BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

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Abstract. Adolescence is a period when individuals begin to pay more attention to their physical condition, which is known as body image. Body image is defined as an individual's perception of how satisfied and accepting they are of their physical appearance, which is influenced by their own perceptions. Self-esteem is the result of an individual's evaluation of themselves, expressed in their attitudes and acceptance of their qualities. This study aims to determine whether there is a relationship between body image and self-esteem among female psychology students at Nusa Cendana University, involving 156 female participants. This study employed a quantitative research method through the distribution of questionnaires. The hypothesis test found a significance value of 0.006 < 0.05, which means that the study indicates a relationship between body image and self-esteem among female students. Students with a better perception of their body image tend to show positive emotional responses, including self-esteem.

Keywords: Adolescents, Body Image, Self-Esteem

Abstrak. Masa remaja merupakan periode ketika individu mulai lebih memperhatikan kondisi fisiknya, yang dikenal dengan *body image*. *Body image* itu sendiri didefinisikan sebagai gambaran seberapa puas dan menerima penampilan fisik mereka secara keseluruhan, yang dipengaruhi oleh persepsi individu itu sendiri. Harga diri merupakan hasil evaluasi individu terhadap dirinya sendiri yang diekspresikan dalam sikap dan penerimaan terhadap kualitas diri secara keseluruhan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara *body image* dan harga diri pada mahasiswi Psikologi Undana, dengan jumlah sampel sebanyak 156 partisipan dengan spesifik kriteria yaitu perempuan. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yakni penelitian kuantitatif dan menggunakan penyebaran kuisioner. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa uji hipotesis didapati bahwa nilai signifikansinya 0,006 < 0,05 yang dapat diartikan bahwa penelitian mengindikasikan adanya hubungan antara *Body Image* dan Harga Diri pada mahasiswi. Mahasiswi yang memiliki persepsi *Body Image* yang lebih baik cenderung menunjukkan respons emosional yang positif, termasuk harga dirinya.

Kata kunci: Remaja, Body Image, Harga Diri

Introduction

Adolescence is a period where individuals begin to pay more attention to their physical condition. Adolescence is estimated to begin around 10-13 years and end at 18-22 years (Santrock, 2019). During this period, adolescents begin to experience various important changes, one of which is physical changes (Papalia & Feldman, 2014). The physical changes that occur during adolescence lead individuals to become more self-aware and to evaluate their physical appearance more critically. Adolescents' attention to the body is one of the psychological aspects called body image. Body image itself is defined as a description of how far individuals are satisfied and accepting of their body parts and overall physical appearance, which is influenced by the individual's own perceptions (Mallaram et al., 2023).

Body image held by male and female adolescents is different. It is due to differences in physical changes experienced. Brooks Gunn & Paikoff in Santrock (2019) said that adolescent girls become less satisfied with their bodies than adolescent boys. This is because in adolescent girls, the fat in their bodies increases, while in adolescent boys, the muscle mass increases. Thompson, in Apriliani & Soetjiningsih (2023), revealed that the level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of individuals with their bodies depends on the feelings that individuals have and expectations about their bodies.

Grogan (2021) argues that a person's satisfaction with their body is closely related to self-esteem, in other words, people who have high body satisfaction also tend to have high self-esteem. This is in line with Damayanti & Susilawati's (2021) research, which explains that when individuals have the belief that they have an ideal, beautiful, and attractive body, they will form a positive perception of their body image. This positive perception then encourages individuals to assess themselves better, accompanied by feelings of satisfaction, happiness, and pride in their body shape. This is in accordance with the results of an interview with female student TB (21 years old) conducted on December 9, 2024. It is known that the student feels that her weight and height are not in accordance with expectations, so she feels inferior to her body.

In addition, SN (22 years old) on December 11, 2024, was a female student who felt that her body was proportional, but had problems with facial acne, which caused the student to be easily

embarrassed and pessimistic. Finally, JT (21 years old) on December 15, 2024, felt dissatisfied with his height, which was not ideal according to his wishes, making him feel funny and unique. From the results of these interviews, individuals have a negative perception of themselves, which has an impact on their self-esteem. This is in accordance with research by Damayanti & Susilawati (2021), which states that when individuals feel that their body shape is less attractive, disproportionate, or does not match the ideal standard, it can form a negative view of their body image. Feelings of disappointment, dissatisfaction, inferiority, and shame are factors that contribute to the decline in individual self-esteem.

Method

The type of research that will be used in this study is quantitative research with a survey method using the Pearson product-moment correlation test. The sample in this study are 156 female students from the Psychology Study Program at Nusa Cendana University. The data collection technique in this study uses the scale-filling method. The samples will fill in the scale provided using the Likert scale type. This body image scale is based on the theory of Cash adapted by Salsabilla (2020), consisting of 33 items that use 5 aspects, namely: Appearance Evaluation, Appearance Orientation, Body Area Satisfaction, Overweight Preoccupation, and Self-Classified Weight.

As for the other scales used in this study, this scale is based on Rosenberg's theory adapted by Seran et al. (2020) to measure the self-esteem variable, which uses several aspects, namely: Self-acceptance and self-respect. The self-esteem scale consists of 10 items. The items that passed the validity test were 9 items. The body image scale used in this study has a reliability value of 0.733, which means it is declared reliable with a high category. The self-esteem scale used in this study has a reliability value of 0.744, which means it is declared reliable with a high category.

Result

Table 1.

Description of Participants by Batch

Batch	N	%
2022	56	35,9%
2023	50	32,5%
2024	50	32,6%
Total	204	100%

Descriptive test of the data that has been calculated using a hypothetical statistical approach (Azwar), a description is obtained that provides an overview of the average data, standard deviation, minimum value, and maximum value. The following are the results of descriptive analysis.

Table 2.

Descriptive Test of Body Image Statistics

	Max	Min	Range	Mean	SD
Body Image	132	33	99	82,5	16,5

Based on the descriptive test, it is known that the maximum (Max) value is 132, the minimum (Min) value is 33, the range is 99, the mean is 82.5, and the standard deviation (SD) is 16.5.

Table 3.

Descriptive Test of Self Esteem Statistics

	Max	Min	Range	Mean	SD
Self Esteem	45	9	36	27	6

Based on the table above, it is known that the maximum (Max) value is 45, the minimum (Min) value is 9, the range is 36, the mean is 27, and the standard deviation (SD) is 6.

Categorization Level

The categorization uses 3 categorizations calculated using a standard normal distribution curve:

Table 4.

Body Image Categorization Table Based on Force

Batch	High	Medium	Low	Total
2022	41 (73%)	14 (25%)	1 (2%)	56 (36%)
2023	35 (70%)	14 (28 %)	1 (2%)	50 (32%)
2024	36 (72%)	13 (26%)	1 (2%)	50 (32%)
Total	112 (72%)	41 (26%)	3 (2%)	156 (100%)

From the table above, the data indicate that most respondents are classified within the high body image category. Batch 22 (73%), Batch 23 (70%), and Batch 24 (72%) are in the high category. Overall, this data illustrates that the majority of respondents are at the high to moderate body image level from Batch 23-24.

Table 5.

Self-Esteem Categorization Table Based on Force

Batch	High	Medium	Low	Total
2022	0	56	0	56
	(0%)	(100%)	(0%)	(36%)
2023	4	44	2	50
	(8%)	(88%)	(4%)	(32%)
2024	18	29	2	50
	(36%)	(60%)	(4%)	(32%)
Total	22	130	2	156
	(14%)	(83%)	(2%)	(100%)

From the table above, it can be seen that it is known that the majority of respondents are in the moderate self-esteem category. The classes of 2022 (100%), class of 2023 (88%), and class of 2024 (60%) were in the moderate category. Overall, this data illustrates that the majority of respondents are at a moderate to high level of self-esteem from the Class of 2023- 2024.

Normality Test

The normality test used in this study uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test, which is calculated using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 for Windows. The data is said to be normal if the probability (sig.) > 0.05; here are the results of the normality test:

Table 6.

Kolmogorov Smirnov Normality Test Results

Variable	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Description
*Body Image*Self Esteem*	0,200	Normal

The normality test obtained is 0.200 and from these results, it is known that the data is normally distributed with variable significance of 0.200> 0.05 or p>0.05.

Linearity Test

The homogeneity test used is the linearity test using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 for Windows. Data can be said to be linear if the significance value (sig.) ≥ 0.05. The following are the results of the Levene test:

Table 7.

Linear Test Result

	df1	F	Sig.
Body Image **Self Esteem**	1	7.328	0,008

It can be seen that the homogeneity test obtained is 0.008. From these results, it is known that the data is linear with variable significance of 0.008 <0.05 or p<0.05.

Hypothesis Test

The hypothesis test used is the independent t-test using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 for Windows. Hypothesis testing is carried out to determine whether the hypothesis proposed is correct or not. The following are the results of the hypothesis test:

Table 8 *Hypothesis Test Result*

		Body Image	Self Esteem
Body Image	Pearson Correlation	1	.220
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	156	156
Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation	.220	1

Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
N	156	156

Based on the results of the Pearson correlation analysis, there is a significant positive relationship between body image and self-esteem among psychology students at Nusa Cendana University ($p = 0.006$; $r = 0.220$). The p-value, which is less than 0.05, indicates that the relationship between body image and self-esteem is statistically significant

Discussion

Pearson correlation analysis shows that body image and overall self-esteem have a positive and significant relationship, with a weak correlation strength. Although the correlation strength is relatively weak ($r = 0.220$), this relationship is still statistically significant and supports existing psychological theories. These results indicate that the higher the body image of female students, the higher their self-esteem. Otherwise, the lower the female students' body image, the lower their self-esteem.

These findings align with Rosenberg (1965) theory, which is a subjective evaluation of oneself that includes feelings of worth and competence. Individuals with high self-esteem tend to have a positive attitude towards themselves, are able to face challenges, and form healthy social relationships. Meanwhile, low self-esteem is often associated with self-doubt, social anxiety, and even depression.

In the context of female psychology students, self-esteem plays an important role because they are in the phase of identity exploration and professionalism formation. At this stage, body image becomes one of the main foundations for self-esteem stability, considering that the body is the most visible aspect and often becomes the object of social assessment. This process of self-assessment is very much in line with Cash's (2002) theory, which states that body image is an individual's evaluation of their own physical appearance.

According to Cash, this assessment is not only physical in nature, but also influenced by beliefs, social experiences, and internalized cultural standards. This explains why female students, especially teenage girls, are prone to experiencing a decline in self-esteem when they

make social comparisons with unrealistic beauty standards. When these standards are used as personal benchmarks, self-evaluation of the body tends to become negative, triggering body dissatisfaction and ultimately lowering self-esteem. These findings are in line with Vignoles (2006), who emphasizes that beliefs and social comparisons are the main psychological mechanisms that influence the dynamics of self-esteem in adolescent girls.

Thus, Cash's (2002) theory reinforces the understanding that body image is not merely a physical perception, but an evaluative process that is greatly influenced by social and cultural contexts. When the evaluation is negative, the impact can be immediately seen in the self-esteem of female students who are building their identity and professionalism. Body image categorization analysis shows that the majority of respondents feel they have a good body image of themselves. Meanwhile, self-esteem categorization shows that the majority of respondents feel they have moderate self-esteem.

The imbalance between a good body image perception and the majority's perception of moderate self-esteem indicates that even though body image perception is good, it is not yet fully capable of encouraging female students to achieve high self-esteem. This phenomenon indicates that although female students generally have a good body image, there are other factors that influence individual self-esteem levels (Maemunah, 2020). Several factors influence the formation of self-esteem, namely experience, parenting patterns, and social environment (Burns, in Seran et al., 2020).

These findings align with various studies showing that, in addition to body image, there are a number of other variables that influence self-esteem in female students. Nur Sifa & Zamroni (2024) mention that body shaming plays a part in lowering an individual's self-esteem. This will make them preoccupied and stressed about their appearance. In addition, Khairani et al. (2024) stated that children who have authoritarian parenting styles will have poor social skills and be more prone to mental health issues, which can lead to low self-esteem. Children with neglectful parenting styles have parents who are less responsive to their physical, emotional, and psychological needs, which can make children feel uncomfortable and useless, leading to low self-esteem. Furthermore, Pratiwi (2020) states that positive relationships between peers and the

surrounding environment can create a sense of security and comfort that has the potential to increase their self-esteem.

Conclusion

According to the hypothesis test conducted, the significance value was 0.006 > 0.05, there is a positive relationship between body image and self-esteem in female students of the Psychology study program at Nusa Cendana University. In 156 female students of the Psychology study program of Nusa Cendana University, Class of 2022, there was a high level of Body Image of 73%, a medium category of 25%, and a low category of 2%. In the Class of 2023, have a high Body Image Level of 70%, a medium category of 28%, and a low category of 2%. Then, in the Class of 2024, have a high Body Image of 72%, a medium category of 26%, and a low category of 2%.

In 156 students of the Psychology study program at Nusa Cendana University, Class of 2022 who had a high level of self-esteem of 0%, a medium category of 100% and a low category of 0%. Then, in Class of 2023 who had a high level of self-esteem of 8%, a medium category of 88% and a low category of 4% and in Class of 2024 who had a level of self-esteem of 36%, a medium category of 60% and a low category of 4%.

Suggestion

The findings from this study are useful for female psychology students to continue strengthening their positive body image and self-esteem by accepting their circumstances, not comparing themselves to others, and believing in their own abilities. This will enable them to build self-confidence, undergo the lecture process with more confidence, and be better prepared to deal with clients in the future. Future researchers are recommended to explore the role of other variables, such as self-compassion, media exposure, or social support, as mediators or moderators in the relationship between body image and self-esteem, or expand the number and diversity of respondents. Research can also be directed at comparing the two variables based on gender, as well as exploring aspects of gratitude by considering the religious background of respondents.

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