

Individual and Social Factors That Contribute to Maladaptive Exercising and Eating Behaviors in Individuals

Involved in Greek Organizations

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Introduction

- In one study, sorority women scored higher than non-sorority women on measures of disordered eating, body objectification, and social pressure. (Baskow, Foran, & Bookwala, 2007)
- In a population of undergraduate women, it was found that body shame mediated the relationship between self-objectification and maladaptive eating behaviors which included anorexic symptoms, bulimic symptoms and dietary restraint. (Noll & Fredrickson, 1998)
- Personal beliefs in regards to the body's appearance, body mass index (BMI), and an increase in "fat talk" lead to an increase in disordered eating in college women. (Rolnik, 2015)
- A study of adolescent girls showed that a decrease in friendship quality was correlated with an increase in eating pathology and higher body dissatisfaction within oneself. (Sharpe, Schober, Treasure, & Schmidt, 2014)
- Women who demonstrated high levels of disordered eating behaviors had the impression that they gave a negative impression when engaged in a social interaction with another female. Negative perceptions led to a decrease in social desirability and negative views of attractiveness. (Rofey, Kisler-van Reede, Landsbaugh, & Corcoran, 2007)
- The purpose of this study was to better understand the within- and between-person factors that may influence maladaptive eating and exercise behaviors in members of sororities. For this study, within-person factors included: perceptions of current and ideal BMI, self-esteem, objectified body consciousness, and social desirability. Between-person factors included: friendship quality and body, eating, and exercise comparison.

Hypotheses

- It was expected that the length of time in Greek Life (calculated in months) would be significantly related to maladaptive eating and exercise habits with longer times associated with more severe issues.
- In terms of within-person factors, it was expected that a person's BMI difference score (Current BMI minus Ideal BMI), lower levels of self-esteem, and higher levels of objectified body consciousness would be significantly related to maladaptive eating habits.
- Finally, it was expected that higher levels of friendship quality and levels of body and eating comparisons would also be significantly related to maladaptive eating-related behaviors.

Methods

Participants

- 120 female students associated with Greek Life at High Point University

Procedure

- Questionnaires were administered using the online survey platform Qualtrics.
- Information pertaining to basic demographics and exercise habits.
- Questionnaires included: Current and Preferred Silhouette Measure, Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, Objectified Body Consciousness Scale, Friendship Quality Questionnaire, Multifactorial Assessment of Eating Disorders Symptoms, the Body Eating and Exercise Comparison Orientation Measure, and the Self-Esteem Questionnaire.

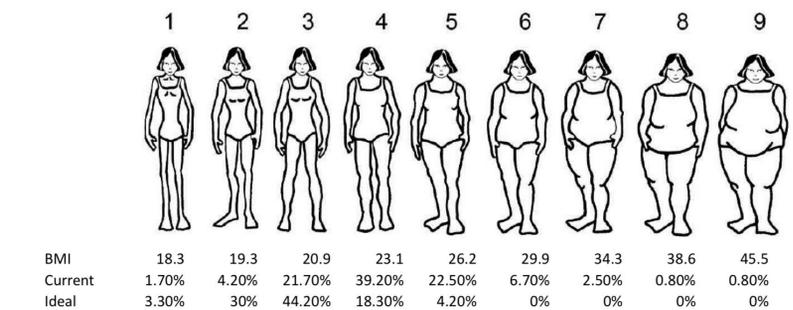
Results

		MAEDS					
		Depression	Binge Eating	Purgative Behavior	Fear of Fatness	Restrictive Eating	Avoidance Forbidden
FQQ	Validation & Caring	r -0.418**	-0.249**	-0.273**	-0.095	-0.260**	-0.260**
	Conflict Resolution	r -0.259**	-0.195*	-0.137	0.023	-0.108	-0.094
	Conflict & Betrayal	r 0.225*	0.198*	0.325**	0.048	0.163	0.131
	Help & Guidance	r -0.278**	-0.205*	-0.117	-0.015	-0.06	-0.174
	Companionship & Recreation	r -0.196*	-0.088	-0.123	0.092	-0.026	-0.158
	Intimate Exchange	r -0.301**	-0.147	-0.159	-0.018	-0.172	-0.151
BEECOM	Body Comparison	r 0.490**	0.532**	0.207*	0.673**	0.521**	0.310**
	Eating Comparison	r 0.378**	0.526**	0.218*	0.622**	0.456**	0.457**
	Exercise Comparison	r 0.384**	0.412**	0.238**	0.581**	0.453**	0.401**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

		MAEDS					
		Depression	Binge Eating	Purgative Behavior	Fear of Fatness	Restrictive Eating	Avoidance Forbidden
Female Different	Body Shape	r 0.308**	0.347**	0.145	0.006	0.195*	-0.05
	Body Surveillance	r 0.333**	0.241**	0.200*	0.550**	0.415**	0.298**
OBSC	Body Shame	r 0.437**	0.462**	0.321**	0.693**	0.579**	0.477**
	Control Belief	r -0.429**	-0.267**	-0.201*	-0.077	-0.282**	-0.065
Self Esteem	Self Esteem	r 0.654**	0.265**	0.349**	0.301**	0.502**	0.171
	Attribution	r -0.295**	-0.258**	0.052	-0.268**	-0.159	0.037
Social Desirability	Denial	r -0.424**	-0.331**	-0.276**	-0.124	-0.355**	-0.09

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).



Conclusion

- The results show that the OBSC was significantly correlated with the MAEDS.
 - The increase in objectified body consciousness (all subscales) was associated with an increase in maladaptive eating behaviors.
- The results showed there was a significant correlation between SDS and self-esteem with the MAEDS.
- A significant relationship was observed between the BMI difference score calculation and some subscales of the MAEDS.
 - A bigger difference score between current silhouette BMI and ideal silhouette BMI was associated with higher rates of depression, binge eating, and restrictive eating.
- The results showed that some subscales of the FQQ (e.g., "validation & caring") and the MAEDS were inversely related.
- There was a significant relationship between all BEECOM subscales and the MAEDS.
 - Most of the significant correlations showed that when there was an increase in body, eating, and exercise comparison there was also an increase in disordered eating.
- Months involved in Greek Life did not demonstrate an impact on maladaptive eating and exercising behaviors. However, the longer someone was involved on Greek Life, the worse the rating of friendship quality.

Future Research:

- A follow-up study could examine if there are differences amongst groups of people not wanting to rush, intending to rush, and already affiliated to see if people who exhibit disordered eating habits are more prone to join a Greek organization.

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