

# Correlation Between Thin-Ideal Pressure and Body Appreciation Among Young Adult Women

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## ABSTRACT

Most people tend to have some ideal type towards something. The most common idealistic around is body ideal, such as women look up to thin-ideal type and men look up to fit and muscular-ideal type. In reality, women are more into a specific body type (*thin-ideal*) rather than men, therefore there's a pressure to fit into a thin-ideal type. The thin-ideal pressure come from society, especially from family, peers, & media that may cause negative effects towards one's mental health and perspectives. There is body appreciation that might protect someone from social idealistic towards body. Therefore, this research focus on correlation between thin-ideal pressure and body appreciation among young adult women, that both variables are haven't been researched enough. There are 818 participants who participate on this research through online google form. This research use SATAQ-4 to measure thin-ideal pressure and BAS-2 to measure body appreciation. The result shows that there is a negative significant correlation between thin-ideal pressure and body appreciation in every dimension of thin-ideal pressure with  $p = 0.00 < 0.05$ . In this paper, will be discussed furthermore about the correlation between Body Appreciation and every dimensions of Thin-Ideal Pressure.

**Keywords:** *Body appreciation, thin-ideal pressure, young adult women*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Previous researches can reveal the unexpected things that may affect human well-being. Studies about body image reveal that there are several things that might affect someone's in positive and negative way. Most men are accepting and satisfied with their body while women mostly struggling to accept theirs [50]. Women mostly feel unsatisfied with their bodies, tend to lose their weight, and always wanted to look thin in any circumstances [2]. Previous research found that tendencies are stable across the age [47] but may differ among 18-49 years olds [2] because of tendencies to internalize others critiques and evaluate them personally [9]. Thin and youthful-looking body are stated as the ideal body for women [20] that may cause from playing and having the Barbie doll since the young age [31]. The intensity of exposure to thin-ideal images causes the unsatisfaction on one's body [4]. Family, friends, and media play the biggest factors to pressure one's ideal body [38] and formerly found that media plays a significant role [50] that made one's normally and instantly compare their bodies [24,30] even though women realize that they might've human phases that change their appearances [45]. Previous research by Suniaro et al. found that Indonesian women tend to compare their bodies with friends, actresses, and family/relatives [39] and Swami and Jafar found that men are more appreciative and accepting their bodies than women do [42]. Appearance is an important life aspect for women [27, 32] because they tend to critique one's

appearances [50]. Therefore, studies show that women's body appreciation score lower than men [20,30,49]. Body appreciation, also known as positive body image [5], works as protection from appearance ideal [15]. Thin-ideal internalization [19] and low body appreciation [48] increase one's unsatisfaction towards body. Mostly playing social medias, like Instagram, affect to lower one's body appreciation [46]. Even though women could adapt on different circumstances, women still compare to other's body or appearance [13].

Thin-ideal pressure and body appreciation are two variables that've close relation with positive evaluation towards body because it may affect one's well-being. Therefore, this research focus on seeking the correlation between thin-ideal pressure and body appreciation among young adult women.

## 2. BACKGROUND

In general, thin-ideal is about subjective standard of women body that wanted by most women [44]. Thin-ideal could probably come from a cartoon that show a positive effect on a thin-looking character [19]. Women with thin-ideal, mostly aren't satisfied with their bodies [15] so that they tend to provoked by the negative impact. Idealized body image is a pressure for women to fit into a certain standard [23] because, also, women love to follow and blend into a current beauty standard [50]. By a long period, thin-ideal would get internalized and be an internalization [15] that may cause an eating disorder or any disorder that related to

body image, body-focused anxiety, or body dissatisfaction [21, 26, 33, 44, 7]. Thin-ideal pressure was formed by social pressure to fit and get into a thin standard [1]. Thin-ideal pressure found from media [3, 4, 7, 12, 25, 31, 44, 50], peers, and family [11, 25, 44] that play the biggest role in the pressure. The thin-ideal pressure made women think that thin is equal to being feminine [18]. Thin-ideal pressure is an indirect pressure that push someone to meet that standard, such as envy and doing diet or try to lose their weight [1]. That type of pressure lead someone to compare their look with others [37, 50] that may attack one's self esteem and well-being [36]. If the comparison being done objectively and constructive, it may give a positive impact that leads to self-evaluation, self-improvement, and enhancement [24]. The pressure focuses on women because, rather than men, women tend to do a negative comparison by judging the looks [12, 13, 50]. Women need to do a counter-argument to help them fight back the idealization about certain body type or else [13, 50].

There's negative body image that cause and form by nurture [11, 14]. Media exposure and circle of peers may shift one's point of view of their appearances [11, 43]. Negative body image is much different than positive body image [20] that positive body image is an act of love, confidence, knowing and appreciating ourselves [51]. Having a positive image towards ourselves lead into a good mental state and well-being [5] that form someone to appreciate their uniqueness, accept their bodies, feel pretty and happy with their bodies, having a mindful relationship with their bodies, and able to interpret an info into a constructive ones. Positive body image is the same as body appreciation [5], that means someone having a positive mindset and orientation towards their body to protect and giving a positive feedback to themselves [13]. Human also evaluated their perception towards something based on their experiences and social life that are all reciprocal [6, 28].

Body appreciation doesn't mean by not having a negative point of view towards body [22, 48] but it helps to protect them from the negative messages [13, 22] so that could be interpreted in a positive and constructive way. Body appreciation helps someone to feel that they're having their freedom of expressions and able to fight the social standards [16] until giving a great impact towards one's psychological well-being [10]. Body appreciation is correlated with psychological well-being [3, 48] to reduce one's negative perception towards body and accepting that there's no certain universal beauty standard [22]. Women with a great body appreciation able to reduce negative messages towards their bodies, selectively accepting body-related messages, and interpreting an ambiguous messages [51]. So that, one's with a great body appreciation able to respect and being kind to their bodies [16, 20]. Having a good mindset and train ourselves to have one is a big help to develop a body appreciation [16]. Even though women will having body-related phases, such as pregnancy and birth, they still want to look thin and pretty [45]. There are various activities that may improve body appreciation, such as doing yoga [17, 41]. This study focus on women in their 18-40 years old because women that age is giving attention on their appearances than men do [27] to avoid negative critiques

towards their appearances [30, 43]. Young adult women easier to get the idealized pressure because they use social media a lot mot than others [4, 43, 51].

### 3. METHODS

#### 3.1. Participants

Participants of this study were 818 women from across Indonesia with range 18-40 by age. All participants were being reached by purposive sampling method and they filled the questionnaire with their consent. Most participants were in range 18-24 by age with 85.3%. Based on their degree or last education that they took, most participants were having their high school degree with 57.7% in total. Based on their occupation status, most of them were students with 63.1%. Most of them haven't married by 94.9%. Most of participants were domicile outside of Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) with 39.5% and most of them were using social media on daily basis (98.9%).

**Table 1** Demographic characteristics of participants

<b>Demographic characteristics</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	698	85.3
25-34	114	13.9
35-40	6	0.7
<b>Education</b>		
High school	472	57.7
Associate degree	30	3.7
Bachelor	303	37
Master	13	1.6
<b>Occupation</b>		
Student	516	63.1
Employee	199	24.3
Entrepreneur	28	3.4
Housewives	18	2.2
Unemployed	57	7
<b>Marriage status</b>		
Not married	776	94.9
Married	42	5.1
<b>Domicile</b>		
Jakarta	288	35.2
Bogor	26	3.2
Depok	18	2.2
Tangerang	100	12.2
Bekasi	63	7.7
Others	323	39.5
<b>Most used media</b>		
Printed	0	0
Electronic	9	1.1
Social Media	809	98.9

### 3.2. Measures

#### 3.2.1. Thin-ideal pressure.

Participants completed the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearances Questionnaires-4 (SATAQ-4) [34, 35], 12-item measure of related aspects of social pressure. SATAQ-4 has been translated and adapted into Bahasa Indonesia by Susanto [40]. All items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = Never to 5 = Always).

#### 3.2.2. Body appreciation.

Participants completed the Body Appreciation Scale-2 (BAS-2) [48], 10-item measure of related aspects of positive body image. BAS-2 has been translated and adapted into Bahasa Indonesia by Primarini [29]. All items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = Never to 5 = Always).

#### 3.2.3. Demographics

Participants provided their demographics details that included in the questionnaire, they are age, education, occupation, marriage status, domicile, and the most frequent media that being used by participant.

#### 3.2.4. Procedure

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling by sharing the questionnaire's link online. Participant also being provided with informed consent before the main part of the questionnaire begun. All the data treated confidentially and anonymously.

#### 3.2.5. Statistical Analysis

There are several statistical analyses that needed in this study, there were Spearman Correlation for the general correlation, Kruskal-Wallis H-test for analysis based on age, and Mann Whitney-U for analysis based on marital status.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Reliability of thin-ideal pressure family dimension has 0.88 Cronbach's Alphas, thin-ideal pressure peer dimension has 0.884 Cronbach's Alphas, thin-ideal pressure media dimension has 0.916 Cronbach's Alphas, and body appreciation has 0.913 (Cronbach's Alpha). Every dimension of thin-ideal pressure scale have 1 minimum score and 5 maximum score. Mean for each dimensions are vary, family dimension has 2.618 (SD = 1.236), peer dimension has 2.392 (SD = 1.102), and media dimension has 3.005 (SD = 1.251). The differences stated that media has the biggest role on the thin-ideal pressure. Body appreciation have 1 minimum score and 5 maximum score. Mean score for body appreciation is 3.882 (SD = 0.680).

This study has unnormal distribution and using Kolmogorov Smirnov Test, body appreciation has 0.069 Kolmogorov score ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Meanwhile thin-ideal pressure family dimension has 0.121 Kolmogorov score ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), peer dimension has 0.137 Kolmogorov score ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), and media dimension has 0.096 Kolmogorov score ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, spearman correlation analysis is being used. Spearman correlation show that both are having a negative significant correlation. Family dimension has negative correlation with body appreciation with  $r(818) = -0.288$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.5$ . Peer dimension has negative correlation with body appreciation with  $r(818) = -0.253$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.5$ . Media dimension has negative correlation with body appreciation with  $r(818) = -0.355$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.5$ .

**Table 2** Spearman correlation between thin-ideal pressure and body appreciation

Thin-Ideal Pressure	Body Appreciation	
	r	P
Family	-0.288**	0.000
Peers	-0.253**	0.000
Media	-0.355**	0.000

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

To prove the significancy between other optional measurement, analysing thin-ideal pressure score based on age are using Kruskal Wallis H Test and there's no significant differences with  $H(2) < 9.21$ ,  $p > 0.005$ . Meanwhile, body appreciation score based on age has significant differences with  $H(2) > 9.21$ ,  $p < 0.005$ . Mann Whitney-U analysis is being used to find significancy difference on each variables based on marriage status. Both, thin-ideal pressure and body appreciation scores aren't significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 3** Thin-ideal pressure (T-I P) and body appreciation by age

Variable	Age	Mean Rank	P
T-I P Family	18-24	411.18	0.753
	25-34	402.55	
	35-40	346.17	
T-I P Peers	18-24	408.41	0.722
	25-34	419.50	
	35-40	346.50	
T-I P Media	18-24	414.91	0.055
	25-34	386.99	
	35-40	208.00	
Body Appreciation	18-24	398.50	0.003
	25-34	478.89	
	35-40	371.08	

**Table 4** Thin-ideal pressure (T-I P) and body appreciation by marriage status

Variable	Marriage Status	Mean Rank	P
T-I P Family	Not married	409.63	0.948
	Married	407.18	
T-I P Peers	Not married	407.85	0.387
	Married	440.06	
T-I P Media	Not married	410.00	0.795
	Married	400.32	
Body Appreciation	Not Married	405.53	0.039
	Married	482.80	
	Married	482.80	

Social media in media dimension play the biggest role in thin-ideal pressure, it may be caused by the pandemic that forced people to stay at home so their entertainment source, mostly come from social media. There's no significant differences in thin-ideal pressure based on age that may be caused by a large interval of age in this study. Therefore, it's needed to look into more specific ages or developmental stages.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on all the data, this research has not normal distribution with negative correlation between thin-ideal pressure and body appreciation among young adult women. Every dimension in thin-ideal pressure have negative correlation to body appreciation, with significant correlation with age grouping. This study aligned with Tiggemann & McCourt's research about body appreciation throughout women life span [47] that women's body appreciation arises throughout life span. Future studies may focus on smaller range or varies of participants, so that it can focused to look depth into certain groups. Qualitative study also required to solve and find direct personal problems. For general public, they also need to bring a positive social media environment, such as commenting and/or giving positive feedbacks rather than judging or hate speech.

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