

INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON BODY IMAGE , FEAR OF NEGATIVE EVALUATION AND SOCIAL ANXIETY OF OVERWEIGHT YOUNG WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE

To explore the influence of media on body image and fear of negative evaluation on social anxiety of overweight young females.

STUDY DESIGN

Co relational study design was used in the study.

PLACE AND DURATION OF STUDY

Data was collected from different gymnasiums of Lahore from 2016-2018

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

A sample of 135 overweight females was collected through purposive sampling from differ gymnasiums of Lahore. The Multidimensional Media Influence Scale; Fear of Negative Evaluation and Social avoidance and Distress were used as assessment measures.

RESULTS

Results showed that body image had negative relationship with social anxiety and fear of negative evaluation had positive relationship with social anxiety.

CONCLUSION

The study has important implications for media personals to stop motivate thin models as the idealistic way to look beautiful.

KEY WORDS

Body image, fear of negative evaluation and social anxiety.

INTRODUCTION

Zanjani et al., (2010)¹ defined body image as an image appearing from self or one's ego and that appears in all of his/her reactions implicitly under any situation. The term "Body Image" was first coined by Silder and he defined this term as image or representation of "soma" in mind which is crafted by a person himself. Alongside this image upon mind, opinion about that image is also imprinted. This means that it comes off as a perception and an attitude about that perception. Perceptual component for body image is that how we see our size, shape, weight, face, movement and actions, while the viewing parts are that how we feel regarding these features and how our feelings direct our behavior (Gleeson, 2006)². Environmental factors involve interactions with other people of society, biological factors involves changes in body such as changes due to physical growth and any sort of ailment or disease that contributed to altered body image. Psychological factors involve apprehension about certain body size, weight, figure and body image overall (Sugar, 2003)³.

A strong theoretical background supports this notion that there exists a significant relationship between body dissatisfaction and anxiety and fear of being negatively evaluated by other people in society (Kim, 2009)⁴. Some other researchers also found that in people who are facing any sort of problems with their body image are more prone towards developing temperamental disorders. One of such study was conducted by Menan & colleagues to explore the rates of social anxiety in fat women and their results indicated that one-fourth of the obese women were suffering from social anxiety. This social anxiety was a result of body dissatisfaction and fear of negative evaluation⁵.

The findings of several studies show that social anxiety is originated and sustained by errors in perception and cognitive process overall. The researchers and theorists dealing with cognitive processes emphasize that people living with social anxiety have distortions in their cognitive processes⁶⁻¹¹. Rapee and Heimberg suggest that socially anxious individuals show a negative image of themselves that seems to have been observed by others and automatically focus on the negative aspects of them¹². When anxious people encounter social situations they become panicky. So in such fear, what they always try is to avoid and get rid of that particular situation¹³. Social anxiety hampers individual and significantly affect important areas of their life such as impairment in interpersonal relationship formation, marriage and friendship¹⁴.

Local literature on the topic is scarce so the current study was designed to investigate the influence of media on body image and fear of negative evaluation on social anxiety of overweight young females. It was hypothesized that body image will have negative relationship with social anxiety and fear of negative evaluation will have positive relationship with social anxiety.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

Participants

A sample of 135 overweight women (calculated through Amos, i.e: 15 cases per parameter) was

be taken from different gymnasiums. Women having access to television were included. Women watching television for at least two hours per day were included as it's the required range of exposure criteria according to Pakistani studies¹⁵. BMI for overweight young adults was more than 24.9 and less than 29.9. BMI was found by dividing weight in kilograms by square of height in meters.

Instruments

The Multidimensional Media Influence Scale (Cusumano & Thompson, 2001)¹⁶

The Multidimensional Media Influence Scale assesses women's recognition of societal/ cultural standards of appearance. Sample items include: Watching movies makes me want to diet, Watching TV makes me want to diet or lose. Scale was translated and adapted into Urdu language with authors' permission.

Fear of Negative Evaluation (Leary, 1983)¹⁷

Fear of negative evaluation evaluates about apprehensions, others evaluations, distress over these evaluations and expectations what others will evaluate. Scale has 12 items with excellent reliability of .97. Urdu translation by Zafar and Kausar was used after permission¹⁸.

Social avoidance and Distress (Watson & Friend, 1969)¹⁹

The Social Avoidance and Distress Scale (SADS) has 28 true/false items. This instrument was developed to quantify social anxiety. Two aspects of anxiety are measured: Four experiences – distress, discomfort, fear, anxiety and the avoidance of social situations. The SADS instrument has been valued at high reliability with its internal consistency at .94 and the test-reliability ranging from .68. Sample items include: I feel relaxed even in unfamiliar social situations, I usually feel relaxed when I am in group of people.

Procedure

Permission was taken from Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab. After prior permission from the Institute of Applied psychology; the researcher accessed the participants who were not be busy in their classes and conformed if they met the criteria. Participants were requested to participate in the study. Ethical considerations were kept in mind. Informed consent was taken from the participant. No participant was forced to continue to participate if she feels distressed. Before conducting the interview; each participant was made assured of the fact that their confidentiality will be maintained. Data were analyzed through SPSS.

RESULTS

The table 1 is explaining the specification of sample (age, no. of siblings, family income, family structure, birth order, tock on and access to remote) quantitatively. Demographic information revealed that young overweight women with age range between 18 to 24 M (SD) = 21.42 (2.14) were selected, in which 88 had nuclear family structure whereas 47 belonged to joint family system. Middle born individuals were highest with frequency in 52, and the last born were least in number with total of 36 in numbers. Appropriate comparable number of watching TV alone or with company was respective 60:75. And in the last the number of access to remote was also comparable with most frequency lied in "remote in others hand= 52" and minimum frequency was found in "varies= 36".

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (135)

Variables	M(SD)	f%	Min	Max
Age	21.42(2.14)		18	24
Family Structure				
Nuclear		88(65)		
Joint		47(34)		
Birth-order				
First Born		47(34)		
Middle Born		52(38)		
Last Born		36(26)		
Tock On				
I enjoy watching Tv alone		60(44)		
I enjoy watching Tv with others		75(55)		
Access of Remote				
Me		47(34)		
Others		52(38)		
Varies		36(26)		

Note. SD = Standard Deviation, M = Mean, f= frequency, % = Percentage.

Table 2
Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Body Image, Fear of Negative Evaluation and Social Anxiety (df=134)

	Variables	1	2	3	M	SD
1	Body image	-	-.42**	-.17*	23.87	6.72
2	FNE		-	.16*	33.41	9.47
3	Social anxiety				13.97	5.66

Note. FNE= Fear of Negative Evaluation, M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, p<.01 **, p<.05*

To explore the correlation between body image fear of negative evaluation and social anxiety of overweight young females the Pearson Product Moment Analysis was run. Table 2 is providing evidence of significant negative correlation between Body Image and Fear of Negative Evaluation; r=-.42, p< .01. Assuring the increment in one variable will assume the decrement in other variable. Significant weak negative correlation was found between body image and social anxiety, r= -.17, p< .05. Further fear of negative evaluation and social anxiety were found with weak positive significant correlation r= .16, p< .05.

DISCUSSION

Negative self-image and fear of negative evaluation plays a critical role in the onset and retention of social anxiety symptoms. Results of the study showed that body image had negative relationship with social anxiety. Results are significant with previous researches²⁰⁻²³ Contemporary literature suggest that for dealing with social anxiety, the most important task one should perform is to take into account the cognition of the person and should work upon it. As some of the cognitive distortions play an important role in continuation of social anxiety disorder so one should do extra emphasis upon cognitive restructuring of the person suffering from social anxiety disorder⁷. Out of the cognitive processes, for example, considered in the domain of the social anxiety, the selective biases in the attention, care

interpretation, memory, judgment and social self-efficacy can be mentioned²⁴.

Results also showed that fear of negative evaluation had negative relationship with social anxiety. Results are consistent with previous researches. Rapee and Heimberg stated that socially anxious individuals show a negative image of themselves that seems to have been observed by others and automatically focus on the negative aspects of them¹². When anxious people encounter social situations they become panicky. So in such fear, what they always try is to avoid and get rid of that particular situation^{13,14}.


CONCLUSION

To conclude; For human beings, judgment about self is extremely important and this evaluation becomes the most definitive factor in the process of psychological evolution. One of the area in which individuals judge is regarding body image which is a mental image they have of their body. Role of thin models shown on television motivates women to lose more and more weight and when they are unable to do so they experience social anxiety and have fear of negative evaluation.

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