

# PRESS RELEASE

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## CHINESE MEN PREFER BARBIE DOLL FIGURES

BEIJING—Researchers have found that Chinese men and women display a preference for women with an hourglass figure. The Chinese can now join the list of cultures that prefer body fat distributed around the hips and buttocks instead of the abdomen, such as those in South America, USA, Pacific Islands and Africa.

A Chinese and New Zealand research group asked 751 Chinese men and women to judge the attractiveness of ten women who had undergone cosmetic surgery to move fat from their abdomens to their buttocks. Photographs from before and after the surgery were presented, and participants were asked whether they found the woman in the photograph attractive. Their results are published in a recent edition of the journal *Current Zoology*.

The researchers found that Chinese men found photographs of the women after surgery more attractive than before surgery. They found that men found women with a waist-to-hip ratio of 0.6 (a Barbie doll has a ratio of 0.57) most attractive. The waist-to-hip ratio is calculated by dividing the circumference of the waist by the circumference of the hips and buttocks.

The authors then compared results from their Chinese study to similar studies in Samoa, Indonesia, New Zealand, and Cameroon. They found that the preference for the hourglass figures that resulted from the surgery is consistent across different cultures.

A low waist-to-hip is an indicator of health and fertility. The recommended ratio for women is 0.7, and 0.9 for men.

Previous studies investigating waist-to-hip ratios have used photographs of women with different body shapes and different body mass index (BMI) readings, but this study used the same women with altered body shapes.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Kexue Communications comprises science communicators in Beijing working with Chinese researchers, organizations, education centres and media to assist in the dissemination of science.

For more information, interviews, or images please contact:

Ben Bravery: [info@kexuecommunications.com](mailto:info@kexuecommunications.com), +86 13718168728

The research paper can be found on the *Current Zoology* website  
<http://www.actazool.org/paperdetail.asp?id=11465>.