

Abstract

The evolutionary perspectives posit consistent and directional preferences of males and females for traits in a potential marriage partner. Yet, flexibility in mate preference across cultures may persist when particular values of males and females shift with environmental changes. The present study aims at investigating the social factors on mate preferences across cultures. I used the universal human mate preference data from Shackelford & Schmitt (unpublished) based on the original database by Buss et al. (1989). In nations with a higher degree of gender equality, females and males were found to value less on traits indicative of resource-accruing ability and domestic roles in mates respectively. In wealthier nations, both females and males were found to value more on mutual attraction and personality traits of a potential mate. Preferences for love were not linked to divorce rate, but instead a strong relationship was found between divorce rate and desire for home and children and chastity. Collectively, these results suggest that certain mate preferences are sensitive to variation in the social contexts.