

Study reveals link between income inequality and French kissing

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Income inequality may be linked to how often people French kiss, according to a worldwide study by Abertay University.

The cross-cultural research involved 2,300 participants from 13 different countries across six continents.

Respondents answered a range of questions including how often they French kissed their partner, and how important they thought kissing was.

Their study revealed that people who lived in less equal nations said they kissed their partners more often.

This correlation did not extend to other forms of [intimacy](#) such as hugging and sexual intercourse.

Lead researcher Dr. Christopher Watkins, from Abertay's Division of Psychology, said: "The results of this research suggest that the environment we live in is related to differences in this particular form of romantic intimacy.

"French kissing has been shown by others to be related to the quality of a romantic [relationship](#), and our data suggests that we do this more in environments where we have less to fall back on, where a gesture which shows commitment to a relationship would be of [greater value](#).

"Another interesting factor is that, across the nations surveyed, kissing was considered more important at the established phase of a relationship compared to the initial stages of romantic attraction."

The study also found differences in opinions between men and women on the importance of kissing, and about what makes a good [kiss](#).

They found that a good kiss consisted of two components—sensory factors (such as pleasantness of body odor and breath) and "technique, contact and arousal."

Women, on average, placed greater importance than men on sensory factors.

Dr. Watkins added: "What's particularly captivating about the data is that it compliments large-scale research in very remote cultures looking at the existence of romantic mouth-to-mouth kissing.

"Kissing isn't always present in these cultures, and whether it is or is not is connected to the way in which resources are shared in that society.

"Further work could examine [regional differences](#) in kissing and romantic intimacy or the importance of the senses in close interactions among couples using similar logic to the current research."

More information: Christopher D. Watkins et al. National income inequality predicts cultural variation in mouth to mouth kissing, *Scientific Reports* (2019). [DOI: 10.1038/s41598-019-43267-7](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-43267-7)

Provided by University of Abertay Dundee

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