

The Impact of Gender on the Role of Social Status in Dating Preferences

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Abstract— This study aims to investigate the impact of gender on the role of social status in dating preferences using a quantitative approach. The primary purpose of this research is to understand the differences in dating preferences between men and women, specifically focusing on how social status influences their choices. The study hypothesizes that the mean number of women who prioritize social status in dating preferences will be higher compared to the mean number of men. To achieve this, we employed a survey method, utilizing Mate Preferences Questionnaire developed by David Buss to measure various aspects of dating preferences, including social status, physical attractiveness, and financial stability. A sample size of men and women were collected through online google form. The data were analysed using statistical methods to determine the significance of the differences between the two genders. (JASP). Our findings indicate that women place a higher importance on social status in their dating preferences compared to men.

Keywords: Dating preferences, Gender roles, social status

I. INTRODUCTION

Dating preferences are shaped by a wide range of social and psychological factors, including gender roles, societal expectations, and individual values.

Among these factors, social status encompassing aspects like education, income, occupation, and perceived prestige plays a significant role in how individuals choose romantic partners. However, the relationship between gender and the importance of social status in dating preferences is a complex and multifaceted issue. This research paper aims to investigate the ways in which gender affects the understanding and significance of social status in dating contexts. Understanding how societal

expectations tied to gender roles influence partner selection can deepen our comprehension of relationship dynamics and the factors driving attraction. As gender norms evolve, so too do the expectations and preferences in dating, which reflect broader social changes. In contemporary society, dating preferences serve as a reflection of broader social dynamics, shaped significantly by factors such as cultural influences, personal values, and the evolving understanding of gender roles. Gender, in particular, plays a vital role in how individuals navigate the dating landscape, affecting both their perceptions of social status and their partner selection. Historically, traditional gender roles have dictated expectations in romantic relationships, often placing men in positions of power and women in subordinate roles. However, as societal norms shift towards greater gender equality, these dynamics are increasingly challenged, leading to a reevaluation of what constitutes desirability and compatibility in a partner. Understanding how these changing paradigms influence dating choices is crucial for comprehending the complexities of modern relationships. This study will explore the complex relationship between gender, social status, and dating preferences, aiming to provide fresh insights into how these elements interact in the context of contemporary relationships. For instance, individuals with higher social status may gravitate towards partners who reflect or enhance their own status, while those with lower social status might face unique challenges in the dating arena, impacting their choices and the perceptions they encounter. Through careful analysis and evaluation of relevant literature and empirical data, this research will contribute to a richer understanding of the interplay between gender and social constructs in shaping romantic choices.

II. . REVIEW OF LITRATURE

This study explores how adolescent dating desires are influenced by the attractiveness and social status of potential short-term partners, and whether self-perceived mate value moderates this relationship. The research involved 1,913 adolescents aged 13-18, who rated the importance of various partner characteristics and participated in an experimental vignette study. The findings indicate that boys place greater importance on attractiveness than girls, while social status is relatively unimportant for both sexes.

Attractiveness was the primary factor for boys' dating desires, with social status becoming important only if the partner was attractive. For girls, both attractiveness and social status were significant factors. Additionally, adolescents with a high self-perceived mate value showed more dating desire towards attractive partners compared to those with a lower mate value. These results highlight the importance of attractiveness in adolescent dating preferences and suggest that social status plays a minor role during this age period. The study contributes to understanding the sexual strategies that underlie adolescents' dating desires.

This set of studies delves into how social categories like gender and race, as well as social status, influence preferences in both children and adolescents. Research indicates that gender-based preferences in children surface earlier than race-based preferences. Additionally, children show an acute awareness of social status, which in turn, can shape their racial preferences as race and social status often correlate. For adolescents, the studies reveal nuanced dynamics: boys emphasize attractiveness in potential short-term partners, whereas girls consider both attractiveness and social status. Self-perceived mate value also plays a role, with adolescents who see themselves as high-value showing more interest in attractive partners.

The findings underscore the critical role of attractiveness and social status in shaping preferences and interactions. These insights provide a foundation for strategies to mitigate biases from an early age and enhance our understanding of mate selection in both online and offline environments. These findings also have implications for designing recommendation systems in online dating platforms, highlighting the need for personalized approaches that consider gender-specific preferences. In recent years, various societal changes has contributed to a significant rise in

the number of single individuals. Factors such as delayed marriage, evolving expectations of marital roles, changing sexual norms, the availability of birth control, and the pursuit of emotionally and intellectually fulfilling relationships have driven this trend (Ahuvia & Adelman, 1992). At the same time, increasing career demands, limited free time, and greater geographic mobility has reduced opportunities for social interaction and maintaining close relationships. To address these challenges in mate selection, new institutions and technologies have emerge. During the late 1970s, personal ads in newspaper singles columns gained popularity, becoming a widely discussed topic in magazines and on talk shows (Ahuvia & Adelman, 1992).

Despite their presence, a social stigma persisted, and by the 1980s, only a small proportion of people in the United States (approximately 1%) use these ads to meet potential partners (Finkel et al., 2012). Another approach, introduced by third-party services, was video dating. This process began with clients reviewing written profiles, often accompanied by photos, to decide which 2–10 minute video profiles to watch. If the client express interest, their video was shared with the chosen individual. If both parties agreed, contact information was exchange (Ahuvia & Adelman, 1992). Video dating allowed participants to screen potential matches more effectively, offering a richer portrayal of personality through visual and nonverbal cues, such as body language—key elements in courtship (Renninger et al., 2004). Both personal ads and video dating give individuals greater control over the pace and details of their interactions (Woll & Young, 1989). This element of self-direction has been further enhance by modern technologies and online platforms that enable personalized and flexible communication (Barraket & Henry-Waring, 2008).

The Evolution of Desire: Strategies of Human Mating was first published by Basic Books (Buss, 1994) after four years of writing. It was a culmination of a decade of research into human mating psychology by the author. In 2003, a revised edition added two new chapters while retaining the original ten chapters unchanged. A comprehensive update followed in 2016 (Buss, 2016), incorporating a wealth of new empirical findings accumulated since its initial release. By 2016, the book had earned recognition as a citation classic, with over 2,000 scholarly references.

It is widely utilized in college curricula, serves as a

foundation for scientific research on mating, and provides practical insights for readers interested in understanding their own relationships. While Donald Symons's *The Evolution of Human Sexuality* (1979) is an earlier influential work in this domain, *The Evolution of Desire* takes a broader approach. Rather than focusing solely on sexuality, it explores the evolutionary psychology of human mating across various dimensions, including mate competition, attraction, selection, retention, poaching, conflicts between genders, mate ejection, and remating throughout life. One of the central ideas of the book is that humans employ multiple mating strategies rather than relying on a single approach, with some strategies differing significantly between genders. Humans engage in long-term mating (committed relationships or marriage), a behavior rare among mammals, representing only about 3% of species. Additionally, humans pursue short-term relationships, serial mating, mate poaching, infidelity, and mixed strategies that combine long-term partnerships with casual sexual encounters. A deeper understanding of these strategies begins with identifying the traits and desires that men and women seek in a mate.

Overbeek in 2009 stated that in his paper that many evolutionary psychologists suggest that men and women utilize distinct strategies when it comes to short-term mating. According to the sexual strategies theory (SST; Buss & Schmitt, 1993), these differences are rooted in the unequal levels of parental investment required from each gender (Feingold, 1992; Trivers, 1972). Women face a higher investment in offspring, including nine months of pregnancy and years of caregiving, such as nursing and child-rearing, while men do not share these extensive responsibilities. As a result, the advantages of short-term mating vary between genders. For men, engaging in short-term mating increases the number of potential sexual partners and, consequently, the likelihood of producing more offspring (Schmitt et al., 2003; Schmitt, Shackelford, & Buss, 2001). In contrast, women's benefits from short-term mating are more nuanced. Research generally indicates that women aim to secure access to superior genetic traits (Gangestad & Thornhill, 1997) or immediate resources, such as food, jewelry, or stylish clothing, which may signal a partner's ability to provide a stable environment for raising children in the event of pregnancy (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Greiling & Buss, 2000).

III. . METHODOLOGY

Aim: To explore the role of gender in shaping preferences for social status in romantic relationships.

Objectives:

Investigating the influence of gender on the prioritization of social status in partner selection.

Comparing gender-specific attitudes towards social status and its impact on dating choices.

Identifying potential gender differences in the perception of social status as a desirable trait in dating.

Variables:

Independent Variable (IV) is gender, as it is the factor being manipulated or categorized (e.g., male, female).

Dependent Variable (DV) is the role of social status in dating preferences, as it is the outcome being measured or observed to determine how it is affected by the independent variable.

Research Design:

The research design is survey-based, utilizing Google Forms as the data collection tool, and includes a total of 60 participants.

Participants:

The study involved a total of 60 participants, comprising 40 females and 20 males, with data gathered via Google Forms.

The table provides a summary of the descriptive statistics for the "Mate Preferences Questionnaire" variable based on 60 valid responses, with no missing data. The most frequently occurring value (mode) and the median are both 44, indicating that the central tendency of the data is around this value. The mean, or average score, is slightly lower at 42.55. The data shows some variability, with a standard deviation of 9.33, which measures how spread out the scores are around the mean. The range of the scores spans 51 points, from a minimum score of 10 to a maximum of 61. The skewness value of -0.74 indicates that the data is moderately skewed to the left, meaning that lower scores are more spread out compared to higher ones. The standard error of skewness, which is 0.309, helps assess whether this skewness is significant. The variance, calculated as 87.065, provides another measure of the variability in the data.

The table summarizes the results of a regression

analysis for the "Mate Preferences Questionnaire" variable. In the baseline model (M_0), no predictors are included, so the correlation (R), the explained variance (R^2), and the adjusted R^2 are all zero. The root mean square error (RMSE), which measures the average prediction error, is 9.331. In the second model (M_1), which includes sex as a predictor, the correlation (R) between the predictor and the outcome variable is 0.237. The R^2 value indicates that 5.6% of the variance in the Mate Preferences Questionnaire is explained by sex, but after adjusting for the number of predictors and sample size, the adjusted R^2 is 4.0%. The RMSE decreases slightly to 9.143, suggesting that this model predicts the Mate Preferences Questionnaire scores slightly better than the baseline model.

In Model $M1M_1$, the intercept is 44.100, meaning that the predicted outcome at the reference level or zero is 44.100. The t-value is 30.505, and the p-value is also less than .001, showing that the intercept is highly significant.

The Q-Q plot compares the standardized residuals of the model to a normal distribution. Most points closely follow the red diagonal line, indicating that the residuals are approximately normally distributed. However, a few points deviate slightly at the tails, suggesting minor departures from normality, but overall, the normality assumption is reasonably met.

IV. DISCUSSION

The analysis provides valuable insights into the impact of gender on the role of social status in dating preferences. The descriptive statistics reveal that the central tendency of Mate Scale scores is around 44, with some variability. The negative skewness suggests that lower scores are more spread out compared to higher ones. The regression analysis shows that including sex as a predictor explains a small but notable portion of the variance in Mate Scale scores. Although the R^2 value is modest, it indicates that gender has some influence on the role of social status in dating preferences. The slightly reduced RMSE in Model M_1 compared to the baseline model suggests an improvement in prediction accuracy when gender is considered.

The Q-Q plot and residual analysis indicate that the residuals are approximately normally distributed, with only minor deviations. This supports the assumption of normality in the residuals and enhances the

reliability of the regression results. Additionally, the ANOVA table highlights that the variation explained by the model is statistically significant, albeit marginally.

While gender appears to have a limited impact on the role of social status in dating preferences, it does contribute to explaining some of the variability. Future research could explore additional predictors to further elucidate the dynamics of dating preferences and social status.

V. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to investigate the impact of gender on the role of social status in dating preferences. Utilizing the Mate Preferences Questionnaire developed by David Buss, we collected data from a sample of men and women to measure various aspects of dating preferences, including social status, physical attractiveness, and financial stability. Our findings indicate that women place a higher importance on social status in their dating preferences compared to men. The central tendency of the Mate Scale scores centers around 44, with variability indicated by a standard deviation of 9.33. The data is moderately skewed to the left with a skewness value of -0.74, suggesting lower scores are more spread out. Regression analysis showed that including sex as a predictor explains a modest portion of the variance in Mate Scale scores, with an R^2 value of 5.6% and an adjusted R^2 of 4.0%. The Q-Q plot and residual analysis support the assumption of normality in the residuals. The ANOVA results indicate that the variation explained by the model is statistically significant, albeit marginally.

Implications of The study highlights the importance of social status in women's dating preferences, suggesting that gender plays a crucial role in how social status is perceived and valued in the context of romantic relationships. These findings have practical implications for understanding the dynamics of partner selection and can inform the design of more personalized approaches in online dating platforms.

There are several limitations to this study. The sample size, while adequate for initial analysis, may not fully capture the diversity of dating preferences across different cultures and age groups. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data can introduce bias, as participants may not accurately reflect their true preferences. Future research should aim to include

larger and more diverse samples and consider longitudinal studies to observe changes in dating preferences over time. In conclusion, while gender appears to have a limited impact on the role of social status in dating preferences, it does contribute to explaining some of the variability. Understanding these dynamics can provide deeper insights into relationship behaviors and the factors driving attraction. Further research could explore additional predictors to enhance our understanding of the complex interplay between gender, social status, and dating preferences.

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