

Body Dissatisfaction and Sociocultural Impact in Hispanic and Latino Adolescents: Self-Concept Clarity, Physical Appearance Comparisons and Social Media Use

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ABSTRACT

The relevance of body dissatisfaction in today's culture makes it a topic of great notability, especially when it comes to the development and identity of adolescents. Previous research has studied the elements that determine the societal bodily ideal and what personal factors affect self-perception after exposure to the former. The literature fails to examine these elements within a majorly Hispanic and Latino population, also excluding the moderating effect of social media and self-concept clarity. The study at hand used 227 respondents, where 58.6% identified as female, 37.8% as male, 1.8% as non-binary, and 1.3% as other; participants identified as 46% South American, 30% Caribbean, 16% European (Spaniard), and 8% Central American. Five quantitative scales were used: Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire - 4, the Figure Rating Scale, Physical Appearance Comparison Scales, Self-Concept Clarity (SCC) Scale, and Social Networking Sites (SNS) lifestyle questions adapted from Burnette et al., 2017. Results reflected moderate body dissatisfaction (BD) and sociocultural influences within Hispanic and Latino adolescents, highlighting self-concept and comparisons, and hypotheses concerning social media use's effect on body dissatisfaction. Discoveries were also made concerning specific mediating factors, their correlational value, and the importance of distinguishing between adolescent age groups. The data aids in expanding the limited knowledge of body dissatisfaction within Hispanics and Latinos and encourages further investigation, highlighting the importance of self-concept in relation to body image, especially in adolescents. This new knowledge could be utilized in the medical and psychiatric fields in the treatment of body dissatisfaction and further eating disturbances.

Introduction

Body image is one of the most significant facets of identity, and one is constantly surrounded by factors that can influence this perception. Sociocultural pressures depict society's bodily ideal and support the idea that one must achieve it to experience satisfaction. After internalization, one is then susceptible to body dissatisfaction, which creates the possibility of developing unhealthy weight-related behavior. Adolescents are especially of concern, as their identity-forming stage of life makes them increasingly vulnerable to these influences (Kuck et al., 2021; Jones & Buckingham, 2005). Further, the evolution of media consumption through social networking services has increased exposure to the ideal, specifically affecting its highly adolescent userbase (Marengo et al., 2017; Vuong et al., 2021); still, it remains understudied in comparison to traditional media. As internalization levels are determined by individual characteristics, different traits have undergone earnest research with the exception of self-concept clarity; Vartanian & Dey have found that its decrease led to an increase in comparisons and internalization (2013), but these studies were composed of adult samples. Additionally, the field of research has relied on predominantly Caucasian samples, calling

for ethnic diversity in the field, such as that found with Hispanics. Thus, the current study aims to analyze levels of internalization and body dissatisfaction within an adolescent, Hispanic and Latino sample, taking into account self-concept clarity, physical appearance comparisons, and SNS use.

Literature Review

Sociocultural Pressures

Pressures endorsing the societal body ideal are applied through the Body Image Tri-Partite influence model (van den Berg et al., 2002). The model consists of three sources of pressure: family, peers, and media (Stice & Whitenton, 2002; Blowers et al., 2003; De Carvahlo et al., 2020; Agliata & Tantleff-Duff, 2004; Markey, 2010; Yamamiya et al., 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al., 2019; Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Vuong et al., 2021). These pressures then enforce the ideal either directly or indirectly (Blowers et al., 2003; Thompson & Stice, 2001; Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al., 2019). The constant exposure to the ideal produces a potent focus on one's own body, especially when considering whether it pertains to that ideal. Society depicts the body ideal as being equivalent to happiness and success, as well as it being obtainable and necessary, (especially among women) (Stice & Whitenton 2002; Blowers et al., 2003; Yamamiya et al., 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001), when this ideal is naturally unobtainable (Blowers et al., 2003; De Carvahlo et al., 2020; Krayner et al., 2008; Agliata and Tantleff-Duff, 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001; Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al., 2019; Schaefer et al., 2019; Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Vuong et al., 2021; Vartanian, 2009; Carter & Vartanian, 2021; Vartanian, 2012).

The perception of sociocultural pressures and one's relationship with each source can be heavily dependent on age. Body image is particularly malleable in adolescence due to the constant changes bodies undergo, especially due to puberty and related adiposity (Markey, 2010; Stice & Whitenton, 2002; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Blowers et al., 2003; Clay et al., 2005; Toselli et al., 2021). As teenagers, with highly contingent self-esteem, value body image as essential to identity, pressure to have ideal bodies increases (Markey, 2010; Kuck et al., 2021; Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al., 2019; Clay et al., 2005; Opara & Santos, 2019; Jones & Buckingham, 2005). A study based on self-reported questionnaires from 1,338 individuals aged 16-88, found that the time willing to be spent reaching the societal standard decreased with age (Quittkat et al., 2019). Such statistics show that adolescents are more willing to dedicate time to hindering puberty-related changes to obtain ideality, especially to increase self-image.

Sex is also worth considering, as the sociocultural ideal differs between females and males (Agliata & Tantleff-Duff, 2004; Leal et al., 2020; Quittkat et al., 2019; Furnham et al., 2002; Kostanski & Gullone, 1998; Vuong et al., 2021; Vartanian, 2012). For instance, a recent study published in 2020 with a sample of 1,019 freshmen found that females desired thinness (especially when overweight) through weight loss, and boys desired strength and muscularity through muscle gain (De Carvahlo et al., 2020; Leal et al., 2020; Agliata & Tantleff-Duff, 2004; Furnham et al., 2002). These gendered differences are important in predicting the manifested behavior based on one's perception of self to comply with the sociocultural ideal.

Of the sociocultural pressures, media is described as the strongest (Blowers et al., 2003; Yamamiya et al., 2004; Agliata & Tantleff-Duff, 2004; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Clay et al., 2005; Morrison et al., 2004; Burnette et al., 2017). A study that showed 20 idealized bodies to women found that even 5 minutes of exposure to idealized imagery resulted in negative body image (Yamamiya et al., 2004). Although experimental environments do not replicate the settings of daily-life exposure, they help determine that effects in a natural environment would be greater and more rooted. Social media's features exacerbate this result through increased exposure and accessibility to the ideal on a device often viewed multiple times a day; the more it is used, the larger the negative impact (Marengo et al., 2017). This becomes especially problematic among adolescents, social media's most salient users (Marengo et al., 2017; Vuong et al., 2021). Risk of exposure increases on sites centered on image-based content, or highly visual social media (HVSM) in comparison to those that are text-based.

Internalization

Not everyone is equally affected by sociocultural ideals. Internalization mediates the relationship between the ideal and body dissatisfaction, or how much individuals establish the ideal as a personal standard (Thompson & Stice, 2001; Clay et al., 2005). In a study of majorly Caucasian primary school girls, internalization fully mediated the relationship between sociocultural pressures and dissatisfaction (Blowers et al., 2003). Thus, as internalization increases, responses to sociocultural pressures become self-afflictive (Vartanian, 2012).

Social comparison, or the process by which individuals process social information to establish similarities and differences between themselves and others, mediates internalization (Kramer et al., 2008; Blowers et al., 2003; Fuller-Tyskiewicz, 2019). A study that tracked individuals' comparisons throughout their day found a strong negative effect due to upward comparisons (or comparisons to someone perceived as superior), regardless of the trait compared (Fuller-Tyskiewicz, 2019). Due to the unattainability of the ideal, physical comparisons are naturally directed upward, producing feelings of inferiority. As self-evaluation worsens, one thinks less highly of themselves and, consequently, of their own body; the ideal is then internalized and set as a goal to attempt to raise body image. Because adolescents are in a personality-forming phase of life, their comparisons with others are essential in identity and opinion formation. Thus, due to the importance of body image in their identity (Markey, 2010; Kuck et al., 2021; Fuller-Tyskiewicz et al., 2019; Clay et al., 2005; Opara & Santos, 2019), the constant exposure and increased likelihood to compare could increase both present and online comparisons. This corresponds with Festinger's Social Comparison Theory (1954), as the need to determine one's identity in society is satiated through comparisons (Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Jones & Buckingham, 2005; Morrison et al., 2004; Marengo et al., 2017)

Self-Concept Clarity

Although these identity-related elements have undergone earnest research, self-concept clarity's relation with body satisfaction remains widely unknown. Self-concept clarity is the extent to which the contents of an individual's self-concept are defined and stable (Campbell et al., 1996). A study by Vartanian and Dey found that as self-concept decreased, comparisons and internalization increased (2013). In the case of comparisons, because people do not have a clear sense of their traits, those low in self-concept clarity seek to define them through external sources (Carter & Vartanian, 2021). As these traits are related to identity, body image becomes affected by lower self-concept, especially in adolescents who are forming their identity. The fact that this variable is restrained to Vartanian's adult-based studies thus emphasizes the need for further expansion (Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Vartanian, 2009; Carter & Vartanian, 2021; Vartanian & Hayward, 2019; Campbell et al., 1996).

Body Dissatisfaction

The internalization of societal ideals through sociocultural pressures, moderated by personal factors, leads to the consequent discrepancy viewed between the actual and ideal body. The focus placed on the body due to the sociocultural ideal and the frequent comparisons against it causes a constant examination of the body, exaggerating the importance of physicality and emphasizing perceived flaws. Body Dissatisfaction can be explained through the Self-Discrepancy Theory (Higgins, 1989), describing the perceived discrepancy between the actual body and the ideal one. If the area of dissatisfaction is considered malleable, it can encourage actions to change that body part, usually manifesting in dieting or exercising (Stice & Whitenton., 2002; Blowers et al., 2003; De Carvahlo et al., 2020; Leal et al., 2020; Markey, 2010; Quittkat et al., 2019; Jones & Buckingham, 2005; Furnham et al., 2002). These behaviors can develop into disordered eating patterns or surplus weight (Leal et al., 2020; Thompson & Stice, 2001; Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Vuong et al., 2021; Morrison et al., 2004). A longitudinal study of 1,156 teens from São Paulo, Brazil, found that 25.6% of the sample wanted to alter their weight, considering themselves overweight in the case of girls and underweight in boys (Leal et al., 2020). Similarly, Furnham et. al found the same pattern among adolescents, with 69% of

females desiring thinness and 37% of males desiring to be heavier (2002). Women's body dissatisfaction is substantially higher than men's, but it is still prevalent within the latter (Furnham et al., 2002; Quittkat et al., 2019; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Kostanski & Gullone, 1998; Jones & Buckingham, 2005; Vartanian, 2009, 2012; Opara & Santos, 2019).

Within the literature, most studies used majorly white samples. Latinos and Hispanics are one of the fastest-growing minority groups in the United States, yet Hispanic-centered research remains limited (Opara & Santos, 2019; Grabe & Hyde, 2006). This leaves a gap in the research, as cultures and variables like acculturation, objectification of Latinos in the media, and ethnic identity can specifically affect this group (Opara & Santos, 2019). In the study that defined Self Concept Clarity, Western culture valued qualities of identity more than the East, increasing their SCC (Campbell et al., 1996), identifying culture's relevance across other internal variables.

Conclusion

This literature provides an overview of the process and predictive factors of BD. Through examining sociocultural pressures, one can view the causes for dissatisfaction and the distinct way in which they affect different ages and sexes. This literature also offers insight into the growing issue of social media and how its dismissal in research could prove to be detrimental, especially to adolescents. Examining internalization and related values define who is affected, specifically shedding light on a new, overlooked variable: Self-concept clarity. The nature of this dimension of identity could further unravel body dissatisfaction, especially through understanding its relation to the well-established concept of comparisons. Further, Hispanic subgroups are understudied, despite their growing prevalence as a minority and their culture-specific factors. For this reason, investigations focused on levels of BD and sociocultural impacts in a Hispanic sample, analyzing how SCC and self-comparisons might have mediated sociocultural factors. Further, hypothesizing that SNS use would increase BD, analyzing social media usage was essential to the study.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to examine the levels of body dissatisfaction and sociocultural impacts in Hispanic adolescents, as moderated by self-concept clarity, SNS use, and physical comparisons. To collect this data, 3 quantitative questionnaires and 1 visual scale were used, including quantitative questions concerning SNS use. Students were required to specify sex in order to differentiate the body ideal between males and females. Students were also asked to provide their race and the Hispanic and/or Latino country they originate from to create specific subgroups under the Hispanic and/or Latino umbrella and analyze similarities and differences between cultures. An international language magnet high school in Coral Gables, Florida, with a total of 382 students, was chosen for this study due to the Hispanic majority, with 85% Hispanic, 12% White, 1% Black, 1% Asian, and 1% Multiracial students in the total student body. Of the student body, 218 students are female (57%) and 160 are male (43%). There are 78 (20.3%) students in 9th grade, 110 (28.6%) in tenth grade, 98 (25.5%) in 11th grade, and 96 (25%) in 12th grade. The sample's age range of 14-19 years corresponded with the study target of body dissatisfaction among adolescents. The target of this study differs from that of past examinations in the literature with its use of a Hispanic sample, which is uncommon in the largely white-focused field of study of body dissatisfaction, as well as its relationship with SNS and SCC. Further, the Hispanic, adolescent sample builds upon the existing self-concept clarity research and its relationship with BD, expanded upon by the examination of physical comparisons

Participants

A total of 267 people participated in the study, with 40 responses removed due to suspicious answers and inability to complete parental-consent forms on time; in total, 227 respondents were used for the study. The ages of the participants

ranged between 14 and 19; 19.3% were in 9th grade, 28.2% in 10th grade, 27.8% in 11th grade, and 24.7% in 12th grade. 61.2% of the sample was female and 38.3% was male due to there being more girls than boys in the academy. In addition, 3.1% of individuals identified as a gender other than male or female. Included within the demographic questions, the ethnic backgrounds of Hispanics and Latinos were considered. Specifically, participants identified as 46% South American, 30% Caribbean, 16% European (Spaniard), and 8% Central American. Cluster sampling was utilized to ensure that students from different ethnicities, educational levels, ages, and abilities had access to the study, creating a diverse sample population. In this case, Language Arts classes throughout all 9th-12th grade levels were chosen to distribute questionnaires due to the fact that all grade levels are required to complete the course each year. Additionally, learning abilities differed in each class due to the inclusion of ESL and Learning Challenged students.

Measures

Sociocultural Influence

Sociocultural Influence was measured using the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ-4), the most recent revision based on the limitations of past SATAQ scales (Schaefer et al., 2015) (Appendix A). The 24-item scale measures an individual's concerns about their physical appearance based on outside influences that can be described through the Tri-Partite Model (family, peers, and media); it uses a 5-point Likert scale, labeled from 1 (definitely disagree) to 5 (definitely agree). The scale is prevalent in the field of research, being commonly used in recent studies (eg. Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al., 2019; Vuong et al., 2021). Past validity tests completed, Schaefer et al. also found SATAQ-4's further reliability as a predictor of body dissatisfaction-related complications, the questionnaire even accurately predicting cut-off scores between healthy and eating-disordered individuals (2019).

Body Dissatisfaction

Levels of body dissatisfaction were measured using the Figure Rating Scale (Stunkard et al., 1983), which has been cited around 2,863 times since its inception (Appendix B). The scale consists of 9 visuals for men and women each, the drawing portraying bodies that progressively increase in weight, going from 1 (thinnest) to 9 (heaviest). The scale measures body dissatisfaction by examining the discrepancy between individuals' answers of what they perceive their body to look like and what they wish their body looked like. Specifically, the present study employed Childress et al.'s adaptation of the scale (1993); this scale fits accordingly with a study targeted at an adolescent audience, as the images depicted are more similar to that of a younger person, creating more accurate results. The use of this scale saw success among a Brazilian, Latino sample, further applying to a Hispanic and Latino audience due to the cultural similarities of Brazil's body standards to those in other Latin countries (Adami et al., 2012)

Self-Concept Clarity

Self-concept clarity was measured through the Self-Concept Clarity Scale (SCCS), as developed by Campbell et al. (1996) (Appendix C). The 12-item scale examines one's knowledge, or lack thereof, of oneself or one's personality traits by using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging between 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) with reverse scoring. Having undergone 3 different tests in 3 consecutive years during its development, the scale has proven its validity and is the only one used in its field today. The scale has also been used in relevance to BD levels, justifying its employment in the present study's examination of body image (eg. Vartanian, 2009; Carter and Vartanian, 2001; Vartanian and Hayward, 2019). Further, when first created, the scale was used to measure cultural differences when it came to defining the self, proving relevant to a study that examined an ethnically diverse sample.

Physical Comparison

To test an individual's likelihood to compare oneself to others, the 5-item Physical Appearance Comparison Scale (PACS) was utilized (Thompson et al., 1991) (Appendix D). Measured through a 5-point Likert scale, the survey helps

determine the frequency at which individuals compare themselves to others in terms of physical appearance; the scale ranges from 1 (never) to 5 (always), and a higher score signifies a higher comparison rate. Not only did PACS fit the context of the study due to its focus on physical appearance, but the questionnaire has also seen frequent use in the field in recent years (eg. Blowers et al., 2003; Shahyad et al., 2018; Mölbert et al., 2017; Dzielska et al., 2017). The brevity of the scale (while still maintaining accuracy) was adequate for an adolescent sample, who might be led to produce inaccurate or impetuous answers when completing longer questionnaires. Teachers also provided a time constraint for completing the surveys in class, making its succinctness key.

SNS Use

SNS was assessed through questions concerning lifestyle habits, specifically concerning the frequency with which SNS was used (Appendix E). The questions were adapted from a study concerning younger girls and their social media use, but the questions are not gender-specific and can apply to both females and males (Burnette et al., 2017). Burnette et al.'s study was verbal, so as to accommodate the digital format of this study, questions were adapted quantitatively to facilitate data analysis. Participants were requested to answer whether or not they used social media with Yes or No answers, later specifying SNS sites in order to indicate which ones were used; HVSM, such as Instagram, Snapchat, or TikTok, were specified due to their relevance in exposing individuals to appearance-focused content, as well as less visual networking sites, such as Twitter or Reddit, as the less exposure to visual content could also result in different results when it comes to one's opinions on their body. An estimate of individuals' SNS usage frequency was requested by providing options concerning time, the lowest being "less than 10 minutes" and the highest being "more than 5-7 hours"; due to adolescents' proven saliency concerning SNS use, hour estimates were increased as to provide more accurate answers (Vuong et al., 2021; Burnette et al., 2017)

Procedures

A survey consisting of the previously stated scales and questionnaires, including additional demographic questions, was formulated and distributed in the school of choice and was limited to the Hispanic and Latino populations. A field test occurred before the surveys were distributed to the rest of the students to identify errors or possible confusion. Before distribution, digital parental consent forms (Appendix F) became accessible and required of all participants who desired to participate, both distributions occurring on February 3rd. Before the surveys were released to the entire school in February, they began to be distributed in augmenting groups of different 9th and 12th graders. As the test groups took the survey, certain questions and questionnaires had to be modified for improved understanding; questions were adapted for clarity, and explanations/definitions of the concepts and terms used in questionnaires were provided after test groups expressed confusion. Surveys were then fully distributed to the rest of the school within 9th-12th grade Language Arts classrooms in early February, including the incentive of 100 community service hours for the completion of all Research surveys. Anonymity was also assured and clarified for students before the completion of surveys to attest for more accurate results sans the fear of shame from the participants. A digital format was chosen for the surveys to simplify distribution and make the studies accessible to all. Certain classrooms provided class time to complete the questionnaires. Incomplete or suspicious answers were excluded from the results with the aim of achieving accuracy, and results were calculated with the use of Excel data.

Results

After responses to the questionnaire were closed, results were averaged in order to analyze and account for the overall sample's levels of the factors examined. In addition to the overall group's average, the sample was divided into several subsections for each scale to determine sex, academics, and age-based differences. Correlations between possibly

related factors were calculated and illustrated based on sample responses. Finally, subsections were also created based on nationalities in order to examine the differences between different Hispanic/Latino groups.

Overall Scale Data

Results indicate that, based on averages on the Likert Scale, levels of internalization of the thin and muscular ideal were 3.2 and 3 respectively (Figure 1). Levels of perceived pressure from family and peers were below the intermediate, with media being significantly higher at 3.2 (Figure 1). Numbers between 0 and 3 represented minor to intermediate internalization and perceived pressures, while values between 3 and 5 showed higher levels of the factors.

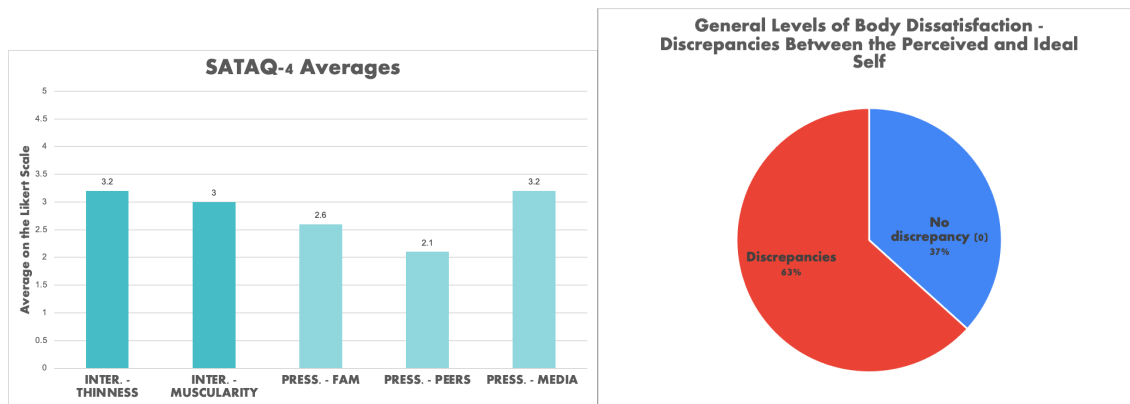


Figure 1

Figure 2

Overall, based on the Likert Scale, levels of self-concept clarity (SCC) stood at an average of 3 (Figure 3). Levels of self-concept clarity among the sample averaged at 3 (Figure 4), and , 98% of the sample used SNS, while 2% did not (Figure 5).

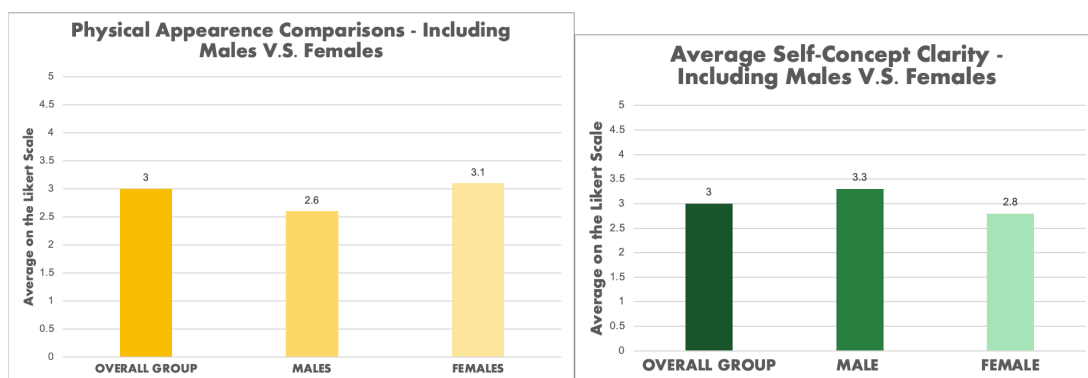


Figure 3

Figure 4

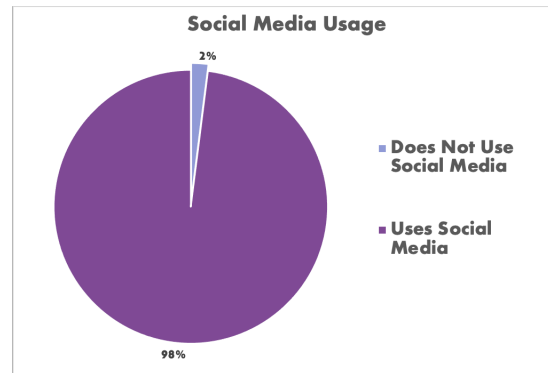


Figure 5

Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance

As seen in Figure 1, on average, levels of internalization within the sample were intermediate. Perceived pressure from family and peers fell below the median, while pressure from the media stood at the intermediate. Females displayed higher levels of the internalization of thinness and males of the muscular ideal (Figure 6). On the basis of pressures, levels were generally higher among females (Figure 7).

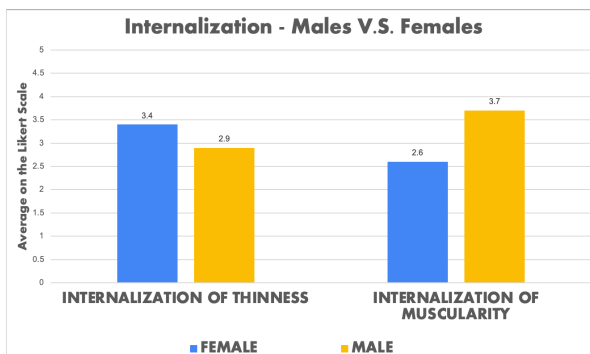


Figure 6

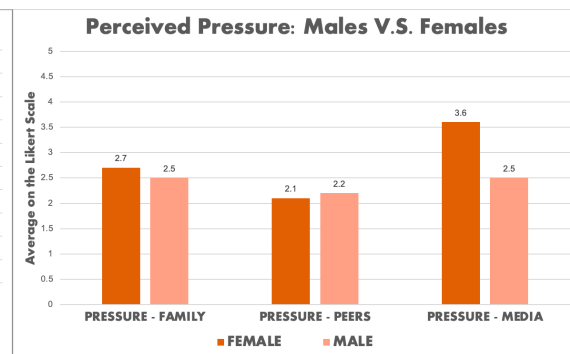


Figure 7

Levels of internalization and perceived pressures remained similar throughout age groups. Levels of the internalization of the thin ideal were higher among 15–17-year-olds (Figure 8). Perceived pressures displayed similar patterns (Figure 9).

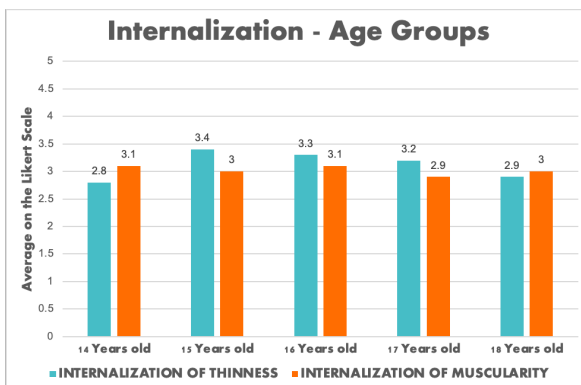


Figure 8

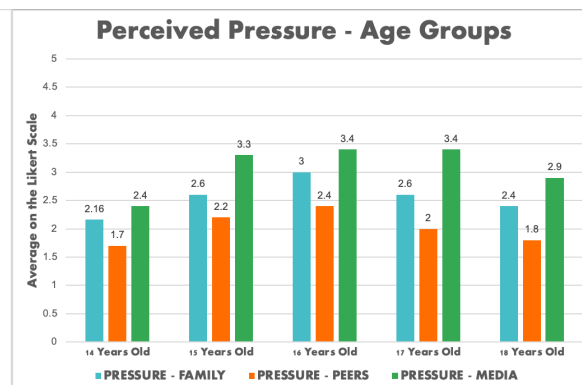


Figure 9

Based on nationality, all internalization averaged at or above 3 (Figure 10). Pressure from the media averaged the highest among all nationalities. Caribbean countries displayed the highest perceived pressure from family (Figure 11).

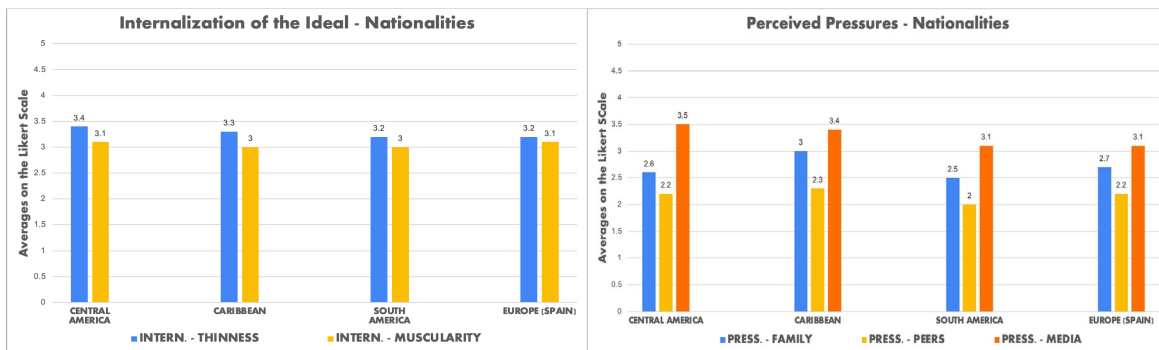


Figure 10

Figure 11

Body Dissatisfaction

As seen in Figure 12, the majority of the sample experienced small discrepancies, with differences between the perceived and the ideal ranging between 1 and 2. Moderate and larger discrepancies made up the minority of the sample. On the basis of sex, females displayed higher levels of body dissatisfaction, with the males averaging higher than females on the amount of no perceived discrepancies (Figure 13). When divided into age groups, the youngest individuals averaged the highest when it came to no discrepancies. While moderate and large discrepancies remained as the minority, 15–17-year-olds displayed the highest total averages for discrepancies (Figure 14). Based on the nationalities of the sample, minor discrepancies made up the majority across all groups, with South America containing the highest percentage; patterns remained mostly similar across subgroups (Figure 15)

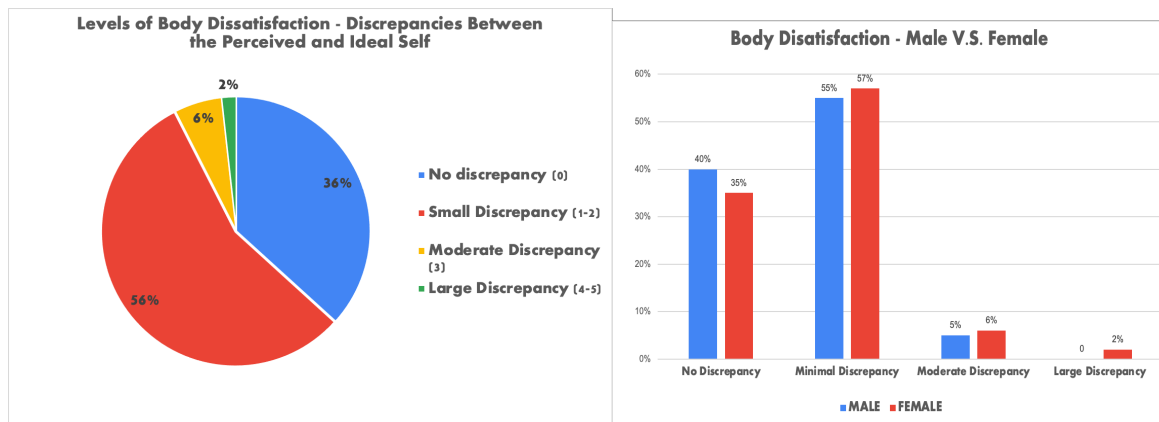


Figure 12

Figure 13

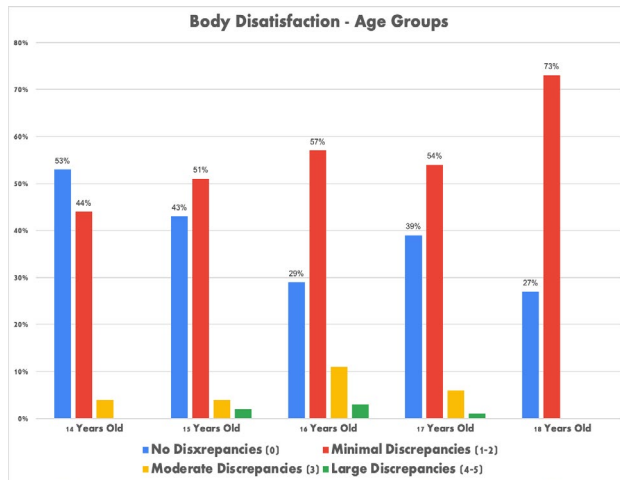


Figure 14

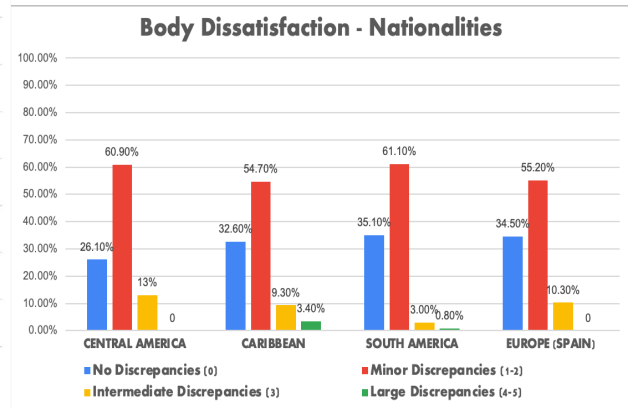


Figure 15

Self-Concept Clarity

Average levels of self-concept clarity within the sample were intermediate; as shown in Figure 4, males displayed higher levels of SCC than females. When divided into age groups, 14-year-olds displayed the highest levels of SCC; 17 and 18-year-olds followed closely, but 15 to 16-year-olds displayed the lowest averages (Figure 16). When divided by nationalities, little differences were found among subgroups; South American countries contained the highest self-concept clarity, while Central America displayed the lowest (Figure 17).

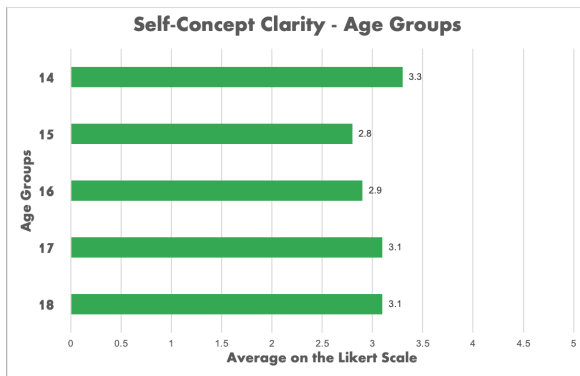


Figure 16

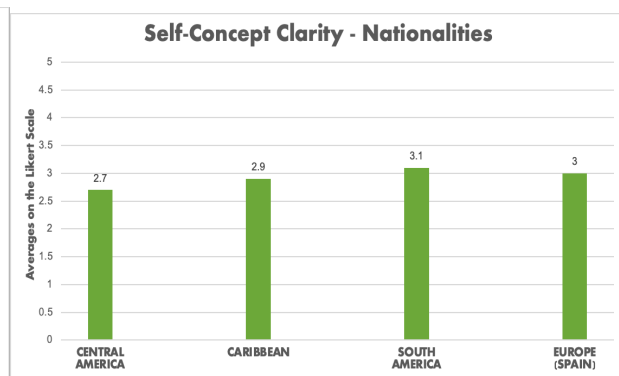


Figure 17

Self-Concept Clarity was also correlated with the average internalization and perceived pressures of the group. A negative correlation was found between self-concept clarity and internalization at $r = -0.3$ (Figure 18). A negative correlation was also found between SCC and perceived pressures at $r = -0.6$ (Figure 19).

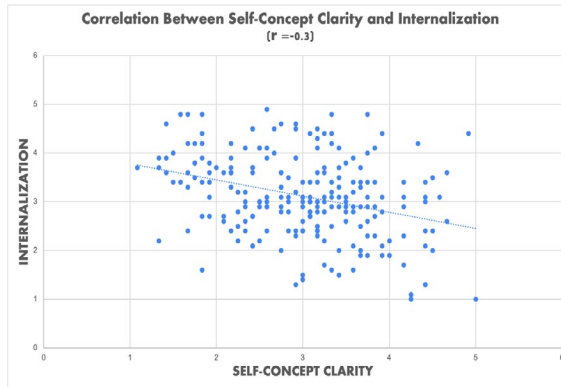


Figure 18

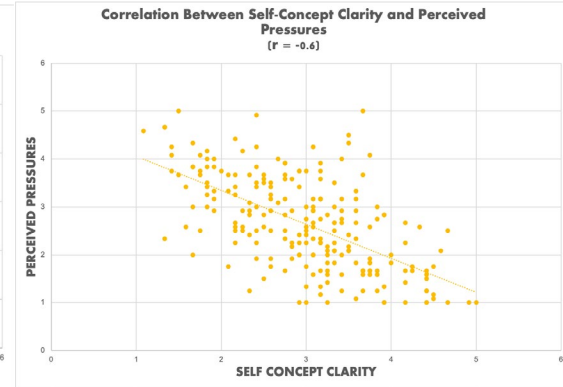


Figure 19

Physical Appearance Comparisons

Figure 3 displayed moderate levels of physical appearance comparisons among the samples; between males and females, females compared themselves at a higher degree than males. When divided by age groups, results did not largely differ, but 15-to-16-year-olds displayed the highest levels of negative factors (Figure 20). Figure 20

When considering different nationalities, levels of physical comparisons remained similar amongst groups, with Spain and Caribbean countries, displaying the highest levels (Figure 21).

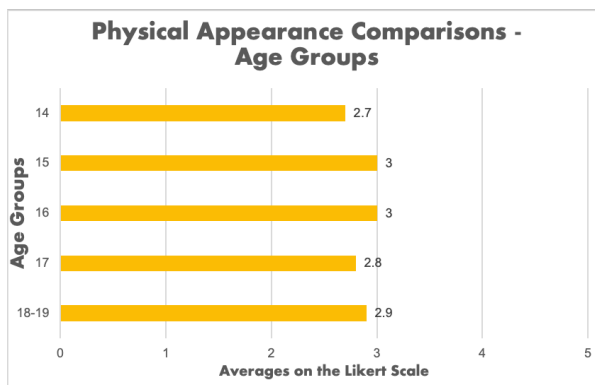


Figure 20

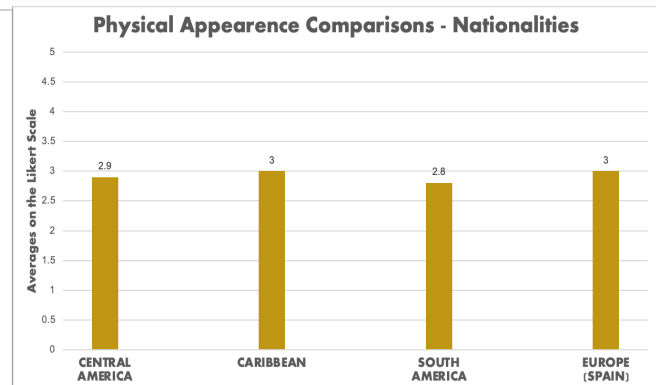


Figure 21

Correlational relationships were also found between physical comparisons and other factors tested. A positive correlation of $r = 0.4$ was found between physical appearance comparisons and internalization (Figure 22). When correlated with perceived pressures, a positive correlation was found at $r = 0.6$ (Figure 23). In addition, physical comparisons and SCC were correlated, showing a correlation at $r = -0.6$ (Figure 24).

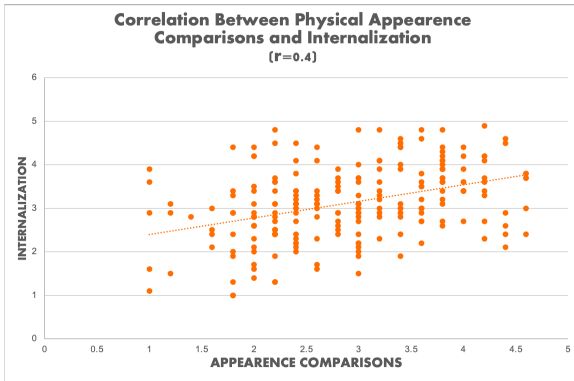


Figure 22

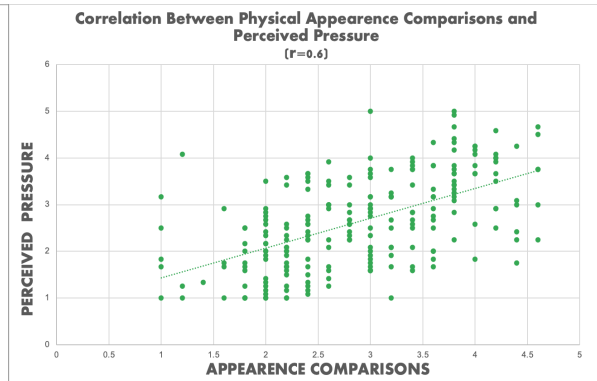


Figure 23

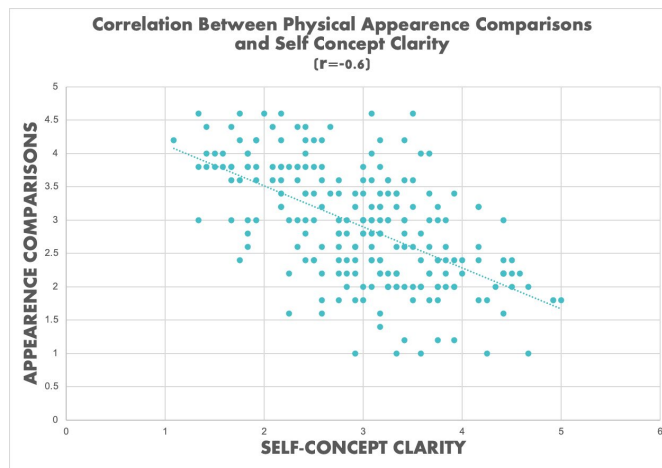


Figure 24

Social Media Usage

Most of the sample used social media (Figure 5). Specifically, 38% of the sample spent 2-4 hours on SNS; only 10% of the sample used SNS for less than an hour (Figure 25).

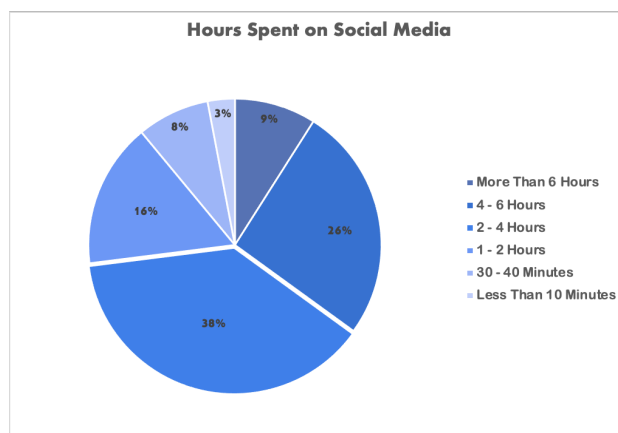


Figure 25

Of the individuals who used SNS, 98% used at least 1 highly visual social media site (Figure 26). Then, it was derived that approximately 64% of individuals had at least 3 accounts on HVSM (Figure 27).

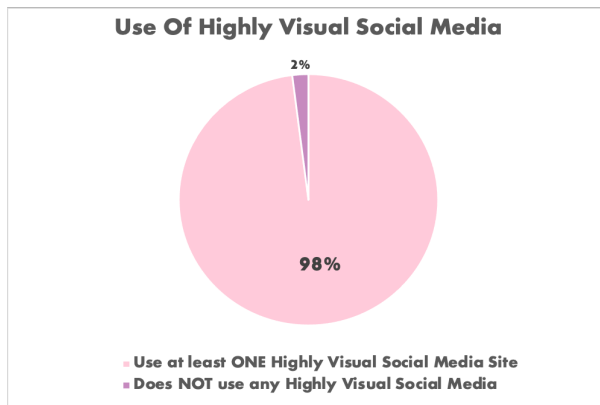


Figure 26

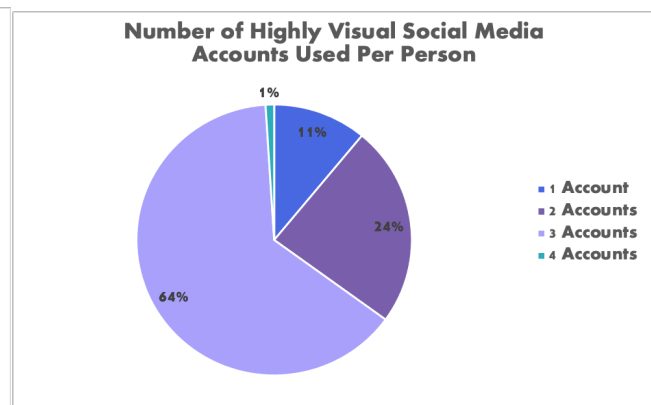


Figure 27

Discussion

The present study aimed to find levels of body dissatisfaction, internalization of the ideal, and perception of sociocultural pressures as mediated by self-concept clarity, physical comparisons, and SNS use within a Hispanic and Latino adolescent sample. Overall, levels of internalization and sociocultural pressures were found at intermediate levels, the strength of media's pressure complying with the literature (Blowers et al., 2003; Yamamiya et al., 2004; Agliata & Tantleff-Duff, 2004; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Clay et al., 2005; Morrison et al., 2004; Burnette et al., 2017). The majority of the sample experienced body dissatisfaction by perceiving discrepancies between their actual and ideal self, though the severity itself was not extreme. Levels of self-concept clarity and physical comparisons were equally moderate; additionally, in compliance with past research, a strong, negative correlation signified that lower self-concept clarity led to comparisons (Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Carter & Vartanian, 2021). SCC strongly correlated with perceived pressures from sociocultural factors but found weaker relationships with internalization; similar patterns were found within physical comparisons. Social media use was relevant due to the sample's high SNS use, abiding with the assertion that adolescents are salient SNS users (Marengo et al., 2017; Vuong et al., 2021).

In general, female participants felt more pressured by sociocultural factors than males. The difference between sex correlates with the literature's concept that females often experience more pressure than their male counterparts (Furnham et al., 2002; Quittkat et al., 2019; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Kostanski & Gullone, 1998; Jones & Buckingham, 2005; Vartanian, 2009, 2012; Opara & Santos, 2019). This is explained by the fact that media's pressure is often heavily concentrated on women (Agliata & Tantleff-Duff, 2004), as well as by the sociocultural belief that women are to live successfully only if their body is ideal (Stice & Whitenton 2002; Blowers et al., 2003; Yamamiya et al., 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001). The literature has theorized that, due to the important role family and peers play in adolescent identity formation, their impact would be larger (Blowers et al., 2003; Markey, 2010; Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Jones & Buckingham, 2005; Morrison et al., 2004; Marengo et al., 2017). Instead, both factors were significantly weak pressures. This might suggest that, although these pressures were still present to a certain degree, an evolution within today's body culture towards body positivity, especially in social media, may have decreased the impact of pressures. Although the reach and effectiveness of body positivity remain limited, its widespread use through social media may have countered the effect of negative body pressures, thus lowering its impact (Cohen et al., 2020). Body positivity culture, though, still requires research within the field due to the under-researched nature of SNS within the field.

Interestingly enough, perceived pressures were at their lowest among 14-year-olds (early adolescence) and 18-year-olds (late adolescence) but increased significantly within 15 through 17-year-olds. Those with lower scores were found within pre-adolescence and late adolescence respectively. Therefore, the literature's concept of adolescent body image trends (Markey, 2010; Kuck et al., 2021; Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al., 2019; Clay et al., 2005; Opara & Santos, 2019) most closely applied to the results of those around 15 through 17 years old. Although many BD studies cluster together early and late adolescence as one (eg. Stice & Whitenton 2002; Krayer et al., 2008; Leal et al., 2020; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Kostanski & Gullone, 1998; Vuong et al., 2021; Clay et al., 2005), the present study suggests that it is imperative to differentiate between them. The differences between these groups could suggest different, more age-specific factors, such as transitioning from middle to high school or preparing to leave home for college, that could affect body image at these different stages of life. Thus, the trends considered for 15-7 years old could possibly be inapplicable to other adolescents.

When it came to internalization, levels of thin-ideal internalization were higher within females, while internalization of the muscular ideal was higher within males, confirming past findings (Leal et al., 2020; Agliata & Tantleff-Duff, 2004; Furnham et al., 2002; De Carvahlo et al., 2020). Across age groups, the same trend identified in perceived pressures continued, displaying the theory's applicability across factors. Further, as these individuals are what the literature defines as those forming their identity, the high value placed on the ideal through internalization displays its use as a variable to define the self.

Concerning mediating factors of internalization, physical appearance comparisons were higher among females than males, displaying similarities to past studies (Vartanian, 2009). Adolescent girls, who seek to define themselves within society (while still placing high importance on body image), rely on comparisons to others to determine their satisfaction with their own looks, as can be defended by Festinger's Social Comparison Theory (1954). Patterns displayed confirmed the notion that more comparisons lead to increased internalization and pressure. While past research has limited comparisons to internalization, identifying it as a powerful mediator, the correlation was weaker than expected. Instead, physical comparisons, an overlooked factor, was significantly more correlated. This presents a new finding as it presents an ignored variable as one that is relevant and a well-established connection as one that was weaker than expected. This stronger correlation could then be explained by the fact that people who felt stronger pressures were more frequently exposed to them, increasing the chances for comparison. The disregard for this variable in the past suggests that pressures today are increasing, becoming more impactful than before.

In comparison to other factors, age group subdivisions found little differences amongst themselves when it came to levels of physical comparisons, suggesting that age is of lower predictive power when regarding comparisons.

This is the first time self-concept clarity and its relation to body dissatisfaction are tested within an adolescent and a Hispanic and Latino sample. Based on the results, males displayed higher levels of self-concept clarity than females, adhering to past findings (Vartanian, 2009; Campbell et al., 1996). Among age groups, a new age-related trend appears; in this case, knowledge of the self is related to the current stage of identity formation. For instance, equal levels between seventeen and eighteen-year-olds could be attributed to the fact that they are the furthest into their identity-formation processes, thus making them more self-identified than 15-16-year-olds. High levels within early adolescence could further be attributed to their recent departure from their tweens, not having yet fully transitioned into adolescence and thus preserving still their younger identity.

When Self-Concept was correlated to physical comparisons within the sample, lower self-concept led to higher comparisons. Thus, as shown through the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954), individuals sought to define the little they knew about themselves by comparing themselves to others. This indicates that findings examined within adult, white samples have resulted in similar findings within this Hispanic and Latino, adolescent sample (Vartanian & Dey, 2013; Vartanian, 2009; Carter & Vartanian, 2021; Vartanian & Hayward, 2019). Similarly to physical comparisons, trends between SCC and sociocultural attitudes adhered to the literature in predicting traits of BD but contradicted it in internalization being a weaker mediator than expected. As with comparisons, this opposes past findings that have focused on the relation to internalization rather than to perceived pressures and thus further presents the necessity to include this variable in the conversation of BD.

In accordance with past studies, levels of body dissatisfaction were higher among females than males (Furnham et al., 2002; Quittkat et al., 2019; McGabe & Riccardeli, 2001; Kostanski & Gullone, 1998; Jones & Buckingham, 2005; Vartanian, 2009, 2012; Opara & Santos, 2019). Across age groups, the pattern in which 15-17-year-olds obtained scores substantially different from the rest was once again observed. In these being the same groups with the most negative sociocultural attitudes, the direction into higher BD is explained through the Tri-Partite model (van den Berg et al., 2002).

High social media use within the sample, with the majority using HVSM, is to be considered when examining the levels of BD. While most of the sample found discrepancies between the ideal and perceived self, the levels of these discrepancies themselves were mostly mild. This contradicts predictions made by previous studies that increased HVSM would cause BD (Yamamiya et al., 2004; Marengo et al., 2017). To further analyze this contradiction, it is necessary to consider how individuals used SNS in the first place. Some studies have attempted to take into account the actions that individuals partake in when they access SNS (Burnette et al., 2017), but studies have failed to analyze the specific content individuals were viewing based on their interests. While HVSM is likely to provide access to images concerning physical appearances, it can also be used to access other interests outside of the realm of appearances.

Throughout the sample, it was continuously shown that averages per factor tended to differ based on the different Hispanic and Latino countries represented within the sample. While the current study did not focus on specific cultural differences among these countries, it shows that these different nationalities cannot be consolidated during studies of body dissatisfaction (Grabe & Hyde, 2006; Opara & Santos, 2019); instead, cultural differences between the different countries under the Hispanic umbrella could be found to differently impact body image.

Limitations and Future Directions

With the use of highly qualified questionnaires and recent scholarly sources, the accuracy of the current research is substantial, but some limitations held it back. For one, time constraints posed by the conduction of questionnaires during school hours limited the allotted time to complete the study. Thus, teachers could only provide a limited time slot to the test, while some did not and made its completion optional with the incentive of extra credit. Not only did this decrease the number of possible participants, but also led some students to complete the questionnaires without supervision and increased the chance of impetuous answers. In the future, it would be ideal to complete further studies under the supervision of study conductors, along with allocated time periods for completion to increase focus and answer accuracy. Time constraints also led to the exclusion of the revised, extensive version of the PACS, instead using it in its original form for the benefit of brevity. While the original PACS (Thompson et al., 1991) is still used today and considered valuable in its field of research (eg. Blowers et al., 2003; Shahyad et al., 2018; Claire Mölbert et al., 2017; Dzielska et al., 2017), an updated study should aim to use its more recent, revised version: the PACS-3 (Schaefer & Thompson, 2018). As established, future studies should aim to understand individual HVSM use based on the user's feed that is tuned to their interests, as having an HVSM account does not necessarily pertain to increased exposure to the ideal in all cases. Related to SNS, the impact of body-positivity culture online should be expanded, as the limited research lacks adolescent samples and thus lacks an understanding of how it could affect their body image. In addition, studies on adolescents' BD should aim to divide samples based on stages of adolescence and specific countries or regions; running separate tests on each group could prove to be beneficial in finding age and cultural-specific factors that impact BD.

Conclusion

The present investigation discovered the repetition of past findings and patterns within levels of body dissatisfaction, tripartite influences, and personal factors within an ethnically diverse, adolescent sample, with significant exceptions.

The current research yielded the fact that Hispanic and Latino adolescents, on average, felt moderate to high levels of perceived pressures and internalization of the bodily ideal. The rarity of a fully Hispanic/Latino sample within the field of BD was found to be a large gap in the research, as new understandings were reached within this sample in comparison to the past. Among these is the predictive power of perceived pressures rather than internalization in relation to variables meditative of the latter. Thus, the current findings expand upon past knowledge. This research also suggests the importance and reliability of self-concept clarity across age groups and cultures. The varied results for every factor between the different Hispanic/Latino ethnicities and stages of adolescence further suggest the necessity of diverse samples within the field of research, showing they must be considered separately and not generalized. Thus, the present research contributes to the limited knowledge of Hispanic/Latino BD realms and provides factors that require further investigation that could prove beneficial to the works of clinicians and social workers specialized in the combatting of BD.

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