

Physical attractiveness and intimate relationship



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Physical attractiveness depends on individual's preference. Intimate relationship can be defined as affectionate, kind, and sense of protectiveness. Few articles were evaluated, to find the connection between physical attractiveness and intimate relationship. Different people have different tolerance to their partners' attractiveness. Dissimilar attractiveness level in relationship causes inferiority between couples, leads relationships to fail. Courtship is important in developing intimate relationship. Hence, attractiveness is highly considered when it comes to courtship. Men also have a concept of attractiveness associating with fertility. Thus, men choose attractive women to be their mate. Physically attractiveness involves in impression formation and attractive people are believed to possess higher socializing traits. This causes attractive individuals to engage in dating activities more. To conclude, physical attractiveness and intimate relationship correlates.

Intimate relationship is very important in most people's life (Fletcher, Simpson, Thomas and Giles, 1999). Equally, physical attractiveness is an important contribution for a relationship according (Berscheid & Walster, 1974). Physical attractiveness could affect an intimate relationship in many factors. Many couples fall in love under a term called love at first sight. People don't know a person or their personality when they fall in love. They get attracted to a person by their looks and then find ways to get to know them. Then, if they like their personality, by luck, and right chemistry they end up in a good relationship. For an instance, when a person enters a room, others would first comment on his or her looks. In a book written by Berscheid and Walster, they have stated that, physically attractive men and

women are more active and preferred in dating activities. Everybody has an ideal partner with considering certain characteristic, personality and they never miss out of looks of their mate. Physical attractiveness doesn't only include people labeled as pretty, handsome, well dressed and fit. Otherwise only models and beauty pageant winners will be involved in relationship. Therefore, physical attractiveness is influenced by each person's own perception, preference and satisfaction. Intimate relationship can be defined as close relationship condition compiles affectionate, sense of protected, honest, seductive, steamy, romantic, kind and more (Fletcher, Simpson, Thomas and Giles, 1999). Physical attractiveness associates in intimate relationship due to many factors. Some of it is, the satisfaction needed in look to get affectionate, inferiority in relationship if mate is better looking, body weight and fertility, looks and formation impression and positive traits.

According to Murstein (1972), physical attractiveness is one of the other main factors that play an important part in influencing people when it comes to choosing their spouse. The author concluded this after he conducted an experiment on ninety-nine couples. The couples who participated were engaged or were in a stable relationship. These participants were students obtained from few colleges and universities. In the experiments, Murstein measured the physical attractiveness level in three aspects. That is self-perception, perception of partner and appearance from judged photo. Murstein concluded that, self-percepts and photo attractiveness plays a role in choosing their partner. Spouse are in need for a person's life for many reason, one of it is intimate relationship. In order for couples to develop a good intimate relationship, partners must feel first feel attracted to each

other. If they are not satisfied with their partners' physical look, they won't feel attracted and no intimacy will develop. A person should like and accept in order to feel satisfied of their partners' physical attractiveness. Physical attractiveness acceptance level will not be the same for all. Some might feel satisfied with partner with low level of physical attractiveness. It's the satisfaction of physical attractiveness of their partner that influences intimacy relationship.

Similarity in physical attractiveness also links with intimate relationship. Courtship or love making development has a weighty influence on intimate relationships. As reported by White (1980), couples with equal physical attractiveness level tend to have better courtship development. Result of the study supported the author's argument. The author also stated couple with dissimilar level of attractiveness has more tendencies to break up. This is due to, if one person is in lower level of attractiveness level, then they tend to get more suspicious or insecure over their better looking partner which leads to break ups. Added to the finding is that, in a casual relationship, the better looking partner has greater desire to date other better looking being. The sample of this study is 123 couples who are student from a mixture of relationship status were used in this study. This study is also very reliable because the participants were followed up on their relationship for nine months.

In a journal written by Devendra Singh (1993), physical attractiveness is affiliated with intimate relationship because men believe physical attractiveness associates with fertility. Therefore, men choose their spouses who are good looking to make sure their wife is fertile. Men use these

<https://assignbuster.com/physical-attractiveness-and-intimate-relationship/>

indications to evaluate females' reproductive system and so they consider it very much before engaging in sex life. Intimate relationships usually occur when they are in serious level of love, so consideration regarding reproductive system is much concerned. If a man knows that his wife or partner is not fertile, he will always have it on mind and feel it as a disability which may stop them from developing a good intimate relationship.

Moreover, these beliefs of men were also scientifically proven by Kaye, Folsom, Prineas, Potter, & Gapstur (1990). They provide evidence that married women who are more unfortunate in conceiving are women with greater fat distribution and lower body mass index. More to the point, lower fat distribution indicates finer fitness as well (Leibel, Edens, & Fried, 1989). To round it up, fertility is associated with physical attractiveness (lighter weight body). Therefore, men happen to have this intuitive system to detect this signs that is the physical attractiveness factor in selecting their mate. Even though men do not choose their mate entirely depending on their weight but it is an important factor involved in the mate selection process where they seek for an intimate relationship with their mate.

It is known that external looks do make an effect in impression formation (Miller, 1970). Especially, physically attractive people believed to possess more positive traits in social life than physically unattractive. In the study done by Krebs and Adinolfi (1975), they clarified the relationship between physical attractiveness and contact between opposite sex members in the dating world and same sex members in the real life situation. The study also tested whether physically attractive individuals possess positive traits. The finding shows that, physical attractiveness influences social contact among

opposite sex and dating activities. Physically attractive personality is highly preferred. There is also a low engagement of physically unattractive individuals in dating activities, which shows opposite sex doesn't have a preference of physically unattractive individuals to be their mate. Thou, it must be bear in mind that, attractiveness is what we perceive.

In a research conducted by Fletcher, Simpson, Thomas and Giles (1999), among 165 female and 155 male students of university Canterbury shows clear relation between physical attractiveness and intimacy relationship. The participants were from few category of relationship status. Finding of the research shows that, there are five elements considered by participants for their ideal romantic mate and relationships. One of the five elements is partner Vitality-Attractiveness. Therefore, attractiveness is a factor which influences romantic mate and relationship. Besides that, relationship intimacy-loyalty is also an element considered by participants. To correlate both elements, the finding shows that, participants who consider affectionate relationship tend to choose partners who are very attractive and fit ideal mate.

Some people consider intimate relationship not as love at first sight, which is based on physical attractiveness, but as love is blind, where love, intimacy and relationship is affected by not looks but other factors. To prove that physical attractiveness doesn't involve in intimacy relationship but revolves around the theory called love-is-blind bias by a group of researchers (Swami, Stieger, Hubner, Voracek, & Furnham). They conducted survey among 266 heterosexual with various demographics and in a romantic relationship at the moment were included as the sample. Swami, Stieger, Hubner, Voracek, <https://assignbuster.com/physical-attractiveness-and-intimate-relationship/>

and Furnham believed love-is-blind bias develops with positive love forms which are romantic and close love type. Their survey resulted in a stable foundation to the love-is-blind bias. Outcome of their survey shows that extraversion personality, self-esteem, relationship satisfaction and romantic love associates with love-is-blind bias. From this, it can be said that, relationship does not evolve around physical attractiveness. Even if it does, it's usually negative love form, which is playful love form and not positive love form which are compilation of intimate, romantic and close relationship.

In addition to that, Devendre Singh's (1993) found out that, there are some studies which show both overweight and underweight women have difficulties in conceiving. Not only that, men preferred women who are slightly heavier. They don't entirely consider thin women as attractive. Nevertheless, it is physical attractiveness men do consider. What matters is their perception of attractiveness and satisfaction in attractiveness that meets their necessities. They do consider physical attractiveness just that they find heavier women attractive in their own ways too. Therefore, attractiveness do shows a path to beginning a relationship and developing intimate relationship.

After evaluating findings of previous researches and studies, it can be concluded that physical attractiveness and intimate relationship shows a connection due to many different aspects. One of the aspect affecting relationship and intimate relationship is dissimilar attractiveness level. Each individual have different acceptance to their partners' attractiveness level. However, different level of attractiveness in a relationship causes inferiority between couples. This causes relationships to not succeed. Other aspect is, <https://assignbuster.com/physical-attractiveness-and-intimate-relationship/>

physical attractiveness weights high consideration when it comes to courtship. Courtship, being in the same token, plays an important role in developing intimate relationship. In short, courtship is important in development of intimate relationship and physical attractiveness influences courtship activity. Besides that aspect, men have a perception of attractiveness associating with fertility. Therefore they choose attractive women to be their mate. This point, however contradicts because in a research, it has been proven weight (attractiveness) is not associated with fertility. Physical attractiveness also influences impression formation. It is also understood that attractive people have higher positive socializing characteristic. This causes physically attractive individuals to be greatly involved in dating activities. From these findings, individuals must be satisfied with their partners' physical attractiveness level in order to have a good intimate relationship. Love is blind is never ground for relationship nowadays. Relationship these days evolves by love at first sight.

Berscheid, E., & Walster, E., (1974) Physical attractiveness. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 7, 157-354. New York: Academic Press

Fletcher, G. J. O., Simpson, J. A., Thomas, G., & Giles, L. (1999). Ideals in intimate relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76(1), 72-89.

Kaye, S. A., Folsom, A. R., Prineas, R. J., Potter, J. D., & Gapstur, S. M. (1990). The association of

body fat distribution with lifestyle and reproductive factors in a population study of postmenopausal women. *International Journal of Obesity*, 15, 101-108

Krebs, D., & Adinolfi, A. A. (1975). Physical attractiveness, social relations, and personality style. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 31(2), 245-253.

Liebel, R. L., Edens, N. K., & Fried, S. K. (1989). Physiologic basis for the control of body fat distribution in humans. *Annual Reviews of Nutrition*, 9, 417-443.

Murstein, B. I., (1972). Physical attractiveness and marital choice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 22(1), 8-12.

Miller, A. G. (1970). Role of physical attractiveness in impression formation. *Psychonomic Science*, 19, 241-243.

Singh, D. (1993). Adaptive significance of female physical attractiveness: Role of waist-hip ratio. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65(2), 293-307.

Swami, V., Stieger, S., Haubner, T., Voracek, M., & Furnham, A., (2009). Evaluating the physical attractiveness of oneself and one's romantic partner: Individual and relationship correlates of the love-is-blind bias. *Journal of Individual Differences*, 30(1), 35-43. doi: 10. 1027/1614-0001. 30. 1. 35

White, G. L.,(1980). Physical attractiveness and courtship progress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39(4), 660-668.