

A Systematic Review of Body Image and Related Psychological Concepts: Does Ethnicity Matter?

Beden İmgesi ve İlişkili Psikolojik Kavramlar Üzerine Sistemantik Bir Derleme: Etnik Köken Önemli midir?

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Abstract

Body image is defined as one's own attitudes toward own body, and it is one of the current topics examined in the literature. The aim of this study is to evaluate and systematically review studies about the relationship between ethnicity and body image. A total of 795 studies were found in the initial literature search through EBSCO, PubMed, Wiley Online Library, PsycARTICLES, and DergiPark. Full-text studies written in English and Turkish from 2010 to 2021 were included in the study. During the screening period, studies were excluded that were not in article format, were not relevant to the study focus, used a qualitative method, and showed no importance to the ethnic differences across cultures. After the screening period, 12 studies were selected and reported through PRISMA criteria. Results revealed that 6 studies showed that people from collectivistic cultures showed higher body dissatisfaction; 3 studies showed that people from individualistic cultures showed higher body dissatisfaction; 1 study compared only collectivistic cultures; 1 study did not show conclusive differences toward one culture and 1 study did not find any ethnic differences. General direction of the studies indicated that people from collectivistic cultures have higher body dissatisfaction. Moreover, overall findings suggested that females have more body dissatisfaction than males. However, in Asian cultures males have poorer body images than males from Western cultures. In addition, ethnic differences in body image are influenced by peer-relationship.

Keywords: Body image, body dissatisfaction, ethnic groups, systematic review, culture

Öz

Alanyazında sıklıkla çalışılan güncel konulardan biri olan beden imgesi, kişinin kendi bedenine yönelik tutumları olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu sistemantik derleme etnik köken ve beden imgesi arasındaki ilişkiyi inceleyen çalışmaları gözden geçirmeyi amaçlamıştır. EBSCO, PubMed, Wiley Online Library, PsycARTICLES ve DergiPark aracılığıyla yapılan ilk alanyazın taramasında toplam 795 çalışma bulunmuştur. Çalışmaya dahil etme kriteri 2010-2021 yılları arasında İngilizce veya Türkçe yazılmış tam metin çalışmalar olup, tarama sürecinde makale formatında olmayan, araştırma odağıyla ilgili olmayan, nitel bir yöntem kullanan ve kültürler arası etnik farklılıklara önem vermeyen çalışmalar derlemeye dahil edilmemiştir. Tarama sonucunda elde edilen 12 çalışma PRISMA kriterlerine göre rapor edilmiştir. Sonuçlara bakıldığında, 6 çalışmaya göre kolektivist toplumlarda yaşayan bireylerin, 3 çalışmaya göre ise bireysel toplumlarda yaşayanların beden memnuniyetsizliğinin daha fazla olduğu görülmüştür. Bu çalışmaların yanı sıra, 1 çalışma sadece kolektivist toplumları karşılaştırmıştır. Ayrıca incelenen 1 çalışmada belirli bir kültüre yönelik farklılıklara dair nihai bir sonuca varılamamışken, 1 çalışmada da bireylerin beden algısında herhangi bir etnik farklılık bulunmamıştır. Derlenen çalışmaların bulgularına genel olarak bakıldığında, kolektivist toplumlarda yaşayan bireylerin beden memnuniyetsizliğinin daha yüksek olduğu görülmüştür. Bununla birlikte, ortaya çıkan bulgulara göre kadınlar erkeklerden daha fazla beden memnuniyetsizliği yaşamaktadırlar. Ancak Asya kültürlerinde erkekler batı kültürüne kıyasla daha zayıf beden imgesine sahiptirler. Ek olarak, beden imgesi ile ilgili ortaya çıkan etnik farklılıklar akran ilişkilerinden etkilenmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Beden imgesi, beden memnuniyetsizliği, etnik grup, sistemantik derleme, kültür

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BODY image is one of the current popular research themes. It is examined and explained by various researchers in the literature (Cash 2004). Body image is defined as the “inside views” about the body (Cash 2004), people’s own attitudes towards their bodies in accordance with size, shape, aesthetics (Cash et al. 1997) and thoughts about attractiveness (Muth and Cash 1997). It is a multidimensional concept including attitudinal (e.g., body dissatisfaction), perceptual (e.g., distorted beliefs about body size), and behavioral (e.g., trying to lose weight with some supplements) features (Verplanken and Velsvik 2008). Body image may conceptually be divided into two dimensions: Positive and negative body image (Tylka 2011). Positive body image is defined as people’s being in peace with their physical selves (Tylka 2011) and people with positive body image find being and looking like themselves important (Holmqvist and Frisén 2012). Menzel and Levine (2011) stated that positive body image includes three components: being appreciative of appearance and functionality; being aware and attentive to body experiences; and the ability to cope with threats to positive body image. In contrast, negative body image includes negative emotions and thoughts about one’s own body (Tylka 2011). Moreover, ideal body image refers to one’s preferred body type based on a group in which an individual is part of such as ethnic groups (Martin 2010). It can be affected by modeling industry, media, video games and can be learnt at a very young age through toys (Martin 2010). Of interest, body dissatisfaction was defined as negative evaluations of one’s physical body (Stice and Shaw 2002) and it includes the perceived discrepancy between actual and ideal body (Grogan 2016).

Negative body image should be carefully considered due to its relationship with some psychological problems. For instance, body image issues including body dissatisfaction could be a risk factor for depressive mood and low self-esteem in adolescents (Paxton et al. 2006) and eating disorders (ED) (Stice and Shaw 2002, Beato-Fernández et al. 2004, Verplanken and Velsvik 2008). Moreover, evidence showed that negative body image significantly predicted suicidal ideation in adolescents (Brausch and Muehlenkamp 2007). Besides, a study conducted with women experiencing polycystic ovary syndrome (Kogure et al. 2019) showed that body dissatisfaction was associated with sexual dysfunction. In addition, Aderka et al. (2014) found that increased social anxiety disorder symptoms were significantly associated with body image disturbance. Unfortunately, several studies indicated that negative body image perception increased over time for both males and females (Cash et al. 1986, Cash and Henry 1995). However, females were found to be more dissatisfied with their bodies regardless of ethnicity (Demarest and Allen 2000), and this dissatisfaction gap between genders is increasing (Feingold and Mazzella 1998).

A considerable amount of research has examined the individual (e.g., personality) and social (e.g., peer influence) predictors of negative body image and related problems in the literature (Littleton and Ollendick 2003). For instance, evidence showed that family factors may lead to increased body image problems (Littleton and Ollendick 2003). Byely et al. (2000) found that girls’ perceptions for more negative family relations were associated with negative body image. Similarly, it has been found that negative family relations were

associated with the development of EDs (Erriu et al. 2020). Some characteristics of those families were being rigid, intrusive, and intolerant, and they did not provide any room for the independence of their children (Erriu et al. 2020). Notably, body dissatisfaction can also be maintained by frequent appearance-related teasing of family during adolescence (Ata et al. 2007). In addition, negative body image can be affected by being exposed to thin media standards. When individuals internalize thin body standards in the media, they show a decrease in body self-esteem (Yamamiya et al. 2005). Social comparisons and comparing themselves to highly beautiful women in advertisements were found to affect body image (Sinh 2013). People tend to compare themselves with same sex peers and models in terms of physical attributes (Jones 2001). For example, Botta (2003) found that girls who read beauty and fashion magazines frequently had higher body dissatisfaction scores. In today's changing world, social media use (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest) has also an influence on our body perception. Many studies demonstrated that there was a positive association between social media use and negative body image (Fardouly and Vartanian 2016). It is a fact that all media prompted to extreme thinness as a gold standard for beauty in Western culture (Van Vonderen and Kinnally 2012). However, ethnicity may affect how these influences on body image are experienced across different cultures. Moreover, understanding differences on body image among various ethnicities is important to develop effective and comprehensive treatments.

Ethnicity, one's identity through language, religion, nationality, common locations, and appearance (Mateos 2007), has also been investigated to explain body image. Even though race and ethnicity are not synonymous, the differences between them are not noticeably apparent in the literature, and the goal of using them is not always explained thoroughly (Comstock et al. 2004, Baer et al. 2013). Research indicated that some groups showed different levels of positive body image (Swami et al. 2009). For instance, a meta-analytic review (Roberts et al. 2006) suggested that Black people have more positive body image than White people with the biggest difference occurring during their early 20 s. The study pointed out that the gap across ethnicities for weight-focused measure decreased; however, according to more general measures, such as face and hair, the difference increased. A literature review carried out to examine body image issues among Japanese adolescents showed that Japanese adolescents as a result of globalization are now stuck between traditional and Westerner ideals; therefore, they may be more in conflict about body image than the rest of the world (Chisuwa and O'Dea 2010). A recent review study (Kimber et al. 2015) examining body dissatisfaction among child and adolescent minorities in USA and Canada revealed inconsistent findings, some of which showing similarities and some of which showing dissimilarities in body dissatisfaction between ethnic minorities and Caucasians (Kimber et al. 2015).

Acculturation, the cultural adaptation that happens when people from different cultures influence each other (Gibson 2001), may also be related to body image. Ball and Kenardy (2002) showed that for immigrant women in Australia, as time spent in the country increases the similarity to the native Australian women also increases in terms of body related values

such as reported body weight and weight dissatisfaction. In addition, in the same ethnic groups, there can be residential location-based differences. Dixit et al. (2011) found that body dissatisfaction is significantly higher among Indian girls who live in urban and slum areas than girls who live in rural areas. Overall, these findings show that ethnicity and ethnic values may be important for body image perception.

To our knowledge, there is no published systematic review on the relationship between body image and ethnicity, comparing different ethnic groups. The goal of this current study is to fill this gap in the literature. In the present study, the articles starting from the year 2010 were included. The reason behind this time restriction is to integrate contemporary research findings which are expected to be compatible with today's digital age. In the 2010s, people began to spend their time with online media rather than older media including books, magazines, and TV (Twenge et al. 2019). Therefore, the time-limited approach of the present study may decrease the variation which can be caused by the changes in the way we live technology.

Methods

The current systematic review was carried out according to the standards of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) (Liberati et al. 2009) and results were presented using a flow chart (Moher et al. 2009). Systematic literature search was conducted using EBSCO, PubMed, Wiley Online Library, PsychARTICLES and DergiPark databases, during January, 2021. Keywords used in search process were: "Body image OR body dissatisfaction" AND "ethnicity OR ethnic OR race OR racial OR culture OR cultural". Same procedure was carried out with Turkish keywords "beden imajı OR beden memnuniyetsizliği" AND "etnik OR etnisite OR ırk OR ırksal OR kültür OR kültürel" in abovementioned databases as well as DergiPark database. All of them were searched using the "in title" section. Only articles starting from the year 2010 were included due to the goal of the review being contemporary and relevant.

After the initial search, 795 studies were found in EBSCO (n=720), PubMed (n=52), Wiley Online Library (n=5), DergiPark (n=11) and PsychARTICLES (n=7). After 586 duplicates were removed, 209 studies were left to screen further. From the 209 studies, a total of 168 studies were excluded during screening. From the 168 excluded studies, 40 studies were removed due to them being in another format rather than a journal article, such as books, e-books, news, conferences and reviews; 51 studies were excluded due to them being irrelevant to the consideration of the current review such as being about scale development or EDs; 15 were removed because they were written in another language than English or Turkish and lastly 62 were removed because full-text versions were not available. After 168 studies were removed, 41 articles were left and examined thoroughly. From the 41 studies, a total of 29 were removed because either their focus was on another topic such as beauty standards; qualitative research method was used; only one country or ethnicity was examined without comparison or no importance was given to the racial or ethnic topics,

which is the main focus of this systematic review. In the end, 12 studies were included in the qualitative synthesis (see Figure 1).

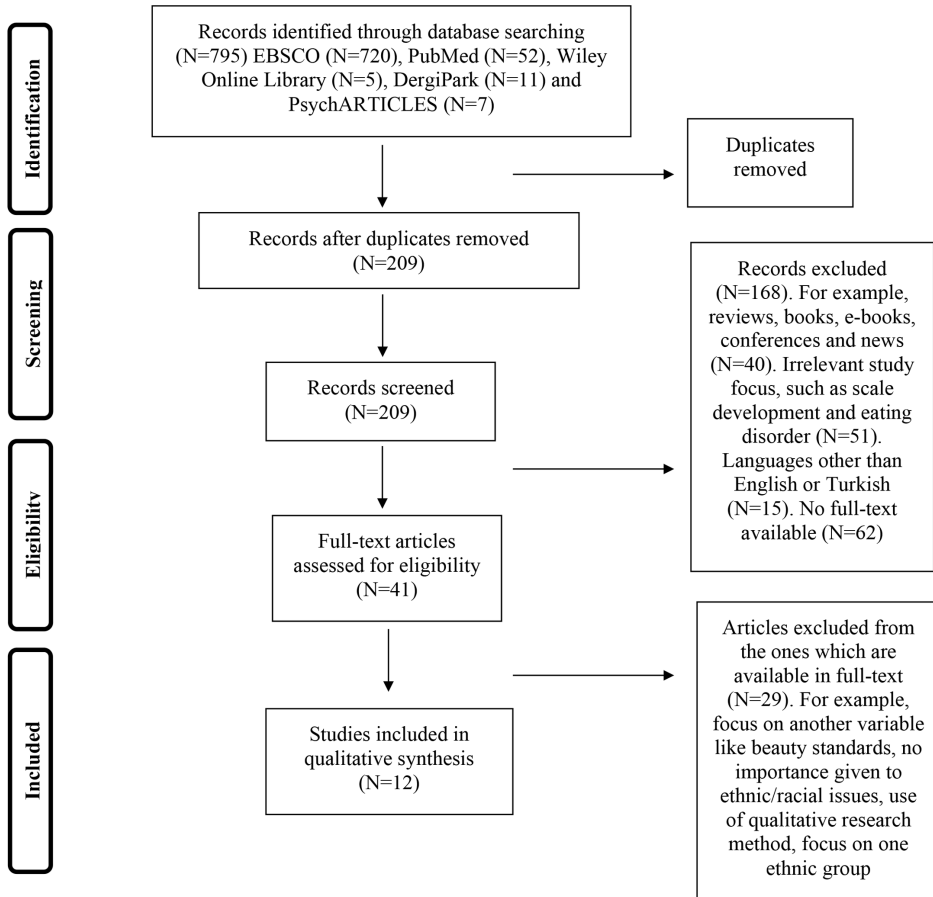


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram

PRISMA: Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses

Results

Via PRISMA criteria, this systematic review provided 12 studies investigating the relationship between body image and ethnicity. They were compared in terms of ethnicity, gender, age, aims of the studies, and results of the studies (see Table 1).

Gender and age issues among different cultures considering body image

Six out of twelve studies were carried out examining both females and males (Heron et al. 2013, Brockhoff et al. 2016, Fahiz 2019, Maezono et al. 2019, Frayon et al. 2020, Gonzales

Table 1. General characteristics and summary point of the ethnicity and body image studies

Author	Year	Sample size	Gender	Age	Ethnicity/race
Talwar et al.	2012	45	Females (N=45)	18-25 years M: 19.8 and SD: 1.4 (Maori) M: 19 and SD: 1.5 (European)	Tangata Whenua Maori (N=20), New Zealand European (N=25)
Lam et al.	2010	205	Females (N=205)	M: 21.03 and SD: 3.02 (Australian) M: 20.96 and SD: 2.96 (Hong Kong Chinese)	Australian (N=65) and Hong Kong Chinese (N=140)
Brockhoff et al.	2016	2614	Females (N=1336) Males (N=1248)	12-18 years M: 15.9 and SD: 1.2 (Japanese) 11-18 years M: 14.9 and SD: 1.5 (others)	Japanese (N=232), Chinese (N=518), Malays (N=100), Australians (N=601), Tongans (N=584), Fijians (N=79)
Mellor et al.	2014	401	Males (N=401)	11-19 years (M: 15.53)	Malaysian Malays (N=106), Malaysian Chinese (N=55), Chinese from China (N=195), Australians (N=45)
Maezono et al.	2019	2975	Females (N=1531) Males (N=1444)	13-14 years M: 13.9 (Japanese) 13-15 years M: 14.4 (Finnish)	Japanese (N=1840), Finnish (N=1135)
Kim and Aubrey	2015	602	Females (N=602)	Overall M: 21.8 M: 20.97 and SD: 2.45 (American) M: 22.73 and SD: 2.79 (Korea)	American (N=304), Korean (N=298)
Baugh et al.	2010	118	Females (N=118)	M: 19.01	White (N=70), Black (N=48)
Forbes et al.	2012	301	Females (N=301)	18-24 years M: 20.59 (Brazilian), M: 20.73 (Argentinean), M: 19.59 (American)	American (N=102), Argentinean (N=118), Brazilian (N=81)
Frayon et al.	2020	699	Females (N=339) Males (N=330)	11-16 years	Melanesian in New Caledonia (N=424), European in New Caledonia (N=239), Polynesian in New Caledonia (N=36)
Fahiz	2019	245	Females (N=127) Males (N=118)	16, 18 and 20 years	Afghans (N=119), Indians (N=126)
Heron et al.	2013	58	Females (N=29) Males (N=29)	5-15 years	Hispanics (%35), African American (%33), Caucasian (%16), other (%14)
Gonzales and Blashill	2021	962	Females (N=482) Males (N=478)	18-30 years	African American (24.5%), White (25.1%), Asian American (25.9%), Hispanic (24.3%)

BD: Body Dissatisfaction, BDD: Body dysmorphic disorder, ED: Eating disorders, BMI: Body mass index, SD: Standard deviation

Aim of the study	Key findings
To investigate the relationship between ethnicity and body dissatisfaction.	Both wanted to be smaller. Body mass was related to body concerns more among Europeans. Maori ethnic identity associated with lower weight concern.
To investigate the relationship between social cynicism and body esteem, and to examine the impact of culture on body image.	Australians were found to be less satisfied with their bodies. Hong Kong Chinese women showed lower attribution esteem.
To examine body image and socio-cultural influences between Japanese and Chinese, Malays, Australians, Tongans, Fijians.	Japanese adolescents have the highest BD and one of the lowest BMI. Identification with modern Japanese values but not Western values increased BD.
To investigate overall body dissatisfaction across cultures, among adolescent males in each cultural context.	Malaysian Chinese and Chinese participants showed higher BD than Australians.
To compare the self-reported body image and eating distress symptoms among adolescents in Japan and Finland; and to investigate associations between psychopathology, body image and eating distress across cultures.	Japanese adolescents of both genders had more BD than Finnish adolescents. Lower levels of peer problem among Japanese females associated with more eating distress. This relationship was opposite for Finnish females.
To examine body image disturbances mediated by cognitive variables and affective variables across cultures.	Koreans showed the mediation effect of agitation (discrepancy between actual and ought body) on the relationship between thin ideal media use and body image disturbance.
To examine the relationship between body image, ethnic identity, and race among black and white college women.	White females showed higher body dissatisfaction.
To examine the body dissatisfaction and behaviors associated with disordered eating between Argentinean, Brazilian and US college women.	Argentinean participants had greater BD than US participants. Argentinean and Brazilian participants feel less pressure to be thin than U.S. participants.
To examine the body dissatisfaction differences between Melanesian, Polynesian and European adolescents living in New Caledonia.	Melanesian girls feel less BD when they perceive themselves as fat. Melanesian boys feel more BD when they perceive themselves as thin. They tend to value fuller body image.
To examine body image between cultures, genders and age groups.	Indians have more body dissatisfaction and feel less attractive than Afghans. Afghans were more concerned about gaining weight.
To examine body image discrepancies in elementary-age children in a racially diverse sample.	No racial differences were found.
To examine the ED and BDD symptoms, drive for muscularity, and APED misuse in an ethnically varied sexual minority sample in the U.S.	It's more probable for Hispanic people to be diagnosed with ED and showed more symptoms of ED than White people; but White people showed more symptoms of ED than both American Asians and African Americans. White people showed more probability of developing BDD than Asian Americans but lower probability than Hispanic people. White people also showed less symptoms of BDD than Hispanic people and more symptoms than Asian Americans. White people showed less misuse of appearance and performance enhancement drugs than Hispanic and African American people.

and Blashill 2021). Five studies were only-females studies (Baugh et al. 2010, Lam et al. 2010, Forbes et al. 2012, Talwar et al. 2012, Kim and Aubrey 2015) and one study was an only-male study (Mellor et al. 2014). Those six studies including both sexes (Heron et al. 2013, Brockhoff et al. 2016, Fahiz 2019, Maezono et al. 2019, Frayon et al. 2020, Gonzales and Blashill 2021) examined gender differences considering body image in different ethnic groups. In one study, Brockhoff et al. (2016) stated that a negative relationship between traditional Japanese values and body dissatisfaction, and a positive relationship between modern Japanese values and body dissatisfaction through media influence was found for Japanese girls but not for boys. Frayon et al. (2020) found that girls tend to feel more body dissatisfaction when they think they are fat than boys do. Another gender difference was found for both Finnish and Japanese adolescents. Females from both countries showed higher body dissatisfaction than males (Maezono et al. 2019). Gonzales and Blashill (2021) carried out a study with Asian-American, African-American, White and Hispanic people and found that women showed elevated risk for EDs than men, while men used more appearance enhancement drugs than women. However, two studies could not find any gender differences in terms of body image perceptions and discrepancies among Afghans and Indians (Fahiz 2019) and among Hispanic, African American, Caucasian and “other” kids (Heron et al. 2013). Overall, considering the amount of body dissatisfaction differences; three studies showed gender differences (Maezono et al. 2019, Frayon et al. 2020, Gonzales and Blashill 2021), two studies did not find any gender differences (Heron et al. 2013, Fahiz 2019); and one study only examined for gender differences in one culture (Japanese) and did not look for a comprehensive comparison across cultures (Brockhoff et al. 2016).

Seven out of twelve studies were done with populations with a mean age over 18 years; five were done with populations with a mean age under 18 years. The most distinct finding was from a study by Heron et al. (2013), which showed no significant racial differences related to body image among Hispanic, African American, Caucasian and “other” kids. Even though the children in first grade showed lower body dissatisfaction than those in second grade, they still did not show any significant difference in the number of feelings of dissatisfaction about their bodies according to their ethnicity. The sample of this study was the youngest among included studies in this systematic review with the age range of 5-15 years (no SD provided), while other studies included participants with the age range of 18-25 (Talwar et al. 2012); 12-18 (Brockhoff et al. 2016); 11-19 (Mellor et al. 2014); 13-15 (Maezono et al. 2019), 18-24 (Forbes et al. 2012), 11-16 (Frayon et al. 2020), 16-20 (Fahiz 2019) and 18-30 (Gonzales and Blashill 2021). Three studies did not provide an age range in their methods but instead provided only their mean ages, which are M: 20.96 for Hong Kong Chinese and M: 21.03 for Australians (Lam et al. 2010); M: 21.8 (Kim and Aubrey 2015) and M: 19.01 (Baugh et al. 2010).

Ethnicity

Talwar et al. (2012) found that, even though both European New Zealanders and Maoris wanted to be thinner, for European New Zealanders, body mass was more related with body concerns than Maoris. For Maoris, the greater the racial identification the greater the body esteem. Lam et al. (2010) compared Hong Kong Chinese and Australian women. They found that Hong Kong Chinese women have lower level Body Mass Index (BMI), higher level of appearance esteem (i.e. emotions about appearance) and weight esteem (i.e. emotions about weight) but lower levels of attribution esteem (i.e. criticisms of others about appearance) than Australians (Lam et al. 2010). A study done by Brockhoff et al. (2016) showed that Japanese adolescents showed the greatest body dissatisfaction level but have one of the lowest BMI scores among adolescents from Chinese, Malaysia, Australian, Tonga and Fiji. Another study investigated the difference between Australian, Chinese from China, Malaysian Malays and Malaysian Chinese male adolescents' body dissatisfaction (Mellor et al. 2014). The findings indicated that Malaysian Chinese and Chinese from China had greater level of body dissatisfaction than Australians, and participants from Asia overall were more dissatisfied with their body than Western participants but while Malaysian Chinese had more body dissatisfaction than Australians; Malaysian Malays did not (Mellor et al. 2014). Another study compared Finnish and Japanese adolescents (Maezono et al. 2019). Japanese adolescents showed higher body dissatisfaction than Finnish adolescents. While greater percentage of Japanese girls wanted to be thinner and Finnish girls are more scared about gaining weight, Japanese boys were more preoccupied about gaining weight than their Finnish counterparts. In addition, Maezono et al. (2019) found that Finnish females with more peer problems showed greater eating distress than Finnish females with lower level of peer problem, which means that among Finnish females having lower level of pro-social behavior could be related with more eating distress. Japanese females with lower level of peer problem showed more eating distress than Finnish females with lower level of peer problem, which indicates that Japanese females with better pro-social behavior were more associated with eating distress than Finnish females with better pro-social behavior. Kim and Aubrey (2015) compared US and Korean female samples and considered agitation and dejection feelings as mediators between thin-ideal media influence and body image. They considered the body image in terms of agitation and dejection feelings; agitation being the feeling of fear/guilt derived from the discrepancy between actual and ought (i.e., societies standards) self, and dejection being the frustration/sadness feeling derived from the discrepancy between actual and ideal (i.e., self-standards) self (Higgins 1987). Only Koreans showed a mediation effect of agitation between media use and body image. There were no differences in terms of dejection and both groups showed similar mediator relationship (Kim and Aubrey 2015). A study done comparing White and Black college female students showed significant results (Baugh et al. 2010). White females showed

higher body dissatisfaction when comparing groups categorically; but perception of ethnic identity did not affect the relationship between body dissatisfaction and ethnicity. It means that identification with an ethnic group was not related with the results.

Argentinean, Brazilian and US female participants were compared in terms of body dissatisfaction by Forbes et al. (2012). Argentinean and Brazilian participants' ideal bodies were bigger and felt less pressure to be smaller than the US participants. Argentineans showed greater body dissatisfaction (discrepancy between actual and ideal body image) than US participants. Others' evaluations about their bodies were more negatively perceived by Argentineans and Brazilians than US participants. However, Argentineans felt less body shame than both US and Brazilians, and Brazilians felt the most shame (Forbes et al. 2012). Results of a study carried out between Melanesian, Polynesian and European adolescents from New Caledonia (Frayon et al. 2020) showed that both Melanesian boys and girls give value to being not thin. While Melanesian boys feel body dissatisfaction when they are smaller than their preferred body image, Melanesian girls feel less body dissatisfaction when they see themselves as too fat than their counterparts with other ethnic backgrounds feel. In addition, there was no relationship between being Polynesian and body dissatisfaction. Another study carried out with Afghans and Indians showed that Indians have more body dissatisfaction and feel less attractive than Afghans, but Afghans showed more anxiety about gaining weight (Fahiz 2019). Gonzales and Blashill (2021) carried out a study with Hispanic, Asian American, African American, and White sexual minority participants living in the U.S. This study showed that Hispanic people have more probability of getting diagnosed with body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) and eating disorder (ED); have more BDD and ED symptoms; use more appearance and performance enhancement drugs than White people. In addition, White people showed more ED symptoms than Asian-American and African-American people; have more probability of getting diagnosed with BDD more than Asian-Americans; have more elevated BDD symptoms than Asian-Americans; and less drug misuse than African-Americans (Gonzales and Blashill 2021). According to the findings of one study, there were no racial differences in body image among Hispanic, African American, Caucasian and 'Other' elementary school children (Heron et al. 2013).

Discussion

Findings of the studies included in this systematic review showed that ethnicity may be an important factor for body image. Some studies examined gender differences and found significant results, considering body image and ethnicity. In one study, it was stated that the more Japanese girls identify with traditional Japanese values, the less they showed body dissatisfaction; and the more identification with modern Japanese values, the more they showed body dissatisfaction through the impact of media (Brockhoff et al. 2016). In their previous study, Brokhoff and colleagues (2012) explained that the traditional Japanese values for women are being feminine, passive, and obedient; for

men being large, powerful but not very apparently muscular, and the traditional Japanese values emphasize more general characteristics than simply being body related values. They also found that the traditional Japanese values could work as protectors from body dissatisfaction for girls (Brokhoff et al. 2012). With the modernization that comes after World War II, Japan moved to a more individualistic and competitive climate and increased the consumer culture which affects appearance anxiety (Brokhoff et al. 2012). Even though the Japanese media is modernized and impose unrealistic beauty standards, it is not distinctly dependent on Western media and values (Brokhoff et al. 2012, 2016). The modern Japanese media is composed of both Western ideals as being thin and attractive; and traditional Japanese ideals such as being submissive and cute (Brokhoff et al. 2016). Similarly, the findings confirmed that when girls internalize the modern Japanese values through the media, they show more body dissatisfaction (Brokhoff et al. 2016). Because of the negative impact of only modernized Japanese values on body dissatisfaction and not Western ideals alone, we may infer that only when the two values come together, body image concerns in Japanese girls increase. In addition, Japanese girls had one of the lowest BMI scores in the study. In the literature, it was shown that BMI was positively related with body dissatisfaction (Yates et al. 2004, Wilson et al. 2013). The explanation for this discrepancy despite one of the lowest BMI scores may be explained by the pressure from combination of the two values that are somewhat different from each other. Another study showed that even though there are substantial racial differences in body image concern, gender also plays a big role (Maezono et al. 2019). Females from both Finland and Japan showed higher body dissatisfaction than males; Japanese females also showed higher eating distress than Finnish females, but Finnish females were more concerned about gaining weight. Males were more similar in terms of body image issues among two nationalities, but Japanese males were more concerned about gaining weight (Maezono et al. 2019). This can be explained by the expectancy from women to be more in traditional female roles in Japan. These expectations could reduce the self-esteem and in turn combined with the beauty standards lead to body image concerns (Maezono et al. 2019). In a study Frayon and colleagues (2020) carried out, girls from New Caledonia (Melanesian, Polynesian and European) found to feel more body dissatisfaction than boys when they think they are fat. Gonzales and Blashill (2021) also found that women have more risk of developing eating disorders than men, and men used more appearance enhancement drugs than women. Overall, results are consistent with the literature indicating that females have more body dissatisfaction than males (Quittkat et al. 2019).

Putting aside the gender issues and focusing on only the ethnic differences in body image showed additional findings, which is the primary aim of this systematic review. According to a study by Talwar and colleagues (2012), although both European New Zealanders and Maoris wanted to be thinner, European New Zealanders showed a greater association between body mass and body image. Maoris showed an increase in body esteem when their

racial identification increased. This may be explained by the fact that for minorities, racial identification is more important and evident; also, thinness is not perceived more positive than being round, and being obese is not demonized as much as it is in the general society (Talwar et al. 2012). For European women, there was no discrepancy between their own ideal body image and their perception of the ideal body image a New Zealander woman would want; but Maori women indicated a smaller own body ideal than their perception of an ideal body a Maori woman would want (Talwar et al. 2012). This discrepancy may be due to the simple fact that the sample chosen for Maori women were thinner than Maori women in general (Talwar et al. 2012). One study compared Hong Kong Chinese and Australian women (Lam et al. 2010). Hong Kong Chinese women showed lower-level BMI, higher level of appearance esteem and weight esteem but lower levels of attribution esteem than Australian women (Lam et al. 2010). This means that Hong Kong Chinese women find themselves beautiful, but they do not believe others find them beautiful as well. This may be explained again by their collectivistic culture that makes them more vulnerable to the opinions of others. Australian women being overall less satisfied with their bodies may be due to their higher BMI scores (Lam et al. 2010). Brockhoff et al. (2016) found that Japanese adolescents showed more body dissatisfaction than their counterparts from China, Malaysia, Australia, Tonga, and Fiji, despite having one of the lowest BMI scores; in addition, the effect of the media on body image is stronger for Japanese, Fijian, and Tongan adolescents than Australian adolescents. A plausible explanation for findings from Japanese adolescents may be the Japanese media promoting social-conformity and shame (Brockhoff et al. 2016). Mellor et al. (2014) carried out a study consisting only male participants. This study is the only one that examines just males included in this systematic review. It examined the differences between Malaysian Malays, Chinese Malays, Australians, and Chinese from China. Chinese from Malaysia and China showed greater body dissatisfaction than Australians. This means that in Asian cultures males have poorer body images than males from Western cultures, but males from Asian cultures can also vary among themselves to some degree which means various socio-cultural issues other than simply being Asian or European might also have effects on the body image differences (Mellor et al. 2014). For example, while Malaysian Chinese felt more dissatisfaction considering their body image than their Australian counterparts; Malaysian Malays did not show this relationship. The fact that Malaysian Chinese were more upscale and richer than Malaysian Malays may be an explanation for this difference (Mellor et al. 2014). Due to their resources that difference occurs even though they are in the same country and belong to the Asian culture. Considering the three studies investigating Australians, Australians showed lower body dissatisfaction in two studies (Mellor et al. 2014, Brockhoff et al. 2016) but in one study they showed higher body dissatisfaction than their counterparts from other ethnicities (Lam et al. 2010). This difference may be because BMI of the Australians in Lam et al. (2010) study was bigger than Hong Kong Chinese, thus leading to inconsistent findings among studies.

Another study showed that Japanese adolescents are more dissatisfied with their body than their Finnish counterparts (Maezono et al. 2019). There is another ethnic difference in the peer-relationship and its effect on body image. When Japanese females have better pro-social behavior and unproblematic peer relationship, they experience more eating concerns. For their Finnish counterparts, this relationship is exactly the opposite, which is when they have poor peer-relationship and pro-social behavior they tend to experience more eating distress (Maezono et al. 2019). The effect of ethnicity may be explained by the collectivistic culture of Japan which promotes more conformity among groups. It may be due to the idea of being similar than being affected by the unrealistic beauty ideals (Maezono et al. 2019). Considering the two studies investigating Japanese participants (Brockhoff et al. 2016, Maezono et al. 2019), both found that the Japanese had higher body dissatisfaction among cultures. They showed higher dissatisfaction both among Asian cultures (Brockhoff et al. 2016) and compared to European cultures (Maezono et al. 2019). This discrepancy once again may be explained by their recent modernization and also the traditional values being still relevant (Brockhoff et al. 2016). These two concepts together may bring a cumulative effect on Japanese people's body image.

Kim and Aubrey (2015) found that agitation and dejection are mediators between thin-ideal media influence and body image, comparing Korean and females from the US. The findings showed that only for Korean females, agitation, the feeling born from the discrepancy between actual and ought selves (society's standards), had a mediating effect between body image and media use. However, for dejection, the feeling born from the discrepancy between actual and ideal (self-standards), there were no differences between groups. They both showed similar relationship (Kim and Aubrey 2015). These findings may be explained by the difference between collectivistic cultures and individualistic cultures. Koreans being more concerned over society's standards than US participants is understandable because of the importance of conformity and norms among collectivistic cultures. Individualistic cultures may also impose beauty standards not through conformity but maybe through self-interest (Kim and Aubrey 2015). This can explain why females from the US only showed a mediating effect of dejection between media use and body image. In a study done by Baugh et al. (2010), it was found that although white females had higher level of body dissatisfaction, perception with ethnic identity was not correlated with body image. This means that maybe ethnicity affects the body image concerns not through identification with ethnicity but through some other factor such as living in an urban or rural environment (Dixit et al. 2011) due to socio-economic differences between ethnic groups (Crimmins et al. 2004). Another study compared females from Argentina, Brazil, and the US (Forbes et al. 2012). It was found that Argentineans and Brazilians had bigger ideal bodies and felt less pressure for being thin than Americans. Argentineans had more body dissatisfaction than Americans, felt less body shame than both Americans and Brazilians. However, Brazilians feel the most shame; and both Argentineans and

Brazilians thought they were evaluated more negatively by others than Americans did (Forbes et al. 2012). This study seems like it showed somewhat contrasting findings (e.g., Argentines with more body dissatisfaction than Americans, at the same time feeling less pressure to be thin, less internalization of ideals and less shame than Americans). In addition, Argentines having a bigger BMI (21.82) than US participants (21.77) complicates the results more because feeling less pressure to be thin cannot be attributed to actually being thinner (Forbes et al. 2012). One explanation provided by authors is that maybe Argentinean culture has some protective mechanisms that allows the society's ideals to be known by the individuals but still the individuals feel the power to select their own ideals despite thinking that they will be perceived as less attractive by others; but the mechanism underlying this process should be further examined (Forbes et al. 2012). Another explanation may simply be the issues with mistranslation of questionnaires that authors included as a limitation of the study (Forbes et al. 2012). Frayon et al. (2020) study showed that, Melanesian boys feel more body dissatisfaction when they are too thin and Melanesian girls feel less dissatisfied when they are too fat than adolescents with Polynesian and European backgrounds. This could mean that Melanesian adolescents do not get affected by Western thin body ideals as much as their counterparts (Frayon et al. 2020) but they show body dissatisfaction according to their own standards that may indicate thin bodies as less desirable. In addition, being Polynesians did not show any relationship with having body dissatisfaction. Therefore, one cannot conclude that one ethnic group of people show more body dissatisfaction than the other. In a study done by Fahiz (2019), Indians showed more dissatisfaction with their bodies and they feel less attractive than Afghans; but Afghans have more anxiety about gaining weight. Indians showing more body dissatisfaction may be due to the possibility to access different media mediums that are not available for Afghan people (Fahiz 2019). Media is known to affect body image (Yamamiya et al. 2005, Sinh 2013). More research is needed to explain the reason why Afghans are more anxious about their body fat while showing less body dissatisfaction. These findings cannot be compared in terms of individualistic or collectivistic culture perspectives since they both are Eastern cultures. Last study that found ethnic differences in body image showed that, Hispanic people showed more possibility of being diagnosed with BDD and ED; more BDD and ED symptoms; more misuse of appearance and performance enhancement drugs than White people. However White people showed more ED symptoms than Asian American and African American people; more probability of developing BDD than Asian Americans; and more BDD symptoms than Asian Americans (Gonzales and Blashill 2021). Even though this study showed some mixed results, it can be said that Hispanic people tend to show more symptoms related to body image issues than White people. This may be due to Hispanic people trying to achieve beauty standards of the U.S. to decrease their feelings of being an outsider and discrimination they experience; and by doing this creating a more stressful environment in terms of body image for themselves (Gonzales and Blashill 2021).

Lastly, only one study did not show a relationship between body image and ethnicity (Heron et al. 2013). It was the study that included the youngest participants, starting from 5-year-olds to 15-year-olds. Even though body dissatisfaction was present in children starting from an early age (second grade), there were no racial or gender differences. One explanation for this may be the cultural impacts not taking their tolls on participants, yet. Literature shows that body dissatisfaction tends to increase with age (Sorter 1997) and ethnic identity develops through adolescence (Phinney 1989, 1990). Findings that show increase in body dissatisfaction through first grade to second grade; as well as the lack of ethnic differences in body dissatisfaction may be explained by the fact that the sample group was somewhat old enough to show increase in body image dissatisfaction but not ethnic identification. This explanation is plausible because other studies included in this review done with older participants showed clear differences between ethnicities. Another explanation may be the small sample size not being efficient enough to find any differences among groups (N=58).

Overall, findings from twelve studies showed that there are differences among ethnic and racial groups in terms of body image. General direction of the studies showed that people from collectivistic cultures are more prone to develop dissatisfaction for their bodies (6 studies showed people collectivistic cultures have more BD, 1 study did not find any differences, 3 studies found results showing people from individualistic cultures have more BD; 1 study compared only collectivistic cultures and 1 study did not show conclusive differences toward one culture). The evaluation of the results from the three studies which found people from individualistic cultures to have more body dissatisfaction showed that only one study stated convincing results. Taking together, people from collectivistic cultures seem to have more body dissatisfaction than people from individualistic cultures.

People from collectivistic cultures being more prone to body dissatisfaction may be due to the society's expectations toward conformity and making them be sensitive about cultural norms. These cultures can create pressure on the people in the society to be more similar; thus, in turn increase the body image concerns when one is not in synch with the rest of the members of the society. However, some studies showed differences among the Asian cultures, and this indicates that some factors other than ethnicity can also affect body image. These factors may be location, rural life–urban life, socio-cultural factors, and socio-economic factors. These factors should also be further studied in the literature. People from individualistic cultures being less prone to body image concern may also be explained by their focus on not being the same but instead being separate individuals. This may explain why in one study they especially showed distress when they divert from their own ideals but not from the societies' ideals (Kim and Aubrey 2015).

Notably, the present study has some limitations. First, a big amount of data was not accessible due to database restriction. It is always a possibility to miss an important finding because of limitations. Moreover, some studies have very small samples (Heron

et al. 2013, Talwar et al. 2012); others indicated possible translation issues (Forbes et al. 2012). In addition, only 6 out of 12 studies consist of both female and male participants, giving the possibility to consider gender differences among and between cultures (Heron et al. 2013, Brockhoff et al. 2016, Fahiz 2019, Maezono et al. 2019, Frayon et al. 2020, Gonzales and Blashill 2021). Five studies included only female participants. Body image is a topic studied mostly among women; therefore, it is understandable that studies included in the current systematic review involve mostly women participants as well. This could potentially affect results and make it harder to compare ethnic differences. Samples were not randomized, usually selected within specific regions (rural, non-metropolitan etc.) or locations (elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, or universities). This may create instabilities among data. Overall, these limitations may restrict the generalizability of the findings.

Conclusion

The present study has some implications for clinical applications for body image issues. Studies showed that cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is an effective treatment approach for body image issues in eating disorders (Hilbert and Tuschen-Caffier 2004), body image dissatisfaction (Butters and Cash 1987), and BDD (Veale et al. 2014). Moreover, a study (Chui et al. 2007) conducted with a group of bulimic women who were White, Hispanic, Black, Asian, and Native American showed that there were no ethnic differences in terms of abstinence rate across all ethnic groups. Another study (Weingarden et al. 2011) examining the effectiveness of CBT for body dysmorphic disorder suggested that specific modifications within the CBT might be helpful among ethnic minority. In the light of these results, cognitive behavioral techniques such as cognitive reconstruction could be tailored for specific cultures and ethnic groups when dealing with body image issues as suggested by Yılmaz and Bozo (2019).

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