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Hook Up Culture: Changing the Structure of Future Relationships?

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Hook Up Culture: Changing the Structure of Future Relationships?

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

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Hook Up Culture: Changing the Structure of Future Relationships?

By

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Abstract

Hook up culture is a relatively new phenomenon that is reported to be occurring rampantly on college campuses across the nation. Research tends to focus on the negative implications of hook up culture and the impact it has on college students' well-being. There is limited research exploring if hook up behavior in college is influencing relationship structure in later life, as would be demonstrated by individuals engaging in consensual non-monogamy practices. The present study examined college students' relationship practices to assess if their current relationship status and relationship practices in the past year align with their ideal, future relationship. Results indicate that the overwhelming majority of participants ideally want to become monogamously partnered in the future, regardless of their current relationship practices. Overall these findings indicate that hook up behavior in college is an experiential stage that does not sway college students' ideal relationship preferences.

Hook Up Culture: Changing the Structure of Future Relationships?

In the past decade, the empirical literature has recognized a new phenomenon on college campuses across the nation referred to as *hook up culture*. There is a large amount of variance in how academia defines hooking up. Hook ups are broadly described as sexual relations that occur outside of a committed or romantic relationship (Fielder, Walsh, Carey, & Carey, 2014). Hook ups can involve a wide array of behaviors, ranging from kissing to penetrative sex, between partners who are not dating or involved in a romantic relationship. These types of noncommittal sexual interactions do not imply an impending romantic commitment as the motivation for the hook up is understood to be merely for sexual satisfaction. From a review of the scientific literature regarding sexual hook up culture, data suggest that between 60% and 80% of college students in North America have had some type of previous hook up experience (Garcia, Reiber, Massey, & Merriwether, 2012).

Although the hook up phenomenon has just recently begun to be discussed in the academic literature, there is evidence to suggest this type of culture was established long before it was recognized in the scientific literature (Bogle, 2007). Monto and Carey (2014) analyzed two national samples, 1988-1996 and 2004-2012, of individuals between the ages of 18 and 25 who had completed, at minimum, one year of college. They found that respondents from 2004-2012, the generation to which hookup culture has often been applied, did not report more total sexual partners, more partners during the past year, or more frequent sex than respondents from 1988-1996. However, respondents from the more recent sampling were more likely than the pre-millennium respondents to report sexual activity with a casual date, pickup, or friend and less likely to report engaging in

sexual activity with a spouse or regular partner. These findings suggest that sexual behavior among college students have not dramatically changed over the past three decades, but the change in interpretation of these behaviors may be the result of a change in labeling. Prior to the millennium, engaging in casual sex with an individual could result in that person being considered a boyfriend/girlfriend. In more recent times, the boyfriend/girlfriend label is only used when the relationship status has been made official through some means, other than solely engaging in casual sex. These changes in labeling may be an integral influence in the new age phenomenon of hook up culture.

Research often aims to understand the nature of college students' casual sexual relationships with other health-related variables. Grello, Welsh, and Harper (2006) investigated how hooking up was related to well-being in college students. Their findings suggest that casual sex, as opposed to sex within a romantic relationship, is associated with symptoms of depression in women. From the college students that reported a history of engaging in casual sex, women reported the most depressive symptoms whereas men reported the fewest depressive symptoms in the sample. Engaging in casual sex was also associated with other risk behaviors including drug and alcohol use. Other research utilizing a sample of first year college women found that sexual hook up behavior was positively correlated with experiencing depression, sexual victimization, and contracting sexually transmitted infections, but that engaging in hook ups did not predict future depression (Fielder et al., 2014). Some of the research in this area sheds a negative light on hook up culture and focuses on the risk involved in casual sex and having multiple sexual partners.

There is a plethora of research available that explores the differences between men and women engaging in hook up behavior. Shukusky and Wade (2012) found that men were more satisfied with and more in agreement with hook up behavior than women. Lambert, Kahn, and Apple (2003) surveyed men and women on a college campus and also found that men expressed more comfort than women in engaging in hook ups. The researchers also found that both sexes rated their peers as being more comfortable with engaging in casual sex than they rated themselves, and both sexes overestimated the other gender's comfort with hook up behavior suggesting a discrepancy in college students' understanding of their peer's casual sex behaviors. Townsend and Wasserman (2011) examined sex differences in emotional reactions to sexual hook ups among college students. Findings suggest that for women, a greater number of sexual partners was associated with increased worry and vulnerability. For men, this trend was opposite. For both men and women, greater permissiveness of sexual attitudes was positively correlated with number of sex partners. The greater the number of sex partners also resulted in decreased thoughts about marriage in both sexes. Findings also suggest for both men and women that a greater number of sexual partners was associated with more one night stands, partners predicted in the next five years, and deliberate casual sex, although this trend was significantly stronger for men than women.

Another important component in thoroughly understanding the behaviors involved in engaging in casual sex is the motivations that propel individuals to take part in this type of behavior. Garcia and Reiber (2008) investigated the prevalence of, and motivations for, hook up behavior in college undergraduate students. Of their 507 undergraduate participants, 64% reported having previously engaged in a hook up at

some point in the past. When asked about what motivated their hook up, 89% of participants identified physical pleasure as a motivation and 51% did so with the intention of initiating a traditional romantic relationship (defined as a monogamous, committed relationship). The 51% of participants seeking a traditional romantic relationship was equally distributed among men and women. When surveyed, almost all of the participants (>99%) indicated that they would ideally like to be in a traditional romantic relationship at some point in their life. Only two participants (<1%) said they did not desire to be in a traditional romantic relationship at any point in their life. These findings suggest that regardless of current sexual behavior, college students ideally want a traditional, monogamous relationship in the future.

The hook up culture described among college campuses draws many comparisons with consensual non-monogamy practices. Consensual non-monogamy encompasses a relationship arrangement in which all involved partners consent to engaging in sexual and/or romantic relationships with other people (Rubin, Moors, Matsick, Ziegler, & Conley, 2014). Among these relationship arrangements is *polyamory*, which is structured around multiple, loving relationships (Matsick, Conley, Ziegler, Moors, & Rubin, 2014). Rubel and Bogaert (2014) explored the psychological well-being of those who practice consensual non-monogamy. When comparing individuals who practice consensual non-monogamy to those who practice monogamy, research suggests the groups do not differ on many significant psychological characteristics including life satisfaction, depression, personal fulfillment, and mood stability. This suggests that engaging in relationship practices different than monogamy is not predictive of other psychological and well-being outcomes.

Although there is an abundant amount of research surrounding the many facets of hook up culture, there is limited research regarding polyamory and other consensual non-monogamies. Barker and Langdrige (2010) conducted a review of the current non-monogamy research available and found that the existent literature could be categorized into one of two groups, *celebratory* or *critical*. Their findings suggest the polarization of the current literature as having a positive or negative position on consensual non-monogamies perpetuates the dichotomization of non-monogamous relationships as being inherently *bad* or *good*. The authors suggest rather than celebrating or criticizing these types of relationships, research is needed to bring more awareness to the different consensual non-monogamous practices while presenting the findings in a scientific manner opposed to dichotomizing, and in some cases pathologizing, this lifestyle.

Aguilar (2013) explored the idea of situational sexual behaviors specific to polyamory in communal living groups. The author studied two communal living groups where members often practiced polyamory. Interestingly, participants transitioned from monogamous to polyamorous relationships suggesting that situations and circumstances can strongly influence an individual's sexual behavior. With that, the findings suggest that community conditions can create an environment in which polyamory thrives. A college atmosphere may very well provide this type of environment, one that fosters non-monogamous practices.

There is evidence to suggest that polyamory and other forms of consensual non-monogamy may not be well understood by society let alone viewed as an *acceptable* lifestyle. Through surveying undergraduate students, Burriss (2014) found that lay perceptions of polyamorous individuals were mixed and suggested this was due to

confusion in understanding the polyamorous relationship structure. Other research targeted at better understanding an individual's perceptions of consensual non-monogamies has found that polyamory is viewed more positively than swinging (couples who engage in sexual relationships with people other than their primary partner; the relationship is consensual and solely sexual, not romantic) and in certain instances, open relationships (having multiple sexual relationships that are consensual, but not romantic) (Matsick et al., 2014). These findings suggest that people are more comfortable with relationships involving romantic and emotional components than strictly sexual relationships.

Research Questions

The present study aims to explore if hook up behavior in college is a fleeting experiential stage or a permanent change towards relationship preferences. With that being said, are the current relationship practices of college students aligning with their ideal relationship practices? Is hook up culture in college leading individuals to engage in, or desire, open relationships later in life, or at all predictive of future relationship status? The first hypothesis for the current study is that hook up behavior may be predictive of an individual's desired future relationship. This assumption is coming from the idea that hook up culture is only novel in theory and this merely may be a new term to describe old behavior, therefore not actually a new phenomenon influencing relationships and college culture. The second hypothesis is that college students' current relationship practices may significantly align with their ideal relationship practices. Hook ups can be motivated by a variety of factors, including using the sexual encounter as a means to initiate a monogamous relationship. Due to the variance in motivators, it is believed that

the current relationship practices may significantly align with college students' ideal relationship practices.

Methods

Participants

Individuals were recruited through a participant pool consisting of students currently enrolled in psychology courses at Minnesota State University, Mankato. There were a total of 295 students that participated in this study, with the sample identifying as predominantly female (78.91%). The age of the sample ranged from 18 to 46 ($M=20.93$, $SD=2.88$), with the majority of the sample (93.56%) between the ages of 18-23. The sample most frequently identified as Caucasian (86.3%), followed by African American (3.77%), Asian (3.08%), and Hispanic/Latino/a (3.08%). Participants most frequently identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual (93.45%) followed by bisexual (3.79%). Table 1 (Appendix A) provides the frequencies of the demographic characteristics.

Measures

A questionnaire was created by the author for the present study (Appendix B). The first page of the survey contained the consent document which participants viewed prior to taking the survey. Participants then viewed four relationship descriptions prior to answering questions regarding their current, past, and ideal relationship status. The last page of the survey contained demographic questions asking participants to indicate their gender identity, age, year in school, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and to rate the importance of religion in their lives. Qualitative data was coded and themed by the author. A minimum of at least three responses were required to create a theme.

Procedure

Individuals signed up to participate in the study online through SONA, the university's online research database that recruits students taking psychology courses to participate in research studies. Upon agreeing to participate, participants were presented a link that directed them to the online survey on Qualtrics, the university's online survey software. Upon completing the survey, respondents were granted credit via SONA for their participation.

Results

Current Relationship Status

Most participants indicated that they are currently monogamously partnered (53.54%) or single (36.7%). Table 2 provides the frequencies of responses for current relationship status (total N=295). Participants who identified their current relationship status as *casually hooking up* (n=19) were asked to describe their motivation for engaging in casual hook ups. Respondents' motivations for engaging in casual hook ups included sexual satisfaction/pleasure, means to seek a relationship/companionship, and the simplicity, fun, and non-committal nature involved with casual hook ups.

Table 2.

What most closely resembles your current relationship status?

Current Relationship Status	n	%
Single	109	36.7%
Casually Hooking Up	19	6.4%
Monogamously Partnered	159	53.54%
Non-Monogamously Partnered	5	1.68%
Legal Partnership	3	1.01%
Other	2	0.67%

Most participants indicated that they are satisfied with their current relationship status (83%). Respondents who reported being single noted their satisfaction coming from the freedom, independence, and time and focus they can devote to themselves while not being involved in a committed relationship. Participants not in a committed relationship (single or casually hooking up) reported appreciating the casual nature of their current status and are satisfied with their current casual, non-committal relationships. Respondents who are currently in a type of committed relationship reported their satisfaction coming from their needs being met and the overall happiness they experience in their current relationship.

For participants who reported being single and not being satisfied with their current relationship status (17%), dissatisfaction came from being lonely and currently seeking a relationship/companionship. Respondents currently in a committed relationship noted not being happy in their relationship and distance from significant other (long

distance relationships) as impairing their current relationship satisfaction. For respondents who noted a recent relationship break up, their dissatisfaction stemmed from adjusting to the recent relationship status change. When asked what would increase satisfaction with their current relationship status, respondents noted dating, becoming involved in a committed relationship, and time to move on and get over their past relationships as variables to increase satisfaction.

Participants were asked a series of questions regarding their previous relationship. Table 3 provides responses from 255 respondents (86% of total participants) who indicated having at least one previous relationship. Participants were also asked to describe the sexual intimacy in the majority of their past relationship(s). Of the 234 respondents (79% of total participants) who identified as previously engaging in at least one sexual relationship, most participants rated their sexual intimacy as *high* (39%), followed by *moderate* (35%), *very high* (15%), *low* (9%), and *very low* (2%).

Table 3.

Previous Relationship(s) Characteristics

Question Reporting	Responses	Respondents		Total	
		n	%	n	%
How would you describe the majority of your past relationship(s)?	Exclusively Monogamous	166	65%	255	100%
		41	16%		
	Neutral	37	15%		
		9	4%		
	Exclusively Non-Mono.	2	1%		
How would you describe your behavior in the majority of your past relationship(s)?	Consensual Relationships	163	64%	254	100%
		43	17%		
	Neutral	22	9%		
		15	6%		
	Non-Consensual Relation.	11	4%		
How would you describe the emotional intimacy in the majority of your past relationship(s)?	Very High	49	19%	255	100%
	High	91	36%		
	Moderate	88	35%		
	Low	24	9%		
	Very Low	3	1%		

Past Relationship Status

Most participants indicated that in the past year, they have spent the majority of their time monogamously partnered (52.7%) or single (30.41%). Table 4 provides the frequencies of responses for past relationship status (total n=295). Participants who identified as casually hooking up for the majority of the past year (n=35) were asked to describe their motivation for engaging in casual hook ups. Respondents' motivations for engaging in casual hook ups included casual pleasure (sexual activity without relationship commitment, opportunity to explore sexual preferences), sexual attraction (attracted to individual sexually but not interested in dating or engaging in a relationship),

seeking companionship, and using casual hook ups as a coping mechanism to overcome recent break ups.

Table 4.

In the past year, how would you say you have spent the majority of your time?

Past Relationship Status	n	%
Single	90	30.41%
Casually Hooking Up	35	11.82%
Monogamously Partnered	156	52.7%
Non-Monogamously Partnered	9	3.04%
Legal Partnership	4	1.35%
Other	2	0.68%

Participants were asked a series of questions regarding their relationship(s) in the past year. Table 5 provides responses from the 225 respondents (76% of total participants) who indicated having at least one relationship in the past year. Participants were also asked to describe the sexual intimacy in their relationship(s) in the past year. Of the 237 respondents (81% of total participants) who identified as previously engaging in at least one sexual relationship in the past year, most participants rated their sexual intimacy as *high* (37%), followed by *very high* (35%), *moderate* (21%), *low* (5%), and *very low* (2%).

Table 5.

Characteristics of Relationship(s) in the Past Year

Question Reporting	Responses	Respondents		Total	
		n	%	n	%
How would you describe your relationship(s) in the past year?	Exclusively Monogamous	176	79%	224	100%
		19	8%		
	Neutral	23	10%		
		4	2%		
How would you describe your behavior in the majority of your relationship(s) in the past year?	Exclusively Non-Mono.	2	1%	221	100%
	Consensual Relationships	174	79%		
		21	10%		
	Neutral	17	8%		
How would you describe the emotional intimacy in your relationship(s) in the past year?	Non-Consensual Relation.	3	1%	225	100%
	Very High	104	46%		
	High	76	34%		
	Moderate	31	14%		
	Low	12	5%		
	Very Low	2	1%		

Ideal Relationship Status

The vast majority of participants indicated that ideally they would like to be monogamously partnered (48.47%) or legally partnered (40%) in the future. Table 6 provides the frequencies of responses for ideal relationship structure (total n=295).

Participants who identified casually hooking up as their ideal future relationship status (n=4) noted personal preference as their motivation for casually hooking up in the future.

Table 6.

Which of the following most closely aligns with your ideal future relationship structure?

Ideal Relationship Status	n	%
Single	9	3.05%
Casually Hooking Up	4	1.36%
Monogamously Partnered	143	48.47%
Non-Monogamously Partnered	3	1.02%
Legal Partnership	118	40%
Other	2	0.68%
Unsure	16	5.42%

Respondents were asked to describe, in their own words, their current ideal relationship. The predominant response was, as indicated in Table 6, to be in a monogamous, committed relationship either in the form of having a boyfriend/girlfriend or being legally married or partnered. A smaller subset of respondents noted they were unsure of their ideal future relationship, indicated they wanted to remain single, or responded that their ideal relationship would be casual in the form of either casual hook ups or open relationships.

Participants were also asked to describe their ideal future, post-college, relationship. Regarding post-college relationships, almost all of the participants indicated they ideally want to be monogamously partnered, with some respondents more specifically noting their desire to be married/legally partnered and buy a house and have a family. Compared to respondents' current ideal relationship, there were notably fewer

respondents who desired to remain single or engaging in casual hook ups in their post-college ideal relationship.

Regarding relationship status alignment, 59% of respondents indicated their current relationship status aligned with their ideal future relationship while 41% reported no alignment between their relationship statuses. For those who indicated alignment between their current and ideal relationship status, respondents indicated they are either currently in a committed relationship and on track to be married/partnered or single with plans to stay single long-term. There were a variety of responses from participants who indicated their current relationship status being incongruent with their ideal relationship status. Most of the respondents indicated being currently single and ideally wanting to be in a committed, monogamous relationship. Some of these respondents specified their immediate desire to engage in a committed relationship while the other respondents indicated their current contentment with being single but eventually plan to seek a monogamous, committed relationship in the future. A smaller subset of respondents indicated that they are currently engaging in casual hook ups and ideally, want to be in a monogamous, committed relationship. A few respondents also indicated a desire to be single and being unhappy in their current monogamous relationship, resulting in an incongruence of their relationship statuses.

Analyses

The first analysis examines if participants' current relationship status aligns with their ideal relationship status. A chi-square test of independence indicates that there is a relationship between current relationship status and ideal relationship status, $\chi^2(30) = 59.52, p = .001$. Table 7 provides the frequencies for each relationship status. The majority

of participants indicated that they are currently monogamously partnered (n=159) with most indicating they would ideally like to remain monogamously partnered (n=78) or ideally become legally partnered (n=72).

Table 7.

Frequencies for Current and Ideal Relationship Status

Current Relationship Status	Ideal Relationship Status						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	Unsure
Single (A)	9	2	58	0	29	2	8
Casually Hooking Up (B)	0	2	5	0	10	0	2
Monogamously Partnered (C)	0	0	78	3	72	0	6
Non-Monogamously Partnered (D)	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Legal Partnership (E)	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Other (F)	0	0	2	0	0	0	0

The second analysis examines if participants' relationship status in the past year aligns with their ideal relationship status. A chi-square test of independence indicates that there is a relationship between past relationship status and ideal relationship status, $\chi^2(30) = 62.98, p < .001$. Table 8 provides a frequency for each relationship status. Similar to current relationship status, that majority of participants indicated spending most of their time monogamously partnered in the past year (n=156). Ideally, those respondents want to remain monogamously partnered in the future (n=77) or become legally partnered (n=72).

Table 8.

Frequencies for Past and Ideal Relationship Status

Past Year Relationship Status	Ideal Relationship Status						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	Unsure
Single (A)	5	3	48	1	24	1	8
Casually Hooking Up (B)	1	1	16	0	14	0	3
Monogamously Partnered (C)	3	0	77	1	72	0	3
Non-Monogamously Partnered (D)	0	0	1	1	4	1	1
Legal Partnership (E)	0	0	1	0	3	0	0
Other (F)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

Discussion

The present study examined college students' relationship practices to assess if their current relationship status and relationship practices in the past year align with their ideal, future relationship. Results indicate that the overwhelming majority of participants ideally want to become monogamously partnered in the future, regardless of current relationship status. This is concurrent with Garcia and Reiber's (2008) findings. Many participants acknowledged that their current relationship practices do not match their current ideals but expressed that they enjoy the freedom of their current lifestyle and appreciate not being "tied down" in a committed relationship while in college.

The first hypothesis of the present study was not supported as hook up behavior is not predictive of an individual's desired future relationship. The vast majority of respondents desire to be in a monogamous relationship in the future, even if they are currently single or engaging in casual hook ups. The second hypothesis was supported in

that participants' current relationship practices did significantly align with their ideal relationship practices as indicated by the chi square analyses. When asked specifically to indicate if their relationship statuses aligned, 41% of participants indicated an incongruence of their relationship statuses. This slight discord could be due to sample error or misinterpretation of the question.

Overall, results did not yield evidence to support that hook up culture is occurring among college students. This aligns with previous literature suggesting that hooking up is not a new phenomenon on college campuses (Bogle, 2007; Monto & Carey 2014). The moral panic surrounding hook up culture is false. Casual sex on college campuses is portrayed as an epidemic but the data is not there to support its existence. For most college students, it does not appear that hook up culture is leading individuals to engage in, or desire, sexually casual or non-monogamous relationships later in life. From the current results it does not appear that engaging in hook up behavior is predictive of future relationship status although this could only truly be answered by follow up data after these individuals leave college.

Limitations

The present study was exploratory in nature and took a novel approach to better understand how hook up culture is influencing relationships later in life. The survey was created by the author and guided by research related to this topic. Nonetheless, the survey has only been employed in the present study and not used in previous research which lends itself as a potential limitation.

The present study targeted a college population between the ages of 18 and 23, the age range most often seen on college campuses where hook up culture exists. A small

percentage of participants (6.44%) were over the age of 23 which leaves the possibility of influencing results as they fall outside of the target sample. It is also worthy to note that the sample consisted predominantly of females (78.91%). A large amount of the sample also identified as heterosexual (93.45%) and Caucasian (86.3%) which limits the generalizability of results.

Implications and Future Research

The present study was unique in theory and in the approach it took to better understand hook up culture's effect on relationship practices after college. Results from this study indicate that hook up culture is not influencing college students' relationship preferences later in life. Many participants indicated their desire to become monogamous and "settle down" in the future which is in accordance with society's ideal relationship structure. For numerous college students, engaging in hook ups is currently meeting their needs. It would be interesting to further explore what changes in the future, besides leaving college and an environment that fosters hook up culture, to influence this change in behavior. It is possible that these individuals' needs change and become more fitting with a monogamous lifestyle. It is also possible that individual needs do not change but that people choose to align with a relationship structure that is considered socially acceptable. Exploring the fluidity and ongoing changes in relationship structures would also be helpful rather than viewing relationships as static and unchanging.

Additional research is needed to better understand the intersection of hook up culture and consensual non-monogamy practices, as hooking up is essentially a type of consensual non-monogamy. Respondents in the present study seemed relatively unaware of consensual non-monogamy practices. Future research should specifically ask college

students about their awareness and understanding of consensual non-monogamies. This information would lend itself useful in how to better develop and disseminate this knowledge about consensual, non-monogamous relationships. There is often a stigma around non-monogamous relationships in general, but increasing society's awareness about the nature of consensually non-monogamous relationships may be beneficial in lowering the negative connotation surrounding these types of relationships.

Based on the results of the present study and the general unawareness of consensually non-monogamous relationship styles, it poses the question of how people go about becoming involved in these types of relationships. If hook up culture is not influencing relationship styles later in life, what is? Society's ideals? What factors influence individuals to be more inclined to engage in consensually non-monogamous relationships? Future research should aim to better understand these factors to better understand relationship styles and preferences.

It would be worth exploring if relationship preferences change after college. The present study asked college students to describe their ideal relationship but it would be interesting to know if these ideals change once they actually leave college. Do the individuals who casually hook up in college have a renewed interest in consensually non-monogamous relationships after they leave college? For some participants, it may be difficult to predict their future relationship as they currently plan to become monogamous but there may be the potential that these ideals change when the environment changes upon the departure from college culture.

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Appendix A

Table 1.

Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Category	Respondents		Total Reporting	
		n	%	n	%
Gender Identity	Female	232	78.91%	294	100%
	Male	60	20.41%		
	Gender Queer	1	0.34%		
	Transgender	1	0.34%		
Age	18-23	276	93.56%	295	100%
	>23	19	6.44%		
Year in School	Freshman	71	24%	295	100%
	Sophomore	43	15%		
	Junior	65	22%		
	Senior	106	36%		
	Other	10	3%		
Race	Asian	9	3.08%	292	100%
	Black	11	3.77%		
	Caucasian	252	86.3%		
	Hispanic/Lationo/a	9	3.08%		
	Native American	2	0.68%		
	Biracial	7	2.4%		
	Multiracial	2	0.68%		
Sexual Orientation	Asexual	1	0.34%	290	100%
	Bisexual	11	3.79%		
	Heterosexual	271	93.45%		
	Gay/Lesbian	2	0.69%		
	Monosexual	1	0.34%		
	Pansexual	1	0.34%		
	Queer	2	0.69%		
	Questioning	1	0.34%		

Appendix B

Hook Up Culture: Changing the Structure of Future Relationships?**Informed Consent**

You are invited to participate in a research study that will examine personal relationship practices. Dr. Eric Sprankle, clinical psychologist and Assistant Professor at Minnesota State University - Mankato, is conducting this study.

Procedures

If you consent to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey including questions about your current, past, and ideal relationship practices. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

Please be advised that this survey asks questions about your personal history of romantic and sexual relationships. Such questions may lead to negative emotions such as anxiety, distress, or embarrassment. Should you experience any discomfort, you have the right to stop and withdraw from the study at any time.

There are no personal benefits of participation.

Compensation

Since this study is using SONA Systems, you will earn one (1) participation credit. Some university professors/instructors offer extra credit in their classes for participation in research involving SONA Systems. However, the amount (if any) of extra credit is solely at the discretion of the professor/instructor.

Confidentiality

Responses will be anonymous. However, whenever one works with online technology there is always the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality, and/or anonymity. If you would like more information about the specific privacy and anonymity risks posed by online surveys, please contact the Minnesota State University, Mankato Information and Technology Services Help Desk (507-389-6654) and ask to speak to the Information

Security Manager. The principal investigator (Dr. Eric Sprankle) and his research assistants are the only people who will have access to the secured data.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relationships with Minnesota State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Contacts and Questions

If you have any questions, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Eric Sprankle (the principal investigator) at Minnesota State University, Armstrong Hall 23, 507-389-5825 or by email at eric.sprankle@mnsu.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, or if you have questions/concerns about the treatment of human subjects, you are encouraged to contact the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Dr. Barry Ries at 507-389-1242 via phone or at barry.ries@mnsu.edu via email.

Consent

By continuing on to the survey, you affirm that you have read and understood the above information and consent to participate. Please print this page for your records.

IRBNet Approval Number: 727926

Please review the following relationship descriptions.

Monogamy: A romantic relationship with one sexual partner exclusively.

Hooking Up: Sexual interactions that occur outside of committed romantic relationships. Hookups involve a wide range of sexual behaviors (e.g., from kissing to penetrative sex) between partners who are not dating or in a romantic relationship, and the interaction does not imply an impending romantic commitment.

Polyamory: Consensual non-monogamous romantic and sexual relationships among multiple people. The non-monogamy is consensual among all of the involved relationship partners.

Non Consensual Non Monogamy: A sexual and/or emotional act engaged in by one person within a committed relationship where such an act occurs outside of the primary relationship and constitutes a breach of trust and/or violation of agreed upon norms by one or both individuals in that relationship in relation to romantic/emotional or sexual exclusivity.

Please answer the following questions.

Current Relationship Status

What most closely resembles your current relationship status?

- Single
- Casually Hooking Up (No Committed Sexual Partners)
- Monogamously Partnered (Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Significant Other, Fiancé, etc.)
- Non-Monogamously Partnered (Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Significant Other, etc.)
- Legal Partnership (Married, Civil Union)
- Other _____

[If 'Casually Hooking Up' is selected]

Please describe your motivation for engaging in casual hook ups.

Are you satisfied with your current relationship status?

- Yes
- No

[If 'Yes' is selected]

In what ways are you satisfied with your current relationship status?

[If 'No' is selected]

Why are you unsatisfied with your current relationship status?

What would increase your satisfaction with your current relationship status?

Past Relationship Status

I have had a previous relationship(s).

- Yes
- No

[If 'Yes' is selected, the following items are displayed]

How would you describe the majority of your past relationship(s)?

- Exclusively Monogamous
-
- Neutral
-
- Exclusively Non-Monogamous

How would you describe your behavior in the majority of your past relationship(s)?

- Consensual Relationships (No Cheating or Infidelity)
-
- Neutral
-
- Non Consensual Relationships (Cheating, Infidelity)

How would you describe the emotional intimacy in the majority of your past relationship(s)?

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very Low

I have previously engaged in a sexual relationship(s).

- Yes
- No

[If 'Yes' is selected, the following item is displayed]

How would you describe the sexual intimacy (sexual passion, sexual compatibility, sexual satisfaction) in the majority of your past relationship(s)?

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very Low

In the past year, how would you say you have spent the majority of your time?

- Single
- Casually Hooking Up (No Committed Sexual Partners)
- Monogamously Partnered (Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Significant Other, Fiancé, etc.)
- Non-Monogamously Partnered (Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Significant Other, etc.)
- Legal Partnership (Married, Civil Union)
- Other _____

[If 'Casually Hooking Up' is selected]

Please describe your motivation for engaging in casual hook ups in the past year.

Have you had a relationship(s) in the past year?

- Yes
- No

[If 'Yes' is selected, the following items are displayed]

How would you describe your relationship(s) in the past year?

- Exclusively Monogamous
-
- Neutral
-
- Exclusively Non-Monogamous

How would you describe your behavior in the majority of your relationship(s) in the past year?

- Consensual Relationships (No Cheating or Infidelity)
-
- Neutral
-
- Non Consensual Relationships (Cheating, Infidelity)

How would you describe the emotional intimacy in your relationship(s) in the past year?

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very Low

Have you engaged in a sexual relationship(s) in the past year?

- Yes
- No

[If 'Yes' is selected, the following item is displayed]

How would you describe the sexual intimacy in your relationship(s) in the past year?

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very Low

Ideal Relationship Status

Which of the following most closely aligns with your ideal future relationship structure?

- Single
- Casually Hooking Up (No Committed Sexual Partners)
- Monogamously Partnered (Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Significant Other, Fiancé, etc.)
- Non-Monogamously Partnered (Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Significant Other, etc.)
- Legal Partnership (Married, Civil Union)
- Other _____
- Unsure

[If 'Casually Hooking Up' is selected]

Please describe your motivation for casually hooking up in the future.

Please describe your current ideal relationship.

Please describe your ideal future (post-college) relationship.

Does your current relationship status (single, hooking up, casually dating, partnered, etc.) align with your ideal, future relationship?

- Yes
- No

[If 'Yes' is selected]

How does your current status align with your ideal relationship?

[If 'No' is selected]

In what ways does your current relationship status not align with your ideal relationship?

Demographics

Gender Identity (Including, but not limited to, Male, Female, Trans)

Age

Year in School

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other _____

Race/Ethnicity

Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian, Heterosexual, Bisexual, Pansexual, etc.)

Religion is very important in my life.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree