

ORIGINAL PAPER**Body Satisfaction And Body Management Behaviors, In Iranian Female Students****Saideh Garousi, PhD**

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Correspondence: Saideh Garousi, Associate Professor, Department of Social Sciences, Shahid Bahonar University. P.O. Box:444, Kerman,Iran E-mail: saidehgarousi@gmail.com**Abstract****Introduction:** Body dissatisfaction and related consequences such as unhealthy body change activities and eating disorders are known as serious health problems. Western culture emphasizes thinness as an Ideal Body . Efforts for achieving the deal Body could be affected by many contributing factors , especially socio-cultural factors. There is a little evidences from Iran, regarding wide spread health problem.**Aim:** to investigate the approaches that people prefer to follow to change their body shape.**Methods:** Four hundred female university students in Kerman participated in the study. Participants filled self administrated questionnaire regarding demographic variables , perceived pressure from others, Body Satisfaction and influences of body on social life.**Results:** About half of respondents used diet for weight reduction. About 1/3 of them selected heavy exercise as body management method. Only 6% of students used drugs. There was negative correlation between body satisfaction with Body management ($P < 0.001$). Media had prominent effect on body satisfaction and body management methods, direct and indirect.**Conclusion :** With considering these results , Understanding body image and contributing factors is important to planning for harm reduction due to body dissatisfaction and consequences.**Key words :** Body satisfaction, perceived pressure from others, influences of body on social life .Iran**Introduction**

Body image has been defined as “a person’s perception, feelings and thoughts about his or her body and evaluation of body attractiveness and emotions associated with body shape and size” (Grogan 2006). Introducing of special body to society as an Ideal body, could be result to increasing body dissatisfaction. This Ideal body that is advertised by media is thinness for women and masculinity for men (McCabe et al., 2007).

Body concerns there are in all of ages. This could be begin in the early years of life (Park 2005). Park (2005) showed, about 40% of 6-years-old girls wanted to be thinner than current weight. But body concern and dissatisfaction is persisting in the later age stages (Park 2005). Nevertheless, great studies are shown that body dissatisfaction and weigh concerns are high prevalence in adolescents and young adults especially in females (Ricciardelli & McCabe 2004). Although the females have greater body dissatisfaction than

men, but body dissatisfaction in males were increased (Ricciardelli & McCabe 2004; Gunewardene et al., 2001).

Socio-cultural variables are important factors in body satisfaction and related problems. Media can play a significant role in body satisfaction, ideal body image that is introduced by media could be suggest thinness is the sign of attractiveness, beauty, social acceptance and success (Stice & Shaw 2002).

Body dissatisfaction could be result to efforts for achieving Ideal body. Body dissatisfaction is associated with low self esteem, depression, anxiety and kinds of eating disorders. One behavioral aspects of body dissatisfaction is change one's body shape. Body dissatisfaction is correlate with various attempt to change body, these efforts can be start even from early childhood (Davison et al., 2000; Ricciardelli & McCabe 2004). One of these methods is dieting that could be results to anorexia and bulimia with compensatory activities such as induced vomiting, use of laxatives (Stice & Shaw 2002).

Body dissatisfaction is responsible of the most of unhealthy weight control behaviors in girls and boys (Neumark-Sztainer 2003). In addition, it increase the risk for abusing anabolic steroids or weight reduction pills (Ricciardelli & McCabe 2004). Some studies demonstrated that adolescents use heavy exercise as a weight loss/weight control (Ricciardelli & McCabe 2004; Stortvoll et al., 2005).

There are cosmetic surgeries. American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) was reported, about 13.1 million cosmetic surgery were done in 2010 (American Society of Plastic Surgeons 2011). Common procedures such as breast augmentation and rhinoplasty have increased by more than 700% in the past 10 years (ASPS). Some of researchers are argued, body and appearance dissatisfaction are associate with cosmetic surgery (Henderson-King & Henderson-King 2005; Callaghan et al., 2011).

In Iran, there are few studies about body satisfaction and related problems such as body management methods. The aim of this study was to assess the body dissatisfaction and body

management strategies in university students in Iran, an eastern country. Identification of this group of individuals and related factors that affect body image may permit the development of early preventive and harm reductive strategies.

Method

This cross sectional study was carried out in Kerman, the capital of the largest province in Iran. The main outcomes of the study focus on the approaches that people prefer to follow to change their body shape. Participants were selected among female university students. The sample size was estimated 400, that these participants were selected by multistage sampling.

Measures

Self administrated questionnaire include below parts:

Demographic variables

Age, Marital status (married, single), Place of Birth (big cities, small cities and village), weight, height [BMI (Cut-offs at 18.5, 24.9, and 29.9, subjects were categorized into four groups: BMI <18.5 (thin), BMI =18.5-24.9 (normal), BMI =25-29.9 (overweight), BMI >30 (obese)], use of media (TV, Fashion magazine, internet)

Socio-cultural variables

Items about:

- 1) perceived pressure from others,
- 2) Body Satisfaction and
- 3) Influences of body on social life, were designed by using validate questionnaires.
 - 1) Perceived pressure from others included 11 questions that assess the role of friends, media, and family on change of physical appearance.
 - 2) In this study we used 12 questions regarding body satisfaction. These questions evaluated satisfaction about appearance, weight and Physical attractiveness (general feeling about own).
 - 3) Influences of body on social life were evaluated by 17 questions regarding social acceptance, marriage opportunities, job success.

Body Management Methods

Body change activities include diet (severe food restriction), exercise (heavy exercise for weight reduction), and substance use (steroids, muscle-enhancing products, such as creatine and weight reduction pills).

Psychometric properties of this questionnaire were acceptable. Test-retest reliability ($\alpha=0.79$), Convergent validity and internal consistency of its was approved ($\alpha=0.75$).

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data. Correlations between variables were tested by Pearson and Spearman correlation tests. Linear regression and path analysis models were applied to identify the factors that influence each of the outcomes or body management methods. $P<0.05$

was considered as significant. This research was done as MS. Thesis in Social Sciences.

Results

The mean (SD) of age was 23.30 (3.10). 91.8% of respondents were single. About 40% of female university students were in thin or normal weight group. Only 10% were in obese group. Frequencies of Body Mass Index (BMI) categories in participants were listed in table 1. Body dissatisfaction was seen in about 65% of respondents. 55.6% of respondents stated that used diet for weight reduction. About 30% of them selected heavy exercise as body management method. Only 6% of students used drugs (steroids, muscle-enhancing products, such as creatine and weight reduction pills). There was correlation between body satisfaction with Body management (negative correlation, $P<0.001$), perceived

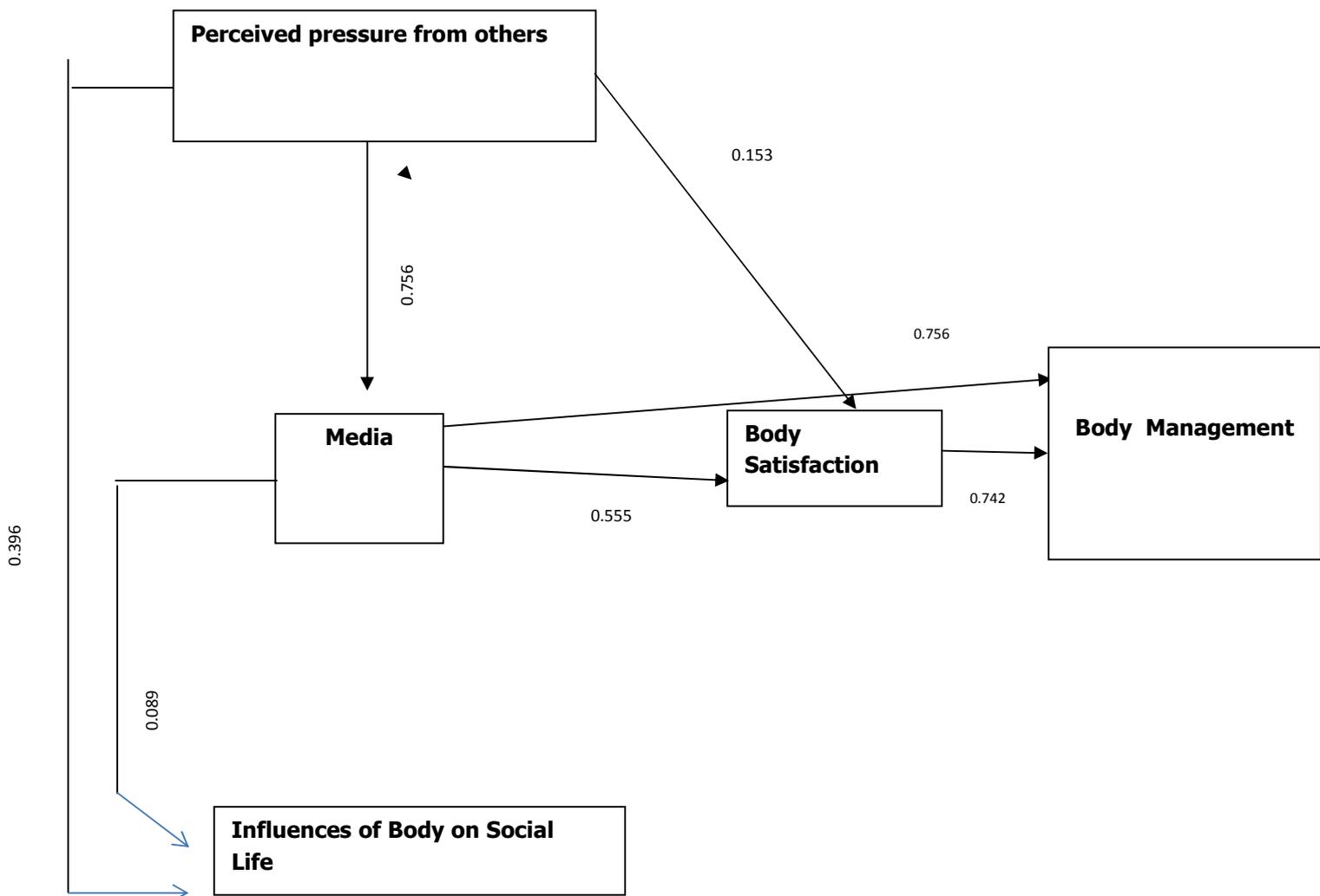
Table1. Frequencies of Body Mass Index (BMI) categories

BMI		
	N	%
Thin<18.5	60	15
Normal 18.5-24.9	108	27
Overweight 25-29.9	192	48
Obese <30	40	10
Total	400	100

Table 2- Effects of some of variables on body satisfaction-Linear regression

Variables	β	Standard error	P
Media	0.555	0.063	0.001
Perceived Pressure from Others	0.153	0.056	0.001
Influences of Body on Social Life	0.204	0.031	0.001

Fig 1.Path analysis regarding contributing factors on body management



pressure from others ($P < 0.001$), Influences of body on social life ($P < 0.001$) and use of media ($P < 0.001$).

For assessment of effects of these variables on body satisfaction, we used linear regression. Results showed in table 2.

The result of path analysis showed media had the most effect on the body dissatisfaction (0.555). Media had the most effect in body management in both direct (0.756) and indirect (0.742) manner. In addition usage of media can be affecting Influences of body on social life (0.089). Perceived pressure from others influences usage of media (0.756) and body dissatisfaction (0.153).

Discussion

In this survey, about 2/3rd of the students had body image dissatisfaction, which were confirmed by other limited researches on this subject in Iran (Abdollahi & Mann, 2001; Rastmanesh et al., 2009; Akbarbegloo et al., 2010). Other studies showed, there was high frequency of body dissatisfaction among university students (Cook-Cottone & Phelps, 2003).

In one study, about one third of the American students had serious preoccupation with body shape (Bohne et al., 2002). There is similar figure in Asian countries. Over 70% of the Emirate students were dissatisfied with their current body size (Thomas et al., 2010). It seems that the focus on body shape and ideal body standards is the same as in the western countries.

Our study showed, media not only affect the body satisfaction and body change behaviors directly, but also could be effective through Influences of body on social life. This effect could be consequences of exposure to western ideal body. In women, decisions regarding dieting associate with the frequency of images that are seen about fitness, dieting and exercise in (Harrison 2001). Furthermore, in movies or magazines successful, positive, smart, intelligent and attractive actors and especially actresses have the ideal body shape, thin with different cosmetic surgery or grooming. Internalization of these figures, and identification

with them, could be result to body dissatisfaction and body change behaviors.

These effects of media on women's body dissatisfaction, appears to be significant among young adults (Fallon & Rozin, 1985; Mellor et al., 2001). Young women do not feel attractive enough in comparison with media pictures.

In Iran, use of women without Islamic covering (Hijab) in advertisements and commercials are forbidden. However, albeit indirectly, the ideal body could be introduced in actress.

Our findings showed the body satisfaction on body management are mediated via other variables.

One of the most prominent socio-cultural factors was perceived pressures pressure from others that include family members, friends and peers. Vincent (2000) investigated that negative expression about body by family members especially mothers promote dieting and vulnerability to eating disorder (Vincent & McCabe, 2000). Peer group have a great effect on Peer groups greatly influence and affect body satisfaction and body change activities (van den Berg et al., 2002). The effect of peers with ideal body were associate with longer duration periods of exercise, especially in among women (Wasilenko et al., 2007). Asian women were determined to be vulnerable to pressure from their community to achieve the ideal body, because they had lower self esteem (Twenge & Crocker, 2000), and afraid their life would be affected negatively by their body.

Identifying the role of family is important in the protection against eating disorders, but also especially in treatment of these disorders. Researchers are argued, sociocultural factors could be affect individuals via feeling of acceptance and social norms (Nasser, 1988; Yates et al., 2004). Our findings show that feeling of social acceptance, was prominent variable in the all of body change activities. Perceived social acceptance is defined as based on the self-evaluation regarding own of one's abilities, skills and his or her, value or and worth. Desire for success and acceptance in society, marriage or other aspects of

social life, influence many aspects of an individual's life decisions or behaviors.

Conclusion

The aim of the study was to identify body satisfaction and related body management in Iranian students. Our results showed that body dissatisfaction is becoming more prevalent among young women in Iran and it is regarded as a public health concern. While body dissatisfaction is strongly associated with mental and physical health, Identify the role of different aspects of body on social life, body dissatisfaction and health related problems in Iran ,could be adders in future studies. Improving adolescent health needs to appropriate body image efficacious and culturally appropriate education and preventive strategy.

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