Relations Between Mate Selection And Big Five Model Of Personality

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Introduction and Aim

Research examining psychosexually preferred characteristics have revealed that most individuals strive for partners who are physically attractive, possess attributes, values and beliefs similar to their own, and have pleasant personality characteristics (Ross and Barone, 1986; Byrte and Harvey, 1987). These studies have been qualified by research on gender differences, which has shown that men tend to place greater emphasis on physical attractiveness, whereas women tend to stress personal characteristics such as kindness, considerateness, and earning capacity (Ross, 1984; Ross and Barone, 1986; Byrte and Harvey, 1987). Considerably less attention has been devoted to studying within-gender individual differences underlying romantic partner preferences, although the variability in responses with emotions within the genders is typically larger than that between them (Ross and Barone, 1986). Since most people do not have the kind of intelligence necessary to attract a partner who possesses the entire array of consciously desired attributes, individuals typically must place greater importance on some attributes than others. The question arises what are those attributes and what kind of relationship lies between choosing of those attributes and personality characteristics of chooser.

The aim of this research is to examine relationships between mate selection criteria and personality dimensions.

Sample

Participants were 86 men and 108 women between age 18 and 50 (M = 25.64, SD = 5.09). Participants were predominantly highly educated; almost all were students or have completed some faculty (63%). The majority of participants were in a relationship (76%) and 12 (26%) were not dating.

Measures

1. Mate selection criteria were measured using the RSP 100 questionnaire (Bosnjak, 2005) which operationalizes six major criteria: competency (α = .81), emotional investment and lenience (α = .74), excitement (α = .71), social status and similar origin (α = .75), specific interests (α = .76) and similar interests (intellect) (α = .78).

The results of regression analysis have shown relatively the same pattern as correlations. All Big Five dimensions are significant predictors of competency, while all, except Neuroticism, are significant predictors of emotional investment and lenience. These criteria correspond the main characteristics of long-term mate selection (Goldstein, 1984), and results suggest that all personality traits that reflect socially adaptive and relatively functional profiles take part in long-term mating. Excitement is significantly predicted by Extraversion and high Openness, which might suggest short-term mating. High Conscientiousness and low Openness are significant predictors of romantic social status and similar origin, which high Openness is predictor of similar interests.

Regression analysis

### Correlation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>competency</td>
<td>.338**</td>
<td>.188**</td>
<td>.138**</td>
<td>-.092</td>
<td>.326**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional investment and lenience</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.242**</td>
<td>.268**</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>.174**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excitement</td>
<td>.327**</td>
<td>.157**</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>-.203**</td>
<td>.370**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social status and similar origin</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.219**</td>
<td>-.062</td>
<td>-1.95**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific interests</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>-.064</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>similar interests (intellect)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>.342**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that personality plays important role in the mating process and suggests validity of individual approach in exploration of mating strategies. Also, the profiles of those who are oriented toward the long-term as opposed to short-term relationships could possibly be singled out. The results indicate that people prefer romantic partners similar to themselves.