

Women find wide-faced men more attractive



Hollywood actor Gerard Butler - AFP/File photo

Washington: Women perceive men with wider faces as more dominant and more attractive for short-term relationships, according to a new study.

"Our study shows that within three minutes of meeting in real life, women find more dominant, wider-faced men attractive for short-term relationships, and want to go on another date with them," said psychological scientist and lead researcher Katherine Valentine of Singapore Management University.

According to Valentine, there's considerable academic debate about whether physical dominance is advantageous in mating - that is, actually attractive to women. At the same time, researchers have been exploring facial width-to-height ratio (fWHR) as a possible physical indicator of male dominance.

This new study addressed both issues, said Valentine. "High male fWHR has previously been associated with surviving in hand-to-hand combat, aggressiveness, self-perceived power, and CEO's financial success," she said.

"Our study shows it's also a reasonably good indicator of perceived dominance - not only that, it piques women's interest in a face-to-face speed-dating setting," she said. Valentine and colleagues hypothesised that increased fWHR, due to its link with testosterone, would make men seem more dominant and more desirable as romantic interests in the short-term.

However, because facial width is also linked with undesirable traits like aggression, women would not see these men as more desirable for long-term relationships. Researchers studied over 150 men and women, ages 18 to 32, who participated in one of several speed-



Publication: Deccan Chronicle

Date: 5 February 2014

Headline: Women find wide-faced men more attractive

dating events. The participants were all single and received no compensation other than the prospect of making a potential romantic match.

Each speed-dating interaction lasted three minutes. Male speed-daters with higher fWHR, as measured by computer software, were independently rated as more dominant. Women not only expressed more interest in short-term relationships with these men, but were also more likely to choose them for a second date.

These associations held even after the researchers accounted for the men's age and independently-rated attractiveness. Further analyses suggest that the link between higher fWHR and greater interest in a short-term relationship could be accounted for, at least in part, by perceived dominance.

"The fact that women wanted to see these men again suggests that our findings are robust – women aren't just saying they are interested, they're actually willing to be contacted by these men," said Valentine. The study was published in *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science.