

Introduction

- Prior research has documented that women receive less aspirational advice, which harms their improvements. This difference is often attributed to unconscious bias.
- In this study, we investigate a novel explanation: whether the difference in advice reception is influenced by the interpersonal concern of the advice-givers.
- The literature on advice has emphasized the instrumental value of information: to what extent does the advice improve the quality of a decision?
- Here, we focus on the signaling value: how can advisors strategically deliver their perceptions of advisees by providing different advice?
- In two studies, we investigate whether advice givers inflate their advice to match the self-expectations of the targets (Study 1), and, subsequently, whether these embellished advice is rewarded by the targets of the advice (Study 2).

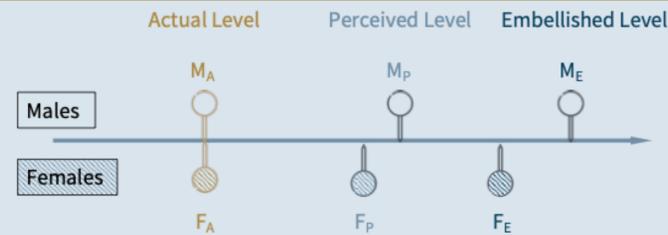
Study 1

- Participants (N= 200) uploaded selfies and predicted their ranks in a 10-person group at Time 1
- Another group of observers (N = 472) was recruited to rank a group of 10 selfies and provide advice for the person ranked 7th most attractive at Time 2.
- Participants (N = 146) who uploaded selfies were invited back at Time 3. They were presented with randomly selected advice and asked to evaluate the giver of the advice.

Advice For The 7th Attractive Participants



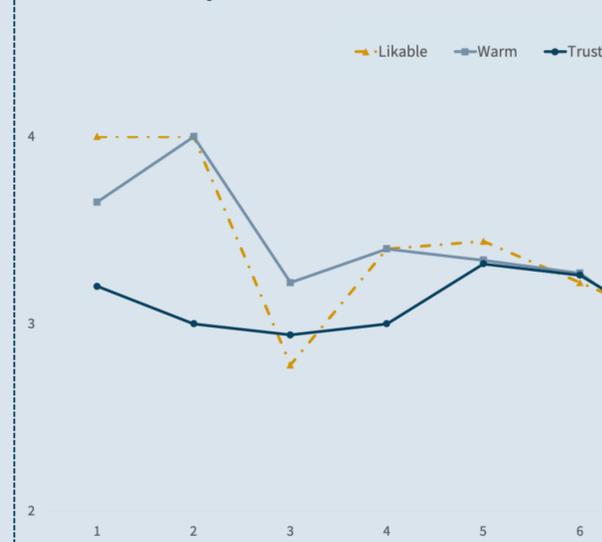
Model



- Advisers form expectations about an advisee's performance based on their evaluation at a certain level.
- Based on these expectations, the adviser's advice may be biased towards delivering more inflated advice.
- Gender differences in advice arise due to different perceptions of expectations.

Adjust for Inflated Expectations When Giving Advice

Interpersonal Benefits of Embellished Advice



Discussion

- Advice givers take into account the target's self-expectation when giving advice because they do not want to disappoint the targets.
- Because men have more inflated expectations than women, taking expectations into account can lead to gender differences in the absence of a separate channel of discrimination.
- However, when males receive more advice on competing with the Top Performer Group, this flattery comes with costs. On average, their gender group receives a lower bonus.
- Providing embellished advice is rewarded by the recipients of the advice. Individuals view the advice giver as more likable, warmer, and more trustworthy when the advice contains information indicating that the giver perceives the recipients as better than they see themselves.

Study 2

- Participants (N=100) took a 10-question math test and estimated the number of questions they could answer correctly (Expectations).
- Females and males are equally competent in this task, with male participants being more confident in their performance.
- Another group of observers (N=193) was recruited to provide advice to 10 participants regarding whether they should compete with a Top Performer or a Low Performer.
- In the Performance condition, observers only see the performance of participants. In the Expectation condition, observers also see participants' expectations. (The gender of participants is always unknown.)

Advice: Meeting Expectations vs. Absent Expectations

