

ADDENDUM REPORT

Dating Experiences Across Religious Communities

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Overview

The 2025 study, *L’Zavgan: Making Matches – Evaluating Challenges in the Orthodox Mainstream Yeshivish Shidduch System*, conducted by the Orthodox Union in partnership with The Shidduch Institute, focused on respondents who self-identified as “Yeshivish/Mainstream Yeshiva.” Respondents who self-identified as a different hashkafa (religious worldview or guiding philosophy) were not analyzed as part of the report.

This addendum compares the dating practices of single Orthodox men and women across all hashkafot (Table 1) to identify how they may differ from the Yeshivish population.

Additional insights are included from the 2023 OU study, *The Challenges of Singlehood among American Orthodox Jews*. Respondents in that study were more likely to identify as Modern Orthodox, providing valuable context and additional data for analyzing behaviors in that hashkafa (Table 1). Key findings from the 2023 OU singlehood study are highlighted in blue boxes throughout this addendum.

TABLE 1 | DISTRIBUTION OF HASHKAFA BY STUDY

Hashkafa	L’Zavgan: Making Matches	OU Singlehood Study
Yeshivish/ Mainstream Yeshiva	70%	15%
Modern Orthodox Machmir	9%	0%
Heimish	7%	0%
Chassidic	5%	4%
Modern/Centrist Orthodox	2%	57%
Other/NA	7%	24%

Heimish and Chassidic respondents closely resembled Yeshivish daters in their responses. As a result, the focus of this addendum is on the differences between Modern Orthodox daters (including both Modern Orthodox and Modern Orthodox Machmir) and their Yeshivish counterparts.

Executive Summary

- Most successful shidduchim are suggested by family members or friends, but Modern Orthodox/Machmir are less likely to be introduced by a shadchan and more likely to meet on their own or use an online dating tool.
- Yeshivish, Heimish, and Chassidic respondents are more positive about working with shadchanim than Modern Orthodox/Machmir respondents.
- However, Modern Orthodox/Machmir singles using shadchanim spend more time in the system and receive more suggestions. This may imply misalignment between the shidduch system and Modern Orthodox/Machmir cultural attitudes toward dating and marriage.
- Modern Orthodox/Machmir women, and to a lesser extent Yeshivish women, have higher levels of selectivity compared to men in the same hashkafa.

Key Findings

Fewer Modern Orthodox/Machmir Successful Shidduchim are Suggested by Shadchanim

In the *L'Zavgan: Making Matches* report, married respondents were asked who set them up with their spouse (Table 2).

While most successful shidduchim across all hashkafot from Yeshivish to Modern Orthodox are suggested by family or friends rather than shadchanim, comparisons between hashkafot show Yeshivish, Heimish, and Chassidic respondents were significantly more likely to have been set up with their spouse using a full-time shadchan than those identifying as Modern Orthodox/Machmir.

Modern Orthodox/Machmir are significantly more likely to have met on their own or to use some form of online dating tools.

TABLE 2 MATCH SOURCE FOR MARRIED RESPONDENTS BY HASKAFA

Match Source	Modern Orthodox/ Machmir	Yeshivish	Heimish & Chasidic
Family Member /Friend	57%	68%	68%
Part Time Shadchan	12%	13%	13%
Full Time Shadchan	4%	10%	10%
Rabbi / Rebbetzin / Community Leader	5%	6%	6%
Other Source	22%	3%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Modern Orthodox/Machmir are Less Positive Toward Shadchanim

L'Zavgan: Making Matches included a series of questions exploring how single men and women perceive the behavior of shadchanim including their responsiveness, understanding, guidance, and critique. Table 3 details significant differences in attitudes toward shadchanim across hashkafot.

Modern Orthodox/Machmir respondents view shadchanim more negatively than their Yeshivish, Heimish, and Chassidic counterparts.

TABLE 3 PERCEPTION OF SHADCHAN BY HASHKAFA

(Combines “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, and “Slightly Agree” responses)	Modern Orthodox/ Machmir	Yeshivish	Heimish & Chasidic
Shadchanim are responsive	48%	55%	64%
Shadchanim understand what single men and women are looking for	46%	63%	59%
Shadchanim give good advice	39%	59%	54%
Shadchanim are too critical of client	48%	28%	31%
Shadchanim follow through with suggestions for dates	51%	41%	54%
Shadchanim provide on-target suggestions	36%	29%	44%

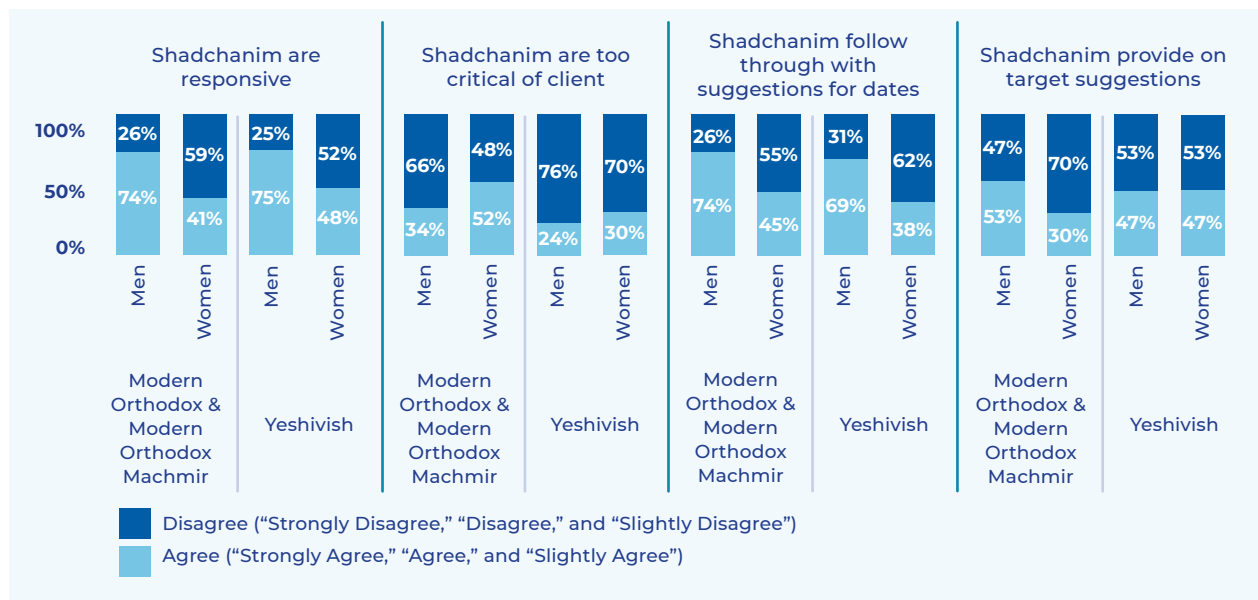
This trend is reinforced by findings from the OU Singlehood study, (in which most respondents were Modern Orthodox), where 50% of single men and women were “very much/somewhat” confident that matchmakers care about what they want and only 34% were “very much/somewhat” confident that a matchmaker would find them a great match.

Additionally, many participants were skeptical of the effectiveness of shadchanim and at times felt hurt, criticized, and judged by shadchanim, which impacts their dating lives and self-perceptions.

Men are Somewhat More Positive Toward Shadchanim than Women

Modern Orthodox/Machmir men, and to a lesser extent Yeshivish men, are somewhat more positive toward shadchanim than women, likely because they receive more suggestions, have greater control over the process, face less risk in rejecting potential matches, and are scarcely available to shadchanim.

FIGURE 1 PERCEPTION OF SHADCHANIM BY HASHKAFA AND GENDER



Not shown in this table are “Shadchanim give good guidance throughout the process”, which was equal across gender and hashkafa, and “Shadchanim understand what single men and women are looking for” which was only higher for Yeshivish women (65% agreement vs. 56% for Men).

The OU Singlehood study also finds that men are more likely than women to feel confident in matchmakers and trust their intentions.

Modern Orthodox/Machmir singles spend more time in the shidduch system and receive more suggestions from shadchanim.

In the *L’Zavgan: Making Matches* report, single men and women currently looking to marry were asked how long they have participated in the shidduch system and the number of suggestions they have received from shadchanim (Table 4).

For both measures, Modern Orthodox/Machmir respondents have the highest responses, suggesting they spend more time in the system and receive more suggestions.

TABLE 4 MEDIAN NUMBER OF MONTHS AND NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS BY HASHKAFA

Hashkafa	Median number of months in the shidduch system	Median number of suggestions
Modern Orthodox/Machmir	48	17
Yeshivish	30	10
Heimish and Chassidic	25	6

It is not clear, from this research, if negative attitudes of Modern Orthodox/Machmir daters toward shadchanim is caused by spending more time in the system and receiving more suggestions or is a result of their interactions with shadchanim. Alternatively, this may suggest misalignment between the shidduch system and Modern Orthodox/Machmir cultural attitudes toward dating and marriage.

The OU Singlehood study does not speak to this topic, as the survey was asked of single individuals who were still looking for a spouse.

Modern Orthodox/Machmir Women are Comparably More Selective

The *L’Zavgan: Making Matches* explored respondent’s willingness to compromise in their search for a spouse by asking levels of agreement to four statements. While three statements showed no significant differences, the statement “Willing to strive for most perfect shidduch” was notably higher for women among the Modern Orthodox/Machmir, and to a lesser extent Yeshivish, hashkafot.

Nearly half (48%) of Modern Orthodox/Machmir women agree (slightly to strongly) they are “Willing to strive for a perfect shidduch, no matter how long it takes”. In contrast, only 21% of Modern Orthodox men share this mindset.

Among Yeshivish respondents, 41% of women express this level of determination, compared to 32% of men.

In the Heimish and Chassidic groups, however, there are no significant differences in selectivity between men and women.

These findings highlight notable gender differences in attitudes toward selectivity, with Modern Orthodox women being the most selective, Yeshivish slightly less so, and Heimish and Chassidic respondents consistent across genders.

The OU Singlehood study finds that women consider more traits to be necessary in a prospective spouse than men (perhaps indicating higher levels of selectivity).

Key Similarities Across Hashkafot

Despite some differences in dating practices across hashkafot, there are several notable similarities.

- Across all hashkafot, most singles are introduced to potential matches through family and friends, with rabbis and rebbetzins playing a minimal role.
- Kindness and *ehrllichkeit* (integrity and/or sincerity) consistently emerge as the most sought-after traits in a spouse.
- Singles across hashkafot tend to prefer a spouse raised in an observant household over one from a ba'al teshuva background.
- Physical attraction is universally more important to men than to women.

These shared values and preferences reflect some of the common threads that connect Orthodox singles across diverse hashkafot.