

Katarzyna Borzucka-Sitkiewicz
Krzysztof Sas-Nowosielski
Poland

Sense of Personal Attractiveness, Perceiving Social Pressure on Attractive Appearance, Behaviour Leading to its Achievement among University Students

Abstract

The aim of the study was to determine how university students perceive their personal attractiveness, how pressurized they feel into being up to the dominant ideals of body attractiveness and if they undertake actions aimed at shaping their appearance.

A cross-sectional design was used. A total of 257 university students (including 160 women) aged 19 to 27 (M 21.0 SD 1.70) were surveyed. The students completed questionnaires measuring perceived social pressure on attractive appearance, satisfaction with one's appearance and actions aimed at shaping one's appearance. The results suggest that the respondents are moderately content with their body images with more positive scores obtained by men. The parts of the body which are the source of disappointment in women are buttocks, hips, thighs and stomach while in men stomach and legs. What is interesting is that the women see the above-mentioned parts as too fat or shapeless whereas the men consider them too weak. The approval of the body image seems to depend on the level of social pressure under which the respondents are; however, the negative influence of the social pressure was noticed mainly by the women. A very low score has been observed in actions taken towards one's own body eg. physical activity, dieting, taking medicines or paramedicines and beauty sessions.

Key words: *body image, health education, young adults*