

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

Kalpana Raman<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Body image is a growing concern in the mass especially in the young adult females who are witnessing several secondary changes and are striving to establish and sustain their own identity. Dissatisfaction with physical body and striving for betterment has been found to be partly nurtured by our social, cultural norms and traditions as well as the publicization by media. There has been many researchers conducted in this realm. But, the cross cultural variations between India and the USA within the young adult females exploring the role of ethnicity, religion, media, society etc has been less explored. Hence, the aim of the present review was to investigate the effect of various sources in the nurturance of perceived and ideal body image in the young adults' females of India and the USA. Overall, it has been found that there has been dearth of research findings especially in the population selected in this study and that interplay of factors accounting to the discrepancy between perceived and ideal self body image.

*Keywords: Body Image, Cross Cultural, Media.*

**B**ody Image involves self perceptions and feelings about our own body (Hsu & Sobkiewicz's, 1991). The concept of body image is used in numerous disciplines such as social sciences, cultural studies etc., but there is no agreed definition for the term. This is the reason why Fisher (1990, as cited in Bergeron and Senn, 1998) commented that there was no such entity as body image and even the definitions proposed to explain body image were inconsistent and not unitary. The perceived self as well as the ideal self shape an individual's notion of body image. They determine whether an individual is satisfied or dissatisfied with their own physique. There has been a significant increase in the body of literature available regarding the psychology of body image. Thomas Cash (2004) notes that there was a remarkable increase in the citations and research on body image and body (dis)satisfaction in the PsychInfo database from 726 in the 1970's to 2,477 in the 1990's, and then as a final point a journal named Body Image: an "International Journal of Research" was launched in 2004. This increase in literature indicates the relevance of reviewing this broad area by fragmenting it into specific themes and understanding relations between these themes in varied populations.

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Phil., Institute of Behavioural Science, Gujarat Forensic Sciences University, Sector-9, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

Body image is an issue in all developmental stages because human beings are constantly evolving physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially. We are learning every day, and are functioning towards conforming to the social norms etc. - even at an intrinsic level. Factors such as self-perception, social culture, folklores, tradition, family, peer group etc., shape our personality pattern, attitudes, and perceptions about the self and about the self in relation to others and the world which, indeed, shapes our view of body image as a whole. Among the diverse population (different societies), women have always been specifically targeted to conform to the ideal notion of being called attractive. Charles and Kerr (1986, p. 49) commented that “[...]Women are constantly trying to reduce, or increase, their body size so that it will conform to the ideal, abnormally slim conception of female beauty which dominates our culture.” Most research has found that there is no change with age in terms of body satisfaction in women. Over the course of the years 1994-1996, Charles & Kerr (1996) interviewed women aged between 16 and 63 and concluded that there was no difference with age as they all represented similar levels of body dissatisfaction. The major areas of concern (problem areas) for all the women across this age span were the stomach, the hips, and the thighs.

Body Dissatisfaction and having specific preferences for body type (plump or thin) is of particular concern to young people (youth/young adults). Research shows that a negative body image can affect self-esteem and general well-being, inhibit participation in social activities and lead to serious health issues such as depression and social isolation (Australian Government Youth Website, 2010). As a consequence, the Australian government started a new website (youth.gov.au) in which a forum is provided for discussion and motivating young individuals to have a positive body image. Latest developments in the area of body dissatisfaction suggest that women are more dissatisfied with their bodies than men. “It is estimated that 8 million people in the US suffer from an eating disorder out of which 90% are women/girls. And 8 out of every 10 women are not happy with their reflection” (Katz, 2005). Many researchers showed that the majority of human diet at least once in a lifetime to conform to the standards of ideal image. Garner (1997) highlighted that 56% of the women and about 43% of the men who responded to their survey were dissatisfied with their overall appearance and 89% of the women were keen to lose weight.

The above facts illustrate that the major emphasis of the notion ‘body image’ is on the size and the shape of the individuals rather than facial attractiveness. This is one of the reasons to why facial attractiveness has been excluded from the present review. It is usually projected that people who do not conform to the ideals set by society are subjected to stereotypes and prejudice. Starting from childhood, humans are conditioned by their family, peer groups, and the media to be physically attractive. Hence, it is commonly seen that young children do not tend to play with children who are obese and, if they do, they label them with absurd names. These names will be related to a negative body image and can potentially put the obese child in a state of depression and anxiety and cause them to pursue the ideal body image. As mentioned earlier, social acceptance is also confined within the spaces of positive and ideal body. Furthermore, the stereotypes and prejudices continue into adulthood as well, where overweight people are rated to

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

be less active or lazy as compared to slim individuals. Research shows that culture is also an important factor to be considered to explain body dissatisfaction and ideal body preference. *“People who are overweight are likely to find more difficulty in renting property, being accepted by “good” US colleges and getting jobs than their slimmer peers”* (Cash, 1990, pp. 10). The above mentioned studies show that body type preference is reinforced by the factors of shape and size of an individual in a particular culture.

Before further explaining the relevance of the review, it is necessary to outline the concept of “culture” because it is a very broad term and includes various factors such as traditions, customs, rituals, media, food and dietary habits, norms and folklores etc. In order to progress with the literature review related to cross cultural variation, there is a need to specify which factors would be included and excluded from the review and the rationale behind sorting the factors. The Oxford English Dictionary defines culture as the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular group of people or society. From this meaning it can be understood that the term culture includes shared ideologies, customs and traditions which shape an individual, society, and a particular country. This review will be directed by the above mentioned definition of culture to compare between India and the USA. Within this broad definition of culture, we can define the factors that would be considered to show the cross-cultural variation between ideologies in India and in the USA.

Firstly, India and the USA are large countries with populations totaling many billions each. The present review tries to point out the differences between the preferred and the perceived body sizes and shapes in the respective young female adult populations of India and the USA. Both countries have a diverse culture and eating choices which makes it impossible to consider the entire variety and, hence, I will only be focusing on the group of Asian American adult females in the USA.

In 2010, the United States Census suggested that Asian Americans account for at least 5.6% of the total US-population and that they have a different culture from other ethnic groups living in the US. In the present review, I will be tracing the cultural journey from the North of India to the South as well as from the East of India to its West as India is a diverse country with multiple ethnic groups categorized according to their geographical nature. In the present review, the term culture will include three factors: (a) eating disorders in relation to eating choices, (b) the impact of the media in creating awareness and internalization of ideal body images, and (c) the set societal standards in relation to being called attractive. Therefore, the three major themes of the review will be eating choices and eating disorders, media influence, and sociocultural norms.

The rationale behind choosing these particular factors within the broad term of culture is because these three factors illustrate the major role of culture in explaining a perceived body image and creating an ideal body image. A report from 2007 by the American Psychological Association found that a culture-wide sexualisation of women was contributing to increased

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

female anxiety associated with body image. Similar findings were found by an Australian government Senate Standing Committee report (2008) on the sexualisation of children in the media. This shows that media play an important role in creating an idealistic body image for young females. Similarly, two other factors, i.e., sociocultural norms and eating choices, influence the notion of body image in both countries as well. The three factors mentioned above can be interlinked because an individual's eating choices are based on the kind of society she live in and how the media impact in that particular society. Every adult woman is striving to look attractive due to various reasons such as personal satisfaction, family, peer or social pressure. The media and society play integral roles in creating an individual's self-image- whether it is positive or negative. The variables such as socio-economic status (SES), type of media (print, social or electronic) etc., will not be excluded but will be carefully evaluated in terms of the eating choices, influence of media and social norms on the overall preference of body in young adult females in India and in Asian-American females in the USA.

### OBJECTIVE

The objective of this review is to critically analyse and evaluate the literature examining the impact of cultural factors such as eating choices, the media, and sociocultural norms in relation to Body Image disturbances (Body Dissatisfaction at a global level) as well as the ideal body image across India and the USA (Asian-American subculture). In order to do this, a literature review on size and shape preferences and on the impact of culture on internalization of acceptable body preferences in young adult females is conducted in two cultural groups: India and the USA.

### Eating Choices: Role of geography, religion, and ethnicity

Dietary requirements and food habits are culturally determined in India. Indian eating habits are influenced by geography, religion, and climate variations. For example, in terms of geography, coastal population in the South and in East India prefers fish and coconut whereas the population in the dessert areas (West India) prefers lentils and preserves to compensate for the unavailability of fresh vegetables (Ketha, 2003). Furthermore, people from North India prefer wheat as the staple food. As per Hindu mythology, Hindus promote vegetarianism and do not take in any meat products as they attach sacred meanings to animals. However, in other religions such as Catholicism, people do not refrain from eating meat products because of any religious bindings. If the eating choices of Americans are evaluated, it could be inferred that they do not have a typical single cuisine signifying the diversity in culture and ethnic groups. The multiple ethnic groups in the USA are classified according to their geographic immigration (e.g., Asian Americans include populations from India and South Asia; as defined by US Census Bureau). Researchers from Stanford and UC Berkeley (as cited in Kulkarni, 2004) explored the eating choices made by Asian-American and white college students when put in conditions that threaten their American identity. They concluded that Asian Americans made poor choices to secure the American identity by preferring more unhealthy food. The most unique and typical American food is junk and fast food type, coupled with soft drinks. This has negative effects on health such

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

as obesity, heart disease etc. From the study of Asian Americans it can be deduced that over-identification with western norms and values might be a reason for increased eating pathology (Furnham & Alibhai, 1983).

Obesity rates in India are very low (at about 0.5%), and weight-related diseases are generally very low due to the nutritional levels below the recommended levels by WHO. One of the reasons behind low nutritional levels could possibly be that the majority of the population in India lives in slum areas and have a low socio economic status (SES) and, at times, they are even falling below the poverty line. However, when reviewing the studies in the USA it can be seen that obesity and eating disorders are currently important issues of concern. Recent data reported in the medical journal 'Lancet' showed that the BMI is higher in America compared to other nations. This illustrates the need to carefully evaluate the emergence of eating disorders as a result of different or poor eating habits. "The prevalence of Eating Disorders in USA is most common in females 15-24. In a world where "thin is in" and in which the media portrays emaciation as beauty, young woman tend to be first to fall to disordered eating and negative body image" (Lenza, 2011, p.3). However, there is little research focusing on the relationship between eating choices and body image. Food habits, attitudes and social pressure can significantly impact eating choices. Bad eating habits are not just individual choices, they often reflect social pressures stemming from parental concern, peer pressure and/or the media. Research suggests that the female adult populations (18-30 year old) in Western societies are concerned about apt food choices in order to fit into an ideal image (Chambers et al., 2008, as cited in Lenza, 2011).

Traditionally, non-Western societies never valued thinness but valued plumpness instead (Afifi-Soweid et al., 2002 as cited in Soh et al, 2006). Traditional Indian, Chinese, and Arabic cultures are few examples to support the above statement related to feminine beauty (Khandelwal, Sharan, & Saxena, 1995). The preference for plumpness was thought to protect against eating disorders in such communities. In contrast, Denniston et al. (1991) confirmed that the majority of females at college in the East Coast undergraduate institution reported dissatisfaction related to their body. This feeling of discontent was also significantly negatively correlated to an eating attitudes test (EAT) suggesting that as body dissatisfaction increased, feelings towards eating attitudes decreased. This study shows the relation between body image and eating attitudes in young adult female population in the USA.

Much of the research into eating choices/pathology and body image disturbance in ethnic minority groups has been conducted on the African-American group (e.g., Crago, Shisslak, & Estes, 1996); Wildes et al., 2001 as cited in Soh, Touyz and Surgenor, (2011). In comparison to that, relatively little work has been done on non-Western populations. This shows that there is a lack of evidence for reinstating the statements with respect to Indian populations.

**The Impact of Socio Cultural norms**

In a society promoting an “ideal slim body image” it is no surprise that women are striving to look more attractive and to keep up with the pace of the latest trends, and that they constantly change their notion of body image because the society is evolving. A large proportion of the literatures suggest that Western societies, compared to non-Western societies, have always preferred a slim body type. However, the mode of achieving it has slightly changed from dieting to promoting regular exercises. This is a typical example for the notion still being but that the trends for achieving them have changed within the society. The continuous awareness to have an ideal body image have put women in a state of depression and recent research supports this. Current research by Carpenter, Hasin, Allison, and Faith (2000, as cited in Hamilton, 2008) indicates that more women are struggling with their views of their body image, and have found a link between low body esteem and higher incidents of depression. Internalisation of socio cultural norms has been implied to promote an environment of body dissatisfaction in women but very little literature evidence exists that can support it.

McKinley and Hyde (1996, p.183) propose that women “internalize cultural body standards so that the standards appear to originate from the self and believe that achieving these standards is possible even in the face of considerable evidence to the contrary.” This illustrates the obsession to meet the standards set by individual society’s for women to be deemed attractive. It has been proposed that “the typically smaller size of Asian women places them at the increased risk for feelings of overweight and body dissatisfaction” (Hall, 1995 as cited in Wildes and Emery, 2001, p.540). In India, the trend in preference for the female body has been fluctuating due to the way they are portrayed in the media and changes in the society. Traditionally, voluptuous curved figures were preferred over thin angular look until a few years back. Currently, due to a trend reversal in theatres and films, society now prefers females to have a plump body with a curvier figure again.

SES has been negatively related to eating pathology in America as well. Stunkard and colleagues illustrated this by conducting a survey in a population of overweight American women population (see also Moore et al., 1962; Goldblatt et al., 1965, as cited in Furnham and Alibhai, 1983, p. 829). The investigation revealed that “30% of women of lower socio-economic status were obese compared with 16% of women of middle status, and no more than 5% in the upper socio-economic group.” This shows that SES-levels are highly related to body image accounting for the assumption that the upper SES-group has lower incidents of obesity because of ready availability of healthy food, access to fitness clubs etc. Comparing Western society (American) with a non-Western developing society (India), the research suggests that “[...] there is a direct positive correlation between body weight and socio-economic status” (Powers, 1980, as cited in Furnham & Alibhai, 1983, p. 830). In fact, “studies among adults in India (Mayer, 1955), Latin America and Puerto Rico (West, 1974), American Indians (Garb et al., 1975), and children in South China (Chang et al., 1963) and the Philippines (Stunkard, 1977) have demonstrated that an increasing standard of living is associated with an increasing mean body weight” (as cited in

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

Furnham and Alibhai, 1983, p.830). The rate of Bulimic disorders is low in North Indian population as suggested by Bhugra, Bhui and Gupta (2000) because the expectations of female are still guided by their immediate family and society. "One's perception of oneself is very much a matter of cultural conditioning, demands, and social pressures in India." (Agrawal, 1978, p. 116).

All of the above-mentioned studies are suggestive of a relationship between SES, culture, and body image in some way or the other. However, some reviewers argue that reported differences in body image in various cultures and ethnic groups are merely due to underrepresented definition of eating disorders in those cultures. Mumford (1993, as cited in Wildes and Emery, 2001, p. 523) stated that "[...] caution against concluding that a cultural emphasis on slimness and dieting, found predominantly in Western societies, is necessary for the development of eating pathology." Similarly, King (1993) suggested that the differences in diagnosing and recognizing an eating pathology might be due to biases in Western diagnostic criteria as the DSM do not take into account the cultural and religious aspect when listing the criteria.

Overall, in reviewing the impact of socio-cultural factors it can be seen that there are contradicting viewpoints as some researchers feel that cultural factors play an integral role in creating perception of ideal image while few feel that cultural factors do not play a major role. (Wildes & Emery, 2001). Furthermore, it can be said that the studies stated above produce inconclusive results and a more qualitative analysis must be conducted in order to understand the influence of culture in India.

### **The Impact of the Media:**

The role of the media has been underlined in the promotion of the "thin ideal" in women. Researchers have shown in many studies that exposure to thin models in media advertisements effects young women to strive and attain an ideal body more often than men suggesting that media-effects are also gender specific. Linda Smolak (2004, as cited in Grogan, 2008) noted that fashion models in the 2000's were thinner than the majority of US-women. More recently, the US National Eating Disorders Association (2002, as cited in Grogan, 2008, p. 108) noted that "the average US model is 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighs 117 pounds, significantly taller and thinner than the average US woman, who weighs 140 pounds and is 5 feet 4 inches tall." This illustrates that the media tend to create a false ideal which is termed as being attractive.

Furthermore, relationships between the size of females, body dissatisfaction and eating disorders have been demonstrated. As mentioned above, women are constantly trying to fit into the notion of having an ideal body due to various reasons with the media being a contributing factor in promoting this ideal. A recent meta-analysis assessed the results of 25 experimental studies and demonstrated that on average young women feel worse after exposure to thin images than other types of images (cf., Groesz, Levine, & Murnen, 2002). A recent longitudinal study by Stice, Spangler and Agras (2001 as cited in Halliwell and Dittmar, 2004, pp 120) demonstrated that

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

“prolonged exposure to the thin ideal had a negative impact on a particular subset of vulnerable female adolescents.” As of yet, there has been no research on the impact on female adult population. Therefore, results cannot be generalized to the adult population. Wykes and Gunter (2005, as cited in Grogan, 2008, p.109) have argued that “popular print media still promote a narrow body ideal for women that is young, white, and slender, but that they do this in different and more subtle ways to appeal to a more knowing audience than in previous years.” All the research that has been done with respect to media and body image point in one direction- the promotion of the idealism of thin figures. “Both qualitative and quantitative studies show that women and girls report that they do compare themselves with the models in fashion magazines.”(Milkie, 1999, as cited in Tiggemann & Slater, 2003). One of the interesting studies that have been conducted in this field of research on media and body dissatisfaction, reports findings related to the content of television and body dissatisfaction. Borzekowski et al. (2000) noted that exposure to music videos on television correlated highly with body image and predicted body dissatisfaction. An area still to be considered within media is whether the duration of watching television would also predict body dissatisfaction.

Some researchers have conducted experimental studies to investigate the effect of media exposure on body image and concluded that the majority of women showed decreased levels of self-esteem. However, a few researchers have showed that either there was no change in the level of self-esteem or that there was an increase in the level of self-esteem. Hence, the results of the studies in this area of research remain inconclusive. Particularly, analysing the studies on media exposure in young adult females in India and the resultant effect on their perception of body image showed that media has always been motivating women to revise and alter the latest trends observed in society. Adulthood is said to be the prime time in a life span and adult females are sensitive to opinions. It is usually witnessed that an actor’s or actress’s success in the film industry is connected to social norms and mass opinions. Adult females idealize actor’s and actresses to choose their fashion trend and conform to the ideals of “what’s in”.

In India, the trend for media portrayal of women is slightly curvier these days due to the release of a new movie “The Dirty Picture” (produced by Ekta Kapoor, Shobha and Sharan Kapoor, directed by Milan Luthria, 2011). Traditionally, movie actors used to be plump but, recently, the trend has shifted to being size zero and, now, there is a reversal again towards an era when plumpness and voluptuousness were considered to be attractive in India. There was a rise in eating disorders among young Indian women during the phase when size zero was the favorite. A leading magazine in India, India Today group Wonder Woman (2011) quoted that “[...]You’ll be more successful, more beautiful and more worthy of love if you lose 10 pounds and those love handles, is the message of our culture”. The interplay of exposure to these film actors’ images and the cultural message made the young women in India more anxious to achieve the ideal body prevalent in the current year. If the American culture is compared with the Indian, there has been a trend of being voluptuous similar to the traditional Indian portrayal in media. However, currently in the US, media portrayal is focused on the idealism of slimness. “The evolution of



## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

female physical beauty in the history of America has been studied by Englis et al. (1994 as cited in Radhika Batra, 2007, pp.22), from a period extending between 1800's to the 1960's. The era of the mid 80's idealized the fragile and pale looking female body, which in the 1890's graduated to a more fuller and voluptuous looking female body." The current ideal in America is to be as thin as models represented in the fashion industry. Studies confirm that in the United States, curvaceous working women are stereotyped as being less competent and untalented. It is a stigma attached to slightly curvy females because of media portrayal of models (Batra, 2011).

Looking at the media influence on the concept of body image, it can be concluded that there is a plethora of research reinforcing the thin ideal. Cross-culturally, there is a little variation in body preferences in Indian context suggesting that curvaceous women are seen to be more attractive as compared to slim women in the USA. There are very few experimental studies focusing only on the ethnic group of Asian Americans as well as on the various ethnic groups in India. Hence, there need to be more experimental and qualitative studies to investigate the relation between ethnicity, media influence, and body dissatisfaction in young adult populations.

### **Final Comments: Evaluation**

Despite of the growing recognition to study and evaluate various factors of body image and body dissatisfaction, relatively little research has focused on the factors responsible for creating a negative or a positive ideal image in young adult female populations. It is necessary to direct the research attention towards this sample because the transition in the consciousness to strive for attaining an ideal attractive image starts in adolescence and it gets more stabilized during the following years that are termed as early adulthood (18-25 years of age). Very few studies have been conducted on this characteristic sample to be able to provide conclusive results in order to generalize to the whole adult female population.

Secondly, various factors such as facial attractiveness, role of foreign advertisements in an Indian setting, male views on female body etc., need to be considered carefully. It can be inferred from the review consistently that females attempt to achieve the idealistic body size and shape (36-24-36) which is culturally determined. The various reasons are: personal health reasons, fashion trends, society's view, media portrayals etc. However, it is seen that the male's view on the female body image also plays an integral role in body satisfaction in females. This variable needs to be considered in future research.

Thirdly, there is a common misconception that Americans staple food is junk food coupled with soft drinks. This might not be true in all households - especially in households with Asian Americans. Asian Americans consist of immigrants from India, Pakistan and South Asia who are very health conscious. An overall study needs to check the food preferences of different ethnic groups in USA as well as in India. A very important point to note is that the study by Carpenter et al. (2000) found a relation between women's view of self-image and low body esteem and higher incidents of depression. An extension to this study could be to explore the relation

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

between self-images, self-esteem, eating pathology, and anxiety disorders such as obsessive disorders and social phobias. A negative body image can be related to many clinically diagnosed disorders to make everyone aware of a developing negative self image.

More studies related to promoting health foods in women and its effect on adult populations could also be conducted to understand the media influence on body image. A study referred in the review by Borzekowski et al (2000) demonstrated the effect of music videos on body dissatisfaction but it does not provide detail about the type of music videos, cultural construct of the video made, exposure to the video etc. An experimental study could be conducted to investigate the effect and type of music videos on body dissatisfaction. More evidence is required to substantiate that media not only creates a positive image but is also responsible for creating a negative image due to which women use various beauty products, start fad diets, perform wrong exercises etc. In a subtle way media is responsible for creating a negative image on obese or fat women by ridiculing them in comedy serials.

One important factor to note is that, recently, even men are becoming very much body conscious (Baker, 1994). In different cultures, there is a macho image created globally. Therefore, men can also be studied with regard to body image and dissatisfaction.

Overall, it can be said that, even though there is a pool of studies on body image, very few studies focus on Indian and Asian American adult female populations. Hence, with the careful investigation of the above-mentioned loop-holes with regard to sample selection and studies/theories, further new researches can be conducted in the area of body image.

## REFERENCES

- Agrawal, P. (1978). A Cross-Cultural Study of Self Image: Indian, American, Australian and Irish Students [Electronic Version]. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 7 (1), 107-116.
- Anderson, L., J, Crawford, B., Charles, Nadeau, J, & Lindberg, T. (1992). Was the Duchess of Windsor Right? A Cross Cultural Review of the Socioecology of Ideals of Female Body shape. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 13, 197-227.
- Australian Government. Retrieved January 10, 2011, from <http://youth.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>.
- Batra, R. (2007). Beauty and Body Dissatisfaction experienced by young Indian women exposed to foreign print advertisement found in International fashion magazines targeted at women. Unpublished Master's dissertation. University of Nottingham, UK.
- Bergeron, M., S., & Senn, Y., C. (1998). Body Image and Sociocultural Norms: A Comparison of Heterosexual and Lesbian Women [Electronic Version]. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 22, 385-401.
- Bhatia, R. (2012, January 10). Plump can also be Sexy. *Wonder Woman*, India Today Group.
- Bhugra, D., Bhui, K., & Gupta, K.R., (2000). Bulimic Disorders and Sociocentric values in North India. *Social Psychiatry*, 35, 86-93.

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

- Denniston, C., Roth, D., & Gilroy, F. . (1991). Dysphoria and Body Image among College Women. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 12 (4), 449-452.
- Dixit, S, Agarwal, G.G., Singh, J.V., Kant, S., & Singh, N. (2011). A Study on Consciosness of Adolescent Girls about their Body Image [Electronic Version]. *Indian Journal of Community Medicine*, 36 (3), 197-202.
- Furnham, A, & Alibhai, N. (1983). Cross Cultural Difference in Perception of Female Body shapes. *Psychological Medicine*, 13, 829-837.
- Furnham, A, & Radley, S. (1989). Sex Differences in the Perception of male and female body shapes. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 10 (6), 653-662.
- Grabe, S., & Hyde, S., J. (2006). Ethnicity and Body Disturbance among Women in the United States: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132 (4), 622-640.
- Grogan, S. (2007). *Body Image: Understanding Body Dissatisfaction in Men, Women and Children* (second edition). USA and Canada: Routledge, Taylor & Francis e-library.
- Gupta, M.A., Chaturvedi, S.K., Chandarana, P.C., & Johnson, A.M. (2001) . Weight-related Body Image concerns among 18-24 year old women in Canada and India: An Empirical Comparative study. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 50, 193-198.
- Halliwell, E, & Dittmar, H. (2001). Does Size Matter? The Impact of Model's Body Size on Women's Body Focused Anxiety and Advertising Effectiveness [Electronic Version]. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23 (1), 104-122.
- Hamilton, S.R. (2001). The relationship between perceived body image and depression: How college women see themselves may affect depression. *Student Journal of Psychological Science*, 1 (1), 13-20.
- Hsu, L.K., G., & Sobkiewics, T.A. (1991). Body Image Disturbance: Time to abandon the concept for eating disorders?. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 10, 15-30.
- Humes, R., Karen, J, A., Nicholas, & Ramirez, R., R. (2011). Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010. United States Census Bureau. United States Department of Commerce. Retrieved 5 th January 2012.
- Katz, Nikki. (2005). Your Guide to Women's issues, 1.
- Ketha, V., K., A. (2003). Indian Eating Habits. Retrieved January 10, 2012 from <http://facweb.bhc.edu/international/esl2/news/fall2003/articles/indianeating.htm>
- Khadilkar, VV, Khadilkar, AV, Cole, TJ, Chiplonkar, SA, & Pandit, D. (2011). Overweight and Obesity Prevalence and Body Mass Index Trend in Indian Children. *International Journal of Pediatric Obesity*, 6 (2), 216-224.
- Khandelwal, S.K., Sharan, P., & Saxena, S. (1995). Eating Disorders: An Indian Perspective. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 41, 132-146.
- King, M.B. (1993). Cultural aspects of eating disorders. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 5, 205-216.
- Kulkarni, D., K. (2004). Food, Culture, & Diabetes in the United States. *Clinical Diabetes*, 22 (4), 190-192.
- Lemberg, R., & Cohn, L. (1999). *Eating Disorders: A reference Sourcebook* (second edition). USA: The Oryx Press.
- Lenza, C. (2011). Self Awareness of Food Choice and Body Image: A relational Study in the Undergraduate Female Population. Unpublished Bachelor's Work. Social Work Student Papers, Paper 78.
- McCarthy, M. (1990). The Thin Ideal, Depression and Eating Disorders in Women. *Behavior Research Therapy*, 28 (3), 205-215.

## Cross Cultural Variations in Adult Female Perceived and Ideal Body Image

- Mintz, B., L., & Kashubeck, S. (1999). Body Image and Disordered eating among Asian American and Caucasian College Student: An Examination of Race and Gender Differences [Electronic Version]. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 23 (4), 781-796.
- Mishra, S.K., & Mukhopadhyay, S. (2011). Eating and Weight Concerns among Sikkimese Adolescent girls and their biocultural correlates: an exploratory study. *Public Health Nutrition*, 14 (5).
- Parker, S., Nichter, M., Nichter, Mark, Vuckovic, N., Sims, C., & Ritenbaugh, C. (1995). Body Image and Weight Concerns among African American and White Adolescent Females: Differences that make a Difference. *Human Organization*, 54 (2), 103-114.
- Soh, L., N., Touyz, W., S., & Surgenor, J., L. (2006). Eating and Body Image Disturbances across Cultures: A Review [Electronic Version]. *European Eating Disorders Review*, 14, 54-65
- Tiggemann, M., & Slater, A. (2003). Thin Ideals in Music Television: A Source of Social Comparison and Body Dissatisfaction [Electronic Version]. *Wiley Periodicals*, 48-58.
- Wildes, E., J., & Emery, E., R. (2001). The Role of Ethnicity and Culture in the Development of Eating Disturbance and Body Dissatisfaction: A Meta-Analytic Review. *Child Psychology Review*, 21 (4), 521-551.
- 24/7 Wall St- Insightful Analysis and Commentary for US and Global Equity Advisors. (2011, 9 February). *Ten states with the deadliest eating habits*. Retrieved January 10, 2011, from <http://247wallst.com/2011/02/09/ten-states-with-the-worst-eating-habits>.