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Body image disturbance: How happy are young adults with their bodies

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Body image is a multidimensional psychological experience involving the mental representations which we create for ourselves yet unnecessarily resemble how others view us. It is subjective, may trigger positive or negative emotions, potentially leading to avoidant behavior. Many factors, mainly social media, cultural expectation and gender differences influence one's body image. In this research, body image is assessed using validated rating scales to identify one's body esteem in terms of body size and its correlations with his feelings and resultant behaviors among young adults in Malaysia. The rating scales used in this research are Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BESAA) and Body Image Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (BIAAQ). Participants were presented with the images of 2 models to assess their wish to conform to the social standard of beauty. Data analysis was done using SPSS. Results showed predictably that, BMI is inversely and age is positively related with BESAA and BIAAQ scores. However, contrary to traditional beliefs, males score a lower mean score than females for both BESAA and BIAAQ. Men also express more desire to achieve an ideal body shape. Coincidentally, the images used showed that women expressed more resistance for heavily advertised skinny. Although shocking, this study is not the first to show such correlation. By analyzing these scores, there is an evident cultural and gender shift in the attitudes towards male bodies. Body esteem has either increased among females or decreased among males.

Biography

Fu Jing Hui is currently studying Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery and Bachelor of The Arts of Obstetrics in Perdana University-Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

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