

BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG ISRA' UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT: *The study aimed to explore the students' body image and its relation with self-esteem. The study sample consisted of 300 students (148 males and 152 females). In order to collect data, two instruments were used: Body image scale (28 items) and Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (10 items). SPSS was used to analyze the data; means, standard derivations, and t-test were used. The results indicated that the Body Image and Self-Esteem of Isra' University students were low; there was a positive relationship between body image and self-esteem; females were found to be less satisfied with their body image, and there was a significant statistical difference in the relationship between body image and self-esteem, in favour of males.*

KEYWORDS: Body Image, Self-Esteem, Adolescence, Maturity, Students.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical stage; because it is a transitional stage between childhood and maturity, adolescents start seeking freedom and independence. This stage is accompanied with different changes in psychological, physiological social and cognitive domains, so the adolescents face different problems in dealing with these rapid changes which affect their expectations of and satisfaction with their bodies. Dosouqi (2003) and Zahran (2005) indicate that adolescence is characterized by extreme interest in body image and emotional sensitivity, so adolescents focus on the interest they take in their bodies and the new changes occurred in them. Shqair (2002) defined body image as the mental and cognitive image that the individuals form of their body, including external appearance, internal components, organs and their ability to use these organs efficiently despite the things that may affect them like emotions and positive attitudes which could affect body image. Moeen, Muazzam and Zubair (2013) defined body image as the image that adolescents form of their body in terms of weight, height, facial features and maturity.

Adolescents' body plays a major role in shaping their body image and thoughts of his/her physical appearance in the eyes of others. Body image is formed as a result of several factors such as social upbringing, community, culture, media, family and friends, (Gattario 2013, and Faied 2004). Body image is one of the most important psychological factors that affects adolescents' personality and behaviour, because the adolescents view their body organs as separate parts, and each part plays a role in his/her personality; sometimes he/she is not satisfied with a certain organ of his/her body which may lead to anxiety; females in particular feel anxious due to obesity or fat build up in body's parts. (Kafafi and Neyal, 1996). The study results also indicated that 70% of female adolescents and 50% of male adolescents were dissatisfied with their body image and wish to change their appearance. (Richardson, Shanel, Paxton and Thomson, 2009). Adolescents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction depends upon other people's judgment. The study of Mellor, McCabe and Ricciardillo (2008) confirms that others' negative judgments of adolescents' bodies lead them to have negative body image. Cultural and

societal traditions and norms affect our views about our body image; the closer an individual's body image to meet the norms of their society, the more they feel positive, attractive, and satisfied with body image. Conversely, the farther unindividual's body image from society's ideal body image the higher dissatisfaction of their body image (Abadseh, 2000).

Studies also indicated a negative correlation between body image and emotional disorders; adolescents, with high satisfaction of their body image, are less stressed and socially withdrawn, have high self-esteem and high level of adaptation (Lobra and Ríos 2011), while adolescents, with low satisfaction of their body image, have emotional and social problems, such as shyness, insecurity, low self-esteem, depression, aggressive behaviour and food disorders. (Newman, Sontag and Salvato, 2006, Farghale 2003).

Body image satisfaction was affected by adolescents' sex. Males were more satisfied with their body image than females. Females were less satisfied; they tried to hide the negatives of their body; their satisfaction with their body image was affected by remarks and appraisals of others. They initially focus on certain body parts and later shift their focus to others. They concentrated mainly on their body weight, breasts size, acne, and periorbital dark circles. This indicated that they concentrated upon the social side of their body image (Abood, 2009, Ata, Ludden and Lally, 2007, Muneeb and Shaheen 2003).

Body image is related to psychological health and happy life. Al-Daher (2004) defines it as the attitude of the individual towards himself. According to Furnham (2005), it was the individual's judgment about him/herself and the ability to feel his/her influence on life. Individuals with high self-esteem are characterized by high satisfaction of their life, independence and optimism; usually females achieved their self-esteem through the attractiveness and beauty of their bodies, while males do that through authority and position (Robins, Trzesniewski, Gosling, and Potter, 2002).

Dohnt and Tiggemann (2006) indicated that others' views and judgments about body play a great role in shaping the self-esteem; if it was negative the satisfaction of the body image and self-esteem would be low and vice-versa.

Many studies were conducted about body image; Al-Zaede (2006) study aimed to investigate the relationship between body image and some emotional variables; the study sample consisted of 600 males and females from middle and high schools in Al- Taef (KSA). The results showed that males were more satisfied with their body image than females, and there were significant statistical differences in the relationship between body image and anxiety, shyness and depression for both sexes.

The study of Alabadseh (2013) aimed to explore the relationship between satisfaction of the body and depression, age, media programs, body dimensions and maturity age among Palestinian adolescents in Gaza strip, and 377 adolescents' females were chosen to collect data. The study results showed that there was a positive relationship between body image and age, and body dimensions. It also showed that there was a negative relationship between body image and depression, media programs and weight.

Shqair (1998) studied the relationship between body image, psychological disorders and future planning. The study sample consisted of 400, 1st year students from College of Education. The study indicated that there was a positive correlation between body image and psychological disorders, family, social and emotional stress.

Al-Mutairi (2011) conducted a study to explore the relationship between irrational thoughts and the body image of adolescent females in Riyadh schools. The study sample consisted of 600 students; the study indicated a positive satisfaction of the females toward their body image. In addition, there were not any significant statistical differences in body image attributed to the class.

The study of Clay, Vignoles and Dittmar (2005) aimed to investigate the relationship between body image and self-esteem among 136 adolescent females. The study showed a positive correlation between body image and self-esteem.

Abdulnabi (2014) chose 287 students from 3rd and 4th year university students to explore the relationship between body image, depression and self-esteem. The results indicated a positive correlation between body image and self-esteem; there were not any significant statistical differences in body image attributed to sex.

The study of Khalaf and Khalaf (2006) aimed to investigate the relationship between body image, social anxiety, depression and self-esteem. The study sample consisted of 633 school students from Syria. The results found a positive correlation between body image and social anxiety, self-esteem and depression.

The study of Ashram (2008) aimed to explore the relationship between body image and self-esteem among visual impairment. The study sample consisted of 207 students. The results indicated a positive correlation between body image and academic, social, appearance and self-esteem.

Study Importance

The body images vary according to the culture and society, so this study will explore the body image of Jordanian adolescents concerning both sexes. The importance of the study results from the age of the sample, since it is one of the critical periods in human life. The results of the study may also be used in constructing counseling programs for adolescents.

Problem Statement

Through scanning the related literature, the researcher found that there was too much variation in body image and its relationship with different variables in different life stages. Thus, this study aimed to investigate the body image among adolescents in Jordan; this study will precisely answer the following questions:

- 1-What is the satisfaction degree of Isra' university students with their body image?
- 2-What is the degree of self-esteem among Isra' university students?
- 3-Is there a statistical relationship between body image and self-esteem?
- 4-Are there statistical differences in body image attributed to gender?
- 5-Are there statistical differences in self-esteem attributed to gender?

METHODOLOGY

Design

Descriptive method, which was used in this study, depended on studying the phenomenon and indicating it in numerical values.

Population and Sampling

The study population consisted of 5000 students from 9 colleges: engineering, nursing, science, pharmacy, information technology, law, education, arts and business. The sample consisted of 300 students (148 males: 77 from scientific field and 71 from humanity field, 152 females: 80 from scientific field and 72 from humanity field). They were chosen from the obligatory university courses, because in such courses students from all faculties and from all academic levels will be there. Table 1

Table (1). Study Sample

Gender	Field of Study		Total
	Science	Humanity	
Male	77	71	148
Female	80	72	152
Total	157	143	300

Instruments

Body image scale: the body image scale was developed using related literature (Shqair, 1998, Mendelson, Mendelson and White, 2001, Dosouqi, 2003); it consisted of 28 items, each item was scaled for 3 levels (3= Yes, 2= Sometimes, 1= No).

The grand mean for scale= 67; according to this scale, if the total is more than 67 then the body image is positive, while if it is below 67 then the body image is negative

Self-Esteem Scale: to assess self-esteem, the researcher used Rosenberg's (1965) self-esteem scale. The scale consists of 10 items rated on a 5- point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree).

Validity

Although the 2 original instruments had a good validity and reliability indicators, the researcher rechecked their validity by sending them to 8 experts in counseling and psychology, to check their face validity, they reported that the 2 instrument were valid to be used for the study purposes.

Reliability

Reliability was checked using the following methods: internal consistency, (cronbach alpha equation) and test retest. Table (2) represents the findings.

Table (2). Reliability

Instrument	Test -Retest	Cronbach Alpha
Body Image	0.85	0.82
Self-Esteem	0.89	0.85

Procedures

The researcher asked permission of some colleagues, teaching the university general subjects, to distribute the questionnaire by themselves. Students were asked to respond to the questionnaire, using flyers; they were informed that answering the questionnaire would not be compulsory, although their commitment, accuracy and completion of all items would be reflected on the study results. It took about 25 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Analysis

SPSS was used to analyze the quantitative data (means, standard deviations s.d, frequencies, t.test, and correlation were calculated).

RESULTS

The First Question

To answer the first question: (What is the satisfaction degree of Isra' university students with their body image?)

Means and standard deviations were used; the researcher found that the body image=51.4, s.d, 18.4; this indicates a negative body image. Table 3 represents means and standard deviations of body image for males and females. According to those standards, males were more satisfied with their body image.

Table (3). Means and Standard Deviations of the body image

Scale	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Body Image	Male	69.4	2.30
	Female	33.0	3.65
	Total	51.4	18.4
Self-Esteem	Male	36.1	2.80
	Female	13.5	2.71
	Total	24.7	11.6

The Second Question

To answer the second question (What is the degree of self-esteem among Isra' university students?)

Means and standard deviations were used; table 2 represents the findings for this question.

According to table 2, it was found that the self-esteem of the sample (mean=24.7 s.d, 11.6; these values indicated lower self-esteem of male students (mean=36.1 s.d, 2.8) than female students (mean 13.5 s.d, 2.71)

The Third Question

To answer the third question (Is there a statistical relationship between body image and self-esteem?), Pearson's correlation was used; it was found that the correlation co-efficient between body image and self-esteem equal=0.965; this value is statistically significant ($\alpha=0.01$).

The Fourth Question

To answer the fourth question (Are there statistical differences in body image attributed to gender?), means standard derivations and t-test were used; table 4 represents the findings

Table (4). T-TEST for the effect of body image attributed to gender

	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	sig
Body Image	Male	69.4	2.30	1.03	.000
	Female	33.0	3.65		

According to table 3, there were significant statistically differences ($\alpha=0.01$) in body image attributed to sex in favor of females.

The Fifth Question

To answer the fifth question (Are there statistical differences in self-esteem attributed to gender?), means standard deviations and t-test were used; table 5 represents the findings of this question.

Table (5). T-TEST for the effect of self-esteem attributed to gender

	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	sig
Self-Esteem	Male	36.1	2.80	70.7	.000
	Female	13.5	2.71		

According to table 4, there were significant statistically differences in self-esteem attributed to sex in favor of males.

DISCUSSION

Physiological and body changes make adolescents more interested and concentrated upon their body image. This image is affected by body changes and the views of others about the body shape. According to (Alabadseh, 2013), these changes could have a negative effect upon the adolescents' behaviour, psychological health and self-esteem. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between body image and self-esteem of Isra' university students. The results indicated a positive relationship between body image and self-esteem, which reflects that body image, develops and grows through human growth stages, and it is an essential component of the personality; accordingly, body image affects our self-esteem; this means that if the

individual is satisfied with his body image this will be reflected on his self- trust and self-esteem. This will in turn lead to achieve success and good life. The findings of (Furnham, 2005, Dohnt and Tiggemann, 2006) are similar to the findings of Abdalnabi (2014), Khalaf and Khalaf (2006) and Ashram (2008); they found that a positive correlation existed between body image and self-esteem, and low self-esteem was associated with low body image satisfaction.

The results of the study also indicated that females were unsatisfied with their body image and had low self-esteem compared to the males. Many studies have focused on the relationship between body image and self-esteem (Gatti, etl 2014, Lowery, 2005, Marcotte, etl, 2002). These studies suggested that females are more vulnerable than males to physical changes; this vulnerability turns into a greater level of body and weight dissatisfaction, which reflects low self-esteem. Furthermore, this result could be explained by the fact that females are always seeking for beauty and attractiveness of body, so they concentrate more on their body, and they are more affected by others' view and cultural norms of body and beauty. This result is similar to that result of Abdalnabi (2014).

According to these results, the researcher recommends that more studies are required to be conducted using other variables that affect body image, like the effect of media. Adolescents also need more counseling programs to accept their body image and to overcome the negative views about their body image.

CONCLUSION

Body image is an essential part of personality, which can be viewed from the way the individual views his/her body, the influence of society, culture, and personal experience.

Body image is also affected by biological cognitive and emotional factors; this will affect the psychological health of the human being. Adolescents concentrate on their bodies; they consider their body as an integral part of their self-concept. The study results indicated a positive relation between body image and self-esteem; the males were more satisfied with their body image, so their self-esteem was higher than females; meanwhile females were more affected by others' views about their body, weight, height, and society standards about beauty and attraction.

LIMITATIONS

Time Limitations: This study was conducted during the 2nd semester of 2015-2016.

Place Limitations: This study was conducted at IU.

Human resources limitations: IU students/ Jordan.

Finally: This study was limited to the instruments, methods used in this study which may affect generalization of the results.

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