



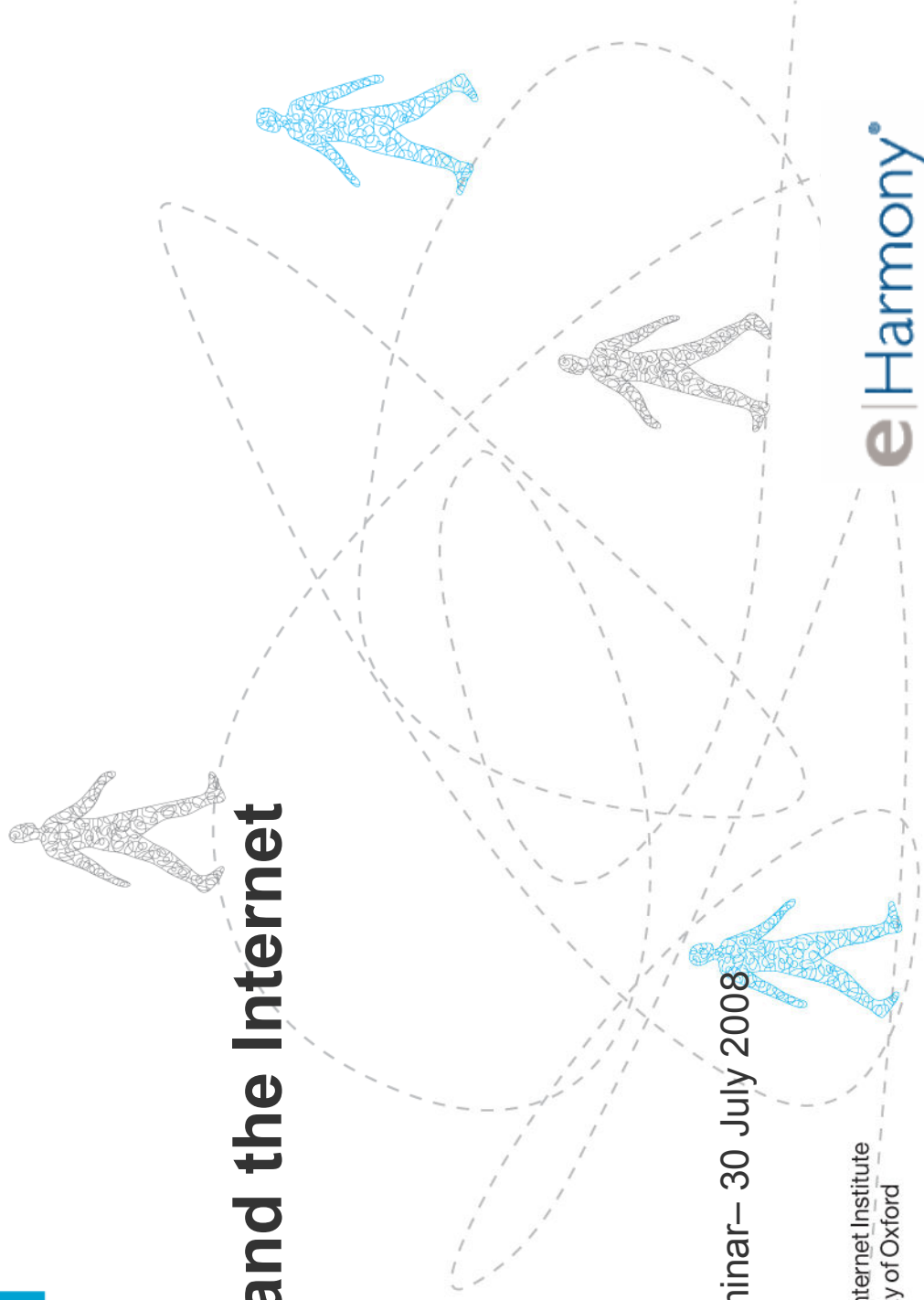
Marriage and the Internet

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One Plus One seminar – 30 July 2008



Oxford Internet Institute
University of Oxford



Me, My Spouse and the Internet Study

- Role of the Internet in marriage
 - Attraction and selection
 - Maintaining relationships
 - Netiquette

Me, My Spouse and the Internet: Sample and Design

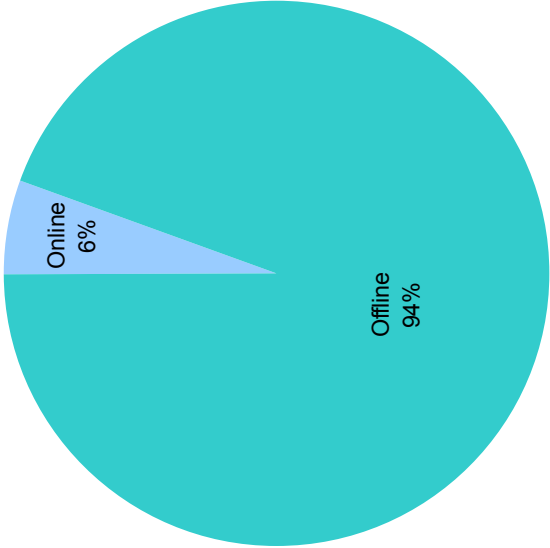
	UK	Australia
Type of Survey	Online Survey	Online Survey
Fieldwork	October 2007	November 2007
Sample	Representative sample of married couples in the UK	Representative sample of internet uses in Australia
Respondents	2,401 individuals (929 couples)	1,496 individuals (748 couples)
Weights	Weighted to represent married Internet users	Not weighted

Sample Composition

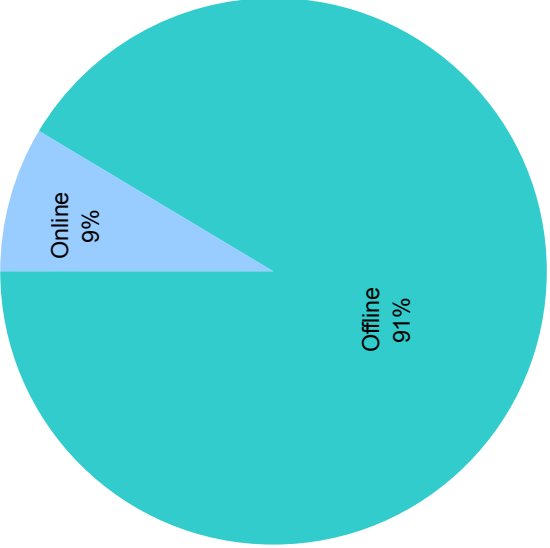
	UK	Australia
Average Age	49 years	42 years
How long have been married	19 years	13 years
Average of Children	1.6	1.9
% with no children	24%	18%

Attraction and Selection

Meeting Partner Online
UK



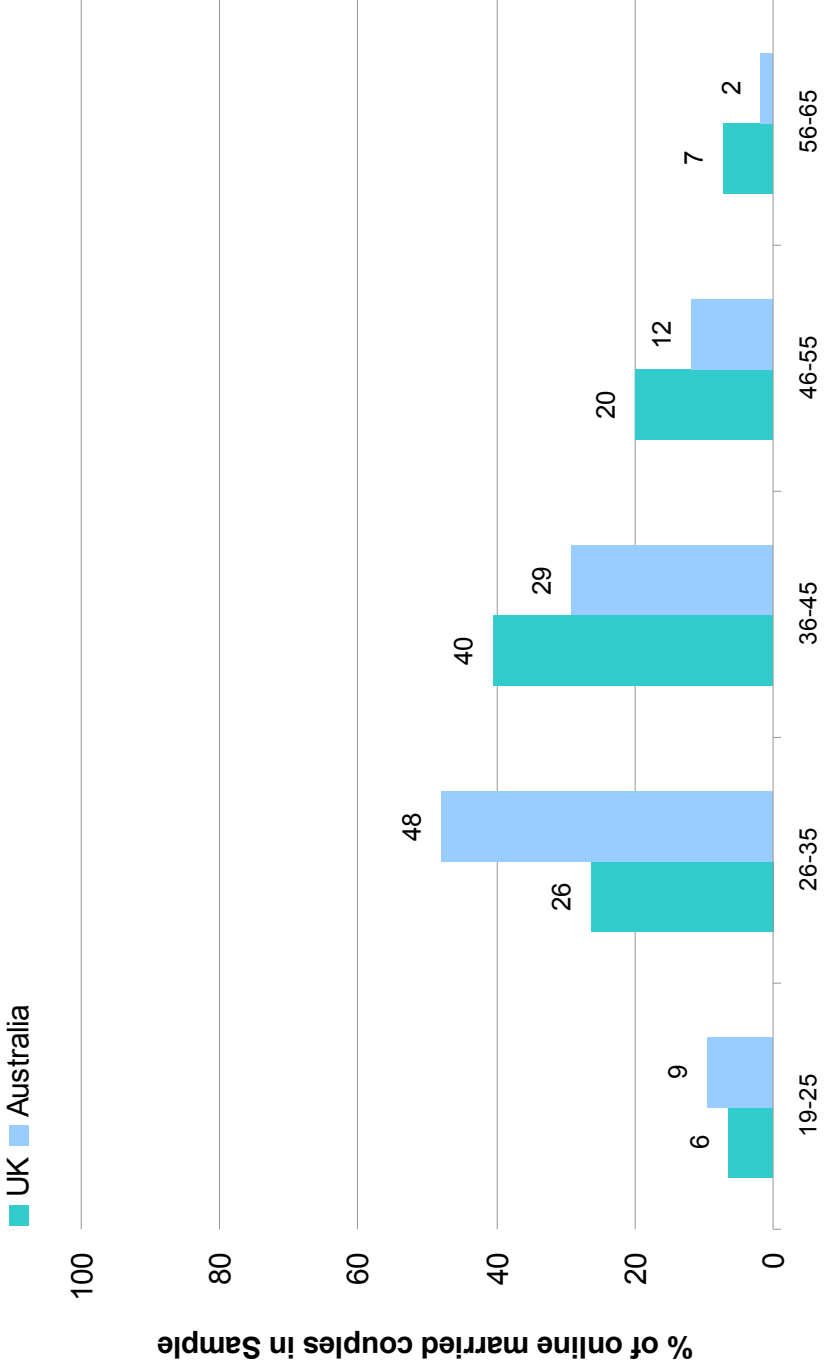
Meeting Partner Online
Australia



Question: Did you first meet your current partner online or offline?

Age groups of couples who met online

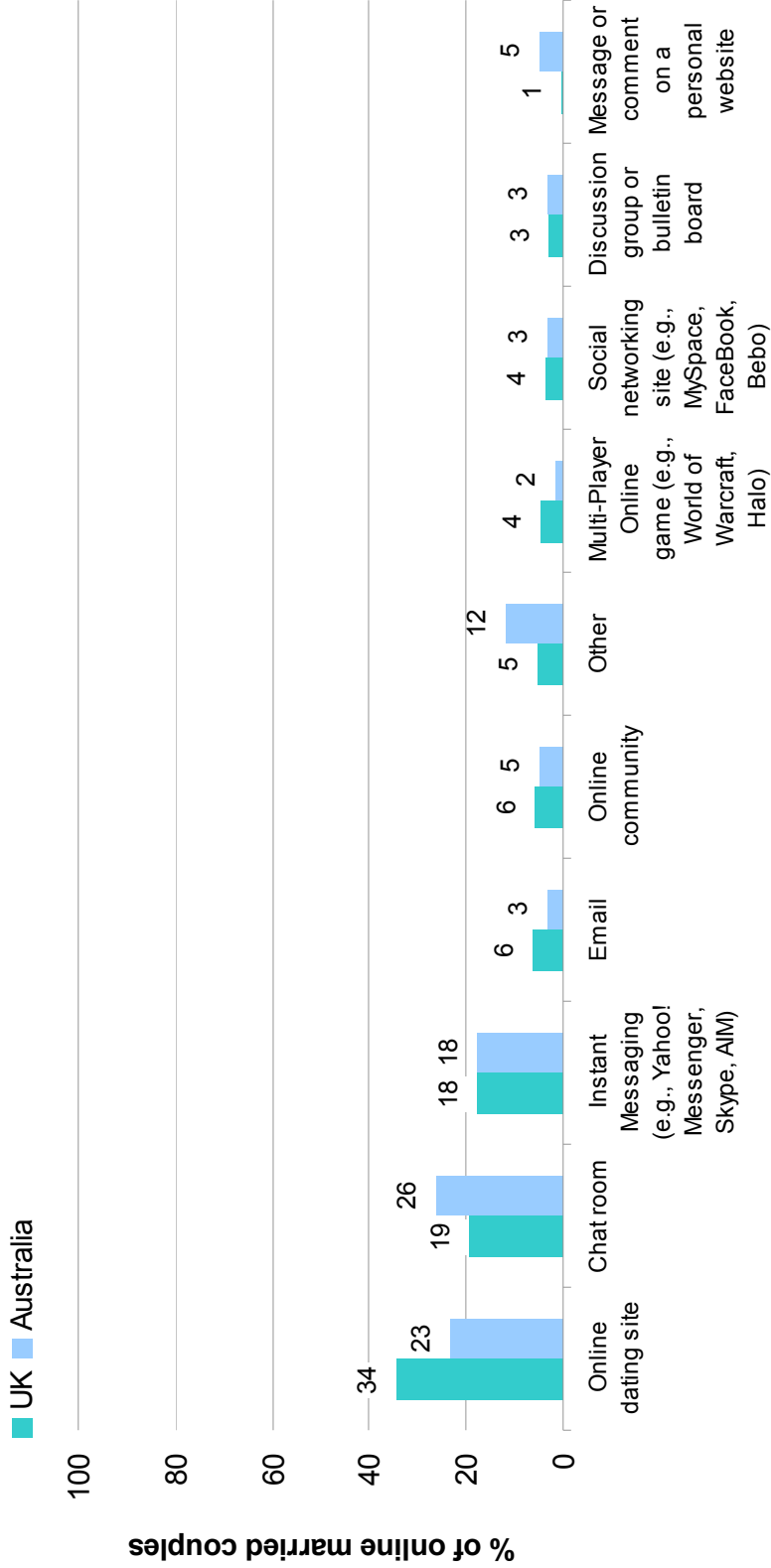
People who met partner online in Sample by Age
UK and Australia



Question: Did you first meet your current partner online or offline?
In what year were you born?

Where did online couples meet

Where did online couples meet
UK and Australia

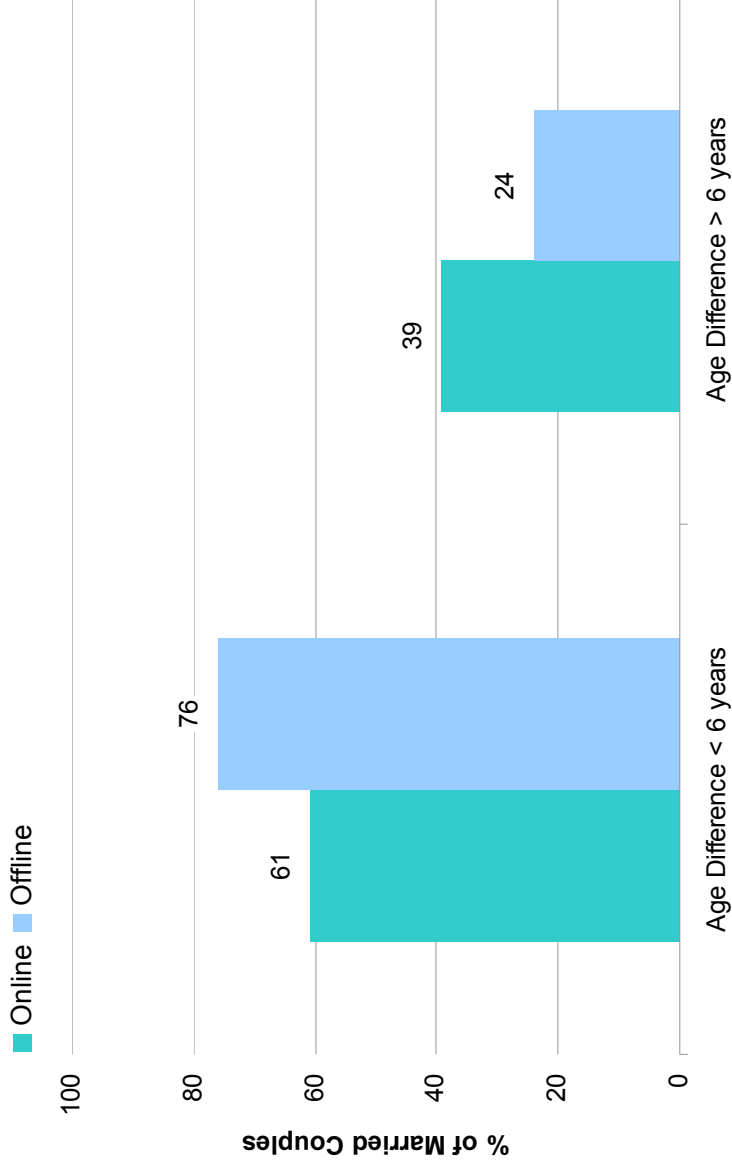


Question: Did you first meet your current partner online or offline?
Where online did you meet?

Couples who met online by Age Difference

Couples who met online by Age Difference (*)

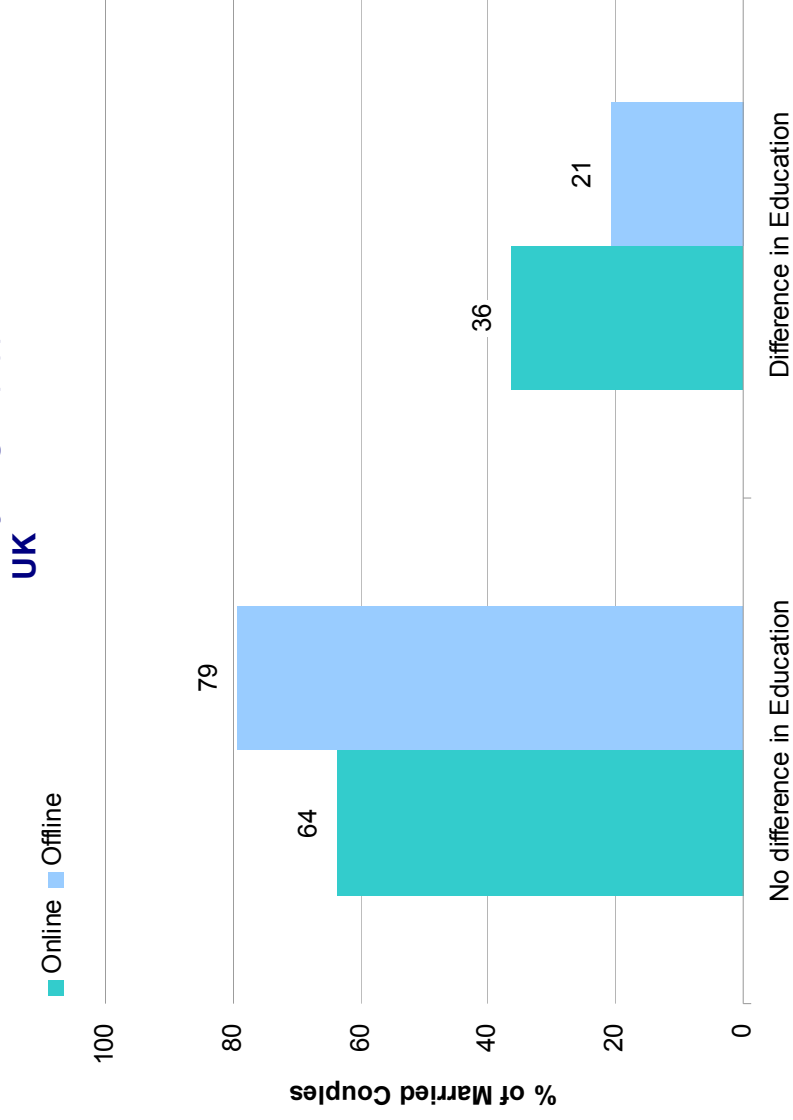
UK



Question: In what year were you born?

Couples who met online by Education Difference

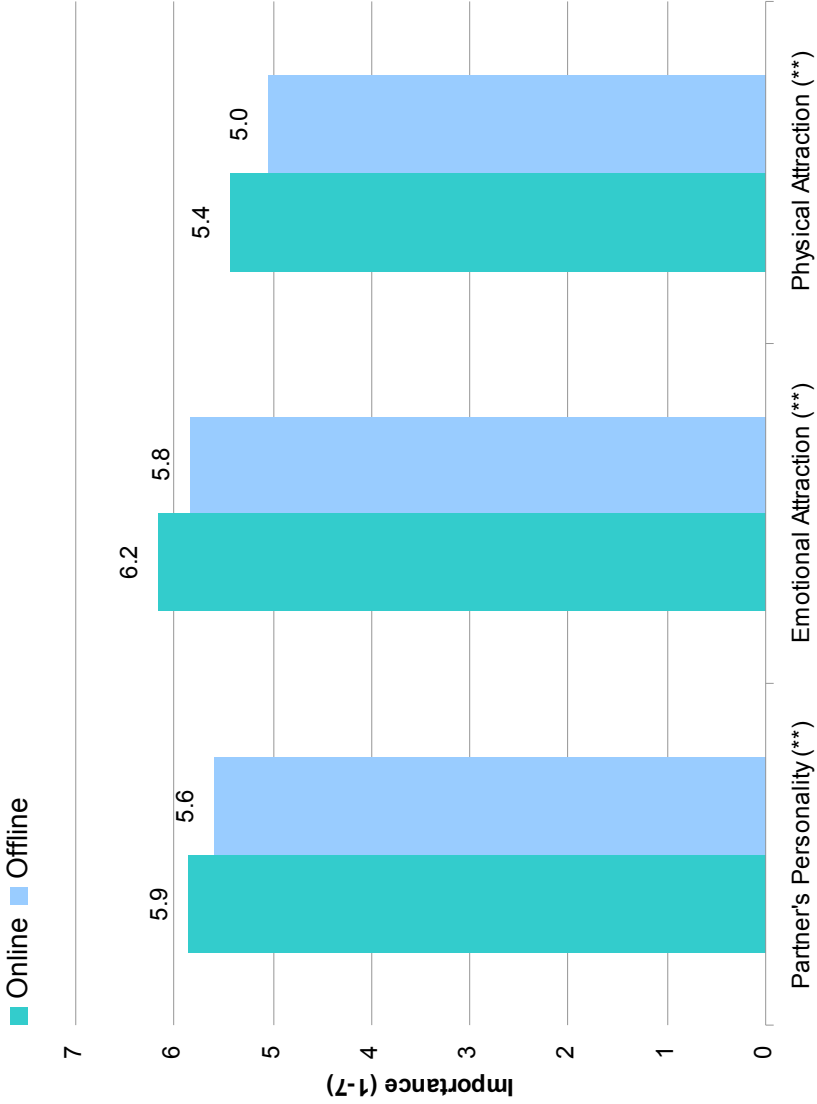
Couples who met online by Education Difference (with and without university degree) (*)
UK



Question: What is the highest level of education that you have attained?

Importance of Partner's Attributes

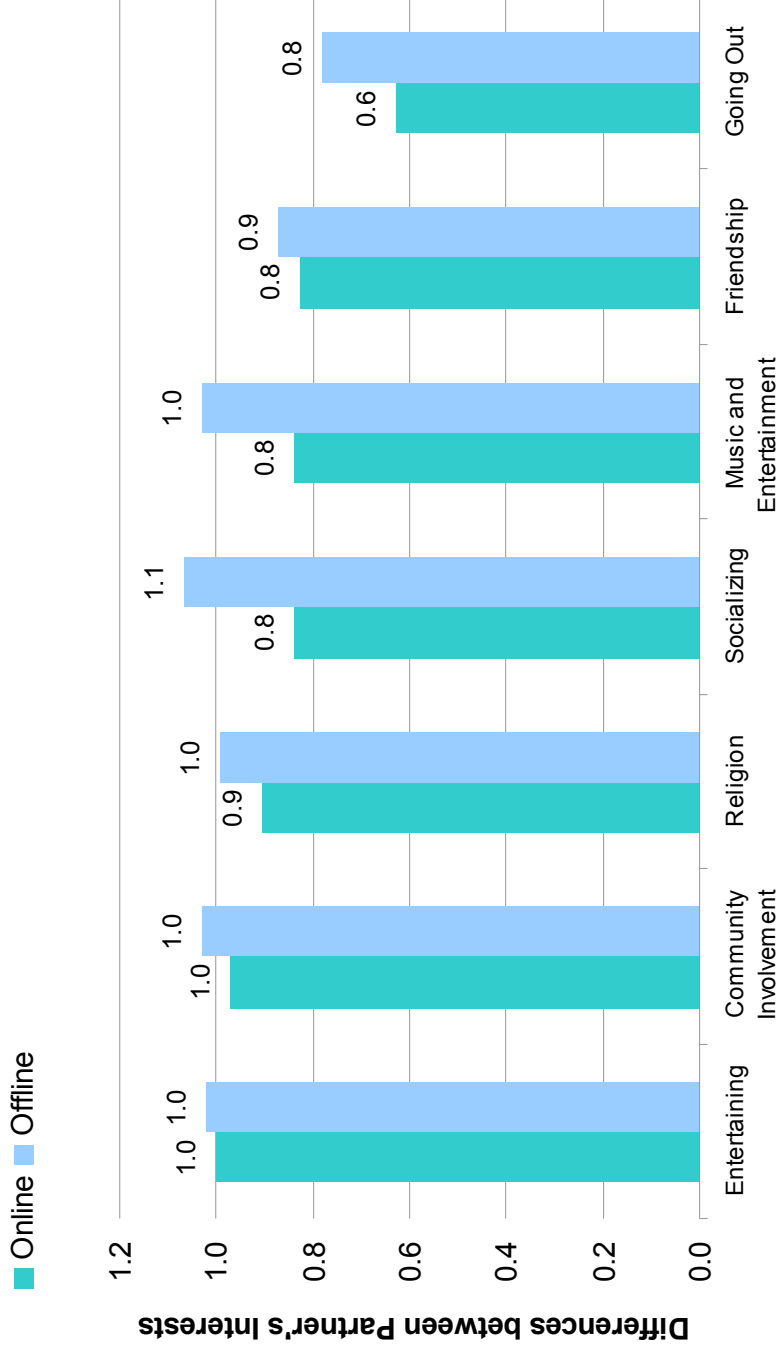
Importance of Partner's Attributes by how People met
UK



Question: When you think about your marriage, how important are the following attributes?

Couple who met online by Differences in Interests

Couple Differences in Interests by how they met
UK



Question: Please use the scale (1-5) below to rate your interest in the following things.

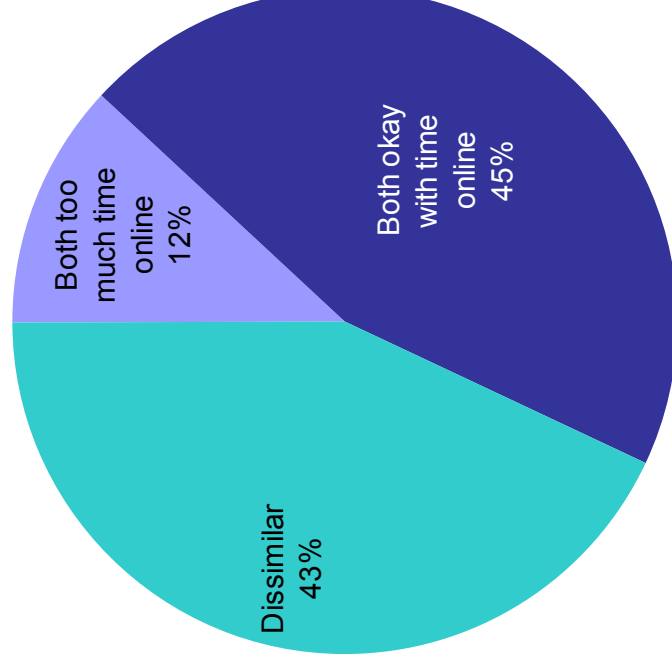
Maintaining relationships

- Online relationships: Debilitating or liberating?
- Truth/Lies paradox
- Social Scripts for relationships

Netiquette: General use

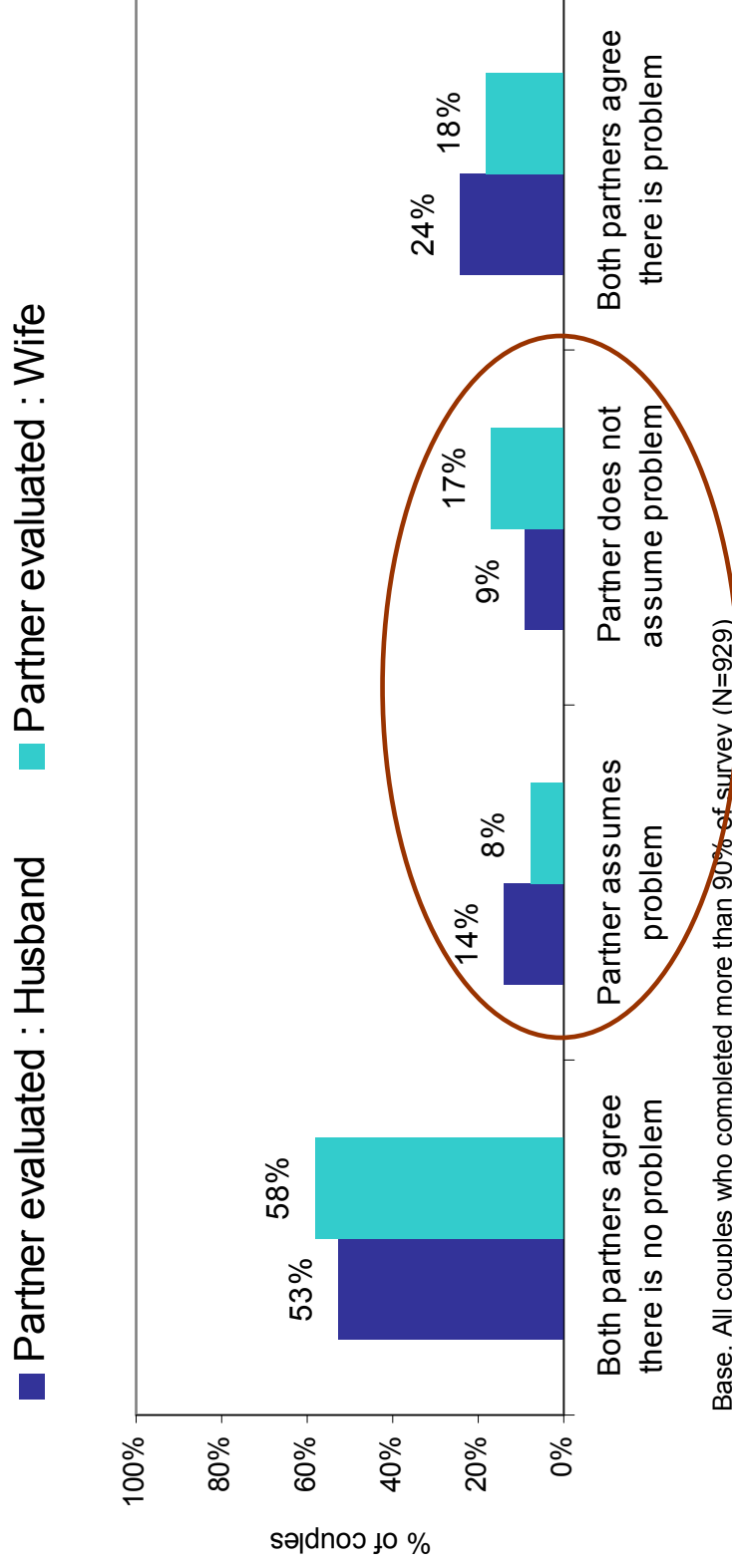
- The majority couples have similar perceptions of the time they spent online
- 43% of couples has dissimilar time use patterns – Cause for conflict?
- Does it matter whether husband or wife is evaluated?

Do you ever spend too much time online?



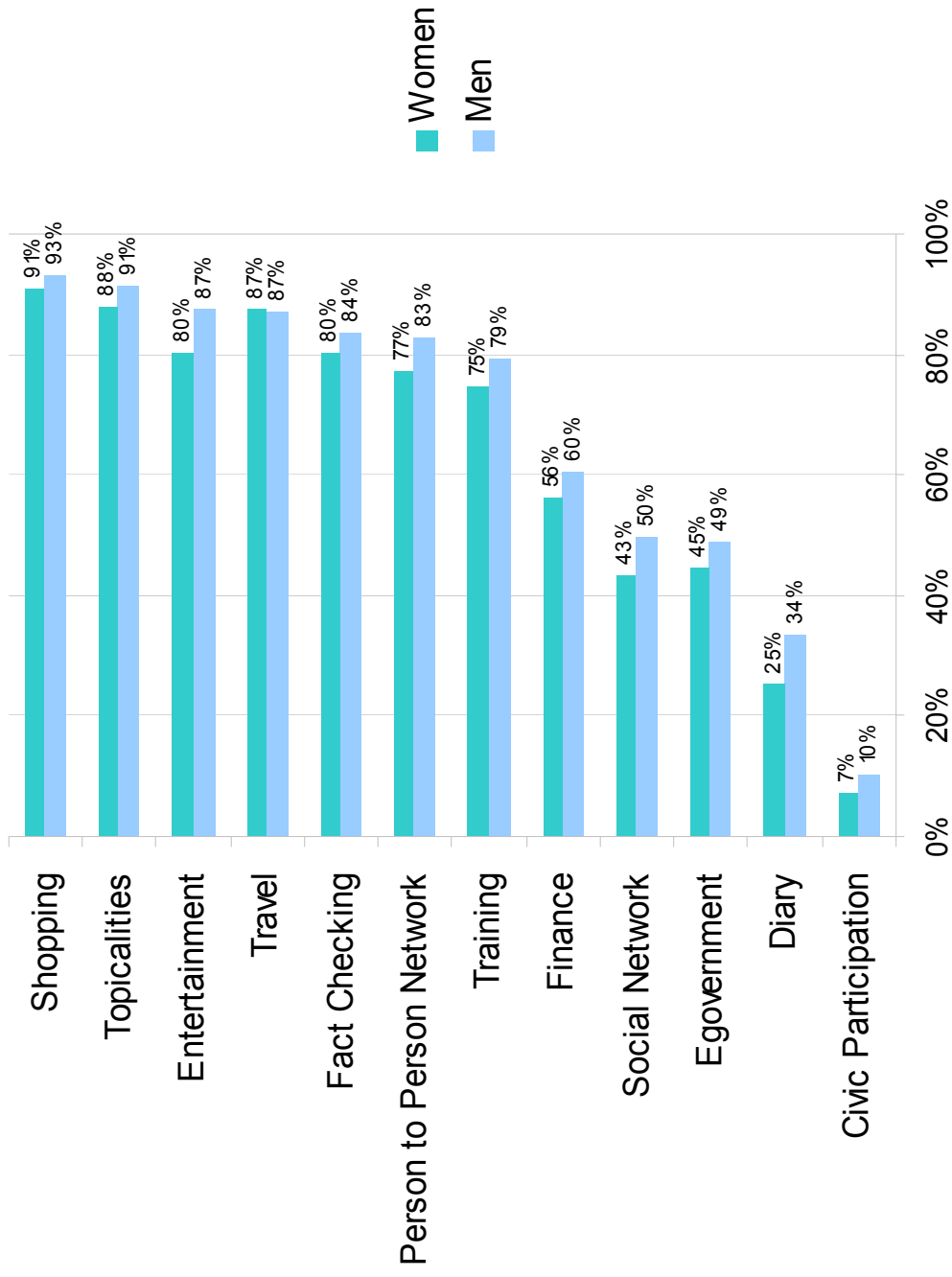
Base. All couples who completed more than 90% of survey (N=929)

Netiquette: Differences in use



It seems that women are more worried about the time they and their husbands spend online

Netiquette: Different activities (OxIS)



Activities in the last year. Internet Users: OxIS 2007 N=1,578

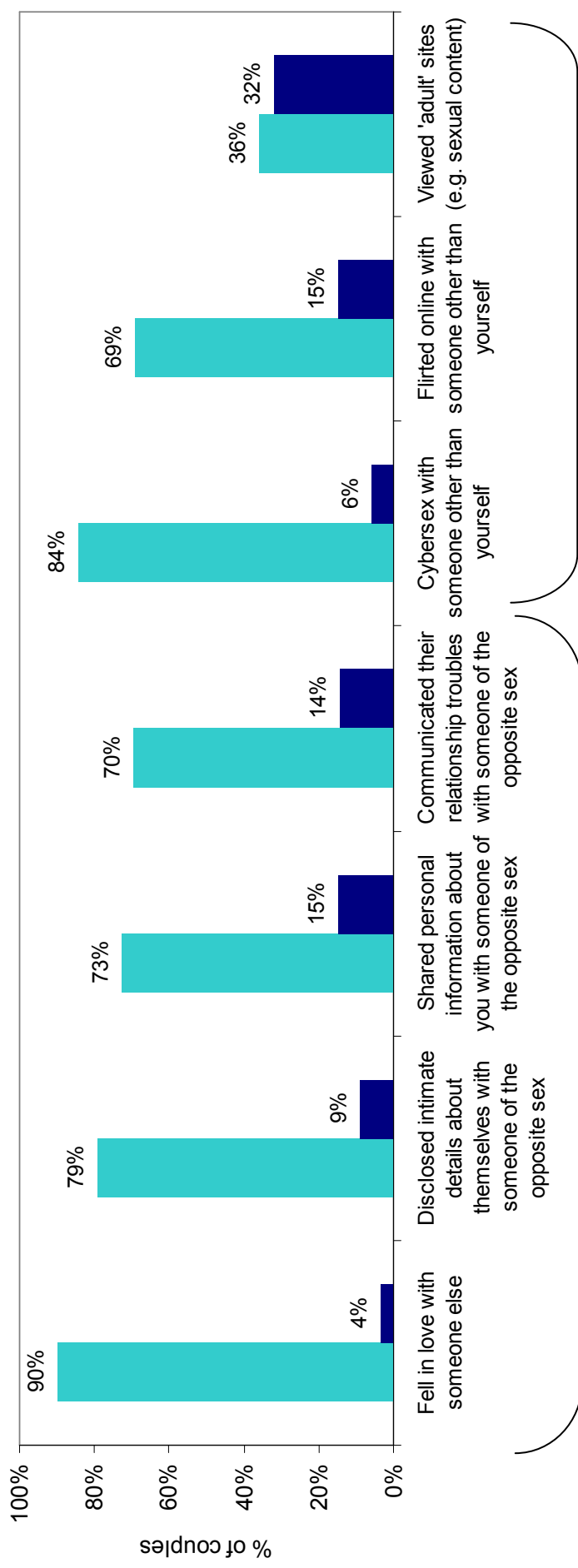
Netiquette: Acceptability infidelity

**How would you feel if your partner engaged in the following activities on the Internet?
(Unhappy/Don't care/Happy)**

- emotional infidelity
- physical infidelity

Netiquette: Acceptability Infidelity

How would you feel if your partner engaged in the following activities on the Internet?

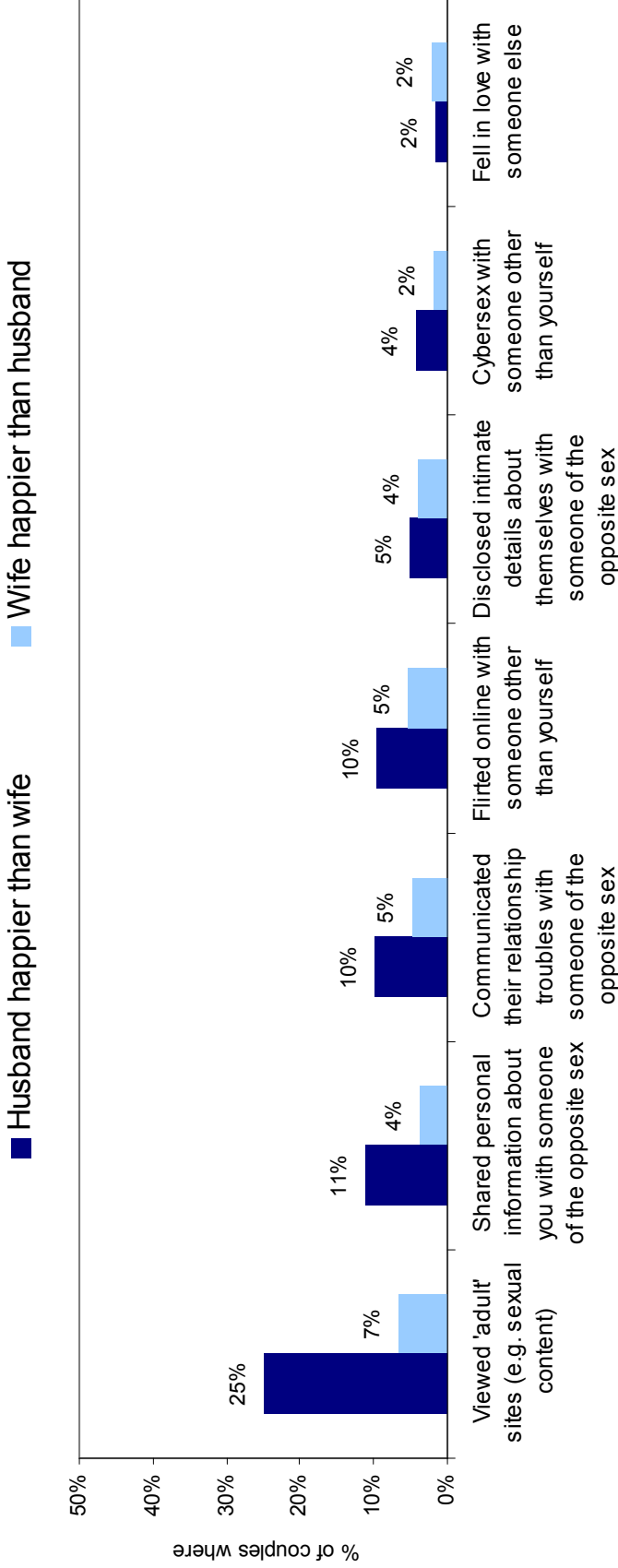


Physical infidelity

Emotional infidelity

Base. All couples who completed more than 90% of survey (N=929)

Netiquette: Specific activities - differences



Base. All couples who completed more than 90% of survey (N=929)

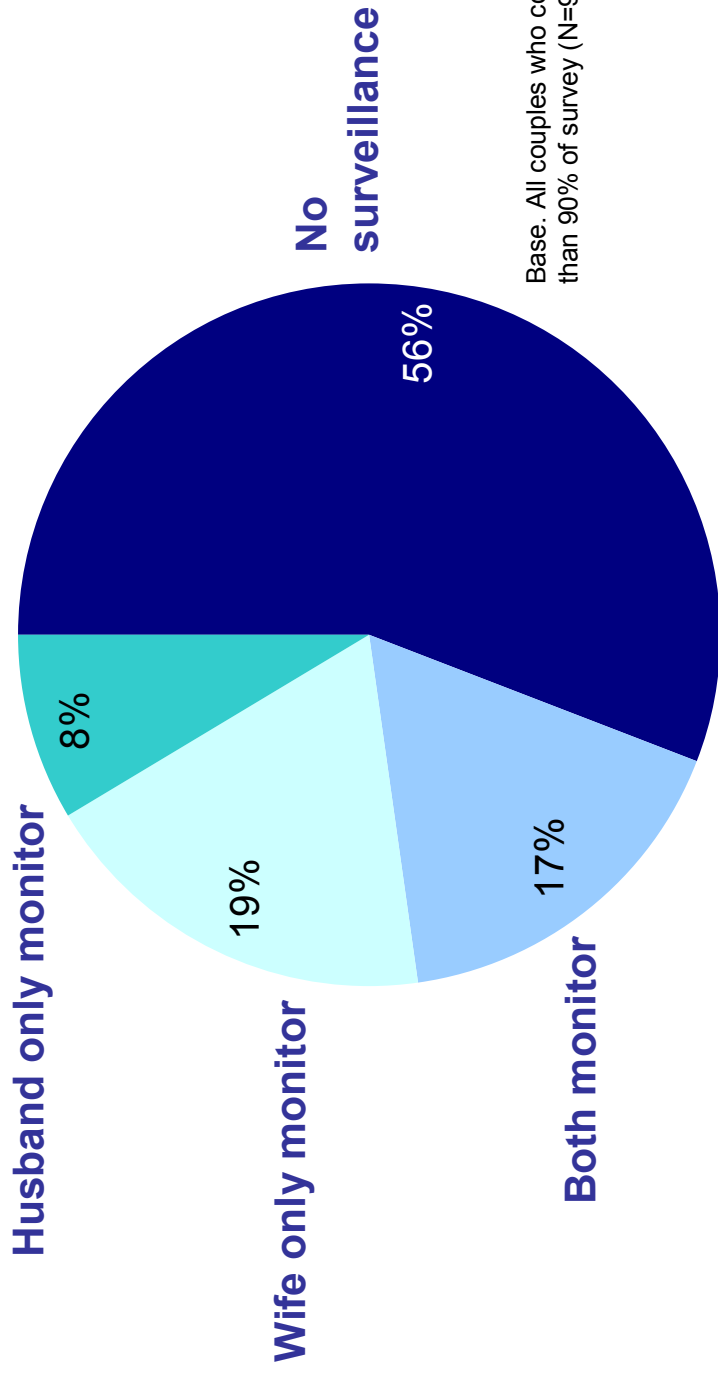
Netiquette: Monitoring

Have you ever checked up on your partner's activities without them knowing, by doing the following?

'Reading their emails' (20%), 'Reading their SMS'(20%), 'Checking their browser history' (13%), 'Reading their IM logs'(5%), 'Using monitoring software'(2%), and 'By pretending to be another person'(1%)

Monitoring: Similarities

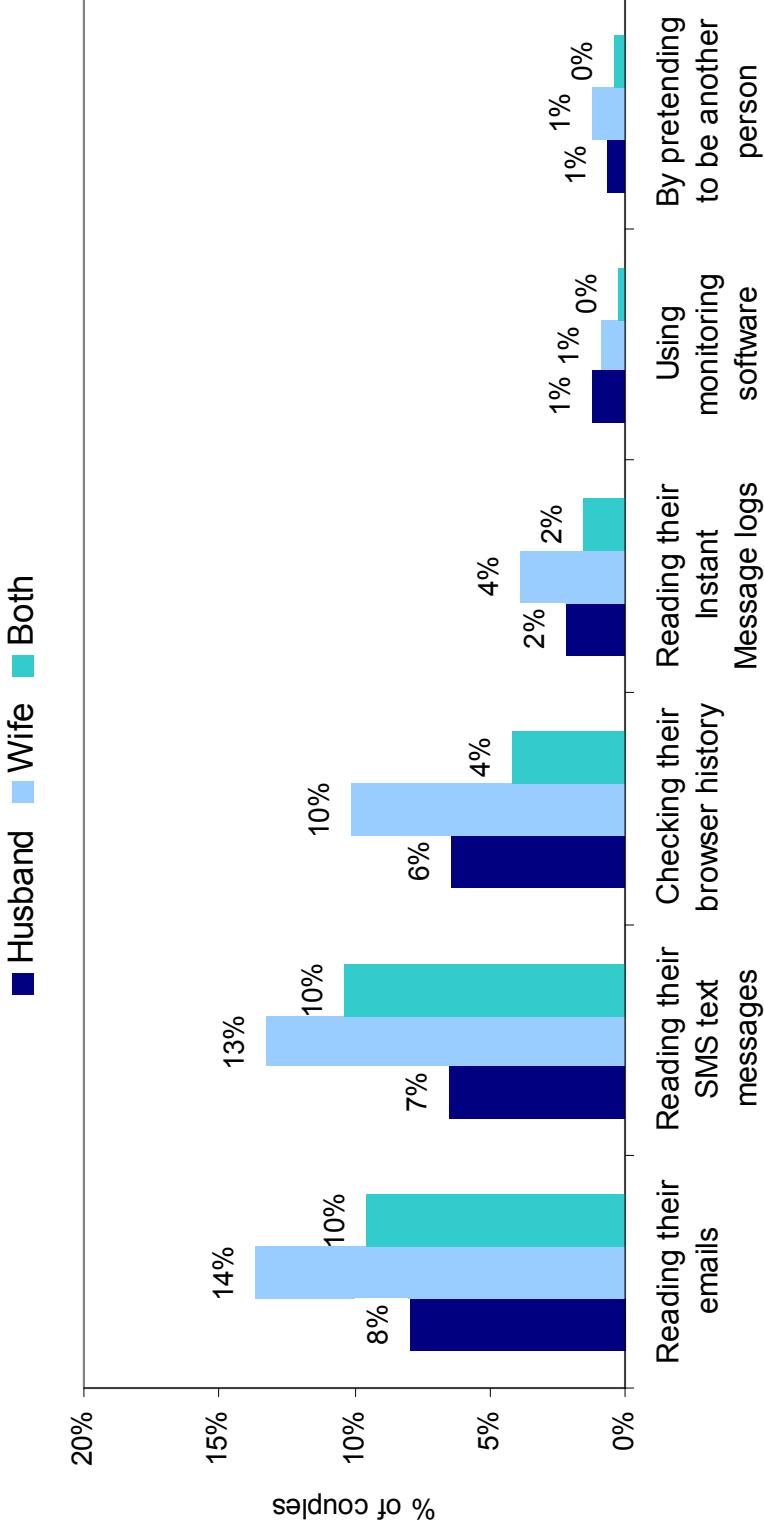
- In 73% of couples there is similar surveillance behaviour between partners
- In 44% of couples at least one of the partners monitors the other partner's behaviour



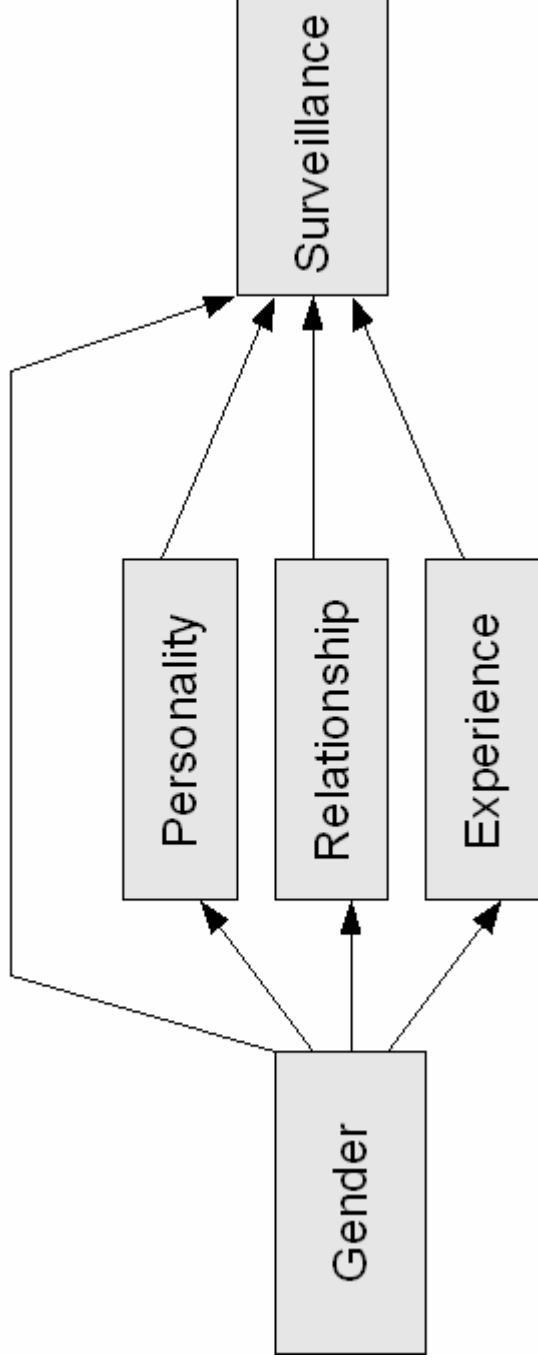
Base. All couples who completed more than 90% of survey (N=929)

Monitoring: Differences

The wife is for all these behaviours more likely to monitor her husbands behaviour than her husband is to monitor hers.



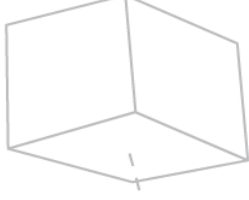
Explaining surveillance



Conclusions

- Gender hugely important in relation to surveillance and netiquette – women are more (have more reason to be) concerned than men about online behaviour
- Age is related to decrease in monitoring (directly and through higher satisfaction with relationship) – This cannot be explained by experience with the internet
- Both personality and relationship characteristics are important

Thank you



‘Me, My Spouse & the Internet’
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