

Parental Influence on Body Satisfaction of Women

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BACKGROUND

Body Satisfaction

Body satisfaction is the positive perspective one has in regard to their body image.

- Body dissatisfaction is common in both men and women; however, more predominant in women (Utsaini & Danahak, 1997)
- Roughly 80% of college women have indicated that they have been dissatisfied with their bodies at some point in their lives (Fitzsimmons-Craft, 2011)
- Having a distorted self-image may lead to long-term maladaptive behaviors (Steinhilber, 2020)

Parental Influence

- Parents are more likely to compare their daughter's weight to their son's as overweight, even though boys tend to be heavier (Sheldon, 2013)
- Parents influence individual characteristics in their children, which carry over into adulthood such as the perception of self-concept, which is how we think about our bodies (Sheldon, 2013)

Parental Comments

- Parental communication about the weight of their daughters is more likely to enhance body dissatisfaction (Baker et al., 2000)
- Negative comments are significantly associated with body dissatisfaction along with unhealthy and extreme weight control behaviors (Neumark-Sztainer, 2010)

Parental Warmth

- Warm and affectionate parenting practices are positively associated with well-being (Moran et al., 2018)
- Positive parent-child bonds, can teach their kids to deal with negative comments or situations, which helps with coping mechanisms versus maladaptive habits (Deas et al., 2011)

Parental Attachment Styles

- Primary affectional bond that develops between the infant and its primary caretaker (Ainsworth, 1985)
- Avoidance attachment is described as the intense need for autonomy and the fear of dependence (Wei et al., 2007)
- Anxiety attachment is characterized as the fear of being rejected or abandoned and needing approval or reinforcement when something is not available (Wei et al., 2007)

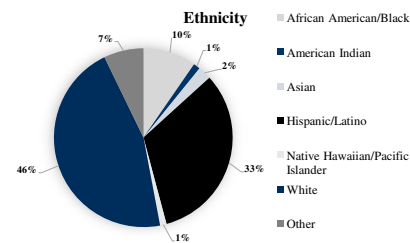
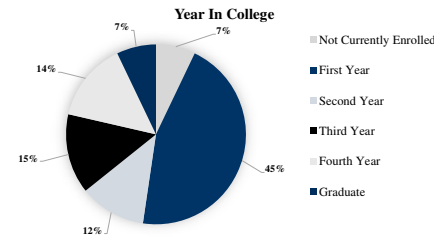
HYPOTHESES

- **Paternal Figure:**
 - Negative comments will be a weak, negative predictor;
 - Interactions will be a strong, negative predictor;
 - Both avoidance anxious attachment will be a strong, negative predictor;
 - Warmth will have a weak, positive association;
 - Positive comments will have a strong, positive association of body satisfaction
- **Maternal Figure:**
 - Negative comments will be a strong, negative predictor;
 - Interactions will be a weak, negative predictor;
 - Both avoidance anxious attachment will be a strong, negative predictor;
 - Warmth will be a strong, positive predictor;
 - Positive comments will have a strong, positive association of body satisfaction

METHOD

Participants

- $n = 84$
- **Age Range:** 18-48 ($M = 20.38$, $SD = 4.75$)



Measures

- **Body Satisfaction Scale:** 14-item measure with a 5-point response scale about a person's thoughts and feelings about their body (Taniguchi & Aune, 2013)
- **Parental Comments Questionnaire:** 18-item measure with a 5-point response scale with 3 subscales – positive, negative, and interactions (Rogers et al., 2009)
- **Parental Bonding Instrument Care Subscale:** 12-item measure with a 4-point response scale on affection, emotional warmth, and empathy in a parent-child bond (Karim & Begum, 2016)
- **Relationships Structures Questionnaire of the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale:** 9-item measure with a 7-point response scale with 2 subscales – avoidance and anxious attachment styles (Fralay et al., 200)

PROCEDURE

- Participants were General Psychology students and individuals who saw postings on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Participants were directed to Qualtrics to complete an anonymous survey
 - Participants completed screening questions to ensure they identify as a women and have an ongoing relationship with both a paternal and maternal figure
 - Participants completed a measure on their perceived body satisfaction
 - Participants completed measures on parental comments, parental warmth, and parental attachment style for both paternal and maternal figures
 - Paternal and maternal measures were counterbalanced

RESULTS

Multiple Regression

Two separate multiple regressions were ran for paternal and maternal figures

Body Satisfaction

- $M(SD) = 3.03(.86)$

Paternal Figure

Means, Standard Deviations, β , and p -values

Variables	M(SD)	β	p
Paternal Positive Comments	3.33(1.11)	.15	.21
Paternal Negative Comments	1.52(.80)	-.13	.30
Paternal Interactions	1.57(.90)	-.05	.76
Paternal Warmth	1.06(.87)	-.12	.61
Paternal Avoidance Attachment	4.08(1.95)	.11	.58
Paternal Anxious Attachment	1.82(1.40)	-.12	.43

- Results were nonsignificant
- $F(6, 77) = 2.00$, $p = .08$
- $R^2 = .13$

Maternal Figure

Means, Standard Deviations, β , and p -values

Variables	M(SD)	β	p
Maternal Positive Comments	3.02(1.10)	.14	.22
Maternal Negative Comments	1.92(1.10)	-.13	.34
Maternal Interactions	2.08(1.10)	-.26	.07
Maternal Warmth	.92(.77)	-.12	.61
Maternal Avoidance Attachment	4.58(1.93)	.003	.99
Maternal Anxious Attachment	1.64(1.17)	-.11	.39

- Results were significant, but no individual predictor was significant
- $F(6, 77) = 3.63$, $p = .003$
- $R^2 = .22$

DISCUSSION

Conclusions

- Our hypotheses were not supported
- The combination of the 6 maternal predictors were significantly related to body satisfaction
 - Individually no predictor was significantly related to body satisfaction

Limitations

- Small sample size
- Used convenience sampling
- Self-report measures
- Lacked age variability

Future Research

- Larger sample size
- Different recruitment method
- Focus on maternal influence
- Identify different predictors that may be significantly related to body satisfaction