

Lying in a Sender-Receiver Deception Game: Effects of Gender and Motivation to Deceive

Authors : Eitan Elaad, Yeela Gal-Gonen

Abstract : Two studies examined gender differences in lying when the truth-telling bias prevailed and when inspiring lying and distrust. The first study used 156 participants from the community (78 pairs). First, participants completed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory, the Lie- and Truth Ability Assessment Scale (LTAAS), and the Rational-Experiential Inventory. Then, they participated in a deception game where they performed as senders and receivers of true and false communications. Their goal was to retain as many points as possible according to a payoff matrix that specified the reward they would gain for any possible outcome. Results indicated that males in the sender position lied more and were more successful tellers of lies and truths than females. On the other hand, males, as receivers, trusted less than females but were not better at detecting lies and truths. We explained the results by a. Male's high perceived lie-telling ability. We observed that confidence in telling lies guided participants to increase their use of lies. Male's lie-telling confidence corresponded to earlier accounts that showed a consistent association between high self-assessed lying ability, reports of frequent lying, and predictions of actual lying in experimental settings; b. Male's narcissistic features. Earlier accounts described positive relations between narcissism and reported lying or unethical behavior in everyday life situations. Predictions about the association between narcissism and frequent lying received support in the present study. Furthermore, males scored higher than females on the narcissism scale; and c. Male's experiential thinking style. We observed that males scored higher than females on the experiential thinking style scale. We further hypothesized that the experiential thinking style predicts frequent lying in the deception game. Results confirmed the hypothesis. The second study used one hundred volunteers (40 females) who underwent the same procedure. However, the payoff matrix encouraged lying and distrust. Results showed that male participants lied more than females. We found no gender differences in trust. Males and females did not differ in their success of telling and detecting lies and truths. Participants also completed the LTAAS questionnaire. Males assessed their lie-telling ability higher than females, but the ability assessment did not predict lying frequency. A final note. The present design is limited to low stakes. Participants knew that they were participating in a game, and they would not experience any consequences from their deception in the game. Therefore, we advise caution when applying the present results to lying under high stakes.

Keywords : gender, lying, detection of deception, information processing style, self-assessed lying ability

Conference Title : ICGDRTB 2022 : International Conference on Gender Differences in Risk-Taking Behaviors

Conference Location : Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Conference Dates : January 28-29, 2022