THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEDIA INFLUENCE, PEER PRESSURE, APPEARANCE

IMPORTANCE, BODY PERCEPTION, AND CLOTHING BEHAVIOR:  EXAMING ETHNIC

DIFFERENCES AMONG ADOLESCENT FEMALES IN THE UNITED STATES


by

LESLIE RENE MERRITT

(Under the Direction of Yoo-Kyoung Seock)

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the relationships between media influence, peer pressure, and appearance importance with adolescent body perception; the relationship between adolescent body perception and clothing behavior; and to examine ethnic differences existing between adolescent girls among all of the variables.  A sample of 214 adolescent girls ages 14-19 completed a survey in a classroom setting.  A series of regression analyses, ANOVA, and MANOVA were used to test the hypotheses.  Results from the analyses indicated that media influence, peer pressure, and appearance importance significantly influence adolescent body perception.  Additionally adolescent body perception significantly influenced clothing behavior.  Furthermore, some ethnic differences were found in adolescent media influence, body perception, and clothing behavior; however, there were no significant ethnic differences concerning either peer pressure or appearance importance.  The implications of the study and suggestions for future research were also discussed.

INDEX WORDS:      Adolescents, Ethnicity, Body perception, Media influence, Peer pressure,

                 Appearance importance, Clothing behavior

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Adolescence is a time of rapid growth and development both physically and emotionally. Teens are sensitive to the social messages and outside influences about cultural norms concerning the body and appearance. Body image has been an important mental health issue especially for adolescents because it encompasses both how they see themselves and how they feel about what they see (Fallon, 1990). Numerous developmental changes occur during early adolescence in both girls and boys that influence, and are influenced by body image, such as pubertal development, an emerging sexuality, and gender role and identity formation (Levine & Smolak, 2002). Additionally, the thoughts and feelings adolescents develop about their bodies will follow them into adulthood. This transition is particularly more stressful for girls than boys because girls go through these changes much more rapidly than boys. Despite the fact that adolescence is an important period in developing perception of one's body image, levels of body dissatisfaction peak during adolescence, reaching rates as high as 80% among high school girls (Adams, Katz, Beauchamp, & Cohen, 1993). This widespread dissatisfaction with the body among both adolescent girls and adult women has been characterized as a "normative discontentment" (Levine & Smolak, 2002).

Body image is characteristically theorized as a multifaceted construct consisting of attitudes, perceptions, and evaluations of how we physically appear (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). Cognitive-behavioral approaches that give emphasis to social learning processes and the cognitive mediation of body evaluation have directed the psychological research on body image (Cash, 2002). Historical

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processes, cultural socialization, interpersonal experiences, and actual physical characteristics prompt individuals to develop specific attitudes and schemas (Firth & Gleeson, 2008).

Another aspect important during adolescence closely related to body image is that of appearance evaluation. For adolescents, appearance becomes central as they attempt to develop a unique style or try to "fit in" according to societal norms or with the peer group in which they identify (American Psychological Association, 2002). Individuals who place cognitive importance on appearance are more occupied with and concerned about appearance-related characteristics such as body weight (Jung & Lee, 2006). In 1977, Markus defined self-schemas as "cognitive generalizations about the self, derived from past experience, that organize and guide the processing of self-related information contained in an individual's social experience" (64). For those who are appearance self schematics, having self-schema on appearance, the way one looks is the most important aspect in how they see themselves as well as how others view them. Jung and Lennon (2003) found that women who were appearance self schematic showed a higher level of dissatisfaction with their body image and revealed lower self-esteem than those who placed low cognitive importance on appearance. Therefore, how important appearance is to an individual may be key in determining how the body is perceived including the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction they have with their bodies.

An additional facet in the formation of adolescents' body perception comes from their socio-cultural influences. These are cultural messages about beauty transmitted and reinforced through social interactions (Cash, 2005). These messages come mainly from mass media images found in fashion and beauty advertisements, magazines, television, movies, and the internet. They are largely responsible for creating and reinforcing America's preoccupation with physical attractiveness (Groesz , Levine, & Murnen, 2002). Currently, the standard for women portrayed through media images is much thinner today than has been in the past making achieving this standard largely unattainable for most women (Hausenblas, Janelle, Gardner, & Focht, 2002). Cultivation theory suggests that consistently thin media

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representations create an alternate portrait of reality (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorelli, 1994).  With repeated exposure to these images, an "alternate reality" is accepted as valid, which then, in turn, leads frequent viewers to feel a greater level of body dissatisfaction (Schooler, 2008).  There have been a number of studies to support the notion that exposure to images of physically attractive women may indeed have detrimental effects on self-evaluation (Trampe, Stapel, & Siero, 2007).  For example, Stice and Shaw (1994) exposed female participants to pictures depicting ultrathin women, average-sized women, or no women.  They found exposure to the pictures of ultrathin women had a negative effect on the various measurements of self-evaluation.  In a similar study, Irving (1990) found that exposure to thin women resulted in a lower self-evaluation than did exposure to either average-weight or oversize women.  Previous research findings have also shown that relationships exist between increased body dissatisfaction and more frequent television viewing (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006; Harrison & Cantor, 1997; Tiggeman, 2003); more frequent exposure to certain genres of television such as music videos and soap operas (Borzekowski, Robinson, & Killen,  2000; Tiggemann & Pickering, 1996); and frequent magazine reading (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004; Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw, & Stein, 1994; Tiggmann, 2003; Tiggeman & McGill, 2004).

Over the last decade, the internet has become a vital tool for socialization and information search. Virtually every household has access to the internet and many of the learning activities in school are web-based.  Based on a study from Yahoo!, MSNBC.com reports that teens now spend more time on the internet than watching television (Weaver, MSNBC.com, 2010).  To date, the extent to which internet images, similar to those found on television or in fashion and beauty magazines are internalized and effect body perception has not been documented.

As well as media influence, peers, another socio-cultural influence, play an important role in the development of adolescent girls' body perception.  Throughout the lifespan, we are subjected to the social pressures from our peer groups; however, during childhood and adolescence the pressures are significant.

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Since these pressures from peers become increasingly important during adolescence, it is logical to offer that peers have an important influence on the development of eating behaviors and body dissatisfaction in girls (Sullivan, 1953; Liebermann et al., 2001).

Peer pressure is suggested to influence others by offering rewards to those individuals that conform to group and/or cultural norms and also to punish those who defy them (Brown, 1989; Kandel, 1980). Numerous studies have shown the effect of peer teasing on body image and disordered eating for adolescent females (Grigg, Bowman, & Redman, 1996; Mukai, 1996). Furthermore, Cash and Green (1986) found that women who suffered teasing about their weight/body during childhood and/or adolescence experienced more dissatisfaction with their appearance during adulthood. Additionally, studies have shown that adolescent females who have a more slender body shape and are considered attractive have better quality peer relationships and enhanced social acceptance than those who are considered overweight (Langlois & Stephan, 1977; Lerner, 1969). Previous literature also suggests that a large percentage of adolescent girls discuss weight, shape, and dieting among their peers (Levine & Smolak, 2002). These discussions are a source of social learning among girls concerning their body image and weight as well as reinforcing peer or societal norms. Evidence has shown that girls who are part of friendship groups have similar levels of body image concerns, drive for thinness, and eating behaviors or restraints (Levine & Smolak, 2002). Therefore, the relationship between peer pressures such as teasing or discussions concerning weight and/or dieting and body perception is important.

By making comparisons to others such as family members, peers, and media images, these perceptions are reinforced (Thompson & Stice, 2001). The process of comparing oneself with others is explained by the social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954). The theory is based on the notion that people compare their own opinions and abilities to those of others and that comparison affects their self-evaluation. According to the theory, people who judge themselves as inferior to others on a valued dimension (i.e. upward comparisons) experience negative affect and a decrease in self-esteem. An

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increased internalization of a thin-ideal encourages body dissatisfaction (Stice & Shaw, 2002). Social comparison theory is the framework used in the current study in assessing the relationships between both media images and peer comparisons or pressures.

While the influence of both media influence and peer pressures on body dissatisfaction has been well documented in the literature, a key area of research related to body image that has been somewhat overlooked is the role of everyday grooming behaviors, specifically women's clothing behaviors (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). Researchers have found a relationship between one's body image and the clothing one wears (Dubler & Gurel, 1984). How one feels about one's self seems to affect clothing choices, and reciprocally, the clothing one wears affects one's feelings about the self (Kwon, 1991). Scholars have found that apparel acts as a second skin that can modify one's perceived body image (Horn & Gurel, 1981; Kaiser, 1997), or according to Fallon (1990) "the way people perceive themselves and the way they think others see them" (80). Clothing may be used to enhance one's body satisfaction or conceal body dissatisfaction comparative to a cultural ideal (Kaiser, 1997).

Clothing behavior becomes increasingly important throughout adolescence because the clothing one chooses to wear during this time may be a message of self-expression, a means of self-enhancement, or a way to conform to societal standards regarding appearance. Previous literature has shown that embracing societal attitudes toward dress and wearing certain clothing has been associated with both better peer relationships (Eicher & Kelley, 1974) and a more positive self esteem (Humphrey et al., 1971). In a study conducted by Littrell et al. (1990) on the dimensions of clothing interests and body satisfaction, it was found that the self-enhancement factor of clothing interest had a significant correlation with the conformity and drive for thinness factors. It was discovered that adolescents that utilized clothing to enhance their self-esteem had higher tendencies to appearance conformity among peers and increased concerns about body weight.

<center>Justification</center>

There are many studies that have investigated the issue of body image and the negative effects associated with body dissatisfaction such as eating disorder tendency, low self-esteem, and depression. Between 2004-2006, approximately 27,000 women and girls were diagnosed with an eating disorder each year (CDC, 2008). The development of body image is a function of culture in direct response to cultural aesthetic ideals (Lennon & Rudd, 2001). In many Western countries, such as the United States, being thin and attractive are both perceived as desirable physical traits for women (Silverstein et al., 1986). Messages of what is considered attractive in American society are transmitted through the mass media. Most of the celebrities and models used in advertisements on television and in magazines are White; therefore, messages of uniformity presented in a Caucasian physique are forced on a diverse audience (DeBraganza & Hausenblas, 2010). Women from various ethnic/racial backgrounds may vary in the extent to which they are dissatisfied with their bodies because meanings of the body depend on cultural and social group context (Crago & Shisslak, 2003).

The United States is considered a melting pot in which people from many different nations have continuously assembled. The term bi- or multicultural refers to individuals that share both native cultural ideals as well as Western ideals. Recent research has shown that biculturals have the ability to go between different cultural meaning systems based on cues from the environment in which they live (Lau-Gesk, 2003). Therefore Latina, African American, and Asian American adolescents may be forced to negotiate between the cultural values regarding appearance provided by dominant White culture, which equates thinness as a key requirement for beauty, and those provided by their own families, communities, and cultures (Schooler, 2008). To date, existing research on body dissatisfaction has focused mostly on African American women and girls in relation to their White peers or studies comparing White and non-White women (Smolak & Stringel-Moore, 2001). Because the Asian American and Hispanic

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populations are the fastest growing minority groups in the United States (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008), current research needs to investigate the relationships of body perception, appearance evaluation, mass media exposure, peer pressure, and clothing practices in all major groups of women.

<u>Statement of the problem</u>

The evidence that media images play and peer pressures play a role in the development of a negative body image among adolescent girls has been well-documented through the existing literature; however, many questions remain unanswered concerning the ethnic differences among adolescents concerning body image and the factors that influence their perceptions of their bodies and appearance. This study will look at the combination of variables that influence body perception and examine ethnic differences among the variables. Furthermore, there has been a lack of focus in the area of clothing behavior in relation to body perception in body image studies, especially adolescent clothing behavior. As previously stated, research has shown that clothing can act as an aid to enhance the part of the body one likes or to conceal the areas of the body that an individual considers unsatisfactory There are three purposes of the present study. First, to examine the relationships of media influence, peer pressure, and importance of appearance on adolescents' body perceptions. The second purpose is to investigate the relationship among adolescent body perceptions and their clothing behaviors. Lastly, to contribute to the existing literature by presenting a cross-ethnic comparison analysis of media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception and clothing behaviors among adolescent girls of various ethnicities. The specific research objectives of the current study are:

1)      to examine the relationship between media influence and body perception.

2)      to examine the relationship between peer pressure  and  body perception

3)      to examine the relationship of importance of appearance and body perception

4)      to examine the relationship between body perception and clothing behaviors

5)       to examine the differences among four ethnic groups in terms of media influence, peer

pressures, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behaviors.

<u>Conceptual Definitions</u>

Adolescence-a transitional time of human development between childhood and adulthood when biological, social, and psychological changes occur (Christie & Viner, 2005).

Appearance Importance-placing cognitive importance on one's own appearance as well as making evaluations about oneself and others based primarily on outward appearance, based on appearance self-schema theory (Markus, 1977).

Body Image-the mental image we have of our bodies, encompassing both how we see ourselves and how we feel about what we see (Fallon, 1990). Body image has been defined as having both perceptual and attitudinal components.

Body Perception- In the context of this study, body perception encompasses all aspects of body image, both perceptual and attitudinal, including level of body dissatisfaction (Thompson & van den Berg, 2002).

Clothing Behavior-the way in which clothing is used to enhance or hide the body; the function of clothing; clothing avoidance; and attitude toward clothing (Kwon & Parham, 1994).

Ethnic group- A group of people that identify with one another, especially on the basis of race, culture, and/or religion (Encyclopedia Britannica)

Media Influence-refers to media as a source of pressure or information to achieve societal standards of beauty that is presented in magazines, television, the internet, by famous people, etc. (Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer, 1995)

Peer Pressure-in the context of the present study, peer pressure refers to peer conversations concerning weight or the body; peer teasing related to body or appearance; and peer social comparisons all of which may have an effect on the body perception of adolescent females (Jones et al., 2004).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this review of the literature, I will discuss previous research and findings regarding body images studies. This chapter will explore the effect of media messages through magazines, television, and the internet; peer pressure through teasing and conversations; and the importance of appearance on body perception. Additionally this chapter will explore previous studies regarding clothing behavior in relation to body perception. Lastly, I will discuss past research concerning ethnic differences in body perception.

The literature review will be divided into six sections. It will begin with body perception, followed by media influence, peer pressures appearance importance, clothing behavior, and ethnic differences in body perception.

Body Perception

The term body image originates from Gestaltists who, through their observations of neurological patients, came to believe there was a mental representation of body information (Kohler, 1947; Altabe & Thompson, 1996). The literature investigating body image has become a relatively complex phenomenon, with researchers, Thompson & van den Berg (2002) identifying four components of attitudinal body image: (a) "global subjective dissatisfaction" referring to overall satisfaction-dissatisfaction with one's appearance; (b) "affective distress regarding appearance" referring to one's emotions about one's appearance, including anxiety and discomfort; (c) "cognitive aspects of body image"-referring to investment in one's appearance, erroneous beliefs about one's body, and body image schemas; and (d) "behavioral avoidance reflective of dissatisfaction with appearance" (p. 142). Currently, body image is most commonly defined as the image we have of our bodies mentally, encompassing both how we see ourselves and how we feel about what we see (Fallon, 1990). Body cathexis refers to the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction people have with their bodies and the separate parts of their bodies.

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This is an essential part of body image (Berscheild, Walser, & Hohrnstedt, 1973). When a discrepancy or difference between how one sees their own body and what they feel is ideal, body dissatisfaction results. In previous research evidence of strong relationships have been found between body dissatisfaction, depression (Keel et al., 2001), and mood (Tiggemann & McGill, 2004). Eating disorders have also been the result of poor body image and/or high levels of body dissatisfaction (Stice et al., 1994).

Over the past two decades, a wide range of measures have been developed to assess the perceptional and attitudinal aspects of body image. Perceptional measurements of body image determine body size estimation and body distortion of individuals (Thompson & Gardner, 2002). Three methodologies have been used for measuring the sensory and non-sensory components of body image size estimation. The signal detection theory presents subjects with static video images of themselves that are distorted either too wide or too thin. Sensory sensitivity, the person's ability to detect correctly the distortion, and response bias, the person's tendency to over-report the body distortion, are measured. Like the signal detection theory, the method of constant stimuli presents a static video image, with size distortion present or absent; the subject is asked to report the presence or absence of distortion. This technique allows for a calculation of percent between the body size distortion (if any) and the subject's perception of their own size. The point at which the subject feels that the image is equal to the perception of their own body is called the point of subjective equality (PSE). This methodology has proven to be time consuming because it requires numerous trials at different levels of distortion. A third methodology examining perceptional body image is the adaptive probit estimation. This method presents a subject with a video image at one of five levels of distortion. The subjects are asked to determine if they judge the images as too wide or thin in comparison to the perception of their own body (Thompson & Gardner, 2002).

The attitudinal dimension of body image has been classified in the following four components as previously stated above: "1) Global subjective dissatisfaction or disturbance; 2) Affective distress regarding appearance; 3) Cognitive aspects of body image; and 4) Behavioral avoidance reflective of dissatisfaction with appearance" (Thompson & van den Berg, 2002) (p.142). Global satisfaction has been measured through figural ratings and questionnaires. Instruments used to access satisfaction or dissatisfaction include the Figure Rating Scale (Fallon & Rozin, 1985), the Body Image Assessment scale (Williamson et al., 1989), and the Contour Drawing Rating Scale (Thompson & Gray, 1995). These scales consist of nine silhouette drawings ranging from very thin (underweight) to very fat (obese) with each represented by a number. Participants are asked to identify the silhouette that they think looks like their current figure and also pick the silhouette of their ideal figure. The discrepancy between the two figures is used to access their body dissatisfaction. This measurement system may not be the most accurate because it does not consider different body shapes especially when accessing body dissatisfaction among various ethnic groups. A more modern method of figural ratings is the Somatomorphic Matrix (Pope, Gruber, Mangweth, Bureau, deCol, Jouvent, & Hudson, 2000) which is a computerized method consisting of 100 figures that differ on % body fat and muscularity for participants to choose from. Global (dis)satisfaction is also measured in the form of several different questionnaires. A popularly used questionnaire is the Body Dissatisfaction Scale (EDI-BD), which is a subscale of the Eating Disorder Inventory (Garner, Olmested, & Polivy, 1983). This measures satisfaction with nine weight-related body parts (hips, stomach, etc.). The Body Image Ideals questionnaire (Cash & Szymanski, 1995) consists of respondents rating 11 physical characteristics by discrepancy between the self and what they feel is ideal and also rating the importance of each characteristic. Some other questionnaires used to determine body (dis)satisfaction are the Multidimensional Body Self-Relations Questionnaire (Brown, Cash, & Mikulka, 1990), the Self-Image Questionnaire for Young Adolescents-Body Image Subscale (Petersen, 1984), the Body Esteem Scale (Franzoi & Shields, 1984), the Body

Satisfaction Scale (Slade, Dewey, Newton, Brodie, & Kiemle, 1990), and the Body Shape Questionnaire (Cooper et al., 1987).

Affective distress regarding appearance refers to emotions such as anxiety, dysphoria, and discomfort one experiences regarding their own appearance. One method to measure affective distress is the Physical Appearance State and Trait Anxiety Scale (Reed, Thompson, Brannick & Sacco, 1991) in which participants rate the level of anxiety associated with 16 body sites (8 weight-related, 8 non-weight-related). Another method cited, developed by Cash (1994), is the Situational Inventory of Body-Image Dysphoria which measures how frequently one experiences negative emotions concerning body image across 48 social and personal situational contexts.

Cognitive measures of body image try to capture the beliefs, thoughts, attributions, or other cognitive components of disturbance. The Appearance Schemas Inventory of Cash & Labarge (1996) assesses dysfunctional appearance related assumptions using a 14 item inventory that addresses multiple domains. The Multidimensional Media Influence Scale consists of five items to determine the internalization of socio-cultural appearance ideals (Thompson, van den Berg, Keery, Shroff, Haselhuhn, & Roehrig, 2001).

Behavioral avoidance reflective of dissatisfaction with appearance refers to avoidance of situations or objects due to their elicitation of body image concerns. Behavioral avoidance is an integral part of disturbed body image; however it has received limited analysis in the literature (Thompson & van den Berg, 2002). The Body Image Avoidance Scale (Rosen, Srebnik, Salzber, & Wendt, 1991) has been used to determine the frequency in which an individual engages in avoidance behaviors related to body image. This measure yields a self-report of avoidance behaviors.

<u>Media Influence and Body Perception</u>

In most Western cultures, people are almost constantly bombarded with mass media images through advertisements, magazines, billboards, and television. These images set the standard of what is

considered to be physically attractive in society. While not all of these images are idealized, most present an unattainable and unrealistic representation of people and their lives (Richins, 1995). The levels of beauty and status found in these images are found in only a fraction of the population. Additionally, through technology and other special effects, flawless and perfect images are presented to the public. Women, in turn, tend to make self-comparisons based on these images. These upward comparisons, as previous studies show, have been associated with an increase in emotional distress and a decrease in self-esteem (Major, Testa, & Blysma, 1991). Media images have the potential to cause both an indirect-the thin body ideal-and a direct-body image disturbance-effect (Botta, 2000).

Research has shown body ideals represented by the media change with time. In Western culture, for instance, the thin ideal replaced a more full-figure woman that was popular in the 1950's (Jackson, 2002). In a content analysis of 33 television shows and 8 monthly magazines over the course of a year, photographs from 1901 to 1980, and films from 1932 to 1980, Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson, and Kelly observed a trend toward a slimmer ideal (1986). Similarly, several decades of the Miss America Pageants were analyzed and it was concluded that the ideal shape has steadily become thinner (Wiseman, Gray, Mosimann, & Ahrens, 1992).

*Media influence from fashion and beauty magazines and body perception*

Estimates have been made that more than half of girls between the ages of 12 and 19 in the United States read fashion and beauty magazines (Duke, 2000). This has become a growing trend over the last few decades as teens have increasingly had more disposable income than in the past (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). These magazines become a vital information source during adolescence serving as guidebooks on appearance, gender roles, and relationship formations (Roberts, 1993). Fashion and beauty magazines serve as a social learning tool for girls. Previous research has shown the effect of reading magazines on negative body image is stronger than television viewing due in part that there are other various motivations for television viewing than social learning (Tiggeman, 2005).

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In recent years, the media has come under fire for establishing standards of beauty that are impossible to achieve as the social norm which fuels a preoccupation with appearance leading to body image issues and disordered eating (Levine & Smolak, 1996).

Several content analyses have been conducted on both teen and women's magazines. Evans, Rutberg, Sather, and Turner (1991), conducted a content analysis of the three most popular adolescent magazines of 1988: *Seventeen, Young Miss (YM)*, and *Sassy*. In their analysis, they found that "Articles and advertisements mutually reinforced an underlying value that the road to happiness is attracting males for a successful heterosexual life by way of physical beautification." They also found that identity development and achievement was vastly overlooked with an exception regarding heterosexual relationships and sex-related issues. Their final conclusion was that women of color were underrepresented in both advertisements and photographic features of the magazines studied. The majority of the models from the magazine were extremely thin White females with blonde hair and blue eyes (Evans, Rutberg, Sather, & Turner, 1991). Another study found that in teen magazines, 45 to 62% of the articles were featured on appearance related information while 30% or less of the content in the magazine focused on identity or self-development (Evans et al., 1991; Pierce, 1990). In an analysis of *Teen* magazine, all 95 images of girls and/or women in the magazine evaluated depicted thin models (Levine and Smolak, 1996).

In a similar study, Wykes and Gunter conducted a content analysis of July 2003 issues of Glamour, Cosmopolitan, and Marie Claire. These were considered the most popular women's magazines in the U.K. They found that each of the three magazines had only one serious women-centered article. The rest of the magazines consisted of advertisements and articles about appearance, relationships, and celebrities. They found that the majority of the advertisements and both the fashion and beauty features in the magazines consisted of extremely thin, Caucasian models. They found that reading these magazines, first, places a level of expectation on women to spend a great deal of time and money to

achieve a beauty standard and to have a heterosexual relationship.  Wykes and Gunter state that being thin and beautiful is promoted as the way to have a lasting relationship or find love and success in life.  Secondly, they found that these publications are all but a vehicle for goods and services through advertisements (2005).

Social comparison theory has been used as the framework for many studies by researchers trying to show the relationship between media exposure and negative effects on women and girls.  According to Festinger's social comparison theory in the context of media imagery, people look at the images used in magazines and other forms of media, and form opinions, compare themselves to those images, and then make self-judgments based on their opinion and comparison.   Since the vast majority of images found in fashion and beauty magazines are unattainable and unrealistic, this upward comparison leads to dissatisfaction with the self.  For example, Stice and Shaw (1994) exposed female participants to pictures depicting extremely thin women, average-sized women, or no women.  They found exposure to the pictures of extremely thin women had a negative effect on the various measurements of self-evaluation.  In a similar study, Irving (1990) found that exposure to thin women resulted in a lower self-evaluation than did exposure to either average-weight or oversize women.  Fashion and beauty magazines not only indirectly put pressure on their readers to meet a cultural standard, they also are filled with articles and advertisements on dieting and exercise that reinforce the beauty ideal (Tiggemann, 2002).  Levine, Smolak, and Hayden (1994) found that female adolescents who considered fashion magazines to be important sources of beauty and fitness information showed higher levels of dissatisfaction with their bodies than did adolescent females who felt such magazines were unimportant.  Additionally, female adolescents that considered fashion magazines to be important also were more likely to engage in weight management behaviors such as meal skipping and exercise (Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994).

*Media influence from television and body perception*

Television is the most widely used and assessed media outlet in our society. Practically every home in the U.S. has one or more television sets. It is estimated that on average adolescents spend nearly 4 hours per day engaging in television viewing (Levine & Smolak, 1996). Television has been deemed a potent social learning tool for adolescents (Arnett, 1995). Television use parallels fashion and beauty magazines as a socialization tool concerning behavioral and appearance standards (Tiggeman, 2005). Many experiments have been used to research the notion that exposure to mass media decreases body satisfaction; however, fewer studies of exposure to televised images have been conducted despite the widespread use of television (Tiggemann, 2002). Studies to access the relationship between media images found on television shows and advertisements to body dissatisfaction have been done through content analysis, experiment through variable manipulation, and also through survey.

In a content analysis of 4,294 television commercials in 1985, Downs and Harrison found that one out of every 3.8 commercials involved some form of attractive-based message. They estimated that, on average, adults and children were exposed to about 14 messages a day based on this frequency with average viewing habits. From these messages emerged stereotypes of beauty, success, and health linked to a slender body (Downs & Harrison, 1985). Conversely, obesity has been associated with negative stereotypes such as lack of control and poor health (Rittenbaugh, 1982).

In one experiment, the effects of appearance-related television commercials and non-appearance-related television commercials were compared on adolescent girls (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2002). The study found that girls exposed to appearance-related commercials experienced more dissatisfaction with their own appearance than those who were exposed to non-appearance-related commercials. Another experiment tested the effects of body image programming and commercials on women's perception of their body size (Myers and Biocca, 1992).

They found that 30 minute exposure to body image programming and commercials (i.e. centering around the thin, ideal female body) caused women to overestimate their body size at a greater extent than women that were exposed to neutral programming and commercials.

In a study on female adolescents' body dissatisfaction, Tiggemann and Pickering (1996) found a positive correlation between body dissatisfaction and the time spent watching soap operas on television. The more time spent watching the suggested programming, the higher the level of dissatisfaction. Additionally in a 2005 study, Tiggeman found that watching soap operas was related to a drive for thinness, internalization of the thin ideal, and to appearance schemas. In the same study, Tiggeman (2005) investigated how the motivations for television viewing were related to body image variables (i.e. appearance schemas, internalization, and drive for thinness). She found that social learning motivation and escape from negative affect motivation for television viewing were both positively correlated with negative body image; however, enjoyment motivation for viewing was not.

Not only thin images in media seem to have an effect, but also those that are aimed at objectifying the body, particularly women. In a study on body objectification in the media, 384 men and women at a Midwestern university were surveyed and found that exposure to sexually objectifying television was positively correlated with body surveillance. Furthermore, body surveillance was positively correlated with both body shame and appearance anxiety (Aubrey, 2007).

*Media influence from the internet and body perception*

Over the last decade, the internet has become a vital tool for entertainment, information, education, and social networking. Currently over 90% of American teenagers are using the internet both at home and in school (Jones & Fox, 2009; Lenhart, 2009). Most of the early research on adolescents and internet use has focused on possible consequences of internet use such as socialization problems, depressive symptoms, and adolescent well being (Valkenburg & Peter, 2009). However, in a more recent study, colleagues at the University of California Berkley found that time spent online helped prepare

adolescents to be productive citizens in society with the social and technical skills for the digital age (Ito et al., 2008).  Contrary to early research on internet use, the use of social networks such as Facebook or Myspace, the internet has become an important socialization tool for peer interaction.  According to the Pew Internet and American Life survey (Lehnhart, 2009), approximately 65% of teens ages 12-17 engage in social networking.  In addition to social networking, teens also utilize the internet for information searches on a variety of topics or interests, shopping or purchasing products, to blog, and to play video games (Lenhart, 2009).

To date, little to no research exists on which fashion, beauty, or celebrity sites are visited by adolescent or young women and how often they are visited.  Furthermore, it is unknown if the images viewed on these sites yield the same internalization effect as that of television and magazine images.  This study investigated the use of the internet for appearance information searches and engaging in social comparisons with images from the web.

<div align="center">Peer Pressures and Body Perception</div>

Every individual is subjected to social pressures in our society, especially during childhood and adolescence.  Peer pressure, the primary mechanism for transmitting group norms, is suggested to influence others by offering desirable rewards to those who conform to group norms and/or undesirable consequences to those who resist them (Brown, 1989; Kandel, 1980). Peer relations and peer pressure become progressively more significant during adolescence, therefore, it is rational to suggest that peers have an important influence on the development of eating behaviors and body dissatisfaction in adolescent girls, especially in environments where weight and appearance are emphasized (Sullivan, 1953; Liebermann, Gauvin, Bukowski, & White, 2001).  When compared to a single sex school, research has found that a coeducational environment is a risk factor for body image disturbance (Dyer & Tiggeman, 1996; Strigel-Moore, Silberstein, & Rodin, 1986).  The tendency for girls to make social comparisons with others and to experience pressure to diet because of direct teasing or mere suggestion

has been documented in other studies on the influence of peer pressure on body image and disordered eating (Grigg, Bowman, & Redman, 1996; Mukai, 1996). Both friends and school acquaintances can be a significant source of body dissatisfaction during adolescence through conversations, modeling behaviors, and teasing (Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994; Paxton, Schutz, Werheim, & Muir, 1999). In this section of my literature review, I will discuss two kinds of pressures from peers: peer conversations regarding weight, dieting, and the body; and peer teasing, bullying, and criticisms regarding weight and the body.

*Peer pressure through teasing*

Teasing or appearance criticisms from peers can reinforce society's importance of appearance. When one is teased the absence of desirable appearance traits is identified thus generating an evaluation of appearance by another, the evaluation of appearance by one's self, and potentially an internalization of that evaluation (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004). Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story (2003) found that a slightly higher percentage of adolescent girls experienced appearance-related teasing about weight by both peers and family members than their male counterparts. Teasing about the body was consistently associated with body dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, high depressive symptoms, and suicidal thoughts or tendencies. These associations transcended gender, race, ethnic, and weight groups. In a large-scale study, Cash and Green (1986) found that women who had been teased about their weight during childhood exhibited more dissatisfaction with appearance during adulthood. Fabian and Thompson (1989) found that in their study of pre- and postmenstrual females that premenstrual girls low body esteem was associated with greater frequency of weight related teasing and negative emotional consequences. In postmenstrual girls, body esteem was correlated with teasing frequency.

*Peer pressure through conversations*

One of the most powerful forms of indirect pressure to adhere to the thin ideal comes in the form of participation in casual conversations about weight or feeling fat, particularly when a thin peer facilitates the conversation (Stice & Shaw, 2002).

Nichter and Vuckovic (1994) labeled these discussions as "fat talk" and found that discussions of weight are frequent among women, especially during adolescence. Conversations about appearance direct attention to appearance related issues, reinforcing the importance of appearance or how one looks and promotes the formation of appearance ideals among friends (Jones et al., 2004).

Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee (2004) found that students that engaged in more frequent peer conversations about appearance with their friends were more likely to internalize the thin ideal thus exhibiting greater dissatisfaction with their bodies. The finding was much more significant for girls than boys. Furthermore, appearance conversations with friends showed a stronger correlation with internalization of media ideals than peer appearance criticisms and appearance magazine exposure. In a study on friendship cliques and body image, Paxton et al. (1999) found that correlational analyses showed that friendship groups that demonstrated higher levels of body image concern and weight-loss behaviors reported they engaged in frequent conversations about weight and dieting with their friends; more often compared their bodies with others; received more teasing about weight and shape; reported friends were important in influencing their decision to diet; and perceived their friends to be more preoccupied with dieting and weight loss. Conversely, in a study on peer influences on body image, Shomaker and Furman (2007) found that the impact of peer conversations regarding appearance were dependent on the participants' individual characteristics that can either protect or intensify peer pressure to be thin. This is consistent with previous research that sociocultural pressures on body image are complex and do not affect all young women the same way (Polivy & Herman, 2002).

Consistent bias in favor of a thinner body build over a heavier build helps to form the attitudes concerning what is considered attractive or desirable and is established at an early age (Lerner, 1969). More positive peer evaluations, better quality of peer relationships, and enhanced social acceptance has been linked to physical attractiveness and a slender body shape in women (Langlois & Stephan, 1977;

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Lerner, 1969).  In contrast, children who are overweight, particularly girls, are considered less likable by their peers (Lerner & Lerner, 1977).  Furthermore, a finding by Bercsheid, Dion, Wasler, & Walster (1971) suggests that appearance is much more important for women than for men in relation to dating. During adolescence, these types of relationships become significant which could have an important effect on how adolescent girls evaluate their appearance and bodies.  Peer pressure through teasing, comparisons, and relationships are vital in forming opinions about the body among adolescent girls.

<div align="center">Appearance Importance and Body Perception</div>

Importance of appearance is derived from Markus' self-schema theory.  Self-schema theory is defined as "cognitive generalizations about the self, derived from past experience, that organize and guide the processing of self-related information contained in an individual's social experience" (Markus, 1977) (p.64).   Schemas influence how information is processed as a standard of self-evaluation and an index of self-worth in a variety of domains such as sex role identity, personality, and appearance.  Appearance schematics are individuals that place more importance on appearance.  Therefore, they are more psychologically invested in their looks and most likely to make judgments about themselves as well as others based on appearance (Cash & Labarge, 1996).  In his development of the Appearance Schemas Inventory, Cash (1994) found that the strongest association to appearance schema was the body-image affect.

In a study that investigated the role of appearance schema activation on body dissatisfaction after viewing television commercials, Hargreaves and Tiggemann (2002) found that only individuals that were labeled appearance schematics showed evidence of body dissatisfaction after viewing the appearance-related commercials.  Using internalization as a moderator, Brown and Dittmar (2005) found that exposure to thin images will elicit increased appearance-schema activation.  They found that appearance schema activation occurred at even below average levels of internalization.  Therefore, appearance schema is easily activated for the majority of women when they see thin images in the media; however,

the greater the internalization, acceptance of the thin ideal as normal, the stronger the activation of the appearance schema. In another study on appearance schema and body image, Jung and Lennon (2003) discovered that the greater the importance individuals placed on appearance the more dissatisfied they were with their bodies. Additionally, those who placed appearance as central to their self-evaluation also were more dissatisfied with their overall appearance and spent more time on appearance management behaviors. Furthermore, the researchers found that individuals considered to be appearance schematics also experienced more negative mood than individuals that were aschematic toward appearance. Previous research has shown that placing cognitive importance on appearance directly affects body perception. Moreover, appearance self-schemas may explain the extent to which individuals may be influenced by or internalize media images.

<div align="center">Body Perception and Clothing Behavior</div>

In order to meet societal expectations of an ideal body, individuals use appearance-management behaviors such as exercise, dieting, surgery, and clothing selection (Rudd & Lennon, 2000). Researchers have found a relationship between one's body image and the clothing one wears (Dubler & Gurel, 1984). The way in which a person feels about oneself seems to affect clothing choices, and reciprocally, the clothing one wears affects one's feelings about the self (Kwon, 1991). Scholars have found that apparel acts as a second skin that can modify one's perceived body image (Horn & Gurel, 1981; Kaiser, 1997). Clothing may be used to enhance one's body satisfaction or to hide body dissatisfaction relative to a cultural ideal (Kaiser, 1997). LaBat and DeLong (1990) found that women with a higher degree of body satisfaction had a positive attitude toward the fit of ready-to-wear clothing; however, another study found that individuals with a high level of body dissatisfaction tend to have more negative attitudes toward clothing, be less confident about their clothing selection, and are less likely to follow trends (Sontag & Schlater, 1982). Kwon and Parham (1994) found that weight conscious women and those who feel fat were more likely to select clothing in order to camouflage certain parts of their bodies. While the

relationship between body perception and clothing behavior is evident, the existing research has not investigated the cultural differences of this phenomenon.  Additionally, previous research has focused mainly on college women, therefore, clothing behavior has not been studied in the context of adolescence.

<div align="center">Ethnicity and body perception</div>

Previous research has shown that body ideals vary among cultures and within culture subgroups. For example, studies have shown that African American girls and women of higher socioeconomic status lean toward mainstream beauty ideals than their African American peers of lower socioeconomic status (Bowen, Tomoyasu, & Cauce, 1991).

Much of the previous research done on body dissatisfaction has been centered on White women and girls (Crago & Shisslak, 2003).  Comparisons have been made between African-American women and their White peers and also between White and non-White groups of women (Smolak & Streigel-Moore, 2001).  Although body dissatisfaction differences between White and Black women are clear, the differences between women of color are not clear.  Since often times these women are grouped together in a non-White, homogenous group, differences among these distinct ethnic minority groups are hidden (Cash, Morrow, Haraosky, & Perry, 2004).  When compared with African-American women, studies have unanimously supported the hypothesis that White women in Western countries experience greater body dissatisfaction (Miller, Gleaves, & Hirsch, Green, Snow, & Corbett, 2000) and also more distortion (Sorbara & Geliebter, 2002).

*African American adolescent girls and body perception*

Considerable amounts of literature have indicated that Black women and girls have a higher level of satisfaction than their White counterparts. Previous studies have shown that Black adolescent females differ from that of White, Hispanic, and Asian females in that they have a higher body mass; are more likely to associate positive characteristics with larger, curvier women; define beauty in terms of "working with what you've got" or having a sense of style than with the slender ideal; and express a desire to gain

weight in order to have fuller hips, thighs, and buttocks. While these contrasts between African American girls and those of other ethnicities show increased levels of body acceptance, research has shown it may contribute to an obese or unhealthy lifestyle (Levine & Smolak, 2002). Studies show that Black women adopt a larger ideal body size, are more accepting of overweight body sizes, and experience less pressure about their weight than their White counterparts (Streigel-Moore et al., 1995).

*Hispanic American adolescent girls and body perception*

Although fewer studies have been conducted on Hispanic-American girls and women, it has been documented that a fuller, curvier body is considered to be healthy and of high status in many Latin American cultures (Gil-Kashiwbara, 2002). The primary comparison group for Hispanic women has been with White women and the findings have been inconsistent. In many studies, White women reported higher levels of dissatisfaction than Hispanic women (Barry & Grilo, 2002); however, other studies have suggested that Hispanic college women demonstrate a higher desire for thinness as well as more body dissatisfaction than White women (McComb & Clopton, 2002). Furthermore, Latina adolescents describe an ideal body type that is comparable with mainstream White culture and report a similar interest in weight loss as their White peers (Neumark-Sztainer, Falkner, Story, Perry, Hannan, & Mulert, 2002). Additionally, research has established a relationship between weight concern and depression among Hispanic and White women, but not Black women (Bay-Cheng, Sucker, Stewart, & Pomerlau, 2002).

Hispanic adolescents must negotiate between the cultural values of the dominant White culture and those provided by their Hispanic cultures (Schooler, 2008). Findings have suggested that the Hispanic culture's body ideal is one that is not as thin as the White norm, but a slender body with curves- a thin waist, larger breasts and hips, and a full behind- similar to that of African American cultural standards (de Cassanova, 2004). Hispanic girls who have a greater acculturation to American White culture are more likely to adopt the cultural thin body ideal therefore making them more susceptible to experience body dissatisfaction than Hispanic girls who are less acculturated (Schooler, 2008).

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*Asian American adolescent girls and body perception*

Research shows that Asian American women are more likely to endorse mainstream beauty standards similarly to White women (Evans & McConnell, 2003). Mintz and Kashubeck (1999) found that while there was no evidence of difference in the level of body dissatisfaction when compared with White women, Asian American women reported a lower satisfaction with race-specific body parts (i.e. eyes) that are different from the white standard in U.S. culture. Like the research concerning Hispanic American women and body dissatisfaction, the research among Asian Americans has also been mixed. When compared to White women, Asian American women report lower rates of body dissatisfaction than White women (Akan & Grilo, 1995); but, in other studies, body dissatisfaction and weight of Asian women were comparable to those of White women. Sanders and Heiss (1998) found that both groups exhibited the same amount of body dissatisfaction and weight concern; however, Asian women had a greater fear of fat. In contrast, findings from Haudek, Rorty, and Henker (1999) suggest that Asian college women had a greater concern about body shape and a higher level of body dissatisfaction than White college women. The majority of the studies show that cultural differences play an important role in body satisfaction and dissatisfaction among various ethnic minority groups.

CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## Statement of Purpose

The specific purpose of the current study is to examine how media influence, peer pressure, and appearance importance influence body perception; the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior; and the ethnic differences between all variables among adolescent girls ages 14-19. While there is an extensive amount of research on media influence and body image, previous research has failed to fully investigate ethnic differences in the variables that affect body perception. Furthermore, little research exists on the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior. The conceptual model for the current study was developed based on several theoretical frameworks. This conceptual model will attempt to examine the affects of media influence, peer pressure, and importance of appearance on body perception; how body perception influences clothing behavior; and ethnic differences among media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior.

## Theoretical Framework

While many theories have been used in the study of body image, there are three theories that were used as the framework for the current study: social comparison theory, self-schema theory, and socio-cultural theory. Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory, commonly used in body image studies, is utilized to address the perception of body image among female adolescent students of different ethnicities. The theory is based on the idea that people compare their own opinions and abilities to those of others and that comparison affects their self-evaluation. According to the theory, people who judge themselves as inferior to others on a valued dimension (i.e. upward comparisons) experience negative affect and a decrease in self-esteem. On the other hand, downward comparison may serve as a component of self-enhancement because one may feel better about one's own standing by comparing oneself with someone who is seen as inferior on a characteristic of interest (Wood, 1989).

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People often unconsciously compare themselves to others (Botta, 1999). Due to the fact that women's images in mass media are extremely thin, women may become vulnerable to negative feelings about themselves because they make social comparisons with these images automatically (Goethals, 1986); however, some individuals may be more motivated to make these comparisons than others. Many studies have illustrated the negative effects exposure to such images have on girls and women. For example, Richins (1991) discovered that the more women perceived a deficit between idealized advertising images of female models and their own appearance; the more dissatisfied they were with their own bodies. She asserted that exposure to these images is said to change comparison standards of the self, resulting in lower satisfaction. In another study, Heinberg and Thompson (1992) used social comparison theory to determine the effects of others' appearance on body image and eating disorders. Female college students were surveyed and asked to make comparisons with celebrities. The findings of the study showed the comparisons were drastically associated with increased body dissatisfaction, increased drive for thinness, and increased bulimic behaviors. Social comparison is used as the framework to support the relationships between both exposure to idealized media images and peer relations with body perception.

Self-schema theory is defined as "cognitive generalizations about the self, derived from past experience, that organize and guide the processing of self-related information contained in an individual's social experience" (Markus, 1977) (p. 64). The self is said to augment processing of self-related information and affect the interpretation of events in the world. A self-schema is a person's mental representation of how they are which is developed over time. In addition, self-schema has been helpful in gaining perspective on clinical disorders like depression (Altabe & Thompson, 1996).

Those who are appearance self-schematics, placing importance on appearance, feel that appearance is the most vital aspect of self-evaluation as well as the evaluation of others in information processing (Jung & Lee, 2006). In other words, people that are appearance self-schematics think

appearance is central when making judgments about themselves as well as others, placing attractiveness above any other attribute.  Since our society has developed a cultural beauty ideal that is vastly unattainable, appearance self-schematics are more likely to internalize this ideal and therefore may develop negative body image for not meeting this standard of beauty (Jung & Lee, 2006).  For example, Jung and Lennon (2003) found that women that placed high cognitive importance on appearance expressed a higher level of body dissatisfaction, a lower level of self-esteem, and a more negative mood than women who placed low cognitive importance on appearance.   In sum, the research shows that it is the women or girls who place appearance as most vital tend to be the most susceptible to the effects of the idealized images portrayed by the media.  Conversely, women or girls who are least invested in their appearance are somewhat protected from the effects of media imagery (Tiggemann, 2002).

Similar to appearance schematics, body image schematics have a preoccupation with their perception of the size and shape of their body.  For these individuals, their body image becomes central and defines who they are and most of their daily experiences in relation to it.  According to Markus et al. (1987):

> Schematics consistently evaluate stimuli with respect to their relevance for body weight and consequently develop differentiated knowledge structures in this domain.  For schematics, one's own weight has a durable salience, and a wide range of stimuli will be evaluated with reference to body weight (for example, does she weigh more than I do: Do these pants make me look fat? There are a lot of chubby people in this restaurant) (p. 52).

Body image self schema is a component of appearance self-schema.  The self-schema theory provides the framework in assessing the relationship between importance of appearance and body perceptions.  Those who place cognitive importance on appearance and their body will view both their body and overall appearance more critically than those who are not appearance or body image schematics.

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Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) is a theory based on the idea that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Originally this theory was applied in the field of education in conjunction with social learning theory; however, socio-culutral theory has been applied in other areas including body image studies. Interactions between various socio-cultural factors and negative body image perceptions have become vital in the research of eating disorder tendency and clinically diagnosed eating disorders. These socio-cultural factors include ethnicity, social class, societal culture, family, and peer norms and pressures (Abrams and Cook Stormer, 2002).

Socio-cultural theory is one of the most recognized views regarding the development of body dissatisfaction. In the context of body image study, the theory asserts that women's dissatisfaction with their physical appearance comes from: the thin body ideal prevalent in Western societies; women's objectification of the body; and the assumption that being thin is good emphasizing rewards for being attractive and the costs associated with being unattractive (Morrison, Kalin, & Morrison, 2004). Society's conceptualization of an ultrathin female body ideal portrayed in mass media may affect the way a woman views her own body. The theory contends that as exposure to these mass media images increases, body image evaluation becomes less favorable, and body image investment in regards to dieting, exercise, and weight control practices become more intense (Morrison et al., 2004).

Social reinforcement and peer modeling have also been applied to components of Socio-cultural theory concerning body image. Social reinforcement has been defined as comments or actions of others that serve to support and perpetuate the thin body ideal as a standard of beauty for women, such as criticism regarding weight (e.g. teasing) and encouragement to diet (Stice, 1998). Peer modeling is the process of copying the behaviors they see others perform (Lieberman et al., 2001). For example, adolescent females may become preoccupied with appearance or their body because they see their peer group engaging in such behavior or possibly someone in the media such as a celebrity engaging in that type of behavior. Socio-cultural theory serves as the framework to support the relationships between

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media images and body perceptions; peer pressure and body perception; and ethnic differences and body

perception.

Based upon the preceding theories the following conceptual framework was developed:
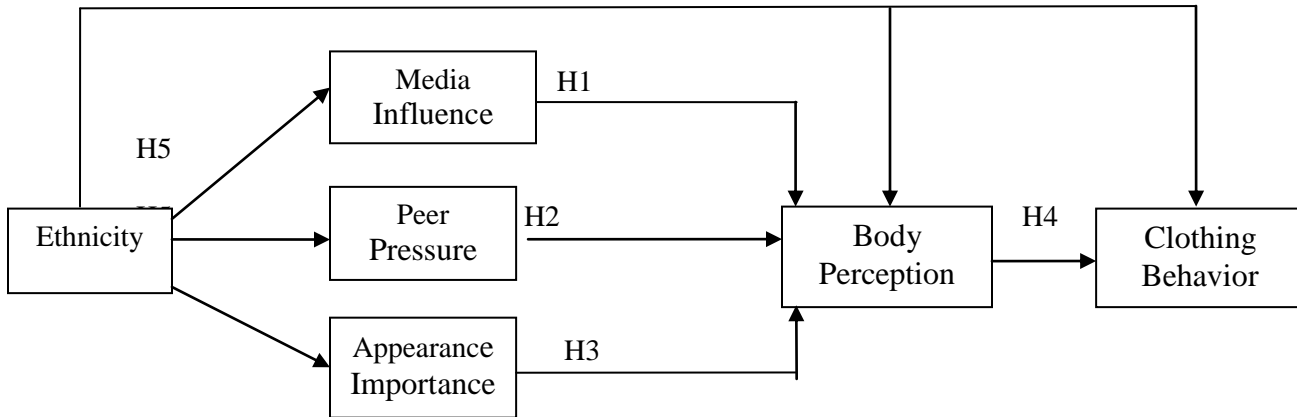


*Figure 3.1 Model of the effects of media influence, peer pressure, and appearance importance on body perception; the effect of body perception on clothing behavior; and ethnic differences among all variables.*

*Conceptual Framework for the current study*

Research Hypotheses

In American society, individuals are constantly bombarded with idealized images through mass

media outlets.  These images are responsible for creating and reinforcing America's preoccupation with

physical attractiveness (Groesz et al., 2002).  The current standard for beauty is a slender body which is

unattainable for most women (Hausenblas et al., 2002). Numerous studies have shown the adverse effects

that exposure can have on girls and women.  For example, previous research findings have also shown

that relationships exist between increased body dissatisfaction and more frequent television viewing

(Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006; Harrison & Cantor, 1997; Tiggeman, 2003); more frequent exposure to

certain genres of  television such as music videos and soap operas (Borzekowski et al., 2000; Tiggemann

& Pickering, 1996); and frequent magazine reading (Jones et al., 2004;  Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw,

& Stein,1994; Tiggmann, 2003; Tiggeman & McGill, 2004).  Since adolescent females spend a

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considerable amount of time watching television and reading fashion and beauty magazines, both become social learning tools and can influence the ideas they form about their appearance and bodies.

**H1: Media will significantly influence adolescents' body perception.**

Peer pressure becomes increasingly more important during childhood and reaches its peak during adolescence. The tendency for girls to make social comparisons with others and to experience pressure to diet because of direct teasing or mere suggestion has been documented in studies on the influence of peer pressure on body image and disordered eating (Grigg et al., 1996; Mukai, 1996). Additionally, more positive peer evaluations, better quality of peer relationships, and enhanced social acceptance has been linked to physical attractiveness and a slender body shape in women (Langlois & Stephan, 1977; Lerner, 1969). Peer pressure through peer teasing, established peer norms, and peer relationships will influence body perception among adolescent females.

**H2: Adolescents' peer pressure will significantly influence their body perception.**

**H2A: Adolescents' peer conversations about weight and body issues will have a negative effect on their body perceptions.**

**H2B: The higher level of peer teasing due to body or appearance will negatively influence their body perceptions.**

Appearance self-schematics are individuals who place high cognitive importance on appearance. Those who evaluate themselves, as well as others, based on appearance will be more sensitive to the messages from society concerning beauty through the media and as through their peers. Therefore, they will have the tendency to judge their appearance including their body perception more critically than those who do not place cognitive importance on appearance leading to a higher level of body dissatisfaction and a more negative body image (Jung & Lennon, 2003).

**H3: Adolescents' sensitivity to appearance importance will significantly influence their body perception.**

There has been little research to assess the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior. The existing research has studied this relationship among college age women but not among adolescents. Existing research has shown that how one feels about one's self seems to affect clothing choices, and reciprocally, the clothing one wears affects one's feelings about the self (Kwon, 1991). Clothing may be used to enhance one's body satisfaction or conceal body dissatisfaction comparative to a cultural ideal (Kaiser, 1997). Therefore, adolescents' body perception will influence their attitude toward clothing, clothing choices, and clothing purchases.

**H4: Adolescents' body perception will significantly influence their clothing behaviors.**

Previous studies have shown that there are ethnic differences among women concerning their body satisfaction and body image. Women from various ethnic/racial backgrounds may vary in the extent to which they are dissatisfied with their bodies because meanings of the body depend on cultural and social group context (Crago & Shisslak, 2003). In American society, the cultural standard of beauty is provided by a dominant White culture which equates thinness as a requirement to be considered beautiful.

Therefore, Latina, African American, and Asian American adolescents may be forced to negotiate between the cultural values provided by American society and those provided by their own families, communities, and cultures (Schooler, 2008). It is important to examine the ethnic differences among adolescents to evaluate variations in the effects of media exposure, peer pressure, and appearance importance on body perception; disparities between body perceptions among ethnic adolescents; and differences in clothing behaviors among ethnic adolescent females in the United States.

**H5: Media influence, peer pressure, importance of appearance, body perception, and clothing behavior will be significantly different among adolescents of various ethnic groups.**

CHAPTER IV
METHODOLOGY

Sample & Population

The population for the current study consisted of adolescent females from a high school in the metro-Atlanta area. A convenience sample of girls between the ages of 14 and 19 (grades 9-12) completed the research questionnaire.

Instrument Development

In order to collect data used in this study, a structured questionnaire was developed and administered to the sample. The questionnaire statements used in this study were duplicated or based on previous studies.

The first section of the questionnaire consisted of demographic information including age, ethnicity, weight, and height. The BMI, a ratio of weight to height, was calculated by the researcher based on the participants' self-reported height and weight. Scales and tape measures were made available in order for participants to have a greater accuracy in self-reported weight/height.

Media influence or internalization of the thin ideal was measured using the Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Questionnaire developed by Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer (1995). The original SATAQ assessed the acceptance of media images as the appearance ideal through television and magazines; however, the internet has become an important socialization tool over the last decade. Therefore, 5 new items were added to the questionnaire for modification. The SATAQ consisted of thirty-five items that were scored on a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).

Peer pressure through conversations and criticisms/teasing was measured using the Appearance Culture Among Peers Subscale for girls (Jones et al., 2004). This scale consisted of twelve items-six evaluated appearance conversations with friends and six items evaluated peer appearance criticisms/teasing using a 5-point scale (1=never to 5=very often).

Importance of appearance was measured using the Appearance Schemas Inventory (Cash & Labarge, 1996). This scale consisted of 20 items with a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) that measured the importance and self-relevance of appearance in one's life. Higher scores indicated that one is more appearance self-schematic than other self-schemas. Specifically, those with a high cognition towards appearance are more likely to evaluate themselves as well as others based on appearance.

Body Perception was measured by part A of a modified version of the Body Image Questionnaire (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990), which included subjective attitudinal and perceptual experiences about one's body, particularly its appearance. The questionnaire consisted of 11 items measured on a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5strongly agree). Part A focused on the satisfaction one has with physical traits of their bodies and appearance.

The last section of the questionnaire measured clothing behaviors. A scale was developed based on the research of Kwon & Parham (1994) and the Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire's clothing factor (Rosen et al., 1991). The scale consisted of 11 items that measured behaviors toward clothing in relation to the body such as avoiding revealing clothing choices because of body discomfort. Items were measured using a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree).

The study was approved by the Instructional Review Board (IRB) on March 2, 2010 (see Appendix A). After approval, a pilot study was conducted with fifteen participants in order to detect any confusion in the questionnaire's wording and ensure the validity of the scales. All pilot participants were high school students ages 14-19. The respondents gave no indication of confusion to any of the items on the questionnaire; therefore, preparations were made to collect the rest of the data.

With permission of various high school teachers from the school, students were briefed about the study and given a student consent form to participate. Minors were given parental consent forms. Forms were collected over a three week period. Female students that returned the student consent form and

parental consent form if under the age of 18 were administered the questionnaire in a classroom setting. Students were given directions and the location of the scales and tape measures should they need them. Due to the sensitive nature of some of the items on the questionnaire, a handout was provided that listed resources promoting a healthy body image in young women. The questionnaire took approximately ten to twenty minutes to complete (see Appendix B). Data was collected over a one month period. Among the 276 questionnaires completed, 8 were immediately discarded because the respondents did not meet the specified ethnic identity requirement. This study was specifically investigating ethnic differences between Hispanic/Latina, White, African American/Black, and Asian American ethnic groups. Of the 268 questionnaires remaining, another 54 were discarded because they failed to answer all items on the questionnaire. Therefore, 214 qualified questionnaires remained for data analysis. Table 1.1 displays the responses for the questionnaire.

<u>Data Analysis</u>

Data gathered from the survey was entered into a computer database and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program. The data analysis consisted of exploratory factor analysis, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), analysis of variance (ANOVA), bivariate and multiple regression, and descriptive statistics including means and frequencies.

Multiple regression analysis and exploratory factorial analysis was used to examine the relationship between media influence and body perception (H1) . Factor and regression analysis was used to examine the relationships of the two dimensions of peer pressure (conversations and teasing) and body perception (H2). Additionally regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between appearance importance and body perception (H3).Regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior (H4). ANOVA and MANOVA was used to identify the differences among four ethnic groups of adolescents (H5) in terms of media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Respondent Demographics

A summary of the respondent demographics is found in Table 5.1.  All of the respondents are

female high schools students attending a metro-Atlanta high school.  All of the respondents ranged in age

from 14-19.  The highest percentage of respondents was 17 years old (28.5 %), and the lowest percentage

of respondents was 14 years old (5.1 %);  25.2% of the respondents were 16, followed by 15 year olds

representing 22.4% of the sample; 18 and 19 year olds accounted for 18.7 % of the sample.

Table 5.1
Profile of Respondents

|  |  | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | 14 | 11 | 5.1% |
|  | 15 | 48 | 22.4% |
| Age | 16 | 54 | 25.2% |
|  | 17 | 61 | 28.5% |
|  | 18 | 40 | 18.7% |
| Gender | Male | 0 | 0.0% |
|  | Female | 214 | 100.0% |
|  | Hispanic/Latina | 45 | 21.0% |
| Ethnicity | White | 78 | 36.4% |
|  | Black/African American | 80 | 37.4% |
|  | Asian | 11 | 5.1% |
|  |  | Range | Mean |
| Weight |  | 98 lb.-260 lb. | 136.67 |
| Height |  | 59"-71" | 64.2103 |
| BMI |  | 15.8-38.6 | 23.095 |

The respondents identified their ethnicity as Black or African American (37.4%), White (36.4 %),

Hispanic or Latina (21 %) and Asian (5.1 %).  The weight of the respondents ranged from 98 pounds to

260 pounds; the mean weight of the respondents was 136.67 pounds.  The height of the respondents

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ranged from 59" to 71" tall; the mean height of the respondents was 64.2103". The body max index (BMI) of the respondents ranged from 15.8 to 38.6; the mean BMI of the respondents was 23.095.

## Instrument Reliability

Cronbach's alpha value was computed to assess the internal consistency aspect of reliability of the multi-items scales measuring media influence, peer pressures (conversations and teasing), appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior. The media influence scale consisted or thirty-five items and had a reliability coefficient of .946. The scale for peer pressure consisted of twelve items, seven items for teasing and five for peer conversations. Peer conversations had a reliability coefficient of .854 and a reliability coefficient of .941 for peer teasing. Appearance importance scale consisted of twenty items and had a alpha value of .859. Body perception and clothing behavior both consisted of eleven items each. Body perception had an alpha value of .875, while clothing behavior had a reliability coefficient of only .590. A scale is considered to have a good reliability if its Cronbach's alpha value is .6 or higher (Hair et al., 1995). Based on previous research, and as indicated by Cronbach's alpha values, all of the scales had high reliabilities except for the clothing behavior scale; therefore, three items were deleted in order to increase the reliability to .648 (see table 5.2). Five additional items were deleted from the body perception scale because it was later decided that these items did not accurately measure respondents' body perception. After deleting these items, Cronbach's alpha value for body perception was.833 consisting of six items.

## Preliminary Analyses

### Factor Analysis

Before testing the individual hypotheses for the study an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed for both media influence and clothing behavior. Based on the factor analysis, items with rotated loading greater than 5.0 and factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were retained. Items that

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did not load greater than .5 and that loaded on more than one factor with a loading score equal to or greater than .4 on each factor were excluded from the analysis (Chen & Hsu, 2001).

Table 5.2

Deleted Items

| |
|---|
| **Clothing Behavior** |
| 4        I prefer clothing that is dark in color (e.g. black) |
| 6        I pick clothing regardless of my weight or shape |
| 7        I enjoy wearing tight-fitting clothes to show off my curves |
| |
| **Body Perception** |
| 2        I'm satisfied with my skin complexion |
| 3        I'm satisfied with my hair texture and thickness |
| 4        I'm satisfied with my facial features |
| 9        I'm satisfied with my physical strength |
| 10       I'm satisfied with my physical coordination |

These requirements were used to ensure that each item only loaded on one factor. Additionally, factors that included only one item were discarded from the analysis. According to this criterion, 16 items were deleted from the media influence analysis. The sixteen deleted items are listed in Table 5.3. Items with communalities greater than .4 were retained. Based on previous research by Hair, Anderson, Tataham, & Black, (1998) items with communalities less than .4 are not significant in explaining the variance.

After deleting the sixteen items, nineteen items remained. From the remaining items, three factors were identified, indicating that 62.50% of the total variance was explained by the three dimensions of media influence. Factor 1 included ten items, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .917 and an eigenvalue of 5.655 explaining 29.77% of the total variance. Factor 2 included five items, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .743 and an eigenvalue of 3.25 explaining 17.09% of the total variance.

Table 5.3

Factor 3 consisted of four items, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .846 and an eigenvalue of 2.974 explaining 15.66% of the total variance. Factor 2 included five items, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .743 and an eigenvalue of 3.25 explaining 17.09% of the total variance.

The three factors were named based on their similarities among the items that made up each factor (Table 5.4). Factor 1 was named *Pressure/Comparison*. The items included in Factor 1 (12, 2, 22, 16, 18, 10, 25, 21, 6, and 3) pertained to pressure regarding appearance or to diet and exercise from various sources of media (12, 2, 22, 16, 10, 25, and 6) and comparisons to media images (18, 21, and 3). Factor 2 was named *Source of Information* and included five items (20, 8, 32, 1, and 24). These items expressed that various types of media are important sources of information about fashion and "being attractive". Factor 3 was named *Athletic Influence* and included four items (26, 33, 27, and 23). These items consisted of a desire to look as athletic as sports stars (26, 33, and 23) and a comparison to athletic people (27). The mean values and standard deviations for the three media influence factors and the 19 remaining items for media influence are listed in Table 5.4.

Based on the criteria for inclusion as previous stated by Chen and Hsu (2005), three items were deleted from clothing behavior (Table 5.2). After deleting the three items, eight items remained. From the remaining items, two factors were formed, indicating that 58.107% of the total variance was explained by two clothing behavior dimensions. The factors were retained that had a Cronbach's alpha value of .5 or greater. Factor 1 included four items, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .803 and an eigenvalue of 2.535 explaining 31.692% of the total variance. Factor 2 included four items, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .682 and an eigenvalue of 2.113 explaining 26.415% of the total variance.

Table 5.4

Factor Analysis Results:  Media Influence Dimensions

| Factor | No. | Statement | Eigen Value | Factor Loading | Variance Explained (%) | Cronbach Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Factor 1: *Pressures/ Comparisons* | 12 | I've felt pressure from TV and magazines to be thin | | .871 | | |
| | 2 | I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to lose weight | | .863 | | |
| | 22 | I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to diet | | .807 | | |
| | 16 | I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to have a perfect body | 5.66 | .795 | 38.152% | .917 |
| | 18 | I compare my appearance to the appearance of people on the internet | | .749 | | |
| | 10 | I've felt pressure from the internet to lose weight | | .730 | | |
| | 25 | I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to exercise | | .665 | | |
| | 21 | I compare my appearance to the appearance of people on the internet | | .640 | | |

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| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 6 | I do not feel pressure from TV or magazines to look pretty | | .584 | | |
| | 3 | I do not care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV | | .543 | | |
| Factor 2: *Sources of Information* | 20 | Magazine advertisements are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" | | .838 | | |
| | 8 | The internet is an are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" | | .767 | | |
| | 32 | Famous people are an are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" | 3.246 | .753 | .743 | 17.087% |
| | 1 | TV programs are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" | | .730 | | |
| | 24 | Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" | | .729 | | |
| Factor 3: *Athletic Influence* | 26 | I wish I looked as athletic as sports stars | | .856 | | |
| | 33 | I try to look like sports athletes | | .820 | | |
| | 27 | I compare my body to that of people who are athletic | 2.974 | .792 | .846 | 15.653% |
| | 23 | I do not wish to look as athletic as the people in magazines | | .763. | | |

The two factors were named base on their commonalities among the items that made up each factor (see Table 5.5). Factor 1 was named *Style*. The items included in Factor 1 (1, 2, 3, and 8) were about clothing selection based on trend or what's in style (items 1, 2, and 3). Item 8 "My clothing boosts my self-confidence" was also included in factor 1. Factor 2 was named *Avoidance*. The items included in Factor 2 (5, 9, 10, and 11) consisted of avoiding clothing fitted to the body (5 and 9), discomfort in

clothing because of the body (10), and using clothing to hide and figure problems (11). Item 4 "I prefer

clothing that is dark in color (e.g. black)" was deleted because it loaded as a single factor. The mean

values and standard deviations for each of the clothing behavior factors and the 8 items for clothing

behavior are listing in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5

Factor Analysis Results: Clothing Behavior Dimensions

| Factor | No. | Statement | Eigen Value | Factor Loading | Variance Explained (%) | Cronbach Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Factor 1: *Style* | 1 | I usually select clothes that are stylish | 2.535 | .865 | 31.692 | .803 |
| | 2 | I usually choose clothes that will impress people | | .853 | | |
| | | | | .756 | | |
| | 3 | I usually select clothes based on what's "in" or a trend | | .688 | | |
| | 8 | My clothing boosts my self-confidence | | | | |
| Factor 2: *Avoidance* | 5 | I tend to pick clothing that is loose and not fitted to the body | 2.113 | .755 | 26.415 | .682 |
| | 9 | I prefer clothes that do not draw attention to my figure or shape | | .739 | | |
| | 10 | | | .712 | | |
| | 11 | I feel uncomfortable in my clothing because of my body | | .636 | | |
| | | I choose clothing that will hide any figure problems that I feel I have (e.g. large thighs) | | | | |

The hypothesis testing was based on the responses of 214 female adolescent students who

attended a public high school in metro-Atlanta in the spring of 2010 and were ages 14 to 19 years old.  A

serious of simple regression analysis, multiple regression analysis, multivariate analysis of variance

(MANOVA), and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to test the five hypotheses at the

designated significance level (alpha=.05) (see table 5.6).

Table 5.6

Variables for Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis Variable | Analysis | Independent Variable | Dependent Variable |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hypothesis 1 | Multiple Regression | Media Influence[a] | Body Perception |
| Hypothesis 2 | Multiple Regression | Peer Pressure[b] | Body Perception |
| Hypothesis 3 | Simple Regression | Appearance Importance | Body Perception |
| Hypothesis 4 | Multiple Regression | Body Perception | Clothing Behavior[c] |
| Hypothesis 5 | MANOVA | Ethnicity[d] | Media Influence[a] |
|  | MANOVA | Ethnicity | Peer Pressure[b] |
|  | ANOVA | Ethnicity | Appearance Importance |
|  | ANOVA | Ethnicity | Body Perception |
|  | MANOVA | Ethnicity | Clothing Behavior[c] |

[a] Three Media Influence factors are *Media Pressure, Media Information Source*, and *Athletic Influence*
[b] Two Peer Pressure factors are *Peer Conversations* and *Peer Teasing*
[c] Two Clothing Behavior factors are *Style* and *Avoidance*
[d] Ethnic groups are Hispanic/Latina, White, African American/Black, and Asian

### Hypothesis 1

- H1:  Media will significantly influence adolescents' body perception.

Hypothesis 1 was concerned with the relationship between media influence and adolescent body

perception.  Previous research has shown that media, particularly magazines and television, does

negatively influence body perception.  Three factors were identified in this construct:  media pressure,

media as an information source, and athletic influence.  Multiple regression analysis was used to examine

the relationship. In the analysis, the independent variables were the three media influence content factors, and the dependent variable was body perception.

Because multicollinearity among the independent variables may be a threat to the interpretation regarding the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables in the regression analyses, multicollinearity was examined. When the researchers checked the multicollinearity among the independent variables, the Pearson Correlation matrix indicated no multicollinearity because all of the correlation coefficients did not exceed the cut-off value of 0.7 (Ott and Longnecker, 2001). Multicollinearity was also examined by the ratio of the largest to the smallest eigenvalue, which is called the condition number of the correlation matrix. The condition numbers presented in the Pearson Correlation matrix table ranged from 11 to 28.4, which was not greater than the cut-off score of 1,000. Thus, no multicollinearity was found in this analysis.

The regression analysis results for the relationship between media influence and body perception are reported in Table 5.7. The multiple regression analysis indicated that 33.9% of the variance in adolescent body perception was explained by the three media influence factors: *Media Pressure, Media Information Source, and Athletic Influence* ($R^2$=.339). The regression model was significant in explaining the relationship between media influence and body perception, with $F_{(3, 210)}$=35.925 and $p$<.001. The test of relative contributions independent variables was used to explain the influence of media influence toward body perception and showed that *Media Pressure* (Factor 1) had the strongest effect on adolescent body perception, with a standardized coefficient of -.559. The t-value for *Media Pressure* was significant at a .0001 level. This was a negative relationship between media pressure and body perception. *Media Information Source* (Factor 2) *and Athletic Influence* (Factor3) were both insignificant in predicting adolescent body perception. *Media Information Source* (Factor 2) had a standardized coefficient of .027 and *Athletic Influence* (Factor3) had a standardized coefficient of -.078. The results indicated that the

three factors for media influence were significantly related to adolescent body perception.  Thus,

Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 5.7

Multiple Regression Analysis Results for Hypothesis 1

| Dependent Variable:  Body Perception | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Independent Variables: *Media Pressure, Media Information Source*, and *Athletic Influence* | | | |
| Analysis of Variance: F (3, 210)=35.925, p<.001 | | | |
| R-square: 0.339 | | | |
| Variables | DF | Standardized Coefficient | t-value |
| Constant | 3 | | 23.381*** |
| Media Pressure | 3 | -.559 | -8.514*** |
| Media Information Source | 3 | .027 | .431 |
| Athletic Influence | 3 | -.078 | -1.288 |

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.000

## Hypothesis 2

- H2:  Adolescents' peer pressure will significantly influence their body perception.

  - H2A:  Adolescents' peer conversations about weight and body issues will have a negative effect on their body perceptions.

  - H2B:  The higher level of peer teasing due to body or appearance will negatively influence their body perceptions.

Peer pressure was specified into two dimensions:  the frequency of peer conversations about

weight and body issues (Hypothesis 2A) and the frequency of peer teasing about weight (Hypothesis 2B).

The peer pressure factors were based on a previous study by Jones et al. (2004); however, factor analysis

was run to ensure that all items loaded into the two factors with a loading factor greater than .5 and an

eighenvalue greater than 1.0 prior to hypothesis testing.

Multiple Regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between peers and body

perception.  In this analysis, the independent variables were the two dimensions of peer pressure and the

dependent variable was body perception. When multicollinearity was examined, no multicollinearity was found in this analysis.

Table 5.8 reports the regression analysis results for the relationship between peer pressure and body perception. The multiple regression analysis suggested that 16.3% of the variance in adolescent body perception was explained by the two dimensions of peer pressure: *Peer Conversations* (Factor 1) and *Peer Teasing* (Factor 2). The regression model was significant in explaining the relationship between peer pressure and body perception, with $F(2, 211) = 20.611$, $p < 0.001$. The test of the relative contributions of the independent variables in explaining body perception showed that *Peer Teasing* (Factor 2) was the strongest predictor of body perception, with the higher standardized coefficient of -.350 but was negatively related to body perception. The t-value for *Peer Teasing* was significant at a .001 level. Peer Conversations (Factor 1) had a standard coefficient of -.125 and did not show significance in predicting adolescent body perception. The results indicated that the two factors for peer pressure were significantly related to adolescent body perception; however, individually only peer teasing (H2B) showed significance in predicting adolescent body perception. Therefore Hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

Table 5.8

Multiple Regression Analysis Results for Hypothesis 2

| Dependent Variable:  Body Perception | | | |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Independent Variables:  *Peer Conversations* and *Peer Teasing* | | | |
| Analysis of Variance: F (2, 211) = 20.611, p<.001 | | | |
| R-square: 0.163 | | | |
| Variables | DF | Standardized Coefficient | t-value |
| Constant | 2 | | 21.934*** |
| Peer Conversations | 2 | -.125 | -1.898 |
| Peer Teasing | 2 | -.350 | -5.323*** |

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.000

- H3: Adolescents' sensitivity toward appearance importance will significantly influence their body perception.

Hypothesis 3 was concerned with the relationship between appearance importance and body perception. Regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between appearance importance and body perception. Appearance importance was the independent variable and body perception was the dependent variable. When multicollinearity was examined, no multicollinearity was found in this analysis. Table 5.9 reports the results from the regression analysis for the relationship between appearance importance and body perception. The regression analysis indicated that 11.6% of the variance in body perception is explained by appearance importance ($R^2$=.116). The regression model was significant in explaining body perception, with $F(1, 212)$=28.873 and $p < .001$. The test of the relative contribution of appearance importance to explain adolescent body perception had a standardized coefficient of -.346. This was a negative relationship. The t-value for the independent variable was significant at 0.001, which indicated that appearance importance was significantly related to body perception. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Table 5.9

Regression Analysis Results for Hypothesis3

| Dependent Variable: Body Perception  Independent Variable: Appearance Imporanace  Analysis of Variance: F (1, 212)=28.873, p<.001  R-square: 0.116 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Variables | DF | Standardized Coefficient | t-value |
| Constant | 1 | | 15.735*** |
| Appearance Importance | 1 | -.346 | -5.373*** |

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.000

<u>Hypothesis 4</u>

- H4: Adolescents' body perception will significantly influence their clothing behaviors.

    o H4A: Adolescents' body perception will significantly influence clothing style.

    o H4B: Adolescents' body perception will significantly influence clothing avoidance.

Hypothesis 4 was concerned with the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior. From the exploratory factor analysis, two constructs were found in clothing behavior: *Style* (Factor 1) and *Avoidance* (Factor 2).

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior. In this analysis the independent variable was body perception and the dependent variable was clothing behavior-style (H4A). When multicollinearity was examined, no multicollinearity was found in this analysis. Table 5.10 reports the regression analysis reports the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior-style. The regression analysis indicated that 3.2% of the variance in adolescent clothing behavior-style was explained by their body perception ($R^2$=.032). The regression model was significant in explain clothing behavior style, with $F(1, 212)$=8.003 and $p < .05$. The test of the relative contribution of body perception to explain clothing behavior-style showed that the independent variable had a standardized coefficient of .191. The t-value for the independent variable was significant at 0.05, which indicated that body perception was significantly related to clothing behavior – style. Thus, Hypothesis 4A was supported.

A second regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior-avoidance. In this analysis the independent variable was body perception and the dependent variable was clothing behavior-avoidance. No multicollinearity was found in this analysis. The results for the regression analysis are reported in Table 5.11.

Table 5.10

Regression Analysis Results for Hypothesis 4A

| | Dependent Variable: Clothing Behavior-Style | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Independent Variable: Body Perception | | |
| | Analysis of Variance: F (1, 212)=8.003, p<.05 | | |
| | R-square: 0.032 | | |
| Variables | DF | Standardized Coefficient | t-value |
| Constant | 1 | | 15.735*** |
| Body Perception | 1 | .191 | 2.289* |

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.000

The analysis indicated that 24.7% of the variance in clothing behavior-avoidance is explained by adolescents' body perception ($R^2$=.247). The regression model was significant in explaining clothing behavior-avoidance, with $F(1, 212)$=70.836. The test of relative contribution of body perception to explain clothing behavior avoidance showed that the independent variable had a standardized coefficient of -.500 indicating a negative relationship. The t-value for the independent variable was significant at.001, which indicated that body perception significantly related to clothing behavior-avoidance supporting hypothesis 4B. Thus, hypothesis 4 was fully supported.

Table 5.11

Regression Analysis Results for Hypothesis 4B

| | Dependent Variable: Clothing Behavior-Avoidance | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Independent Variable: Body Perception | | |
| | Analysis of Variance: F (1, 212)=7, 0.836 p < 0.001 | | |
| | R-square: 0.247 | | |
| Variables | DF | Standardized Coefficient | t-value |
| Constant | 1 | | 20.109*** |
| Body Perception | 1 | -.500 | - 8.416*** |

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.000

- H5: Media influence, peer pressure, importance of appearance, body perception, and clothing behavior will be significantly different among adolescents of various ethnic groups.

Hypothesis 5 was concerned with the relationships among all the variables and four ethnic groups: Hispanic/Latina, White, African America/Black, and Asian. A series of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to test the hypothesis.

First, factorial MANOVA was conducted to examine the relationship between the three factors of media influence and ethnicity. The independent variable was ethnicity and the dependent variables were the three dimensions of media influence: *Media Pressure, Media Information Source*, and *Athletic Influence*. Among the three constructs, *Media Information Source* had the highest mean score for the Hispanic/Latina group, followed by Media Pressure ($\underline{m}$=2.68), and Athletic Influence ($\underline{m}$=2.622). For the White respondents, Athletic Influence had the highest means score ($\underline{m}$=3.0032), followed by Media Information Source ($\underline{m}$=2.9487), and Media Pressure ($\underline{m}$=2.8385). For the African American/Black respondents, Media Information Source had the highest mean score ($\underline{m}$=3.325), followed by Media Pressure ($\underline{m}$=2.4113), and Athletic Influence ($\underline{m}$=2.3281). For the Asian respondents Media Information Source had the highest mean score ($\underline{m}$=3.8909), followed by Media Pressure ($\underline{m}$=3.1364), and Athletic Influence ($\underline{m}$=2.7273). When the media influence differences among the four groups were examined, the multivariate tests under Pillai's Trace criterion revealed that the main effect was significant, as indicated by as significant F-Value, $F(9, 630)$=5.148, $p<0.001$. Post-hoc tests using Tukey HSD were then conducted to compare the mean values of the three media influence content factors (see Table 5.12). The results suggested statistic differences among the four ethnic groups. The Asian Ethnic group reported the highest level of media pressure; while the African American/Black ethnic group reported the lowest. A significant difference existed between the White and African/American ethnic groups ($p<0.05$).

Table 5.12

MANOVA Results:

Media Influence According to Ethnic Groups

| | Independent Variables | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Means by Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| Dependent Variables | Hispanic/ Latina | White | African American/ Black | Asian | Mean Square | *df* | *F* |
| **Media Influence** | | | | | | 9 | 5.14*** |
| *Media Pressure* | 2.68 | 2.838[a] | 2 .411[b] | 3.136 | 3.316 | 3 | 3.656* |
| *Media Information Source* | 3.276 | 2.949[a] | 3.325[b] | 3.891[c] | 3.891 | 3 | 4.882** |
| *Athletic Influence* | 2.622 | 3.003[a] | 2.328[b] | 2.727 | 6.037 | 3 | 6.146*** |

[a],[b],[c] variation represents a significant difference between the ethnic groups
*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$

For athletic influence (Factor 3), the White ethnic group had the greatest influence among all groups; however the African American/Black ethnic group had the least influence, thus a significant relationship existed among the two groups ($p<0.001$). The Asian group had the highest level of influence for media information source (Factor 2), while the White ethnic group had the lowest. Significant differences existed among the White ethnic group and the African American/Black ethnic group ($p<0.05$). Significant differences existed between the White ethnic group and the Asian ethnic group ($p<0.01$). Based on the significant differences among the three constructs of media influence, Hypothesis 5A was supported.

Secondly, MANOVA was conducted to examine the relationships between ethnicity and two dimensions of peer pressure: *Peer Conversations* (Factor 1) and *Peer Teasing* (Factor 2). Among the two constructs, peer conversations had the highest mean scores for all ethnic groups. The African American/Black ethnic group reported the highest mean score ($\underline{m}$=15.9625), followed by the Asian ethnic group ($\underline{m}$=15.4545), the Hispanic/Latina ethnic group ($\underline{m}$=15.2444), and the White ethnic group

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(m=14.7436).  For peer teasing, the Asian ethnic group reported the highest mean score (m=11.4545), followed by the Hispanic/Latina ethnic group (m=10.4667), the African American/Black ethnic group (m=10.3625), and the White ethnic group (m=9.9359).

The multivariate tests under Pillai's Trace criterion revealed that the main effect was not significant.  The results of the analysis are reported in Table 5.13.  Post-hoc tests using Tukey HSD were conducted to compare the mean values of the two dimensions of peer pressure.  The results indicated there were no significant differences among the ethnic groups for peer conversations or peer teasing. Therefore, Hypothesis 5B is not supported.

Table 5.13

MANOVA Results:

Peer Pressure According to Ethnic Groups

| Dependent Variables | Independent Variables | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Means by Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| | Hispanic/ Latina | White | African American/ Black | Asian | Mean Square | *df* | *F* |
| **Peer Pressure** | | | | | | 6 | .585 |
| Peer Conversations | 15.244 | 14.744 | 15.962 | 15.455 | 19.767 | 3 | .938 |
| *Peer Teasing* | 10.467 | 9.9359 | 10.3625 | 11.4545 | 8.839 | 3 | .297 |

$*p < 0.05$ $**p < 0.01$ $***p < 0.001$

To examine ethnic differences in the importance of appearance, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted.  In this analysis the independent variables were the four ethnic groups and the dependent variable was appearance importance.  In relation to appearance importance, the Hispanic/Latina ethnic group had the highest mean score (m=69.8889), followed closely by the African American/Black ethnic group (m=69.8625), the Asian ethnic group (m=68.8182), and the White ethnic

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group (m=67.7051).  The results indicated that among the ethnic groups, no significant differences were found in appearance importance (See Table 5.14). Thus, Hypothesis 5c was not supported.

Table 5.14

ANOVA Results:

Appearance Importance According to Ethnic Groups

| | Independent Variables | | | | | | |
| | Means by Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| Dependent Variables | Hispanic/ Latina | White | African American/ Black | Asian | Mean Square | df | F |
| Appearance Importance | 69.8889 | 67.7051 | 69.8625 | 68.8182 | 75.349 | 3 | .518 |

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

To explore the ethnic differences among body perception, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used.  The independent variables were the four ethnic groups and the dependent variable was body perception.  In relation to body perception, the African American/Black had the highest mean score (m=23.8125), followed by the Hispanic/Latina ethnic group (m=20.88889), the White ethnic group (m=19.7308), while the Asian ethnic group had the lowest (m=17.0000).  The higher mean scores indicate a higher satisfaction with one's body.

The results in Table 5.15 indicated that significant differences existed among the four ethnic groups, F (3, 210)=11.731, p < 0.001.  According to Tukey's test, the African American/Black ethnic group was significantly different from the Hispanic/Latina ethnic group (p < 0.05); from the White ethnic group (p < 0.001); and from the Asian ethnic group (p < 0.001).  No significant differences were reported among the Hispanic/Latina, White, and Asian ethnic groups.

Given the results of the analysis, the respondents' body perception differed according to their ethnic group.  Thus, Hypothesis 5d was supported.

Table 5.15

ANOVA Results:

<u>Body Perception According to Ethnic Groups</u>

| Dependent Variables | Independent Variables | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Means by Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| | Hispanic/ Latina | White | African American/ Black | Asian | Mean Square | *df* | *F* |
| Body Perception | 20.8889 | 19.7308 | 23.8125[a] | 17.0000 | 25.781 3 | 3 | 11.731*** |

[a] variation represents a significant difference between the ethnic groups
*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

To investigate the ethnic differences in clothing behavior multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used.  In this analysis the independent variables were the four ethnic groups and the dependent variables were the two dimensions of clothing behavior-*Style* (Factor 1) and *Avoidance* (Factor 2).  For the clothing behavior-style construct, the African American/Black ethnic group had the highest mean score ($m$=3.8437), followed by the Hispanic/Latina ethnic group ($m$=3.5833), the Asian ethnic group ($m$=3.4545).  The White ethnic group had the lowest mean score ($m$=3.4199).  For the clothing behavior-avoidance construct, the Asian ethnic group had the highest mean score ($m$=3.0455), followed by the White ethnic group ($m$=2.5192), and the Hispanic/Latina ethnic group ($m$=2.4056).  The African American ethnic group reported the lowest mean score ($m$=2.2688).

The multivariate tests under Pillai's Trace criterion revealed that main effect was significant, $F (6, 420)$=3.355, $p < 0.01$.  Post-hoc tests using Tukey HSD were then conducted to compare the mean values of the two dimensions of clothing behavior.  For the style construct, a significant difference was found

between the White ethnic group and the African American/Black ethnic group (p < 0.05). No other

differences were found among the ethnic groups. For the avoidance construct, a significant difference

was found between the African American/Black ethnic group and the Asian ethnic group (p < 0.05). This

was the only difference found among the ethnic groups (See Table 5.16). Based on the overall results of

the MANOVA model, Hypothesis 5D was supported.

Table 5.16

MANOVA Results:

Clothing Behavior According to Ethnic Groups

| | Independent Variables | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Means by Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| Dependent Variables | Hispanic/ Latina | White | African American/ Black | Asian | Mean Square | *df* | *F* |
| **Clothing Behavior** | | | | | | 6 | 3.355** |
| *Style* | 3.583 | 3.420[a] | 3.844[b] | 3.455 | 2.495 | 3 | 3.285* |
| *Avoidance* | 2.4056 | 2.5192 | 2.2688[a] | 3.0455[b] | 2.298 | 3 | 3.326* |

[a], [b] Variation represents a significant difference among ethnic groups
*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

<u>Additional Analysis</u>

To explore the effect of the internet as a media influence on adolescent body perception, multiple

regression analysis was used. The independent variable was media influence-Internet and the dependent

variable was body perception. The analysis revealed that 15.5% of the variance in body perception can be

explained by media influence-internet ($R^2$=.155). The regression model was significant in explaining the

relationships between media influence-internet and body perception, with $F (1, 212)$=38.951, p<0.001.

The internet factor of media influence had a standardized coefficient of -.394, with a significant t-value at

a 0.001 level. The results indicate a significant negative relationship between media influence-internet

and body perception as illustrated in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17

<u>Regression Analysis for Internet Influence</u>

| Dependent Variable: Body Perception<br>Independent Variable: Media influence-Internet<br>Analysis of Variance: F (1, 212)=308.951, p<0.001<br>R-square: 0.155 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Variables | DF | Standardized<br>Coefficient | t-value |
| Constant | 1 | | 23.574*** |
| Media-Internet | 1 | -.394 | -6.241*** |

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.000

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions and Implications

This study investigated the relationships between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behaviors among adolescent girls. This study also examined the ethnic differences associated among four major ethnic groups in the United States.

Based on the preliminary factor analysis three factors were found under the media influence construct: *Media Pressure, Athletic Influence, and Media Information Source.* Two factors were found under the clothing behavior construct: *Style and Avoidance*. The relationships that were examined were media influence and body perception; peer pressure and body perception; appearance importance and body perception; and body perception and clothing behavior. Additionally, the ethnic differences among all five variables were examined.

A significant negative relationship was found between media influence and body perception. Respondents that reported a higher importance on various sources of media exhibited lower scores of body perception, or a lower satisfaction with their bodies. Media pressure (Factor 1) was the most significant in explaining the variance in adolescent body perception. Therefore, adolescents that reported high levels of pressure to achieve a socio-cultural standard of beauty through diet or exercise exhibited lower levels of body perception or satisfaction. Athletic Influence and Media information source did not show any significance for predicting adolescent body perception. Almost 34% of the variance in body perception can be explained by media influence. Media influence was the strongest predictor of adolescent body perception. This significant relationship supports previous findings in the existing literature.

The effect of media images on body perception has been well documented in the literature through countless studies. Education by parents and teachers could serve as a buffer against the cultural messages these images send to children and adolescents. The education should start during childhood in order to try to protect young girls from thinking the images they see in the media is what they are supposed to look like in order to be accepted. Media literacy programs have been effective in decreasing the level of internalization of media images by their participants (Irving et al., 1998). In addition, retailers, marketers, and magazines should strive to use realistic models in order to reduce a perceived pressure to be thin and to combat the possible negative influences of idealized media images.

Additional testing was used to see if the internet influenced adolescent body perception due to the fact that adolescents spend more time on the internet than watching television (Weaver, 2009) and that this area of media has not been researched in relation to body image. A significant negative relationship was found between the internet and body perception. More research is needed in this area to find out what sites, in particular, and the information and images found on that site that may influence their body perception.

A significant relationship was found between peer pressure and adolescent body perception. There were two factors under the peer pressure construct: *Peer Conversations* and *Peer Teasing*. Respondents reported the frequency they engage in weight-related conversations and the frequency of weight-related teasing by their peers. A significant negative relationship was found between frequency of peer teasing and adolescent body perception. Specifically, the greater the frequency of weight-related teasing the lower the adolescent body perception or reported satisfaction with the body. This finding supports previous research found in the existing literature (Cash 1986; Jones et al., 2004; Eisenberg et al., 2003). No relationship was found between frequency of weight-related peer conversations and body perception. About 16% of the variance in adolescent body perception is explained by reported peer pressure.

Parents, teachers, counselors, and other adults that work with children or adolescents need to be aware of the links between weight, risk of bullying or teasing, and body perception. The long and short-term effects of weight related teasing may be devastating to the emotional well-being and body esteem of an individual. Cash (1986) found that girls who were teased during childhood developed body dissatisfaction that followed them into adulthood; therefore, it is vital that weight-related teasing be addressed and not ignored. Additionally, peer acceptance workshops or interventions in the elementary, middle, and high schools may serve to educate others about the detrimental effects weight-related teasing or bullying may have on individuals.

A significant negative relationship was found between appearance importance and adolescent body perception. The greater emphasis adolescents place on appearance, the lower their body perception. Approximately 12% in adolescent body perception can be explained by appearance importance. This significant relationship supports previous research (Cash & Lebarge, 1996; Jung & Lennon, 2003).

Because the relationship between appearance self-schema and lower body perception is evident and well documented, mental health professionals who are working with clients on body image issues may want to focus on changing their appearance self-schema. Additionally, in our appearance driven society, parents and teachers should focus on challenging the appearance importance and shifting focus to non-appearance related domains like intelligence, athletics, or music during childhood.

Based on preliminary factor analysis, two factors were identified under the clothing behavior construct: *Style* and *Avoidance*. Style focused on the likelihood of adolescents choosing clothing that is considered stylish or trendy and to boost confidence. Avoidance focused on adolescents being uncomfortable or avoiding certain types of clothing because of their bodies. A significant positive relationship was found between adolescent body perception and style. The higher the level of body perception, or more satisfaction with the body, the more likely adolescents will select clothing based on the style or trend. A significant negative relationship was found between body perception and avoidance.

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Specifically, the lower the body perception, or dissatisfaction with the body, the higher the level of avoidance. Instead of selecting clothing based on style and because of a possible level of discomfort, adolescents may choose clothing based on covering up certain parts of their body or choosing loose clothing so that it is not drawing attention to their bodies. Both of these findings support previous studies (LaBat & DeLong, 1990; Kwon & Parham, 1994; Sontag & Schlater, 1982).

An important part of this study was to determine if adolescents' body perception had any effect on their clothing behaviors, particularly discomfort or avoidance because of low body perception. More research is needed to gain a better understanding to the extent to which individuals engage in avoidance behaviors or feel discomfort because of their body. It was suggested that clothing interest in relation to body satisfaction may be of a higher order thinking ability not yet developed by adolescents (Litrell et al.1990). This study contradicts this notion in that adolescents' body perception does influence their clothing behaviors. Retailers and marketers should be aware that teen girls with a lower body perception may be inclined to choose clothing in order to manage body distress rather than simply by brand or by style. Retailers should market to teens using models of various sizes in clothes that flatter a variety of shapes rather than everything being presented on unrealistically thin representations of the population.

Several differences were existed among the four ethnic groups among the variables. First, among the media influence factors the Asian ethnic group had the highest mean score for media pressure (Factor1) and media information source (Factor 3). This means that the Asian ethnic group felt more pressure to diet or exercise based on media sources like television or magazines and felt strongly that the media was a good information source for dieting, fashion, and exercise. For athletic influence, the White ethnic group had the highest mean score. Therefore, the White ethnic group was most influenced by athletes or looking "athletic." For media pressure, the African American/Black ethnic group had the lowest score or lowest level of pressure. This finding supports previous literature. For athletic influence, the African American/Black ethnic group had the lowest level of influence among all four ethnic groups.

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The White ethnic group had the lowest level for media information source. The most notable difference in body image studies have been between African American/Black girls and women compared to their White counterparts. Based on social comparison theory, individuals make comparisons to those who are similar to themselves. Because the cultural standard of beauty is typically White and unrealistically thin, Black girls and women refrain from making comparisons to images that are unlike themselves. Thus, they experience a less perceived pressure. More research is needed on exposure and the extent to which other ethnicities are aware and internalize idealized media images. The sample size was too small to generalize the results for both the Hispanic/Latina and Asian ethnic groups. Furthermore, retailers, magazines, and marketers should use a variety of models to appeal to an ethnically diverse population. This would widen the perception of what is considered beautiful and hopefully increase body and appearance perception among girls and young women.

Additionally, ethnic group differences were also found in adolescent body perception. The African American/Black ethnic group exhibited a much higher body perception, or satisfaction with the body, compared to the other groups. The Hispanic/Latina ethnic group had the second highest level of body perception, followed by the White ethnic group. The Asian group had the lowest body perception score among all ethnic groups. This finding supports previous research. Studies have shown that African American or Black females typically have higher body esteem, adopt a larger build as desirable, and are more comfortable with their body shape and weight than their White counterparts (Levine & Smolak, 2002; Streigel-Moore, Schreiber, Pike, Wilfley, & Rodin, 1995). Little research exists among other ethnic groups; however, Hispanic/Latina females are also thought to accept a curvier figure as attractive (Gil-Kashiwbara, 2002). Because of a small sample size for both the Asian and Hispanic/Latina ethnic groups, the results of this study cannot be generalized. More research is needed in order to find out the ethnic differences in body perception, specifically among the Asian and Hispanic/Latina ethnic groups. Ethnicity has been theorized as a possible buffer against body dissatisfaction largely based on social

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comparison theory (Warren et al., 2005). According to the theory comparisons are made based on what is relatable to an individual. Since most of the idealized images found in the media are White and extremely thin, White girls and women may be more susceptible to the negative effects of such comparisons than other ethnicities because they may find these images irrelevant. The current study contradicts this theory along with some of the other studies on ethnicity and body image. Therefore, parents, teachers, and clinicians should be aware that body image issues transcend ethnicities and work to help individuals combat these issues.

Ethnic group differences also existed among both clothing behavior factors: *Style* and *Avoidance*. The African American/Black ethnic group had the highest scores for style, while the White ethnic group had the lowest score. Thus, the African American/Black ethnic group is more likely to select clothing based on trends or what is considered to be "in." This finding is supported by previous research in that African American/Black females are more likely to invest in style or achieving a certain look or a "working with what you got" mentality than to focus on the shape of their bodies (Levine & Smolak, 2002; Parker et al., 1995). This finding may be of particular interest to retailers and marketers. For the African American/Black and the Hispanic/Latina adolescent market, marketers and retailers should focus on presenting a complete style or look to achieve satisfaction. This may be an important factor in order gain appeal and patronage from this market. For the avoidance clothing behavior factor, the Asian ethnic group exhibited the highest level of avoidance, followed by the White ethnic group. The African American/Black ethnic group had the lowest level of clothing avoidance. The Asian ethnic group was more likely to feel uncomfortable in clothing because of the body and to choose clothing that hides parts of the body in which they are dissatisfied. As previously stated, more research should be conducted in the area of clothing management behaviors among adolescents to determine the extent to which they engage in this practice. The African American/Black ethnic group was least likely to exhibit avoidance behaviors

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or feel uncomfortable in their clothing because of their bodies.  No significant ethnic differences were found for peer pressure or appearance importance among adolescents.

<u>Limitations and Future Research</u>

There were several limitations associated with the current study.  These limitations must be addressed to consider their potential impact on the results of this research and to determine the direction of future research.  The limitations are as follows:

1.  The study was a convenience sample that consisted of adolescent respondents in the metro-Atlanta area.  Therefore, the sample is not representative of all female adolescent high school students.

2.  The sample size in general was fairly small. The Asian (5%) and Hispanic/Latina (21%) ethnic groups were both under-represented making up only 26% of the sample.  Therefore, the results cannot be generalized among ethnic groups.

3.  The study was only conducted at one metro-Atlanta high school.  Gaining county and principal approval was difficult in public school systems due to the fact that the study was not academic in nature and not geared toward student achievement.  More time and consideration should have been taken in order to contact various youth organizations or private schools to have a larger more diverse sample size.

4.  Several other variables could affect adolescent body perception such as socio-economic status, parental level of education, body mass index (BMI) and also family relationships (i.e. parents, siblings) as a socio-cultural factor.  Previous research has supported all of these relationships with body perception.

5.  Because items in the media influence scale overlapped, factor analysis did not identify the dimensions of media influence that were desired.

6. This study did not fully examine the relationship of body perception and clothing behavior or the potential relationships of media influence and clothing behavior or peer pressure and clothing behavior.

Based on the limitations previously discussed, several suggestions for future study were identified.

First, additional studies should be conducted among adolescents across the United States in order to determine if the results from this study are consistent when sampling a different population of respondents. Additional studies should also consist of much larger sample sizes among each ethnic group. Future researchers should not only use public schools but also use a variety of youth organizations to collect data. Secondly, comparing ethnic differences in population samples from ethnically diverse populations versus non-diverse population samples may be interesting. Adolescents may perceive their bodies different based on their environment and the social comparisons they make.

Future research should be conducted to examine the ethnic differences among other variables-socioeconomic status, BMI, parental level of education, and family relationships-and the effect they have on adolescent body perception. Previous research has supported all of these relationships in general; however, to date the ethnic differences have not been investigated particularly in the Hispanic/Latina and Asian ethnic groups.

Additionally, a new scale should be developed in order to investigate more dimensions of media influence. Because of overlapping, only three factors were identified and almost half of the items were deleted. Investigating ethnic group differences of the influence of music videos, television shows, fashion and beauty magazines, etc. would be interesting. Furthermore, examining differences in ethnic responses to visual stimuli would prove beneficial.

Lastly, more research should be conducted in adolescent clothing behavior. Qualitative research in clothing avoidance or clothing as an appearance management mechanism to moderate body satisfaction/dissatisfaction among adolescents could further explain the extent to which adolescents engage in this type of behavior. Other variables that may affect adolescent clothing behaviors should also be examined. Specifically attention should be paid to the degree to which peers and various media sources influence adolescent clothing choices.

<u>Summary</u>

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance and body perception; body perception and clothing behavior and to analyze the ethnic differences among all variables.

Chapter 1 provided background information on body image studies. A brief discussion was provided on the influence of media, peer pressure, and appearance importance on body perception. Additionally, clothing behavior in relation to the body was discussed. The problem was identified and the justification for this study was made along with the specific research objectives. At the end of the chapter, the conceptual definitions were included.

Chapter 2 identified and presented an analysis of the current body of literature on body image, media influence (television, internet, and magazines), peer pressure (conversations and teasing), appearance importance, clothing behavior, and ethnic differences in body image studies. Several potential scales and previous experiments were discussed for each of the variables.

Chapter 3 outlined the conceptual framework for the study and how it was used to identify the relationships between the media, peers, appearance importance, and body perception. The research hypotheses that were used to test the research objectives were discussed.

Chapter 4 provided a brief discussion of the sample and population that were used for the study. The instrument that was used for collecting the data was discussed as well as the statistical methods that were used to analyze the data.

Chapter 5 presented a detailed description of the demographics for the respondents that participated in the study. The preliminary analyses were discussed, including factor analysis, which identified three factors for media influence and two factors for clothing behavior. The results for the hypotheses testing, as determined through factor analysis, regression analyses, ANOVA, and MANOVA, were then discussed.

Chapter 6 provided a brief discussion of the results that were identified in Chapter 5 as well as the conclusions of the study. Additionally, the limitations of the study were addressed as well as ideas for future study.

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APPENDICES

# Appendix A

## IRB Approval

### The University of Georgia

Office of The Vice President for Research
DHHS Assurance ID No. : FWA00003901

## APPROVAL FORM

**Date Proposal Received:** 2010-01-25          **Project Number:** 2010-10564-0

| Name | Title | Dept/Phone | Address | Email |
|------|-------|------------|---------|-------|
| Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock | PI | Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors 307 Dawson Hall 706-542-4892 | | yseock@fcs.uga.edu |
| Ms. Leslie R. Merritt | CO | Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors Dawson 404-432-7416 | | lrm513@uga.edu |

**Title of Study:** The relationships between media influence, peer pressures, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior: Examining ethnic differences among adolescent girls in the United States

**45 CFR 46 Category:** Expedite 7
**Parameters:**
Reviewed per Subpart D (46.404): Permission of one parent may be sufficient;
Approved for Institutions with Authorization Letters on File;

**Change(s) Required for Approval:**
Revised Application;
Revised Consent Document(s);

**Approved :** 2010-03-02      **Begin date :** 2010-03-02      **Expiration date :** 2011-03-01

*NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end data collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval, and cannot be retroactively approved.*

**Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs:**                **Funding Agency:**

**Your human subjects study has been approved.**

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to inform the IRB:
... of any adverse events or unanticipated risks to the subjects or others within 24 to 72 hours;
... of any significant changes or additions to your study and obtain approval of them before they are put into effect;
... that you need to extend the approval period beyond the expiration date shown above;
... that you have completed your data collection as approved, within the approval period shown above, so that your file may be closed.

For additional information regarding your responsibilities as an investigtor refer to the IRB Guidelines
Use the attached Researcher Request Form for requesting renewals, changes, or closures.
*Keep this original approval form for your records.*

Chairperson or Designee,
Institutional Review Board

Consent Forms

Dear Participant:

You are invited to participate in a study titled, "The Relationships between Media Influence, Peer Pressure, Appearance Importance, Body Perception, and Clothing Behavior: Ethnic Differences Among Adolescent Females in the United States", conducted by Leslie Merritt. This research is required for my graduate thesis in the Textiles, Merchandising, & Interiors department at the University of Georgia. This study will examine: media influence, peer pressure (appearance related teasing and conversations), and appearance importance on body perception; the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior; and ethnic differences among all variables. The information collected in this study will provide a new perspective on body image-related studies and contribute to existing literature in this area.

The procedure to be used in this research is a questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The research is not intended to cause any harm or discomfort; however, you may quit at any time if you experience discomfort or stress when answering the survey questions. Any information collected about you will be held strictly anonymous. You do not put your name or ID number on the survey. You cannot be identified in the results. The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project.

Thank you for assisting me with this study.

Sincerely,

Leslie Merritt

Graduate Student

Textiles, Merchandising, & Interiors

Dawson Hall, The University of Georgia

E-mail: Lrm513@uga.edu


Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock

Textiles, Merchandising, & Interiors

352 Dawson Hall, The University of Georgia

Phone:  706-542-4892

E-mail:  yseock@fcs.uga.edu

---

I understand the project described above.  My questions have been answered and I agree to participate in

this project.  I have received a copy of this form.


_____

Signature of the Participant/Date

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602; Telephone (706)542-3199; E-mail Address IRB@uga.edu

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am a master's student at the University of Georgia in the department of textiles, merchandising, and interiors. I am conducting a research project entitled "The relationships between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior: Examining ethnic differences among adolescent females in the United States." My study will investigate the effect of media, peer pressures (conversations and criticisms about appearance), and importance of appearance on body perception; the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior; and the ethnic differences among all variables. While there is no direct benefit to the participant, this study will be valuable to society and make a significant contribution to the existing literature on body image studies. Adolescence is a period when people learn and acquire life skills through various sources. Thus, adolescents' perception of their body image and clothing behaviors might be understood in the context of developmental stage of the socialization process. Misperception of body image and the following behaviors may be problematic and deterrent for adolescents' physical and psychological development. Considering the importance of the developmental task during adolescence, a better understanding of

female adolescents' body perception and their clothing behaviors may assist teachers, parents, and consumer educators to communicate and help them develop sound mind and body and also develop educational programs to guide them.

Participation in this study is voluntary and participants may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled. The decision to participate or not will have no affect on grades. If you choose to let your child participate, they will complete a survey that consists of 6 sections that will take approximately 30 minutes. No names or any other personal information will be recorded or revealed. Incomplete questionnaires and those that are excluded because they do not meet the research criteria for this study will be destroyed. Usable questionnaires will be analyzed and kept for three years in a locked file cabinet per federal regulation then destroyed. The results of this participation will be anonymous. When thinking about appearance related issues, participants may experience negative feelings, stress, or slight discomfort. Before beginning the survey, participants will be instructed that at any time they may stop if they feel any such discomfort. Additionally, they will be given a list of resources including their school counseling center information if they should seek further assistance. I am asking for your permission to proceed with this step in my study by signing on the next page to indicate your consent.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 404-432-7416 or by email at lrm513@uga.edu. Thank you in advance for taking the time to help me in my study.

Sincerely,

Leslie Merritt
Department of Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors and Interiors
The University of Georgia
312 Dawson Hall
404-432-7416
Lrm513@uga.edu

Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock-faculty advisor
Department of Textiles, Merchandising,
The University of Georgia
307 Dawson Hall
706-542-4892
yseock@fcs.uga.edu

Additional questions or problems regarding your child's rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

I agree to allow my child, _____, to take part in a research study titled "The relationships between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior: Ethnic differences among adolescent females," which is being conducted by Leslie Merritt from the Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors department at the University of Georgia, under the direction of Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock. My child's participation is voluntary; I and my child can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have information related to my child returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

Leslie Merritt                          _____        _____
                                         Signature                               Date

_____        _____        _____
Name of Parent/Guardian          Signature                               Date

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

I agree to allow my child, _____, to take part in a research study titled "The relationships between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior: Ethnic differences among adolescent females," which is being conducted by Leslie

Merritt from the Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors department at the University of Georgia, under the direction of Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock.  My child's participation is voluntary; I and my child can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty.  I can ask to have information related to my child returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.


Leslie Merritt                                  _____              _____

                                                **Signature**                                              **Date**



_____     _     _____              _____

**Name of Parent/Guardian**            **Signature**                                              **Date**




**Please return a copy and keep a copy for yourself.**

Dear Student:

I am a master's student at the University of Georgia in the department of textiles, merchandising, and interiors. I am conducting a research project entitled "The relationships between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior: Examining ethnic differences among adolescent females in the United States." My study will investigate the effect of media, peer pressures (conversations and criticisms about appearance), and importance of appearance on body perception; the relationship between body perception and clothing behavior; and the ethnic differences among all variables. While there is no direct benefit to the participant, this study will be valuable to society and make a significant contribution to the existing literature on body image studies. Adolescence is a period when people learn and acquire life skills through various sources. Thus, adolescents' perception of their body image and clothing behaviors might be understood in the context of developmental stage of the socialization process. Misperception of body image and the following behaviors may be problematic and deterrent for adolescents' physical and psychological development. Considering the importance of the developmental task during adolescence, a better understanding of female adolescents' body perception and their clothing behaviors may assist teachers, parents, and consumer educators to communicate and help them develop sound mind and body and also develop educational programs to guide them.

Participation in this study is voluntary and participants may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled. The decision to participate or not will have no affect on grades. If you choose to participate, you will complete a survey that consists of 6 sections that will take approximately 30 minutes. No names or any other personal information will be recorded or revealed. Incomplete questionnaires and those that are excluded because you do not meet the research criteria for this study will be destroyed. Usable questionnaires will be

analyzed and kept for three years in a locked file cabinet per federal regulation then destroyed. The

results of this participation will be anonymous. When thinking about appearance related issues, you may

experience negative feelings, stress, or slight discomfort. Before beginning the survey, you will be

instructed that at any time you may stop if you feel any such discomfort. Additionally, you will be given

a list of resources including your school counseling center information if you should seek further

assistance. I am asking for your permission to proceed with this step in my study by signing on the next

page to indicate your consent.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 404-432-7416 or by email at

lrm513@uga.edu. Thank you in advance for taking the time to help me in my study.

Sincerely,

Leslie Merritt                                          Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock-faculty advisor
Department of Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors    Department of Textiles, Merchandising,
and Interiors
The University of Georgia                                The University of Georgia
312 Dawson Hall                                         307 Dawson Hall
404-432-7416                                            706-542-4892
Lrm513@uga.edu                                          yseock@fcs.uga.edu
Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to
The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies
Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address
IRB@uga.edu


I,_____,  agree to take part in a research study titled "The relationships

between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior:

Ethnic differences among adolescent females," which is being conducted by Leslie Merritt from the

Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors department at the University of Georgia, under the direction of Dr.

Yoo-Kyoung Seock.  My participation is voluntary; I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty.  I can ask to have information related to me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.


Leslie Merritt                          _____                    _____
                                        Signature                                     Date


_____                   _____                    _____
Participant Name                        Signature                                     Date

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

     I,_____,  agree to take part in a research study titled "The relationships between media influence, peer pressure, appearance importance, body perception, and clothing behavior: Ethnic differences among adolescent females," which is being conducted by Leslie Merritt from the Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors department at the University of Georgia, under the direction of Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock.  My participation is voluntary; I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty.  I can ask to have information related to me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

Leslie Merritt                          _____                    _____
                                        Signature                                     Date


_____                   _____                    _____
Participant Name                        Signature                                     Date

**Please return a copy and keep a copy for yourself.**

Appendix C

Survey

## I. Demographic Information

1. I am _____

   a. 14 years old

   b. 15 years old

   c. 16 years old

   d. 17 years old

   e. 18 < years old

2. The ethnicity that best describes me is _____

   a. Hispanic or Latina

   b. White (including middle eastern)

   c. Black or African American (including Africa & Caribbean)

   d. Asian (including the Indian subcontinent)

   e. American Indian or Alaskan Native

   f. Native Hawaiian or other pacific islander

3. I weigh _____lb.

4. I am _____inches tall.

5. BMI _____ (leave blank)

Please read each of the following items carefully and indicate the number that best reflects your agreement with the statement.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree or Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. TV programs are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive". | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| lose weight. | | | | | |
| 3. I do **not** care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 4. I compare my body to the bodies of people who are on TV. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 5. TV commercials are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neither Agree or Disagree** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
| 6. I **do not** feel pressure from TV or magazines to look pretty. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 7. I would like my body to look like the models who appear in magazines. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 8. The internet is an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 9. I compare my appearance to the appearance of TV and movie stars. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 10. I've felt pressure from the internet to lose weight. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 11. Music videos on TV are <u>not</u> an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 12. I've felt pressure from TV and magazines to be thin. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 13. I would like my body to look like the people who are in movies. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 14. I **do not** compare my body to the bodies of people who appear in magazines. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15. Magazine articles are **not** an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 16. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to have a perfect body. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 17. I wish I looked like the models in music videos. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 18. I compare my appearance to the appearance of people on the internet. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neither Agree or Disagree** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
| 19. I compare my appearance to the appearance of people in magazines. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 20. Magazine advertisements are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 21. I compare my appearance to the appearance of people on the internet. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 22. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to diet. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 23. I **do not** wish to look as athletic as the people in magazines. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 24. Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 25. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to exercise. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 26. I wish I looked as athletic as sports stars. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 27. I compare my body to that of people who are athletic | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 28. Movies are an important source of | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| information about fashion and "being attractive." | | | | | |
| 29. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to change my appearance. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 30. I **do not** try to look like the people on TV | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 31. Movie stars are **not** an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 32. Famous people are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 33. I try to look like sports athletes. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neither Agree or Disagree** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
| 34. I compare my body to that of people in "good shape." | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 35. The internet is not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Never** | **Seldom** | **Sometimes** | **A lot** | **Always** |
| 1. My friends and I talk about how our bodies look in our clothes. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 2. My friends and I talk about what we would like our bodies to look like. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 3. My friends and I talk about how important it is to always look attractive. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 4. My friends and I talk about the size and shape of our bodies. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 5. My friends and I talk about what we can do to | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| always look our best. | | | | | |
| 6. Girls tease me or make fun of the size or shape of my body. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 7. Boys laugh at me or make fun of me because of my body. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 8. Boys tease me or me or make fun of me because of the size or build of my body. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 9. Girls laugh or make fun of me because of my body. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 10. Boys say I should go on a diet. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 11. Boys say that I would look better if I was thinner. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 12. Girls say that I would look better if I was thinner. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neither Agree or Disagree** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
| 1. I spend little time on my physical appearance. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neither Agree or Disagree** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
| 2. When I see good-looking people, I wonder about how my own looks measure up. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 3. I try to be as physically attractive as I can be. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 4. I have never paid much attention to what I look like. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 5. I seldom compare my appearance to that of other people I see. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 6. I often check my appearance in a mirror just to make sure I look okay. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree or Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | When something makes me feel good or bad about my looks, I tend to dwell on it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | If I like how I look on a given day, it's easy to feel happy about other things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | If somebody had a negative reaction to what I look like, it wouldn't bother me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | When it comes to my physical appearance, I have high standards. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | My physical appearance has had little influence on my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | Dressing well is not a priority for me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | When I meet people for the first time, I wonder what they think about how I look. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | In my everyday life, lots of things happen that make me think about what I look like. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | If I dislike how I look on a given day, it's hard to feel happy about other things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | I fantasize about what it would be like to be better looking than I am. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | Before going out, I make sure that I look as good as I possibly can. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | What I look like is an important part of who I am. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | By controlling my appearance, I can control many of the social and emotional events in my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. | My appearance is responsible for much of what's happened to me in my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree or Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. | I'm satisfied with my height. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | I'm satisfied with my skin complexion. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | I'm satisfied with my hair texture and thickness. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree or Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 4. | I'm satisfied with my facial features (eyes, nose, ears, facial shape). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | I'm satisfied with my muscle tone. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | I'm satisfied with my body proportions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | I'm satisfied with my weight. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree or Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. I'm satisfied with my chest size. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. I'm satisfied with my physical strength. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. I'm satisfied with my physical coordination. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. I'm satisfied with my overall physical appearance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree or Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I usually select clothes that are stylish. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I usually choose clothes that will impress people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I usually select clothes based on what's "in" or a trend. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I prefer clothing that is dark in color (e.g. black). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I tend to pick clothing that is loose and not fitted to the body. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I pick clothing regardless of my weight or shape. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I enjoy wearing tight-fitting clothes to show off my curves. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. My clothing boosts my self-confidence. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. I prefer clothes that do not draw attention to my figure or shape. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. I feel uncomfortable in my clothing because of my body. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. I choose clothing that will hide any figure problems that I feel I have (e.g. large thighs). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |