Chapter Two

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The plan of this chapter is to review the empirical studies on (a) the relationship between physical (facial and physique) attractiveness and liking; (b) body parts and attraction; (c) physical (facial) attractiveness stereotyping; (d) physique attractiveness stereotyping; (e) sex-differences in physical (facial and physique) attractiveness. This chapter comprises only those studies which are directly related to our problem or having some implications of the study.

Physical (Facial and Physique) Attractiveness and Liking.

In an experiment by Byrne et al. (1968) subject's were asked to evaluate strangers of the within-sex or opposite-sex who were either physically attractive or unattractive. Towards the physically attractive stranger, irrespective of sex, attraction was greater than towards the unattractive stranger.

Sigall and Aronson (1969) investigated the relationship between physical attractiveness and liking. The physical attractiveness (attractive versus unattractive) of an evaluator and how she evaluated (positive versus negative) were manipulated and effects of this examined. The positive attractive evaluator was liked most, while attractiveness of the evaluator, if her
evaluations were negative lost, it impact and she was liked least. The unattractive positive evaluator was liked more than the attractive negative evaluator.

Kopera et al. (1971) investigated the effect of great interaction on the perception of physical attractiveness presenting photographs of women faces to two groups of males and females. The attractiveness of each photograph was rated by each subject in a coacting setting, a second time. The interacting subjects gave a low rating to the photographs on the second critical viewing than the coacting subjects indicating that group interactions tend to lower down in rating of attractiveness.

Melaned and Moss (1975) conducted two studies to test the hypothesis that context effects on social stimuli depend on associations between the context and the target stimuli. All subjects viewed and rated photographs of college age females in the context of attractive and unattractive others. Results from Expt. I where the context and targets were not linked, show a significant context effect. Neutral pictures appeared more attractive in a negative than in a positive context. These results were confirmed for the general context in Expt. II. However, the results were reversed when the context and target were linked as friends, thus demonstrating, for the general context, that the effects of context depend on the association between the target and the context.
Brown et al. (1986) used videotape to examine select determinants of perceptions of physical attractiveness and gender (masculinity/femininity) in a college student sample of 30 men and 85 women. Both body and facial attractiveness contributed to the prediction of overall attractiveness, although neither variable was a more powerful predictor than the other. Perceptions of overall physical attractiveness, both static ("fixed target") and dynamic ("moving target") were positively related to perceptions of growing. In predicting dynamic physical attractiveness from static physical attractiveness and certain nonverbal indices thought to be related to attractiveness evaluations in naturally occurring conditions, only static physical attractiveness entered the regression equation at a significant level. Still, perceived friendliness and natural body movement were related to overall attractiveness perceptions. Finally, physical attractiveness was significantly related to gender perception in both males and females, with natural body movement and tight fitting clothes also predictive of perceived masculinity in males and overall grooming and natural body movement predictive of perceived femininity in females.

Husain and Kureshi (1982) determined the male and female subjects' attraction for the opposite-sex physique vis-a-vis the role of subjects' body build and his/her, self-evaluation in attraction for the stimulus persons. The main findings of the study were; (a) subjects as a whole showed significantly higher attraction for the athletic type of body build in comparison to
either the asthenic or pyknic types; (b) male subjects irrespective of and with regard to their own body build, showed higher attraction for the asthenic female stimulus persons; (c) female subjects' attraction was more for the athletic male stimulus persons, both irrespective of and with regard to their own body build; (d) subjects' self-evaluation conformed to their preferences for the different types of body-build (i.e. athletic, asthenic, and pyknic); (e) most of the male and female subjects perceived themselves as athletic even though belonging to the other types of body build.

Perception of the attractiveness of female physique was investigated to determine the role of the body-build of the perceiver in attraction for the opposite-sex stimulus person; and to determine differences between Indian and Sudanese students in preferences for female physique. 30 Indian and 30 Sudanese male students were selected from the undergraduate classes of A.M.U., Aligarh and were asked to give their preference for one silhouette of the three presented to them showing the asthenic, athletic and pyknic type. Indian subjects, irrespective of and with regard to their own body-build, showed higher attraction for the asthenic female stimulus person. Sudanese subjects' attraction was more for the athletic female stimulus person, both irrespective of and with regard to their own body-build (Husain, 1988).

**Body-Parts and Attraction.**

Ward (1967) recruited a sample of 920 males and females of different heights for evaluating the heights of the Average
American Male (AAM), the Average American Female (AAF), president Lyndon, B., Johnson and Lady Bird Johnson. The subjects also expressed their liking or disliking for the latter to figures. Among both sexes, own height was positively related to height judgements of the AAM and AAF and among both sexes this relationship was stronger for judgements of the same sex figures. Own height was more strongly related to cross-sex judgements among females than among males. Females made figures estimate higher than male of the heights of the AAM and the AAF, but lower estimate than males for the heights of Lyndon B. Johnson and Lady Bird Johnson. The prediction that estimates of L.B.J.'s height would be higher for subjects, who liked him than for those who disliked him was confirmed for males and partially confirmed for females. That expected liking for Lady Bird would not be related to estimate made of her height was supported among both males and females. The results were discussed in terms of the notion that own height serves as an anchor for height judgements of others, with special reference to some of the implications of adaptation-level theory.

Berkowitz et al. (1971) explored the relationship between height and interpersonal attraction. They tested the hypothesis that subjects chose as friends those, similar to them in height. Relating the voters', choice of candidates they believed that the voters' height and that of the candidate covaried. On the eve of the election 276 male pedestrians were interviewed and asked about their choice of candidates who happened to be quite different
in heights. Subjects' were asked to tell their own heights and the name of the candidates. As for the taller subjects, they choose significantly more taller candidates whereas the shorter subjects did not show any consistent tendencies.

Height as valued characteristic for men in modern society has been emphasized by Feldman, (1971) who with the help of anecdotal data, could support his premise that the American society attached much importance to height and to be tall was to be good and to be short was to be stigmatized.

Graziano et al. (1978) conducted two experiments to examine the influence of male height on interpersonal attraction. In experiment I, short, medium and tall women evaluated, pictures of men, whom they believed to be either short, medium or tall. It was predicted that women's attraction to the men would be an increasing linear function of the men's height. This prediction was not confirmed; men of medium height were seem to be significantly more socially desirable than either short or tall men. This was true whether the female evaluator was short, medium or tall, women did not differ in their evaluations. In experiment II, short, medium and tall men evaluated the same male stimuli. These men not only give their own evaluation of the male stimuli, but they also estimate how socially desirable the male's pictures were to women. While men showed no evidence that they believed that height was important to women; their own evaluation revealed that they liked and rated short men more positively than they
did tall men. This was true, regardless of the height of the male raters. These results were discussed in terms of social stereotypes and the importance of specifying situational contexts in the prediction of attraction.

Tridon (1922/1949) reported that breast-fed males, thought to have experienced oral gratification, showed their later preference for women with developed breasts. On the other hand, Gorer (1948) has mentioned that scheduled feeding experiences and oral frustration led to later preferences for large breasted women.

Wiggins and Wiggins (1969) conducted a study on typological analysis of male preferences for female body types. The data tend to support the belief that the three body parts of the females, namely, breasts, buttocks, legs, were considered important by males in the females' attraction.

In an informal interview-set Smith (1975) asked 100 females to name the male body characteristics, which they found to be most sexually arousing. While 39% of the women selected the male buttocks as protically attractive, and 15% favoured male slimness, only 1% reported sexual arousal when they viewed muscular chests and shoulders, and none reported sexual arousal when viewing muscular arms. These preferences are widely discrepant with the cultural belief and with the results of 100 interviews by Smith, in which males were asked to select male body parts, which they thought were most sexually arousal to women.
Wilson and Nias (1976) explored several characteristics of attractiveness in females, such as height, physique, face, hair, health, clothes and self-esteem. It is interesting that most of these features are under voluntary control, if we include ways of increasing height and changing real and apparent physique to a large extent perceiving attractiveness as a style of behaviour which can be indulged in by those who choose to do so.

Gitter et al. (1982) investigated reactions to body characteristics of male physiques. Male and female subjects were shown a series of figures which systematically manipulated five body characteristics. The findings indicated that the most salient physical characteristics for male figures was protrusion of the belly. Its presence resulted in the most negative ratings of attraction, while its absence yielded the most positive reactions. Other body characteristics including the position of the shoulders and the thickness of the neck or all body shape also effected evaluation. The study was conducted both on American and Israeli student sample, but cross-cultural differences were not found. Factors, such as the attraction of the subjects also did not affect judgements.

Perception of the attractiveness of female body characteristics were investigated to determine preference of both men and women. The design systematically manipulated that the four characteristics - head postures, shoulder postures, breast size, and body shape included several subject characteristics - gender attraction and culture. Students from two
universities in the United States and Israel were asked to rate 16 times female physiques and to assess their attraction. Results yielded a number of attraction among body characteristics, most prominently between breast size, and shoulder postures. The most preferred characteristic was a glass shape figure large breasts were also preferred (Gitter, Lomranz, Saxe and Barl-tal 1983).

**Physical (Facial) Attractiveness Stereotyping.**

The answer to the question "what is beautiful is good" was sought by Dion et al. (1972), who examined whether physically attractive stimulus persons, both male and female, possessed more socially desirable personality traits and expected to lead better lives than unattractive persons, was found to be in affirmative.

Seligman et al. (1973) examined that "what is beautiful is good" stereotype influenced O's attribution of responsibility to target persons. It was found that subjects (males and females), attributed more responsibility for a good outcome to attractive women, while unattractive females were seen as more responsible for a bad outcome than attractive females. Results are interpreted within the framework of balance theory. It is concluded that unattractive women may constitute a group which is discriminated against.

Dermer and Thiel (1975) conducted a study in which the person perception study by K.K. Dion et al. was quasi-replicated in order to assess the generality of the "what is beautiful is good"
stereotype. In Expt. I, 40 female participants who were either unattractive, average or physically attractive made a variety of attribution about female target persons of varying attractiveness levels. Attribution favourability was found to be contingent upon the physical attractiveness of the participants as well as the dimensions along which the attributions were made while many of the attributions were congruent with the postulated stereotypes others were not. Socially undesirable attributions regarding variety, egotism, likelihood of material disaster and likelihood of being bourgeois were reliably increasing monotonic functions of target persons' attractiveness levels. Plausible explanations for these divergences were explored in Expt.II with 354 randomly sampled university students.

Hill and Lando (1976) noted that the effects of physical attractiveness and sexual identity upon attributions had yet to be addressed within a single paradigm. In the present study, 40 male and 40 female subjects rated the performance of a physically attractive or unattractive male or female depicted in a photograph or modified versions of the sex typed tasks employed by Deaux and Enswiller. Results indicate "beauty is good" effects for both general trait ratings and specific attributions of performance but failed to indicate an antifemale in subject's attributions.

The reverse possibility that "what is good is beautiful" was investigated into by Gross and Crofton (1977) who wanted to know whether information about personality and character can
affect judgements of beauty. The stimulus persons described more favourably received a higher rating on physical attractiveness.

Jones and Adams (1982) assessed the importance of physical attractiveness across the life span. From 24 selected interviews sites in five towns, a total of 128 men and 173 women were interviewed. Subjects ranged from 18-50 years of age, self-assessed and interview rating of physical attractiveness were recorded during the interview process specifically, each subject was asked, "using as a comparison all the acquaintances that you have who are about your own age, how attractive do you think you are? On 15% of the interviews, two interviews rated with an interrater correlation reaching $r = .61$. The correlation between self and rater assessment was $r = .25$.

The data supports the beauty is good hypothesis. Further, it appears gender and peer (or interviewer rating of subject's personal attractiveness have little predictable mediating effect on belief in the attractiveness stereotype. Age of respondent did mediate the belief in the importance of physical attractiveness. It is possible that more years of living correlate with experiences which enhance the belief in a physical attractiveness stereotype. Finally these data suggest a self-regard model may be more potential than a peer evaluation model in understanding when and how individuals may come to apply the physical attractiveness stereotypes in their lives.
Ellis et al. (1983) investigated whether individuals' utilization of the physical attractiveness stereotype would be affected by varying their perception of the causal locus of attractiveness judgements. In two experiments, male subjects were led to believe either that their judgements of female targets' attractiveness were caused by the women's physical characteristics (objective judgements) or that these judgements were the result of their own personal preferences (subjective judgements). If the attractive stereotypes rests on perceiver's implicit, assumption that beauty constitutes a reliable and unbiased criterion from which to infer other characteristics (personality traits), then stereotyping should be less extreme when attractiveness is seen as subjective. Although manipulation checks showed that objectivity-subjectivity was effectively manipulated, subjects in all conditions made personality inferences that were consistent with the attractiveness stereotype i.e. significantly more favourably for attractive than for unattractive targets. These results suggest that utilization of the attractiveness to generate personality predictions in covert and not amenable to influence by perceivers' conscious attributions about the cause of their attractiveness judgement.

Using a standard person-perception paradigm, Cash & Duncan (1984) examined the first impressions that black American College Students expressed towards facial photographs of black males and females representing three level of physical attractiveness. Consistent with the research on whites, three stereotypes
were evident among blacks. At a higher level of attractiveness, stimulus persons were judged to have more socially desirable personalities and greater potential for the future. More attractive women were thought to be more sex-typed. Finally, on the negative side, attractiveness also conveyed a self-centered 'bourgeois' orientation (materialistic, unsympathetic with oppressed people) and conveyed less potential for parental competence and marital stability.

Dion and Dion (1987) have advocated that just world theory provides a possible explanation of physical attractiveness stereotyping, in that believing in a just world should lead to a positive bias toward "winners", such as the physically attractive. Several hypotheses derived from this assumption were tested by having adults complete the just world scale and rate the personality traits and expected life outcomes of an attractive or unattractive stimulus persons: (a) Believers in a just world perceived the personalities of attractive, male stimulus persons as more socially desirable than non-believers and also attributed more socially desirable personalities to male stimulus persons who were attractive rather than unattractive; and (b) no effects were found for female stimulus persons. Predictions for the life outcome ratings and differences in correlations between personality and life outcome ratings as a function of belief in just world were clearly supported.
Physical (Physique) Attractiveness Stereotyping.

There is ample evidence that physique can be a potent eliciter of impressions and stereotypes in adulthood. The investigator has come across only four studies relating to the sex differences in physique stereotyping.

Kiker and Miller (1967) and Hamid (1968) explored a variety of indications of sex differences in stereotyping but very little consistency between or within them. In a later study of physique stereotyping using semantic differentials (Miller et al., 1968) a sex difference approaching significance (Z = 1.24, p = < .10) was reported for data obtained by collapsing 198 scales - a surprisingly large difference considering that it was based on the summary of approximately 60,000 more or less heterogeneous ratings.

Stewart et al. (1973) determined sex differences in perception of female physique. In this study, 25 adult female college students ranked six female physique (two endomorphs, two mesomorphs and two ectomorphs) from most to least suiting 'Like least' and 'Like best' with instructions to judge upon an aesthetic rather than imputed personality basis. The two endomorphs were least liked, followed by the two mesomorphs and finally by the two ectomorphs. This order of preference was exactly reversed on liked best. The order of preference of male students was identical.

The aim of Powell's (1974) study was to follow up the suggestion of Stewart et al. (1973) that quantitative rather than
qualitative difference in body build may also yield significantly different stereotypes. The subjects were 50 University students and materials and procedure identical with that of Miller and Stewart (1968). Each subject ranked 6 female physique from most suiting to least suiting each of 15 concepts presented in a random order. The concepts were (1) Like least, (2) Like best (3) Wife (4) Young (5) Successful (6) Sister (7) Leader (8) Hold (9) Self (10) follower (11)Mother (12)Prostitute (13) Prudish (14) Homosexual (15) Alcoholic. The physiques were selected so as to form 3 pairs, endomorphs, 6-3-2 and 7-3-1, mesomorphs 3-6-2, and 1-7-1, ectomorphs 1-2-7, and 1-3-6, sometotype number from Sheldon (1942). The physiques were photographs of anonymous person with masked faces.

Sex Differences in Physical (Facial and Physique) Attractiveness.

Miller and Rivenbark (1970) investigated sex differences as a determinant of heterosexual liking and found that males gave greater weightage to physical attractiveness than females. The importance of physical attractiveness affected by the degree of infancy and continuance in relationship, sex and type of relationship did not show any significant interaction.

That attraction resides in dissimilarity was found to be true when it was a matter between sexes and their perceived roles, and a function of similarity when it pertain to the same sex was based on similarity and between members of the opposite sex on complimentarity and sex-role attitudes (Seyfried & Hendrick, 1973).
Byrne's attraction paradigm was put to test in a study of sex-differences in physical attractiveness by Schoedel et al. (1975) intending to know whether subjects would perceive attractive strangers of the opposite sex as possessing attitudes similar to their own. Analysis of variance yielded a significant main effect for attractiveness. In an experiment that followed, these results were upheld and seemed to support both Byrne's paradigm and Newcomb's cognitive symmetry-hypothesis.

The influence of the variable of sex in physical attractiveness preferences was explored by Feinman and Gill (1978) and the validity of stereotype beliefs about sex differences in preferences for opposite sex coloration was also tested. A sexual selection questionnaire was used to obtain likes and dislikes of large groups of male and female students for eyecolour, hair-colour and complexion colour of the opposite. Sex differences were found to exist in both likes and dislikes in all the three aspects, males showing greater preferences for darker males coloration.

Husain and Kureshi (1983) examined (a) sex differences in attraction for the opposite sex stimulus person and (b) the effect of subjects' own physical attractiveness and their own self-evaluation on attraction for the opposite sex stimulus person. Male subjects showed higher attraction for the high attractive and female subjects showed higher attraction for medium attractive stimulus person. Irrespective of their own level of attractiveness and self-evaluation the male subjects showed greater liking for the high attractive stimulus person. The low attractive stimulus
person was found to be unattractive even by the similar attractive subjects. The low attractive female subjects showed a significantly higher liking for the medium attractive and low attractive male subjects, for the high attractive stimulus person.

Maret's (1983) study compared the attractiveness ratings of photographs of blacks by male and female American and Cruzans. Females rated photographs higher than did males. Photographs of females were rated higher than those of females. An interaction between culture and race of subject and sex of stimulus photographs was also evident. Male cruzans rated male photographs significantly lower than the other three subjects groups rated male and female photographs.

Mathes et al. (1985) tested the theorizing of Homes and Hatch and Symons, it was hypothesized that following puberty a negative relationship would be found between an individual's age and ratings of physical attractiveness by judges of the opposite-sex. Furthermore, the relationship would be more negative for ratings of women by men than for ratings of men by women. The negative relationship was found for ratings of women made by American men but not ratings of men by American women.

A questionnaire comprising description of different colour and types of eyes, hair, lips and face was administered on 50 male and 50 female undergraduate students, to determine the difference in the preference for the various features (colour and type) in the opposite-sex attraction; sex differences in the preferences for
the colour and type of eyes, hair, lips and face of the opposite-sex person and in the relative role of these features in attraction for other. Female subjects showed significantly different preferences for the various colour of males eyes, hair, lips and face. Male subjects showed significantly different preferences for the colour of females eyes, hair and lips. Significant differences were found to exist in the females' preferences for the various types of males eyes and hair. Male subjects showed significantly different preferences for the various type of eyes, hair, lips and face of the females. In the preferences for various colours of lips and different types of hair, lips and face sex differences were also found to exist. Male subjects' were attracted most by the female eye, followed by lips and hair, whereas female subjects did not show a preference for any of these parts in particular, rather they were attracted by the males face as a whole (Husain & Kureshi, 1985).

Kaushik and Husain (1987) investigated the significance of difference between asthenic, athletic and pyknic male and female subjects' preferences for the within-sex similar/dissimilar physique stimulus person. The main findings of the study were; (a) Significant differences were found between asthenic male and asthenic female subjects' preferences for the asthenic and athletic stimulus person and between athletic male and athletic female subjects' preferences for the similar physique stimulus
person; (b) Pyknic male and female subjects did not show preferences for the similar physique stimulus person; (c) No significant differences were found between pyknic male and female preferences for the asthenic and athletic physique stimulus person.