Want to get with this? – You'd better commit: High mate value women enact a longer-term mating strategy

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Introduction

- Previous research on female mate value and sociosexual orientation has been mixed.
- Some research has found no link between self-perceived mate value and the women's short versus long-term mating strategies (Landolt et al., 1995; Mikach & Bailey, 1999).
- Other research has found that women with low (less attractive) waist-to-hip ratios are more likely to pursue a short-term mating strategy (Brewer and Archer, 2007).
- There are two potentially competing hypotheses on this relationship:
- 1) High mate-value females may benefit from a short-term mating strategy in gaining more resources and access to high genetic Quality mates.
- 2) High mate value females may employ a long term mating strategy because they can employ their sex-typical mating strategy more readily than lower mate value females.
- Previous research indicates a need better understand this relationship. It is possible that there may be different relationships between sociosexual orientation and diverse aspects of mate value.
- This study examined the relationship between female mate value and subscales of SOI-R.

Method

Study 1. 127 undergraduate women aged 17 to 40 (M = 20.36, SD = 3.62)

Components of Mate Value Survey. The CMVS measures diverse mate-value dimensions (Fisher et al., 2008) (α = .83). There are 7 subscales of the CMVS: views of the opposite sex (α = .88), sociality (α = .85), parenting (α = .77), wealth (α = .76), looks (α = .81), relationship history (α = .52), and fear of failure (α = .63).

The Mate Value Scale. The MVS (Edlund & Sagarin, 2010) is a four-item scale that measures overall self-perceived mate value (α = .91).

Revised Sociosexual Orientation Inventory. This 9 item inventory (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008) measures whether one is oriented towards a short term/unrestricted sociosexuality or long-term mating strategy/restricted sociosexuality (α = .86). There are 3 subscales of SOI-R: behavior (α = .84), attitude (α = .81), and desire (α = .91).

Results

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. SOI-R	***											
2. SOI-R behaviour facet	.799**	***										
3. SOI-R attitude facet	.851**	.577**	***									
4. SOI-R desire facet	.701**	.334**	.361**	***								
5. Mate value score	.082	.052	.037	.111	***							
6. CMVS	.318**	.226*	.250**	.276**	.460**	***						
7. CMV Views of the opposite sex	.351**	.298**	.312**	.213*	.523**	.789**	***					
8. CMVS Sociality	.154	.054	.144	.159	.446**	.813**	.598**	***				
9. CMVS Parenting	−.217*	−.156	−.214*	−.132	.102	.349**	−.035	.213*	***			
10. CMVS Wealth	.217*	.156	.164	.193*	.186*	.531**	.314**	.295**	.112	***		
11. CMVS Looks	.389**	.251**	.329**	.334**	.057	.461**	.209*	.131	.201*	.240**	***	
12. CMVS Relationship history	.305**	.192*	.242**	.285**	.385**	.721**	.698**	.524**	−.074	.378**	.268**	***
13. CMVS Fear of failure	.193*	.168	.066	.242**	−.270**	.211*	−.185*	−.009	.172	.136	.475**	.018

Table 1. Correlations between indices of SOI-R, Mate Value Scale, and CMV, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$ (2-tailed)

Discussion

The previous research on mate value and sociosexual orientation is mixed. In this study, overall SOI-R did not correlate with a generalized self-report mate value score, but did relate to the overall components of mate value scale. However, there are variations in the relationships between SOI-R and the different subscales of mate value:

1) Women reporting a more unrestricted sociosexuality rated themselves as being more noticed by the members of the opposite sex, having more sexual partners, and fear more about failure of relationships.
2) Women reporting a more unrestricted sociosexuality rated themselves lower on parenting skills, whereas individuals with a more restricted sociosexuality were more oriented toward parenthood. Previous research on women's preference in long term mates indicate the important of their mate's willingness to invest in children.
3) Contradicting Brewer and Archer's (2007) study, those with an unrestricted sociosexuality self-reported themselves as more physically attractive. Potentially, attractive individuals can afford a short-term mating strategy because they have more mating options to choose from.
4) Interestingly, less restricted sociosexual orientation was positively related to wealth, where individuals who were more unrestricted self-reported themselves as more wealthy. This could reflect lower reliance on long-term resource investment by male partners.
5) In relation to the behavior subscale of SOI-R, women with more short term mating behavior were viewed more positively by men, self-reported themselves as more attractive, and had more sexual partners.
6) In relation to the attitude subscale of SOI-R, women with positive attitudes towards unrestricted sociosexuality had more favorable views by men, were more attractive, had more previous relationships, and were less oriented towards parenting.
7) In relation to the desire subscale of SOI-R, women who desire short term mating perceived themselves as more desirable to men, more wealthy, more attractive, had a larger relationship history and were more fearful of relationship failure.

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