



## Factors Affecting Body Image in Adulthood: A Systematic Review

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<b>ABSTRACT</b> Body image refers to the perception of various aspects regarding one's body shape, particularly physical appearance. This systematic review aims to analyze 15 international journals concerning factors that affect body image in adulthood. The results of this systematic review indicate that the factors affecting body image can have significant impacts on an individual's physical and psychological well-being during adulthood. Various factors affecting body image include peer pressure, cultural norms, high expectations, anxiety and dissatisfaction, social media pressure related to beauty standards, social views on the body, and obesity. These impacts can affect psychological well-being, leading to stress, self-esteem issues, eating disorders, depression, and low confidence levels. <b>Keywords:</b> <i>Adulthood, Image, Psychological</i>			

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, society holds certain standards for the ideal body shape, which is a body that maintains a balance between height and weight. When the difference between an individual's actual body shape and the desired ideal image is too large, it can lead to negative body evaluations, resulting in an unsatisfactory body image. These negative evaluations hinder someone from fully accepting their body condition. Aligning the actual body shape with the ideal body image can lead to body dissatisfaction. This indicates that individuals with a positive body image tend to feel satisfied with their physique. On the other hand, individuals with a negative body image tend to be dissatisfied with their physical appearance (Anisykurli, 2022).

Appearance is often considered a highly important aspect, leading individuals to frequently compare their physical appearance, especially their bodies, to ideal standards observed in others who are deemed more attractive. Dissatisfaction with appearance often

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arises among adults related to body size and weight. Additionally, various demands such as finding a partner, career, and marriage, create pressure to continuously appear attractive (Nisa & Rahmasari, 2019).

Body image is the perception of others regarding body shape and physical appearance, especially concerning how attractive the body is perceived to be (Wulansari, 2018). Dissatisfaction with body image arises from the variation in perceptions in defining the ideal body shape. Jones (2022) explains that 77 subjects felt dissatisfied with their bodies due to others' perceptions, leading to impacts on depression, anxiety, and eating disorders. Another study states that the more society pressures individuals to conform to unrealistic body standards, the higher the levels of anxiety, low self-esteem, worry, and depression (Karna & Sivaraman, 2023). This is supported by another study indicating that societal pressure leads to stress among individuals (Karthikeyan & Bhaumik, 2021).

Experiencing pressure from people around them regarding body image not only impacts physical health but also has significant implications for psychological well-being, as at this stage, individuals tend to perceive their body shape as far from ideal. This can lead individuals to worry about others' perceptions or judgments of themselves. As a result, individuals may experience various negative impacts such as increased social anxiety, feelings of low self-esteem, or even mental health disorders like depression. They may also experience decreased self-worth, ongoing dissatisfaction with physical appearance, and difficulty in accepting and liking themselves overall. All of these can affect psychological well-being and overall mental health (Jafar et al., 2020).

Based on the presentation of the above research, it is evident that there are factors affecting body image in adulthood. The results identify individual dissatisfaction with themselves due to several factors. Therefore, this systematic review will present several factors that can affect body image. This systematic review is expected to provide information about various factors that affect an individual's body image.

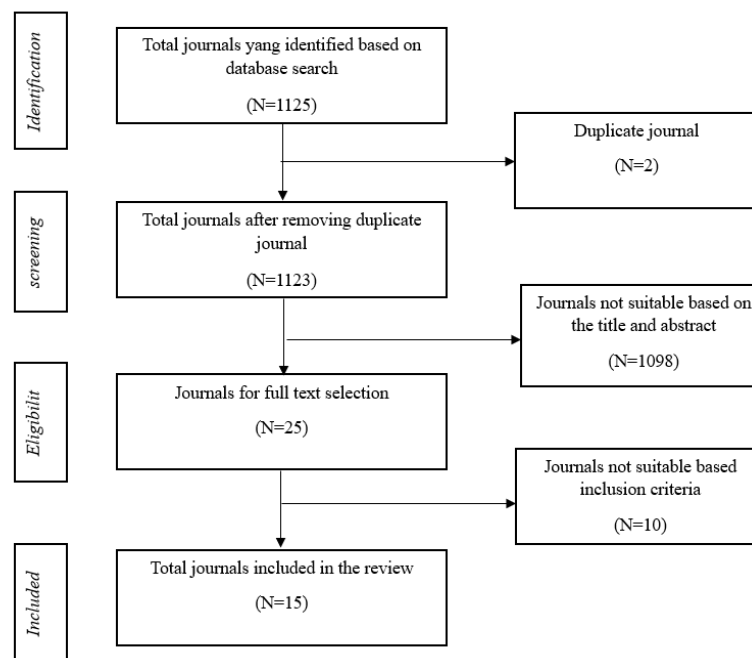
## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In the review process, the steps of conducting a systematic review begin with planning. The planning of the review starts by formulating the systematic review question using the SPIDER framework (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research Type). The research question for this systematic review was "What are the factors affecting an individual's body image? After that, the author proceeded to determine other terms related to body image, body dissatisfaction, young adulthood, and early adulthood. The author then created a comprehensive search list based on the selected terms. Some of these words were used as keywords in search databases such as Google Scholar and Scopus. The next stage involved downloading all the journals and checking for duplicates using Mendeley and Rayya. Next, all journals will be filtered based on their titles and abstracts. Journals that pass with suitable titles and abstracts will be thoroughly checked again. After selection from the 1125 journals found, only 15 journals were found to discuss factors affecting body image. The journal selection process can be seen through the PRISMA diagram in Figure 1. The researcher sets criteria for journal review with 1)

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Journals discussing body image while mentioning impacts that affect psychological well-being, 2) Journal publication years from 2012-2023, 3) Journals are in English and Arabic, 4) Subjects in the journals are adults, 5) Types of research are qualitative and quantitative. Some criteria for journals that were not selected include 1) Journals only discussing psychological well-being without explaining the causes affecting psychological well-being, 2) Journals being literature reviews or in book form.

#### **PRISMA Chart for Journal Selection Process**



## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Body image is the discrepancy between the perceived body shape by individuals using body shape. Ramanda (2019) explains that body image, also known as body image, is an individual's perception of their appearance and physical condition that evokes feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their body. In another study, body image is defined as a mental representation used in forming thoughts about the body (Abbasi & Zubair, 2015). It can be concluded that body image is the perception or representation of one's appearance and physical condition. This includes the discrepancy between the body shape perceived by the individual and their physical reality.

Melliana (as cited in Ramanda et al., 2019) explains the factors that affect an individual's body image, including: first, Self-Esteem, which is affected by an individual's beliefs and attitudes towards their body, as reflected in societal beauty standards. Second, Comparison with Others, where body image is often shaped by comparisons individuals make regarding their physique with recognized ideal standards within social and cultural environments. Repeated comparisons can affect the acceptance of one's body shape. The third factor is Family Influence, where the process of forming body image is often affected by individuals outside of oneself, especially the family. Family, particularly

parents, impact the development of body image in children through examples, guidance, and feedback provided. The fourth factor is Interpersonal Relationships, which can affect an individual's self-concept, including how they evaluate their physical appearance.

**Table 1.** List of Factors Affecting Body Image in Adulthood

No	Penulis	Subjek	Faktor
1	Abbasi & Zubair, 2015	300 adults, aged 18-31 years	Comparison of oneself with others regarding body shape
2	Ahmadi <i>et al.</i> , 2013	97 adults, aged 21-34 years	Physical dissatisfaction that does not meet beauty standards
3	Arroyo <i>et al.</i> , 2021	412 adults, aged 18-35 years	Social media pressure regarding beauty standards
4	Campos-Uscanga <i>et al.</i> , 2022	3715 adults, aged 18 years	Social pressure on the obese body
5	Jafar Tabatabaei <i>et al.</i> , 2020	50 adults, aged 18-34 years	Post-operative fuse changes
6	Jayne, 2020	148 adults, aged 18 years	Social views regarding certain body types
7	Jones & Rachel, 2022	77 adults, aged 18-74 years	Social pressure and stigmatization
8	Karna & Sivaraman, 2023	80 adults, aged 18-25 years	Societal pressure
9	Kumar <i>et al.</i> , 2023	114 adults, aged 18-22 years	Worry and don't care about appearance
10	Martin <i>et al.</i> , 2022	3715 adults, aged 19 years	Social pressure on thin bodies
11	Marsh <i>et al.</i> , 2021	132 adults, aged 18-29 years	High regard for appearance and physical attractiveness
12	Molina <i>et al.</i> , 2019	501 adults, aged 18-34 years	Obesity
13	Özyıldırım <i>et al.</i> , 2023	33 adults, aged 28-55 years	Obesity
14	Swami <i>et al.</i> , 2017	1148 adults, aged 18-81 years	A tendency to feel sorry for oneself for not meeting standards
15	Yazdani <i>et al.</i> , 2018	124 adults, aged 17-67 years	Obesity continues to increase

The review above found that several factors affect body image in adulthood, thus affecting an individual's psychological well-being. Table 1 shows several factors that can affect body image, such as self-comparison with others regarding body shape (Abbasi & Zubair, 2015), dissatisfaction with physical appearance due to beauty standards (Ahmadi *et al.*, 2013), social media pressure related to beauty standards (Arroyo *et al.*, 2021),

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societal pressure on obese bodies (Compos-Uscange et al., 2022), physical changes post-surgery (Jafar Tabatabaee et al., 2020), social views regarding specific body shapes (Jayne et al., 2020), social pressure and stigma (Jones & Rachel, 2022), societal pressure (Karna & Sivaraman, 2023), anxiety and dissatisfaction with appearance (Kumar et al., 2023), social pressure due to thin body (Martin et al., 2022), high expectations for appearance and physical attractiveness (Marsh et al., 2021), obesity (Molina et al., 2019; Özyildirim et al., 2023), self-pity due to non-compliance with standards (Swami et al., 2017), increasing obesity rates (Yazdani et al., 2018).

Social pressure is one of the factors that significantly affect an individual's body image due to the ideal body shape and appearance. Martín Cárdaña et al. (2022) reveal the existence of social pressure related to thin bodies, especially more common among those who are overweight, which becomes one of the factors affecting psychological well-being. Another study indicates that the greater the societal pressure to conform to unrealistic body standards, the higher the levels of anxiety, low self-esteem, and mental disorders such as anxiety and depression (Karna & Sivaraman, 2023). In general, individuals tend to perceive their bodies as larger than they actually are, leading to dissatisfaction with their bodies due to being overweight. This is caused by the desire to have a slimmer ideal body shape. This systematic review will illustrate several factors of body image that affect an individual's psychological well-being with various adult age variations and different perspectives from other researchers.

Discontentment with body image is often caused by differences in opinions regarding the ideal body shape, thus resulting in social pressure. Martín Cárdaña et al. (2022) reveal the existence of social pressure related to a thin body, especially more common among those who are obese, which becomes one of the factors affecting psychological well-being. Another study indicates that the greater the societal pressure to conform to unrealistic body standards, the higher the levels of anxiety, low self-esteem, and mental disorders such as anxiety and depression (Karna & Sivaraman, 2023). In general, individuals tend to perceive their bodies as larger than they actually are, leading to dissatisfaction with their bodies due to being overweight. This is due to the desire to have a slimmer ideal body shape. A systematic review will outline various factors affecting an individual's psychological well-being concerning body image, considering different ages and perspectives from researchers.

Fernando (2019) highlights in his study the psychological effects on obese individuals, including feelings of low self-esteem, depression, and social withdrawal due to teasing from peers. Additionally, there are physical consequences such as frequent respiratory infections, limited activity participation, increased drowsiness, high blood pressure, heart problems, and diabetes.

In addition to affecting their physical health, this also has significant implications for psychological well-being, as individuals tend to view their body shape as far from ideal at this stage. Campos-Uscanga (2022) illustrates in their research that 3715 female students aged 18 experienced body dissatisfaction due to social factors commenting on the need for a slim body shape among young individuals with obesity.

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Psychological well-being refers to a state where individuals experience overall positivity in terms of themselves, their surrounding environment, and various aspects of life while being able to accept themselves and grow personally. Psychological well-being is linked to personal satisfaction, emotional attachment, hope, gratitude, emotional stability, self-understanding, self-esteem, happiness, contentment, and a positive outlook, encompassing the recognition and development of an individual's abilities and interests (Lilishanty & Maryatmi, 2019).

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on this systematic review, it can be inferred that negative body image in adulthood encompasses social-cultural pressures, social media influences, societal stigmas related to body weight, negative appraisals of appearance, self-perceptions of body, and beauty standards. These negative effects extend beyond mere body dissatisfaction and can profoundly impact overall psychological well-being. The findings from this study offer a deeper and scientifically significant understanding of the importance of valuing diverse body shapes in others. By understanding these factors, readers can gain a better insight into how body image forms and how it can affect individual behavior and well-being. The implications of these findings help place this research within previous contexts and provide a realistic framework for developing interventions and programs that can enhance psychological well-being and mental health in adults. Thus, this study contributes to existing literature and holds clear relevance for practitioners, researchers, and individuals interested in the fields of psychology and mental health.

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