Body Mass Hurts Adolescent Girls More than Thin-Ideal Images

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Abstract : This study was aimed to identify factors that affect negative mood and body image dissatisfaction in women. positive and negative affect, self esteem, body image satisfaction and figure rating scale was administered to 97 female undergraduate students. This served as a base line data for correlation analysis in the first instance. One week later participants who volunteered to appear in the second phase of the study (N=47) were shown thin- ideal images as an intervention and soon after they completed positive and negative affect schedule and body image states scale again as a post test. Results indicated body mass as a strong negative predictor of body image dis/satisfaction, self esteem was a moderate predictor and mood was not a significant predictor. The participants whose actual body shape was markedly discrepant with the ideally desired body shape had significantly low level of body image satisfaction ($p < .001$) than those with low discrepancy. Similar results were found for self esteem ($p < .004$). Both self esteem and body mass predicted body satisfaction about equally and significantly. However, on viewing thin-ideal images, the participants of different body weight showed no change in their body image satisfaction than before. Only the overweight participants were significantly affected on negative mood as a short term reaction after viewing the thin ideal images. Comparing the three groups based on their body mass, one-way ANOVA revealed significant difference on negative mood as well as body image satisfaction. This reveals body mass as a potent and stable factor that consistently and strongly affected body satisfaction not the transient portrayal of thin ideal images.

Keywords : body image satisfaction, thin-ideal images, media, mood affects, self esteem
Conference Title : ICSRD 2020 : International Conference on Scientific Research and Development
Conference Location : Chicago, United States
Conference Dates : December 12-13, 2020