

# Relationship Between Sociocultural Pressures and Body Dissatisfaction Among Female University Students in Batam

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## ABSTRACT

The globalization and rapid advancement of Indonesia's economic and technological states have resulted in the exposure of Western beliefs, attitudes, and practices, including the messages of the thin ideal, spread in the entire country's areas. This study aims to identify the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam, as well as to identify the level of sociocultural forces and body dissatisfaction among the samples. A total of 165 female university students in Batam aged 18 and 25 years participated in this study using convenient and snowball techniques. Sociocultural pressures were measured using Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance Questionnaire-4 (SATAQ-4), while body dissatisfaction was assessed using Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BES-AA). The result confirmed a significant positive relationship between the dimensions of sociocultural pressures, namely family, peer, media pressure, and body dissatisfaction. Concurrently, a moderate level of sociocultural forces and body dissatisfaction were discovered. This paper ended with several limitations and recommendations that will contribute to university students, university, and future researchers.

**Keywords:** *Sociocultural pressures, body dissatisfaction, female university students*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Body dissatisfaction is an essential issue that receives growing concern due to its escalating prevalence and adverse effects. It can be understood as a negative subjective judgment about an individual's overall appearance or certain features of the body [1] and assumed to develop because of the conflict between perceived and internal standards of impeccable body image [2].

Gender contrariness has been extensively noted to body image satisfaction. In this case, women are described as having a higher state of dissatisfaction than men [3]–[6]. Women's dissatisfaction with their bodies is also expressed as persisted across the life span [7]. Accordingly, body dissatisfaction is labeled a 'normative discontent among women, particularly in Western society [8]. The consequences of body dissatisfaction are linked with many negative results, starting from unnecessary control of weight in normal and underweight [9], poor self-esteem that increases anxiety and depression [10], to the extent of clinical conditions, such as eating disorders [1] and body dysmorphic disorder [11].

Although there are numerous risk factors related to body dissatisfaction, socio-cultural influence has been counted by many researchers to have a compelling impact on the expansion and perpetuation of body image disturbance [12], [13]. Among other aspects, perceived thin pressures were reported as the most associated with body image concerns [14]. The pressure for thinness is exposed to an individual through many sources, such as parents, peers, and media ([15], which later promote the idea that women's beauty is equivalent to a thin body [16]. Consequently, this standard of attractiveness is accepted and forced on many individuals throughout society, resulting in a 'cult of thinness'.

College students are traditionally within the age range of 18 to 25 years old. Hence, college students are in an era of transformation from late adolescence into young adulthood, making them a vulnerable population to the sociocultural pressures that caused body dissatisfaction [17]. Young adult women are in a time to explore new ideas that help them develop a self-identity [18]. At the same time, they are more susceptible to the demand to attain high attractiveness norms in a competitive college setting [19].

Moreover, globalization has increased global integration between cultures. The Western beliefs, attitudes, and practices, including the messages of thin ideal, are spreading to other countries with different economic, social, and cultural settings. Mass and social media roles have also escalated the manifestation of thin-ideal information worldwide, causing the slender body ideal to be recognized by society while creating pressures for its members to attain it. As a result, there is growing evidence of body dissatisfaction problems in both developed and developing countries, including those in Asia, such as Thailand [20], South Korea [21], and Japan [22].

Over the past two decades, rapid economic and technological advancement has yielded more significant Western influence in Indonesia, particularly in prosperous areas of the country. Consequently, it has brought Indonesian society into a phase where society tries to endure some elements of its traditional culture while adopting some aspects of a new culture [23], such as the endorsement of the Western thin-ideal as women's beauty standard. At the same time, this country is experiencing substantial nutritional and lifestyle changes due to rapid urbanization [24]. Hence, these fluctuations might induce the increment of body image problems.

As one of the leading industrial cities in Indonesia, Batam cannot just escape from the changes in Indonesian socio-cultural life. Unfortunately, there is a lack of research that has systematically investigated the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction in Batam, particularly among female university students. Therefore, the significance of the relationship between the two variables is left unexplored. Concurrently, the level of body dissatisfaction and its sociocultural sources are still unidentified up to this point, allowing some room for more examinations.

Moreover, the inconsistency in previous findings related to the primary sources of sociocultural pressures suggests that questions remain regarding the risk factors of body dissatisfaction. It might occur since many studies were conducted in Western and developed countries. Another critical issue is that most of the past reflections on sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction have focused on adolescents, with little research specified to young adults, especially university students.

Relying on those facts, the purpose of the present study was to provide a better insight into the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam. Accordingly, this study was compatible and beneficial, not only to the students themselves but also to other parties involved and encountered with the students, such as the university. The research

objectives are as follows, (1) Identify the level of sociocultural pressures among female university students in Batam, (2) Identify the level of body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam, and (3) Identify the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Sociocultural Pressures

The concept of sociocultural pressures was embedded in the sociocultural perspective of body images. It posits a compelling social and cultural emphasis placed on physical allure for women, which highlights a perfect, slim body [25]. In the current society, the standard propagated is a thin body that is generally unattainable for most individuals [26] due to genetics and metabolism level. Therefore, it requires the affirmation of extreme and detrimental actions as an effort to reach the standard, such as excessive dieting and exercise, cosmetic surgery, and to the extent of harmful substances consumption [27]. This standard is later delivered and strengthened by many social influences. The essential transmitters of beauty ideals that have been widely identified are parents, peers, and the media [28].

The family pressure begins in the home where the family, mainly parents, can directly or indirectly encourage the thin ideal in comments about the child's weight or looks, enforcement of food and eating rules, and modeling [28]. Furthermore, the peers' role in transmitting thin ideals includes teasing [29], peer feedback [30], fat talk [31], or indirect forces through social comparison, social reinforcement, perceived peer popularity, and peer modeling [32], [33]. Meanwhile, media plays its part through television, magazine, and other media manifestation that expose digitally modified images to inflict unrealistic representations of the physical ideal [34].

Sociocultural pressures in this study can be considered as perceived pressures by female university students to attain the thin-ideal that come from social and cultural influences. It consisted of three dimensions, which are family, peer, and media pressure.

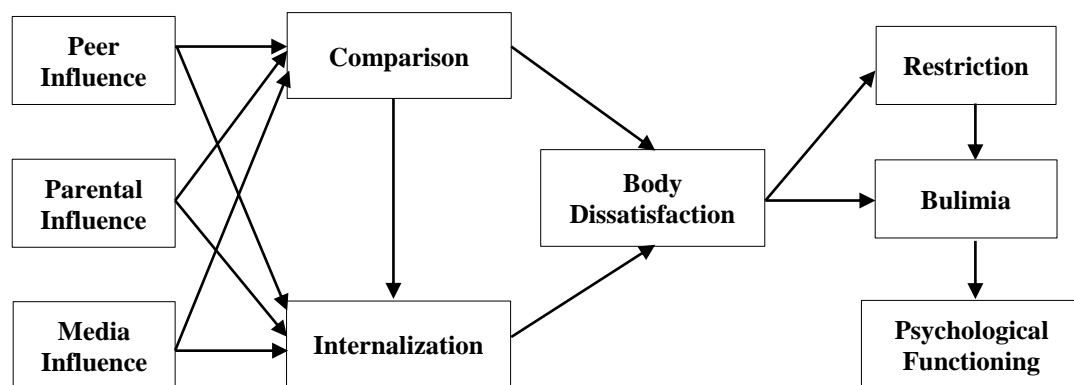
### 2.2 Body Dissatisfaction

Body dissatisfaction is one of many phrases extensively used in this research field to describe body image distress. This term focuses on the biased evaluation of physical looks and features, referring to negative thoughts and feelings [35]. Consequently, the people who experience body dissatisfaction tend to view their body as more minor or more significant

than the actual one and feel unattractive. As such, it is considered a universal gauge of body image distress.

Numbers of theories have been proposed to explain the origin of body dissatisfaction. For instance, [36] has formalized the self-discrepancy approach to understand how one's contradictory views are related to emotional distress. This theory explains that body dissatisfaction results from a discrepancy between how people see themselves and how they expect themselves to be [37]. Meanwhile, social comparison theory [38] suggests that appearance-related comparison appears when individuals try to accumulate info from others about their stage of physical attractiveness. Such comparison makes women perceive their comparison target better off than themselves [39], [40]. Therefore, they will later experience body dissatisfaction once the comparison is unfavorable [41].

In this study, body dissatisfaction was considered as female university students' negative evaluation of their bodies. It included three dimensions, which were appearance, weight, and attribution.



**Figure 1** the Tripartite Influence Model [42]

## 2.4 Relationship between Family Pressure and Body Dissatisfaction

Several kinds of research related to establishing the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction have been carried out in the past decades. Previous studies have examined the relationship between family pressure and body dissatisfaction among young female adults. Most of the studies found that there is a significant positive relationship between family pressure, particularly negative parental and siblings comments, and body dissatisfaction [45]–[55].

For instance, [46] indicated that parental negative remarks and appearance focus were significantly related to body dissatisfaction among college women in the United States. In Asia's context, there was an investigation by [48] to explore the influence of parents' criticism on body dissatisfaction and eating

## 2.3 Tripartite Influence Model

A theoretical framework applicable to describe the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction is the Tripartite Influence Model, developed by [42]. Through this model, three significant sources of sociocultural influences were introduced, which are parents, peers, and media. These transmitters establish the foundation for developing body image and eating dysfunction [43]. Perceived appearance pressures from these social agents, both in direct and indirect ways, lead to body dissatisfaction by employing thin-ideal internalization and appearance comparisons [44]. Body dissatisfaction then generates restrained eating behaviors, which directly predict bulimia. Concurrently, this model also provides a link between bulimia and psychological functioning (e.g., self-esteem, depression). Figure 1 illustrates the Tripartite Influence Model.

disorders among Singaporean young adults. This study found that parental adverse comments are significantly related to body dissatisfaction in young women. In contrast, a study by [56] on 80 female undergraduate students identified as Asian Americans reported that family influence did not notably correspond with body dissatisfaction.

To sum up, most studies revealed that family pressure has a significant positive correlation with body dissatisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis of this study is

**H1: There is a significant positive correlation between family pressure and body dissatisfaction**

## 2.5 Relationship between Peer Pressure and Body Dissatisfaction

Past studies on the relationship between peer pressure and body dissatisfaction also illustrated consistent findings. Several studies reported a significant positive correlation between peer pressure and body dissatisfaction [16], [33], [55], [57]–[64], showing the higher peer pressure perceived, the higher engagement to body dissatisfaction

For example, a study by [60] designed to explore the Tripartite Influence Model has been conducted on 188 Australian and 190 French female undergraduates. It found that there was a significant association between peer influence and body dissatisfaction in both Australian and French cultures. Similarly, [33] conducted a study on 196 women aged 18 to 35 years in Australia also supported this notion. On the other hand, research by [50] on 472 female college students from three private universities in South Korea discovered that the demand to be thin from peers did not relate to their body dissatisfaction.

In short, most studies posited that peer pressure has a significant positive relationship with body dissatisfaction. Accordingly, the hypothesis of this study is

**H2: There is a significant positive correlation between peer pressure and body dissatisfaction**

## 2.6 Relationship between Media Pressure and Body Dissatisfaction

Most of the past studies that investigated the relationship between media pressure and body dissatisfaction among young female adults had reported a significant positive correlation between these two variables [16], [47], [50], [60], [65]–[70]. Specifically, these studies have demonstrated that an increment in media exposure containing thin-ideal standards leads to higher body dissatisfaction levels.

For instance, a study by [66] purposed to evaluate the association between media influence and body

dissatisfaction among Brazilian female undergraduate students. In this research, media pressure had a moderate relationship with body dissatisfaction. Similar to the two studies above, [67] described that TV and magazine exposures were significantly related to body dissatisfaction. Contrarily, research by [71] demonstrated different findings than most of the previous studies. This study reported that there is no significant relationship between the two variables, indicating prolonged media publicity did not contribute to negative body image perception.

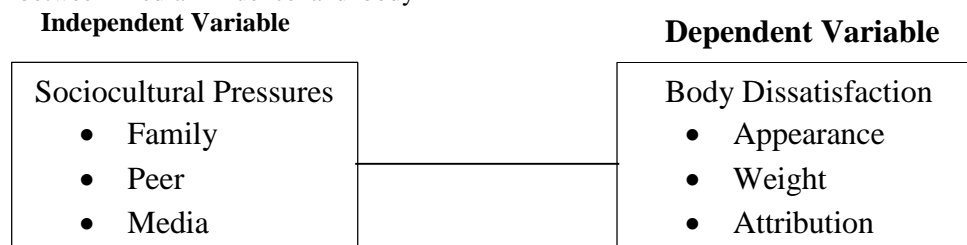
In sum, most previous studies found that media pressure has a significant positive relationship with body dissatisfaction. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is

**H3: There is a significant positive correlation between media pressure and body dissatisfaction.**

## 3. METHOD

### 3.1 Research Design

This study is quantitative, cross-sectional, and correlational research aimed to identify the relationship between the independent variable of sociocultural pressures and the dependent variable of body dissatisfaction. This kind of design was chosen as it grants the researcher the capability to assess links that appear in daily events, examine the expected connections between variables, and establish predictions [72]. In this study, sociocultural pressures act as an independent variable that consists of three dimensions, which are family, peers, and media pressure. Meanwhile, body dissatisfaction represents a dependent variable that formed of appearance, weight, and attribution factors. Nevertheless, this study only measured body dissatisfaction dimensions as a whole and not separated. In order to collect the quantitative data, a set of questionnaires was used as the research instrument to measure the study variables. Figure 2 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study.



**Figure 2** Conceptual Framework

### 3.2 Population and Sample

The people in this study were female university students currently enrolled in both public and private universities in Batam. Convenience and snowball sampling were employed to reach out to the targeted

population. Convenience sampling was used in this study because it allows data collection from participants who are easily accessible to the researcher and fit the sampling criteria [73]. Meanwhile, snowball sampling can direct the researcher into a

larger group of people by contacting a few individuals [74]. However, the research findings are only relevant to the sample in this study, as both samplings are categorized in non-probability selection [74].

Concerning the aim of the study, there were a few sampling criteria taken into account in this study. The respondents chosen were female, presently enlisted as university students in Batam, and aged from 18 to 25 years old. To only include the students with the desired characteristics and to simplify the procedure, the study's sample was chosen from one public and one private university in Batam. The main reason was that these two universities were regarded as the most populous ones in each category. Thus, it would be more convenient for the researchers to find the samples needed.

### 3.3 Data Collection Procedure

In this study, convenience sampling was administered by approaching the university students who may fit the criteria directly and through an invitation from social media platforms. Next, the online form questionnaire was distributed to the participants and recorded in the system right away. Simultaneously, snowball sampling was implemented by asking the researcher's friends who are studying at higher institutions in Batam to participate in this study. The researcher then asked them to invite their friends to take part in this study. In this technique, the questionnaires were also shared online in the form of Google Forms. The data collection sequences were continued until the targeted number of respondents was achieved and sufficient information was obtained. At the same time, all participation in this study was ensured to be voluntary. The data collection period was taken for one month, starting from the mid of July to August 2020.

### 3.4 Research Instruments

The instrument of this research was a three-section questionnaire that consisted of section A for demography, section B for sociocultural pressures, and section C for body dissatisfaction. The total number of items was 41 and composed of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was served in English and translated to Indonesian by a language institute at a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

In section A, participants were required to provide their demographic information according to six classifications. The respondents were asked about their age, place of study, year of study, and living situation. Besides, participants were also requested to state their current height and weight. Based on the weight and height information, a participant's Body Mass Index (BMI) was calculated following the formula:  $BMI = \text{weight (kg)} / \text{height}^2 \text{ (m}^2\text{)}$ .

In section B, the Family, Peers, and Media Pressures subscales from Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance Questionnaire-4 (SATAQ-4) developed by [75] were administered to identify three dimensions of sociocultural pressures (i.e., family, peers, and media). Each subscale consisted of four items, with twelve items in total. This instrument used a five-point Likert scale where the respondents had to identify their agreement for each statement, ranging from 1 (definitely disagree) to 5 (definitely agree). In the United States female sample, the coefficient alphas were spread from 0.85 to 0.95 for the three subscales [75], while a range of 0.91 to 0.96 was reported in the Japanese women sample [76]. In the current study, the pilot study conducted found this instrument reliable as the Cronbach's alphas coefficient ranged from 0.786, 0.889, and 0.924 for each dimension.

In section C, the Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BES-AA) developed by [77] was used in this study to measure body dissatisfaction. It contained twenty-three items divided into three subscales. These subscales included 10-items of general feelings of appearance, 8-items of weight satisfaction, and 5-items of appraisal attributed to others related to body and appearance. This instrument also used a five-point Likert scale from "never" (0) to "always" (4). In terms of internal consistency, research by [78] revealed good to excellent levels of coefficient alpha, aligned from 0.76 to 0.93 for the three subscales in American samples, a range of 0.81 to 0.83 for the Chinese model, and an extent of 0.75 to 0.85 for the Korean example. In the current study, the pilot study conducted found a number of 0.846 for overall items, by which this instrument could be considered reliable.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Normality test, descriptive statistics analysis, and inference statistics analysis using Spearman correlation were administered in the International Business Machines Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM SPSS) version 23 in order to analyze the data and fulfill the study objectives.

The normality test was applied by using the Shapiro-Wilk test provided in SPSS. Simultaneously, the descriptive analysis was employed to analyze respondents' demographic data, consisting of age, place of study, year of study, living situation, and BMI. Those factors were analyzed using frequency and percentage presented in the form of tables, while only respondents' BMI was determined by using mean. Concurrently, the frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were administered to fulfill the first and second research objectives, which were to identify the level of sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction.

Inferential statistics were employed to examine the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body

dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam. Since this study applied non-probability sampling and ordinal data, the inferential statistics used was Spearman's Rank Correlation, as it measures the monotonic association between variables [79].

A total of 197 sets of online questionnaires were distributed directly and indirectly through several recruited people to female university students in Batam. After the data cleaning process, 165 sets of complete and valid questionnaires were exerted for the final analysis.

## 4. FIGURES AND TABLES

### 4.1 Demographic Analysis

The summary of demographic analysis in this study. Based on the table above, it can be found that the majority of respondents' age ranged from 18 to 21 years old, showed by a percentage of 82.4% (**Table 1**). Meanwhile, only 29 respondents, which represented a proportion of 17.6%, belong to the range between 22 to 25 years old. In terms of place of study, it is clear that more than three-fifths of the respondents were currently studying in public universities and polytechnics in Batam (62.4%). The rest of the participants were enrolled in private universities and

polytechnics, consisting of 37.6% of total respondents.

As regards the year of study, the fourth-year student turned up with the highest percentage among all years, with a proportion of 41.8%. It was followed by the third-year student with 34.5%, the second-year student with 17%, and last were the first-year student who only comprised 6.7%. Concerning the living condition, the survey also demonstrated that more than three-fourths of the students identified themselves to be living with their family (76.4%), while students who live alone made up almost one-fourth of the respondents (23%). In this study, only one student identified herself to live with others other than family and friends with a percentage of 0.6%. Adding to the findings, more than half of the respondents had ideal weight as 57.6% fall within the normal range of BMI. However, underweight participants also composed a significant number, with a percentage of 20.6%. Tagged close behind were respondents who counted to be overweight, with a portion of 16.4%. Obese was the most minor BMI category that the participants had with only a percentage of 5.5%. Overall, the average total respondents' BMI was 21.95.

**Table 1.** Respondents' Demography (n=165 respondents)

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
18-21	136	82.4
22-25	29	17.6
<b>Place of Study</b>		
Public University/Polytechnic	103	62.4
Private University/Polytechnic	62	37.6
<b>Year of Study</b>		
1	11	6.7
2	28	17
3	57	34.5
4	69	41.8
<b>Living Condition</b>		
Live with Family	126	76.4
Live Alone	38	23
Live with Others	1	0.6
<b>BMI</b>		
Underweight	34	20.6
Normal	95	57.6
Overweight	27	16.4
Obese	9	5.5
Mean	21.95	

### 4.2 Data Analysis Level of Sociocultural Pressures among Female University Students in Batam

**Table 2** illustrates the mean scores of items measuring sociocultural pressures among female university students in Batam. Based on the table

below, the overall mean score for sociocultural pressures items was 2.93, which was categorized into a moderate level. The results also showed that the media pressure subscale (Mean = 3.13) was ranked the highest mean among all sociocultural pressures subscale scores. It was then followed by the peer pressure subscale (Mean = 2.85), while the family

pressure subscale came up as the lowest rank among all dimensions (Mean = 2.73). Individual items analysis revealed that the most reported pressure was item 11, "I feel pressure from the media to improve my appearance." (Mean = 3.39). The lowest described

mean score was from item 1, "I feel pressure from my family members to look thinner." (Mean = 2.38). Concurrently, the rest of the items have mean scores ranging between the values of 2.38 to 3.39.

**Table 2.** Level of Sociocultural Pressures

Variables	Mean	Level
Item 1	2.38	Moderate
Item 2	2.74	Moderate
Item 3	2.60	Moderate
Item 4	3.21	Moderate
Family Pressure	2.73	Moderate
Item 5	2.76	Moderate
Item 6	3.04	Moderate
Item 7	3.08	Moderate
Item 8	2.70	Moderate
Peer Pressure	2.85	Moderate
Item 9	3.32	Moderate
Item 10	3.01	Moderate
Item 11	3.39	Moderate
Item 12	2.92	Moderate
Media Pressure	3.13	Moderate
	<b>2.93</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

#### 4.3 Level of Body Dissatisfaction among Female University Students in Batam

**Table 3** describes the mean scores of items measuring body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam. The overall level of body dissatisfaction among respondents was moderate, represented in a mean score of 1.90. When it comes to the analysis of individual items, the most

expressed body dissatisfaction was item 9, "I wish I looked better." (Mean = 2.89). Subsequently, item 7, "There are lots of things I'd change about my looks if I could." then appeared as the second most conveyed feature (Mean = 2.78). Meanwhile, the least disclosed for this variable was from item 17, "I feel ashamed of how I look" (Mean = 1.29). In this variable, the mean scores of the remaining items can be found within the value of 1.29 to 2.89.

**Table 3.** Level of Body Dissatisfaction

Variables	Mean	Level
Item 1	1.59	Moderate
Item 2	1.79	Moderate
Item 3	1.44	Moderate
Item 4	2.47	Moderate
Item 5	1.42	Moderate
Item 6	1.51	Moderate
Item 7	2.78	High
Item 8	2.24	Moderate
Item 9	2.89	High
Item 10	2.16	Moderate
Item 11	2.27	Moderate
Item 12	1.95	Moderate
Item 13	1.43	Moderate
Item 14	1.83	Moderate
Item 15	1.44	Moderate
Item 16	2.13	Moderate
Item 17	1.29	Low
Item 18	1.70	Moderate
Item 19	1.39	Moderate
Item 20	2.18	Moderate
Item 21	1.86	Moderate

Variables	Mean	Level
Item 22	2.09	Moderate
Item 23	1.80	Moderate
	<b>1.90</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

#### 4.4 Relationship between Sociocultural Pressures and Body Dissatisfaction among Female University Students in Batam

**Table 4** presents the correlational analysis between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam using Spearman-rank Correlation. It becomes apparent that there was a significant, positive, and weak relationship between family pressure and body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam ( $r_s = .330$ ,  $p = .000$ ). The result also demonstrates that the p-value collected signifies that the relationship is significant at two-tailed. Thus, the first hypothesis of the study is accepted since  $p < 0.01$ .

Furthermore, the outcome of the analysis also suggested a significant, positive, and weak relationship between peer pressure and body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam ( $r_s = .341$ ,  $p = .000$ ). As for the p-value, it reveals that the relationship is significant at two-tailed. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the study is accepted since  $p < 0.01$ .

In regards to media pressure, Spearman correlation showed a significant positive relationship with body dissatisfaction ( $r_s = .183$ ,  $p = .019$ ). Nevertheless, similar to the first and second hypotheses, the Spearman coefficient attained also points out a weak relationship between the variables. The p-value found specifies that the relationship is significant at two-tailed. Consequently, the third hypothesis of the study is accepted since  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 4:** Correlations between Sociocultural Pressures and Body Dissatisfaction

Variables	Body Dissatisfaction	
	$r_s$	p-value
Family Pressure	.330	.000**
Peer Pressure	.341	.000**
Media Pressure	.183	.019*

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

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

## 5. DISCUSSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

### 5.1 Level of Sociocultural Pressures among Female University Students in Batam

The first objective of this research was to identify the level of sociocultural pressures among female university students in Batam. Overall, the study's findings showed a moderate level of stress in all dimensions among samples. It conveys that the respondents were compelled and exposed to a reasonable limit of social and cultural influences to be thin from these three transmitters.

Concerning the primary source, the mean score obtained has indicated that the most pressure perceived by female university students in Batam was coming from the media. This result is in line with studies done among female college students in France, Australia, and India that revealed media as the main venue of sociocultural pressures [47], [65]. This kind of resemblance assumes that the press in Indonesia has frequently communicated and publicized the

messages of appearance, weight, and shape to young women, by which it creates the exposure to achieve such standards.

Furthermore, the second-highest pressure noted by female university students in Batam was peers, while the family was graded to display less influence than other dimensions. This result was comparable to the previous research by [80] that described the Australian's young adults rated media, followed by peers and family, as the most substantial source of pressure for a thin body. Although these two dimensions did not act as the key channel, it may indicate that the community has adopted the ideal western figure as its beauty standard. Concurrently, the respondents discerned a pressure to be thin in order to meet the social expectation of attractiveness.

### 5.2 Level of Body Dissatisfaction among Female University Students in Batam

The second research objective was to identify the level of body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam. Based on the study result, it was



discovered that the participant's overall dissatisfaction with their body was moderate. It indicated that the samples experienced body dissatisfaction within a tolerable level, as they somewhat paid attention to their appearance, weight, and attribution to others. The numbers of past research conducted on female university students in other nations were found to be aligned with the findings of this study. [59], for instance, it described a medium frequency of body dissatisfaction among 246 undergraduate women in the United States. Similar results also can be found among respondents in South Korea and China [50], [59], [78], [81]. The current result substantiates the notion that body dissatisfaction is not only prevalent among young female adults in developed Western countries but also seen in the developing non-Western ones, including Indonesia [20].

### ***5.3 Relationship between Sociocultural Pressures and Body Dissatisfaction among Female University Students in Batam***

The primary objective of this study was to identify the relationship between sociocultural pressures and body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam. The result of the current study indicated that all of the dimensions of sociocultural forces, particularly the family, peers, and media, had a significant positive correlation with body dissatisfaction. These findings supported the outcome of numerous previous studies, in which the relationship between these two variables exist in the population of female university students around the world [16], [47], [49], [50], [59], [60]

When it comes to the degree of relationship, the findings showed that peer pressure had the highest correlation with body dissatisfaction, followed by the family and media. It was dissimilar to a few past studies that reported media as the most correlated transmitter [50], [59]. However, this outcome becomes notable since this study's result also discovered media as the most perceived source of pressure to be thin. In this case, media pressure is believed to play an essential role in shaping body perceptions but not as compelling for evaluating the body image [47].

Furthermore, the study showed that perceived peer pressure was the most potent agent associated with body dissatisfaction. It supports the previous western research that claimed peers perform a critical role in reinforcing body dissatisfaction among young female adults [57], [82]. Compared to adolescents and children, college students spend a substantial amount of time with peers in the home, school, and social settings [83]. Moreover, women are also more prone to same-sex peers' comments about physical attractiveness and frequently assess their relationships

than men [84]. As a result, such pressures can lead the girls to have body dissatisfaction, which perhaps explains a relationship between female university students in Batam.

Along with peers, the family pressure also had a significant correlation with body dissatisfaction among the study's respondents. This result approved the previous literature that describes family influences in body image dissatisfaction [46], [48], [53]. In this context, most of the respondents still live with their families and have daily interactions with them, which could be one of the reasons why the family came up as the second-highest influences.

In the current study, the media was shown to be significantly related to body dissatisfaction as well. This finding was in alignment with previous studies that defined the impact of media pressure on young women's body image [85]. Admittedly, Indonesian media has been increasingly portraying the thin ideal and Caucasian features in various forms, such as magazines, TV, and films, over the past few decades. Besides, there are 198 million social media active users in Indonesia, with 14.2% of them being females aged 18 to 24 years old [86] who are exposed to a wide range of appearance-focused sites. These rationales might illustrate the pressure from media on body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam.

### ***5.4 Limitations and Recommendation***

While the present study contributes to the existing literature, several limitations must be acknowledged to offer future research avenues. First and foremost, this study is cross-sectional in nature, by which it does not allow causation to be implied. Besides, the sampling method used in this research was non-probability sampling, namely convenience, and snowball techniques. Hence, this study's results can only depict the study samples, which are 165 female university students in Batam. The questionnaire's distribution was also limited to the online form due to the pandemic restriction movement, thus prohibiting the researcher from reaching broader samples. Moreover, this research was only covered two variables and did not take into consideration other determinants. The differences between genders were not acknowledged as well since this study solely focused on female university students.

On the bright side, the limitations also create an opportunity to broaden future research. First of all, it is suggested to expand the research's targeted population by adding the male students' population while conducting it in all universities in Batam. Future research may consider using a longitudinal design to find the causation by portraying changes in variables between time points. The study also can be improved

by using probability sampling as the sampling technique. The primary rationale is that probability sampling allows the research findings to be generalized, as it reflects the whole population [74]. Concurrently, despite significant relationships found between variables, the values were below expected. Therefore, it could be excellent if future researchers could scrutinize other independent, mediating, and moderating variables that contribute to body dissatisfaction, such as the role of social comparison, thin-ideal internalization, and feminism beliefs.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The research results proposed that the most dominant source of sociocultural pressures perceived among female university students in Batam was media, followed by peer and family pressures. The respondents were also discovered to have a moderate level of sociocultural forces and body dissatisfaction. Concurrently, it can briefly be stated that all dimensions of sociocultural pressures are relevant to predicting body dissatisfaction among female university students in Batam. Peer pressure came up as the most correlated sociocultural agent across all factors, continued by family and then media pressure.

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