2341>
- Bosker, B. (2015, October). Why Tinder has us addicted: The dating app gives you mind reading powers. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/09/ Tinder-dating-app_n_3044472.html
- Connell, R., & Messerschmidt, J. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829-859. doi:10.1177/0891243205278639
- Costa, E. (2016). The morality of premarital romances social media, flirting and love in southeast Turkey. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*, 9(2), 199-215. doi: 10.1163/18739865-00902006
- Country Policy and Information Note Turkey: Sexual orientation and gender identity (2017). Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/619683/Turkey_-_SOGI_-_CPIN_-_v2_o__June_2017_.pdf
- Cunningham, E. (2016). In Turkey, it's not a crime to be gay. But LGBT activists see a rising threat. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/in-turkey-its-not-a-crime-to-be-gay-but-lgbt-activists-see-a-rising-threat/2016/06/24/18fe91a6-37d2-1e6-af02-1df55foc77ff_story.html?utm_term=.e53bf61749da
- David, G., & Cambre, C. (2016). Screened intimacies: Tinder and the swipe logic. *Social Media + Society*, 2(2), 1-11. doi:10.1177/2056305116641976
- Dredge, S. (2015). 42% of people using dating app Tinder already have a partner, claims report. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/may/07/dating-app-tinder-married-relationship>
- Earrings for Men - Islam question & answer. (2019). Retrieved from <https://islamqa.info/en/answers/1980/earrings-for-men>

- Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., and Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook "friends": Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *J. Comput. Mediat. Commun.* 12, 1143-1168. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00367.x
- Engin, C., & Pals, H. (2018). Patriarchal attitudes in Turkey 1990-2011: The influence of religion and political conservatism. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 25(3), 383-409. doi:10.1093/sp/jxx021
- Fruhlinger, J. (2018). *Why Tinder is the most popular online dating app: Digital trends*. Retrieved from <https://www.digitaltrends.com/social-media/tinder-most-popular-dating-app/>
- Galante, M. (2012). *Ten scientifically proven ways to make yourself more attractive to the opposite sex*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-to-attract-the-opposite-sex-2012-9>
- Gettelman, T., & Thompson, J. (1993). Actual differences and stereotypical perceptions in body image and eating disturbance: A comparison of male and female heterosexual and homosexual samples. *Sex Roles*, 29(7-8), 545-562. doi:10.1007/bf00289327
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Khan, S. R., Benda, T., & Stagnaro, M. N. (2012). Stereotyping from the perspective of perceivers and targets. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 5(1). doi:10.9707/2307-0919.1043
- Kimmel, S. B., & Mahalik, J. R. (2005). Body image concerns of gay men: The roles of minority stress and conformity to masculine norms. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 73(6), 1185-1190. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.73.6.1185
- Klein, C. (2017). Gay-identifying AI tells us more about stereotypes than the origins of sexuality. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/gay-identifying-ai-tells-us-more-about-stereotypes-than-the-origins-of-sexuality-83807>
- Lance, L. M. (1998). Gender differences in heterosexual dating: A content analysis of personal ads. *Journal of Men's Studies*, 6(3), 297-305. doi:10.1177/106082659800600303
- Lindemuth, C. J., Thomas, L. A., Mates, Hadley A., & Casey, J. A. (2011). Gender patterns in dress and outward appearance: An individual choice or fulfillment of cultural expectations? *Modern Psychological Studies*, 17(1), 30-36.
- Marcus, J. (1992). A world of difference: Islam and gender hierarchy in Turkey. *London, England: Zed Books*.
- Orosz, G., Tóth-Király, I., Bóthe, B., & Melher, D. (2016). Too many swipes for today: The development of the Problematic Tinder Use Scale (PTUS). *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, 5(3), 518-523. doi:10.1556/2006.5.2016.016
- Öktem, K. (2008). Another struggle: Sexual identity politics in unsettled Turkey. *Middle East Report Online*, 2, 1-3.
- Öztürk, M. (2011). Sexual orientation discrimination: Exploring the experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual employees in Turkey. *Human Relations*, 64(8), 1099-1118. doi:10.1177/0018726710396249
- Paechter, C. (2006). Masculine femininities/feminine masculinities: power, identities and gender. *Gender and Education*, 18(3), 253-263. doi:10.1080/09540250600667785
- Rulings on women imitating men - Islam Question & Answer*. (2019). Retrieved from <https://islamqa.info/en/answers/11083/rulings-on-women-imitating-men>
- Shively, M., Rudolph, J., & De Cecco, J. (1978). The identification of the people sex-role stereotypes. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 3(3), 225-234. doi:10.1300/j082v03n03_04
- Simon, B., & Hamilton, D. L. (1994). Self-stereotyping and social context: The effects of relative in-group size and in-group status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 66(4), 699-711. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.66.4.699
- Smith, A., & Anderson, M. (2016). *Five facts about online dating*. Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center.
- Sumter, S. R., Vandenbosch, L., & Ligtenberg, L. (2016). Love me Tinder: Untangling emerging adults' motivations for using the dating application Tinder. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(1), 67-78. doi:10.1016/j.tele.2016.04.009
- Taywaditep, K. (2002). Marginalization among the marginalized. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 42(1), 1-28. doi:10.1300/j082v42n01_01
- Ting-Toomey, S. (1999). *Communicating across cultures*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Tolman, D. L., Striepe, M. I., & Harmon, T. (2003). Gender matters: Constructing a model of Tinder Motivations adolescent sexual health. *Journal of Sex Research*, 40(1), 4-12. doi:10.1080/00224490309552162
- Toma, C., Hancock, J., & Ellison, N. (2008). Separating fact from fiction: An examination of deceptive self-presentation in online dating profiles. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(8), 1023-1036. doi:10.1177/0146167208318067