



Western Media and Body Image Dissatisfaction in Young Women in Developing Nations

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This review systematically analyzed BID among young women of developing nations after these women's consumption of Western media. We explored changes in women's exposure to Western media alongside changes in body image dissatisfaction and eating disorders. Reoccurring themes of internalization across populations of women are discussed.

Method: Multiple databases were used in our search for relevant research which included information on body image dissatisfaction, eating disorders, Western media, and the experiences of young women. Ultimately, given the extant research and specific

interests of the current study, body image dissatisfaction was explored within the following ten nations: Turkey, India, China, South Africa, Belize, Zimbabwe, Malaysia, Iran, Oman, and Fiji.

Results: Many of the identified research studies included *secondary and post-secondary students as their sample*. Results lend further support for the association between Western media and body image dissatisfaction and eating disorders across cultures and developing nations. Internalizing thin ideals into a woman's current cultural beauty schema, her amount of exposure, and her socioeconomic status emerged as important predictors of body image dissatisfaction.

Implications for Research and Practice: Results of the current study suggest that young women of developing nations may associate the thin ideals portrayed in Western media with financial success. This association warrants further exploration and could inform more culturally sensitive interventions. An attempt to understand the importance of cultural differences and similarities would be a progressive step in identifying appropriate mechanisms on which interventions might act to prevent internalizing harmful aspects of the beauty ideals presented in Western media.

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Introduction

From 1990 to 2010, an alarming increase in the health-related burden of eating disorders increased across 21 world regions (Murray et al., 2012), and this rising trend is thought to be associated with body image dissatisfaction (BID) through increased exposure to Western media (Bergstrom & Neighbors, 2006; Swami et al., 2010). Research suggests that increased access to Western media in developing nations parallels the increased health-related burden that began in 1990 (Murray et al., 2010), but the sociocultural and diverse experiences of these women have not been explored. There is evidence to support positive effect of Western media consumption on body image dissatisfaction among women in both Western and non-Western countries such that increased exposure is associated with increased body image dissatisfaction (Anderson-Fye, 2004; Bergstrom & Neighbors, 2006; Swami et al., 2010). The effects of Western media are thought to be most harmful for younger women. Body image and dieting awareness have been found associated with peer and media influence as early as age six in girls (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006), and research finds the highest rates of BID and eating disorders typically emerge during adolescence (Lucas, et al.; Smink et al., 2012).

To shed light on the experiences of women when they might be most susceptible to the negative outcomes associated with Western media consumption, the current review examined the experiences of young women. The overarching aim of this review is to acknowledge the varied experiences of these women across cultures and better inform practitioners and researchers of the potential effects of Western media. In Western nations, the rate of BID has known to have substantial and pervasive public health consequences. In 2014, an astounding majority of native-born and migrant women in the U.S. reported a desire to lose weight or change the shape of her body (Swami et al., 2014). This is especially harmful as BID is associated with depression (Waghachavare et al., 2014), poor nutrition (Dixit et al., 2011), and eating disorders (DeLeel et al., 2003). Research similarly provides support that negative outcomes are associated with BID in developing nations (Humenikova & Gates, 2008; Schneider, 2000; Swami et al., 2015). BID has been defined as, "The negative attitudes, thoughts, or feelings toward one's own body." (Grogan, 2007, pp. 3-4). While BID is not limited to the size or weight of a woman's body, Western media pervasively identifies thinness as the ideal beauty. Importantly, the frequency of experiencing BID among women is on the rise across many nations; however, their experiences uniquely differ, and there may be aspects of culture that protect against or mitigate the effects of Western media on a woman's body image.

Evidence from some developing nations shows that beauty ideals are increasingly focused on thinness or a desire for smaller body-mass index (BMI). Importantly, BMI is a nutritional measure associated with disease and illness ("WHO Child Growth Standards," 2009), and there are growing concerns that a drive for thinness among young women promotes an unhealthy BMI (Bilukha & Utermohlen, 2002; Heshmat et al., 2015; Mishra & Mukhopadhyay, 2010). A cross-cultural examination of women from ten world regions found that exposure to Western media and having higher measurements of BMI was associated with higher levels of BID in most surveyed

developing nations (Swami et al., 2010). As a developing nation increase its per capita gross domestic product, the interactions with other foreign nations also increase. With these interactions, many countries will learn about Western culture and its beauty ideals. This research contributes largely to the epidemiology of BID in developing nations, but it does not unpack the unique sociocultural influences that Western thin ideals, or the emphasis on thinness as beautiful, bring to women of developing nations. As these women incorporate or internalize Western media's beauty archetype, their own beauty ideals may shift and be limited.

Unfortunately, most women exposed to Western media internalize its beauty ideals. Internalizing Western media's portrayal of thinness involves integrating the desire to be thin into an individual's schema of beauty. This internalizing likely has varied consequences that could be culture specific but extant research has considered the relevant experiences of women from different countries. It is important to note that not all beauty ideals portrayed in Western media are specific to thinness. There are many other aspects of beauty that are underrepresented in Western media such as racial and ethnic diversity. The specific consequences of thinness and cultural, racial, and ethnic exclusion could have a profound impact on women from non-Western nations. To acknowledge the different experiences of women across nations, the current study reviewed existing research from developing nations newly exposed to Western media. The authors considered changes in the amount of Western media corresponding to changes in BID and eating disorders for each nation of interest. Finally, the review discussed some of the emerging trends among women from different nations after exposure to Western media.

Research has found that adolescents and emerging adult women most often internalize influences from the surrounding macro-culture (Gerbasi et al., 2014; Ricciardelli et al., 2003). Over the past decade, media consumption by adolescents in Western nations has most notably increased around the age of twelve (Common Sense Media, 2015). Adolescents are especially vulnerable to be negatively affected by misperceptions of social norms such that the dominant depiction of thin and beautiful women in the media is perceived as the norm when it is not (Bergstrom & Neighbors, 2006). Further, body image disturbance is frequently found associated with eating disorders, making the influence of Western media on young women especially pertinent (Bergstrom & Neighbors, 2006; Ricciardelli et al., 2003). Interestingly, there is some evidence to suggest that children of different countries are similarly vulnerable to the effects of media through the same developmental competencies (Lapierre & Rozendaal, 2019). Given that children of different nations appear to be similarly affected by media usage, this specific increase in usage could have dire implications during adolescence when the occurrence of eating disorders are highest. This is specifically relevant to teens between the ages of 15-24 who are at greater risk of dying from anorexia (Smink et al., 2012) and have shown an alarming increase in the rate of anorexia (Lucas et al., 1998). With children having increased access to Western media during the stressful time of puberty, narrow versions of beauty could be especially harmful to a child's growing self-esteem and body image. With these developmental

implications and associated risks in mind, this review primarily focused on young women approximately 12-25 years of age.

Method

Research Design

For the purpose of this review, primary focus was given to BID in relation to weight, body shape, and body size as opposed to other aspects of the body such as hair or skin color. Cross-cultural research in the area of BID has found variations of the operational definition to be applicable across cultures. Western media was broadly defined as any form of media created in Western nations not native to the country of interest. This includes television shows, television commercials or advertisements, magazines, newspapers, and internet articles or videos. No limitations were placed on the physical form of media in order to obtain an accurate representation of the amount of Western media available within a nation. Publications regarding exposure to Western media after 2010 were excluded to understand the experience of women in developing nations relevant to the increase in health-related burdens of eating disorders between 1990-2010 (Murray et al., 2012). Given the existing literature, we hypothesized that there would be increased levels of BID and eating disorders among women consuming Western media. No specific hypotheses were made in regard to differences within or across nations as the primary aim was to explore the unique experiences of these women.

Data measuring BID among women in developing nations are limited, so research concerning both eating disorders and BID was used to best establish the amount of BID experienced prior to the introduction of Western media. Although eating disorders and BID are not synonymous, eating disorders have been found to be associated with BID in both developed and developing nations (Perez & Joiner, 2003; Stice et al., 2004; Swami et al., 2010). These data provided an understanding of the existing amount of BID in the female population from which changes were assessed using research published during and after the introduction of Western media for the following developing nations: China, Malaysia, Fiji, Turkey, Iran, Oman, Belize, India, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. The amount of Western media exposure for each nation of interest was then examined across the timeline of introduction using both relevant scientific and consumer sources. These countries were reviewed because there was sufficient research returned in our results during the accompanying increased health-related burden associated with eating disorders found in 1990-2010 (Murray et al., 2012).

Research Procedures

The following databases were searched: PsycINFO, Web of Science, Women's Studies International, PubMed, the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). The platforms EBSCOhost and ProQuest were used. The PsycINFO database covers a variety of regions and was selected for its focus on mental health and behavioral sciences. Women's Studies International, a subset of EBSCOhost, provided

widespread coverage of international research on feminist issues. Both Web of Science and ProQuest are hosts to a plethora of disciplines and regions. The database ERIC focuses primarily on education-related literature and was chosen because of its targeted population of young adults. Comprehensive databases, such as these, represent multiple countries and were used to better embody a diverse collection of current scientific contributions. The following key terms were searched: body image, body image disturbance, body image dissatisfaction, body appreciation, negative body image, weight, weight-loss, eating attitudes, eating disorders, media, Western media, young women, girls, adolescents, developing nations, anorexia, bulimia.

Research Sample

This review examined the following developing nations: Turkey, India, China, Oman, South Africa, Belize, Zimbabwe, Malaysia, Iran, and Fiji. Each country was found to have recent empirical research conducted on a population of young women after exposure to Western media. A developing nation was defined as a nation having a greater portion of gross domestic product (GDP) comprised of industrialized goods over service goods. Developed nations have a greater portion of GDP devoted to service goods as opposed to industrialized goods. Each nation chosen for review was additionally cross-referenced to the list of developing nations agreed upon by the World Economic Situations and Prospects (2012).

The authors found limited quantitative data for BID or eating disorders in all developing nations of interest; however, relevant qualitative examining eating disorders and BID was relatively available. Some of the literature reviewed included additional sample characteristics (for example, included older adult women). These articles were included when relevant. Earlier research confirmed this lack of population-based data for eating disorders and BID in developing nations (DeLeel et al., 2003; Xu et al., 2010). Research regarding BID and eating disorders was described in relation to other data describing increases of Western media. Specific sample data including gender, age, and nationality, for each article can be found in Table 1.

Results

Results from the database ERIC returned 68 results, with 22 remaining after inclusion and exclusion criterion were met. Web of Science returned 56 results, which were then narrowed down to 23. Lastly, Articles were cross-referenced for overlap and then read for relevance and time period of interest (prior to 2010). Details for each article reviewed are outlined in table 1. The results are discussed.

China

Each year, China's censorship committee selects a limited number of Western films to censor and release (Coonan, 2014a; Coonan, 2014b). Over the past decade, this number has increased and is expected to continue increasing (Coonan, 2014b). For example, in 2012, the Chinese government agreed to allow over 30 Hollywood films be released in China (Coonan, 2014a; Coonan, 2014b). Western beauty ideals are also

disseminated through magazines. Condé Nast International produces seven of China's leading multimedia productions including Vogue China, a fashion magazine originating in New York, New York (Over 100 years, n.d.). During this time of Western media growth, corresponding rates of eating disorders and BID were found to increase.

In 1991, eating disorders rates in Hong Kong were estimated to be around 0.46% of Chinese women (Lee, 1991). In this research, nearly all surveyed women wanted to lose weight or be thinner—which is like the attitudinal rates of BID reported by Western women (Lee, 1991; Swami et al., 2014). Although these women desired a thinner body, surprisingly, none reported dieting to become thin (Lee, 1991). Later in 1996, a sample of women in Hong Kong was given the Eating Attitudes Test 26 (EAT-26), and 6.5% of these women were found to be at high risk for eating disorders development (Lee & Lee, 1996). Lee (1996) also concluded that the Western idea of “fat-phobia” existed in the female population of China. A review by Miller and Pumeriaga (2001) found a lack of fear during the 1930's to early 1990's. This “fat-phobia” is a typical characteristic of anorexia nervosa and until this time, “fat-phobia” had not been empirically documented in the Chinese female population.

More recently in 2010, Xu and colleagues (2010) found that Chinese women had experiences like women in Western nations (Swami et al., 2014). Chinese women experienced higher levels of BID than men, reported receiving direct messages from the media that encouraged weight loss, and lastly, both healthy weight and overweight women experienced higher levels of BID than underweight women (Xu et al., 2010). In addition to these newly emerged traits and attitudes, research from 2010 estimated that 3-10% of women in China had some form of an eating disorders (Xu et al., 2010) compared to the earlier estimates of 0.46% (Lee, 1991). Evidence found in the literature from 1990 onward supports an increase in BID, eating disorders, and exposure to Western media.

Table 1

Specific Sample Data Including Gender, Age, and Nationality, For Each Article

Citation	Country	Global Findings	Population	Type
Al-Adawi S., Dorvlo A.S., Burke D.T., Moosa S., & Al-Bahlani S. (2002)	Oman	EAT-26 not found reliable, more reliable when facet of "fat-phobia" removed	Male (n=136) and female (n=126) students, ages 14-17 years with separate analyses	cross-sectional, validation of EAT
Anderson-Fye, E. (2004)	Belize	Women worked in US-related tourist industry attributed thinness with achieving higher socioeconomic and educational status; body shape was more prized than body size or BMI	Young school-aged girls through age 70	mixed methods
Avci & Akliman (2018)	Turkey	Gender differences were found in experience of body image on behavior, and coping with body image	Young girls ages 14-15 (n=710)	cross-sectional
Becker, A. E. (2004)	Fiji	Young women of Fiji internalized thin ideals of WM during times of economic and social change	young women (n=30), ages 15-20 years	cross-sectional
Becker, A. E., Burwell, R. A., Herzog, D. B., Hamburg, P., & Gilman, S. E. (2002)	Fiji	Higher rates of ED were found after increased access and exposure to WM	Young women (n=30), ages 15-20 years	cross-sectional
Dhillon, M., Priti, D. (2011)	India	All girls wanted to lose weight; unhealthy eating behaviors seen as harmful to the body and family; parental disapproval about weight and open advertisement of weight in arranged-marriage ads was distressing	Young women(n=10), ages 15-21 years	Cross-sectional

Table 1 Continue

Citation	Country	Global Findings	Population	Type
Dogan, Bayhan, Yukselen, & Isitan (2018)	Turkey	Body image had an effect on behaviors targeted at changing body size/ shape. Sociocultural factors played a greater role in girls' body image	Boys and girls in 7th-10th grade (n=1,280)	cross-sectional
Gerbasi, M. E., Richards, L. K., Thomas, J. J., Agnew-Blais, J. C., Thompson-Brenner, H., Gilman, S. E., & Becker, A. E. (2014)	Fiji	Western culture was significantly correlated with maladaptive eating behaviors but only with marginal significance; peer influence was a stronger predictor for eating pathology	Young women (n=523), ages 15-2 years	cross-sectional
Lee, M., & Lee, S. (1996)	China	BID was associated with higher EAT-26 scores, higher levels of depression, and higher levels of family conflict	School girls, aged 14-19 years	cross-sectional
Lee, S. (1991)	China	Women suffering with anorexia showed similar clinical traits as women in Western countries; women experiencing anorexia nervosa were disproportionately of higher SES	Small, clinical population of women (n=16) 12-26 years	cross-sectional
Lee, S. (2001)	China	Support that fat phobia is no longer centralized to Western nations; estimates 3-10% of females had some form of an ED	Country of China	book
Mishra, S. K., & Mukhopadhyay S., (2010)	India	Urban homes and higher SES were more likely to diet; BID associated with BMI; Westernization and social pressures to be thin noted to influence weight loss	Young women (n=577), ages 15- 19 years	cross-sectional
Nagar & Virk (2017)	India	Experimental test of internalization of thin ideals. Women who were shown images of thin women had lower self-esteem and higher body dissatisfaction.	Women ages 16-22 years (n=62)	cross-sectional

Table 1 Continue

Citation	Country	Global Findings	Population	Type
Nakamura, K., Hoshino, Y., Watanabe, A., Honda, K., Niwa, S., Tominaga, K., Shimai, S., Masaharu, Y. (1999)	Japan	Exploratory research among Japanese high school girls-- Results suggested that female high school students in Japan could have slightly lower rates of ED. BID was the biggest predictor of eating problems	High school girls ages 15-17	cross-sectional
Nishizawa, Y., Kida, K., Nishizawa, K., Hashiba, S., Saito, K., & Mita, R. (2003)	Japan	Adolescents of normal and underweight BMI have an overestimated self-perceived body size	Young boys (n=299) and girls (n=268), separate analyses, ages 15-17	cross-sectional
Nobakht, M., & Dezhkam, M. (2000)	Iran	Higher rates of ED than non-Western nations and rates that are comparable to Western nations	adolescent girls (n=3100), ages 15-18 years	cross-sectional
Oğuztürk, Ö., Bülbül, S. H., Özen, N. E., Ekici, M., Örnek, K., Ünlü, E., & Yüksel, S. (2012)	Turkey	Positive body image was positively correlated with state trait anxiety, higher anxiety was correlated with higher body weight	430 Turkish school children (246 girls, 184 boys), ages 12-16 years	cross-sectional
Swami, V. (2006)	Malaysia	Desire for thinness increased with exposure to WM and industrialization	7,434 individuals	
Swami, V., Frederick, D. A., Aavik, T., Alcalay, L., Allik, J., Anderson, D., & Zivcic-Becirevic, I. (2010)	10 major world regions (e.g. Malaysia, South Africa)	BMI and Western media exposure were significant predictors of BID, BID more common among higher SES across most countries and during adolescence	across varied regions with a wide range of age across nations from approximately 15-50 years	cross-sectional

Table 1 Continue

Citation	Country	Global Findings	Population	Type
Swami, V., Mada, R., & Tovée, M. J. (2012)	Zimbabwe	Migrant women experienced higher levels of weight discrepancy and BID, WM exposure was associated with lower body appreciation	women in Harare, Zimbabwe (n=140), and an age-matched sample (n=138) of Zimbabwean migrants in Britain	cross-sectional
Swami, V., Tovée, M., & Harris, A. S. (2013)	Malaysia	Women internalized the beauty ideals presented in WM differently across ethnicity	Adult women consisting of Malays (n= 459), Chinese (n=307) and Indians (n=150) from Kuala Lumpur	cross-sectional
Swami, V., Tran, U. S., Stieger, S., & Voracek, M. (2014)	US and Non-US samples	Nearly all women reported experiencing BID; BMI positively predicted BDI and negatively predicted body appreciation	8,925, US residents ages 18 and over (M=30.22) and 742 non-US residents ages 18 and over (M=27.7)	cross-sectional
Wassenaar, D., Grange, D., & Winship, J. (2000)	South Africa	ED were not limited to Western nations and were prevalent across ethnicities in South Africa	Female university students, ages 18-27 years	
Xu, X., Mellor, D., Kiehne M., Ricciardelli, L. A., McCabe, M. P., & Xu, Y. (2010)	China	Reported pressure from peers and the media to lose weight; Feeling pressure from media was predictive of body change behaviors	Adolescent males (N = 219) and females (N = 298)	cross-sectional

Malaysia

Despite a hefty import tax on foreign films, data from the Malaysian population show a steady preference for American Hollywood films similar to that of the Chinese population (Lee, 2008). Research has investigated changes in BID among young Malaysian women after the introduction of Western media, but there is little epidemiological data regarding the levels of BID and eating disorders prior to this introduction. With a thriving consumer market for American-made films, it can be concluded that women in Malaysia have received a steady exposure to Western thin ideals (Lee, 2008).

In 2005, research found that Malaysian women desired a smaller BMI instead of a healthy waist to hip ratio (Swami et al., 2008) like the women of Belize working in the tourist industry (Anderson-Fye, 2004). More recent research has found that women living in more urban areas desired the slimmest body type (Swami, 2016). Furthermore, women of higher socio-economic status (SES) desired an increasingly slimmer body type compared to women of lower SES (Swami, 2016). Similar findings emerged even earlier, establishing a trending relation between Western media exposure and desire for thinness that could differ across SES and region. Specifically, Swami and colleagues (2010) found significant differences in desire for thinness across both regional and SES differences such that women in urban areas and those with higher SES desired thinner body types. In addition to regional and SES differences, the amount of BID has been found to vary across ethnicity. In the city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian women desired a thinner body type than Chinese or Indian women (Swami et al., 2013). These differences demonstrate how Western beauty ideals are internalized differently across ethnicities (Swami et al., 2013). Additionally, in 2009, a cross-cultural comparison found that a sample of Malaysian adolescents engaged more frequently in weight-loss strategies than did Chinese adolescents. Surprisingly, this research found gender differences in levels of BID among the Chinese sample but not the Malaysian sample (Mellor et al., 2009). The mechanism behind these cultural and ethnic differences is not discussed extensively in the literature, but more recent research suggests sociocultural change as a risk factor for ED in Malaysian women. It is possible the socioeconomic, political, and cultural shifts that accompany Westernization could serve as a stressor which increases young women's vulnerability toward ED.

Fiji

In 2002, just four years after the introduction of television, research found that young girls emulated characters from Western television shows and associated the character's success and personality traits with her physical beauty (Becker et al., 2002). In order to become like these characters, the girls reported a desire to lose weight, become thinner, or change the shape of their body (Becker, 2004). This research also found an increase in maladaptive eating behaviors.

Other research provides additional support that continued exposure to Western media was associated with a more negative body image in young women of Fiji; however, this correlation was mitigated by socioeconomic status (Gerbası et al., 2014). This relation between SES and BID was like findings discovered in Malaysian women (Swami et al., 2010). Gerbası and colleagues (2014) also found that the influence of Western media was heavily dependent upon peer-perceived norms, viewing television, and peer interactions (Gerbası et al., 2014), and the women's understanding of Western cultural norms were learned primarily through television and peer interaction. The developmental implications of learning about another culture primarily through television could lead to distorted perception, promoting misconceptions about the normality of thinness in Western cultures (Bergstrom & Neighbors, 2006; Gerbası et al., 2014).

These unhealthy peer-perceived norms and increased peer interactions devoted to Western television viewing were significantly correlated with eating disorders (Gerbası et al., 2014). Among these young women, ages 15 to 20, older adolescent girls were less influenced by their peers but more influenced by Western media (Gerbası et al., 2014). This finding emphasizes the differences of internalizing Western media across development and how it could potentially be detrimental to a young woman's developing body image. Further research on developmental differences, character emulation, and the impact of Western media should be conducted in the Fijian population as these factors were found to influence a drive for thinness in this population.

Middle Eastern Countries: Turkey, Iran, and Oman

Over the past few years, the European Union has worked toward annexing Turkey (Richardson, 2005). As of today, Turkey has not been annexed, and for the purpose of this review it will be considered as part of the Middle East. Adolescent girls in Turkey have an increased risk for poor health as a consequence of low SES, BID, and poor sleep (Oguzturk et al., 2012) and Turkish adolescent girls have also been found to experience a more negative body image perception than boys (Avci & Keven Akliman, 2018). All these factors are common as nations undergo economic and political changes. This research found that these young girls had higher levels of anxiety when experiencing BID than young men (Oguzturk et al., 2012), and like the women of China (Xu et al., 2010) and many developed nations, the women of Turkey experienced higher levels of negative body image than men. Data collected from Turkish adolescents in 2008 found similarly increasing rates of eating disorders to that of developed nations (Sanlier et al., 2008). The rate of eating disorders in this sample of university students was reported to be 23%; like most Western nations, women experienced a higher frequency of eating disorders than men. This sample did not reveal any statistically significant differences in the amount of BID experienced across BMI. These findings are most pertinent to this population as it will continue to change and gain greater access to Western media.

As the access to internet becomes more available to Turkish youths, research finds this developing nation is experiencing some of the same negative consequences as Western nations. In 2015, researchers discovered that approximately 10% of the adolescents surveyed experienced internet addiction. Furthermore, adolescents experiencing internet addiction were more likely to exhibit disordered eating attitudes and score higher on the EAT-26 (Alpaslan et al., 2015). Although not directly investigated, exposure to Western media, cultural change, and Westernization were discussed as possible causes for these relations (Alpaslan et al., 2015).

Another Middle Eastern nation of interest for its exposure to Western media is Iran. In 2000, research estimated the rate of anorexia to be 0.9% and the rate of bulimia to be 3.2% of the female Iranian population (Nobakht & Dezhkam, 2000). These estimates were based on a cross-sectional study of Iranian schoolgirls, but there are still many variables unexplored. Outside of this high school sample, the Tehranian women of Iran were found to appreciate Western culture and displayed higher levels of body image satisfaction than other populations of Iranian women (Nobakht & Dezhkam, 2000). Although the differences of internalization for Iranian women are contrary to most findings, there is currently insufficient evidence to draw any conclusions on the Iranian female population.

In addition to investigating the rates of BID in the Middle East, the use of culturally relevant psychometrics was noted as an obstacle for BID research. Unfortunately, one of the most commonly used psychometric tests in eating behavior and attitude research, the EAT-26, is culturally bound (Al-Adawi et al., 2002). In the country of Oman, researchers set out to validate the cross-cultural use of the EAT-26. The EAT-26 is a 40-item instrument measuring eating attitudes and behaviors (Garner & Garfinkle, 1979). One such item asks about the participant's fear of fat on the body. It was found that interviews excluding the use of fat-phobia are more reliable than the EAT-26.

Although in some developing nations, like China, research has found that young girls identify with the idea of fat-phobia, but this is not true of all countries. It could be that fat-phobia or a drive for thinness is not predictive of eating disorders because it is not salient to the culture of Oman; however, this remains unclear. A second more recent study similarly found that a drive for thinness or fat phobia was not reliably predictive of anorexia among young men and women of Oman using another measure (Kayano et al., 2008). This research highlights the current limitations of research in the Middle East and the importance of qualitative approaches. This research also uncovered nuances in eating attitudes and BID that support a higher prevalence of eating disorders among adolescent males in Oman (Al-Adawi et al., 2002) which has not been found in other developing nations.

Without culturally appropriate psychometrics, phenomenon such as these may not emerge. These findings validate the crucial need for more culturally relevant measurements before evidence-based interventions can serve these populations. The

Middle Eastern findings of gender differences and higher levels of body appreciation stand out in comparison to other nations examined in this review. It is unclear if these differences are a result of invalid psychometrics and research methods or if women of the Middle Eastern nations internalize Western media differently.

Belize

In San Andrés, Belize, nearly 80% of the city's economy is derived from tourism—especially Western tourism (Anderson-Fye, 2004). Through recent economic growth, the women of San Andrés, Belize, have gained easier access to television (Anderson-Fye, 2004). After this new exposure, Anderson-Fye (2004) collected data using both interviews and quantitative measurements from 80 young women during the years 1996-1997 and again over the next five years. These interviews and observations provided vital insight into the ideology of the young girls and their attitudes toward Western media ideals (Anderson-Fye, 2004).

In San Andrés, Belize, research found that young women sought after a particular body shape and were less concerned with overall body size or weight. Although most of these young women wanted to change their body shape, very few engaged in maladaptive weight loss behaviors to achieve it. Young women who received a greater exposure to Western tourists and Western media indicated a greater desire to be thin. The duration and frequency of exposure was strongly correlated with a greater desire to be thin (Anderson-Fye, 2004). This desire for thinness starkly contrasts the traditional ideal of having a body resembling that of a Coca-Cola bottle or appealing waist to hip ratio (Anderson-Fye, 2004). This changing desire for a thinner body frame is similar to the sentiments of women in Malaysia (Swami et al., 2008). Not only did the women with greater exposure to Western tourism and culture experience a greater desire for thinness, but these women also reported a desire to become thin in order to gain more economical advances. (Anderson-Fye, 2004). The association of thinness and economic advances was also observed in Fiji and possibly Malaysia (Becker, 2004; Swami et al., 2010).

Prior to this research, no record of eating disorders existed in San Andrés, Belize, and there was very little existing research on BID (Anderson-Fye, 2004). In order to assess the changing ideology of beauty, Anderson-Fye (2004) examined photos of beauty pageant winners from previous years. This was especially important to the people of San Andrés, Belize, where women frequently took part in pageants. According to Anderson-Fye (2004), the photos of previous pageant winners had become increasingly thin over time. Despite this evidence, the association between economic opportunity and thinness deserves further investigation as it cannot be determined if Western media, Western tourism, or both influenced this desire for thinness.

India

India has a growing cinematic economy. Women in India are exposed to both Western media and their own culturally based entertainment (Gupta, 2015, June 17); however, the extent to which Indian women are influenced by Western media is still undetermined. Although current literature cannot definitively describe the impact of Western media, there is evidence to suggest that women in India do internalize this message with unhealthy consequences.

Dhillon and Priti (2011) conducted a survey on a small sample of young women in India. These women reported a desire to lose weight, so that they might fit properly into Western style clothes. These girls emulated characters on television and reported a desire to obtain the same weight as particular Western actresses seen on their favorite television shows (Dhillon & Dhawan, 2011). These reports were similar to those found in Fiji (Becker, 2004). Some of the women surveyed were also found at high risk for eating disorders (Dhillon & Priti, 2011).

In 2014, adolescent women were found to have increasing levels of BID as their exposure to media increased (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2014). Additionally, the level of BID experienced in this population varied significantly across parent occupation and SES. Another survey conducted in 2010, found that 84% of young women in India experience high levels of BID even while maintaining a healthy BMI (Mishra & Mukhopadhyay, 2010). This research provides insight into the high levels of BID experienced by the female population of India. The high rate of BID among young women with healthy a BMI closely parallels the experiences reported by women in developed nations (Swami et al., 2010; Swami et al., 2014). More recently, experimental manipulation provides additional support that Indian women are at risk for internalizing thin ideals of beauty when exposed to unrealistic depictions of thin women (Nagar & Virk, 2017).

Africa: Zimbabwe and South Africa

As nations undergo political changes, it is not uncommon for women to seek refuge in more stable nations. This is true of Zimbabwean women who sought refuge in Britain (Swami et al., 2012). The government of Zimbabwe has very strict regulations on the media, so upon arrival to their new host country, these women were exposed to copious amounts of Western media.

In 2012, research compared the migrant population of Zimbabwean women to the women who did not leave Zimbabwe. A positive correlation was found between Western media exposure and greater weight discrepancy in the migrant population of women. Likewise, a negative correlation was found between increased Western media exposure and lower levels of body appreciation in the migrant population (Swami et al., 2012). The migrant population also had higher levels of negative body image despite having no significant differences in BMI (Swami et al., 2012). The circumstances of the migrant

Zimbabwean women created a natural experiment to further the understanding of internalization within the same ethnicity but across cultures and regions.

In South Africa, Wassenaar et al. (2000) investigated the different roles that ethnicity may play in BID. In this study, White women from South Africa had higher levels of BID; however, Black women from South Africa had a higher drive for thinness and a higher drive for perfectionism than White women and Asian women residing in South Africa (Wassenaar et al., 2000). These differences found across ethnicity could be due to the combination of racial prejudices as well as Western media introduction. It is important to note that the average BMI differed significantly across ethnicity such that Black women on average had higher BMI than White women. BMI did not differ significantly across SES or urban and rural areas. This difference in BMI might also contribute to the difference in drive for thinness across women of various ethnicities (Wassenaar et al., 2000). This research study contrasts what earlier research identified. According to the review by Miller and Pumariega, the number of Black women experiencing BID and eating disorders has been increasing since the 1970's. This review presented research showing that rates of anorexia nervosa is higher among White women; however, Black women were found to score higher on the EAT-40 in 1998 (Grange et al., 1998). It is important to note that the EAT-26 and EAT-40 differ such that the EAT-26 measures eating attitudes and behaviors while the EAT-40 measures symptoms of Anorexia Nervosa (Garner & Garfinkel, 1979).

Western films and television cast nearly all White individuals for female leads (Schooler et al., 2004). The images of mostly White women in Western media may have influenced some of these differences found across ethnicity (Swami et al., 2010). Later in 2010, regional differences also emerged here. Women of lower SES and rural South African regions selected a significantly heavier figure as the most attractive body type (Swami et al., 2010). These findings are like those found in Malaysia (Swami, 2006) and support the hypothesis that women of urban regions desire a thinner figure as a result of greater exposure. The role of ethnicity, race, region, and socioeconomic status all play a role in the internalization and impact of Western media in the women of South Africa. Little is understood about which variable more strongly predicts how a young woman will be affected, and this warrants further investigation.

Discussion

This review examined the many unique experiences of BID in women across nations, the discussion of cultural differences within the literature, and the consequences of internalizing Western beauty ideals. Results from the current study lend further support that increased exposure to Western media was associated with BID and eating disorders among women (Swami et al., 2010). Of the ten nations analyzed in this review, nine nations showed increasing levels of BID and/or eating disorders. The overarching aim of this

review was to examine the unique experiences in BID during 1990-2010 when there was a reported global increase in health-related burdens associated with eating disorders (Murray et al., 2012). This review adds to the growing concern that the thin ideals heavily shown in Western media could have negative consequences for young women, but this reviews also finds reasons to further recognize the unique experiences of women from different countries.

This review found several differences but also striking similarities across nations. Regional differences were found in both Malaysia and South Africa. Other important similarities related to SES emerged across nations. Women from Fiji (Becker, 2004; Becker et al., 2002) and San Andrés, Belize (Anderson-Fye, 2004), associated thinness with economic advancement. Racial differences also emerged in South Africa and Malaysia (Wassenaar et al., 2000). These nations showed varying degrees of BID and experiences after exposure to Western media while residing in the same nation and culture. Women have varied experiences of BID across culture, race, region, SES, and other variables that are not fully explored within the current literature.

This review finds evidence to suggest that young women of developing nation may emulate characters from Western television shows even reporting a desire to obtain their characteristics (Becker, 2004; Becker et al., 2002; Dhillon & Dhawan, 2011) and feel directed to lose weight by messages in the media (Xu et al., 2010). Most of the young women considered in this review were found to internalize the thin ideal, and only a small percentage of women did not (Alipoor et al., 2009). Some women internalize the desire for thinness but do not engage in maladaptive eating behaviors (Anderson-Fye, 2004), but other women did internalize the beauty ideals of Western media and engaged in these behaviors (Becker, 2004). Lastly, women with healthy BMI experienced BID and often at similar levels to that found in Western nations (Mishra & Mukhopadhyay, 2010; Swami et al., 2010, 2014; Wassenaar et al., 2000). The similarities between Western and developing nations could be the cause of Western media or this could signal these nations are nearly developed and share several similarities.

Limitations

This systematic review is constrained by various factors which could be considered and incorporated into future research. For example, researchers could not control a young woman's exposure to Western media, thus a causal relation between BID and Western media cannot be concluded. While much of the existing research is correlational, we can learn more about the changing experiences in BID as women increase their consumption of Western media. This review also could not accurately assess the type of media or the amount of media consumed. We are also unable to determine if all Western media consumed by the women in these studies largely prioritized thin ideals. We aimed to address the amount of exposure by reviewing the demand for Western media and by reviewing longitudinal research that closely paralleled the introduction and change in

Western media consumption. Additionally, parallel changes in media consumption and BID and eating disorders were difficult to find for some nations. There are also other factors to consider such as sex, SES, and the area in which a woman lives. We are unable to determine if social factors account for a young woman's ability to access Western media or nutritional food. Given the extant research, we are also unable to consider the experience of BID in young men at this time. Young men may share similar experiences and their experiences may interact with the experiences of women, but this remains unclear. Despite the limitations of this review, it contributes to our understanding of BID from a global perspective and highlights key areas for future research.

Implications and Future Directions

The possibility that culture may serve as a protective factor for internalizing thin ideals or engaging in maladaptive behavior warrants further exploration to prevent the BID experienced by so many women around the world. This review has highlighted important similarities and differences in BID among young women of developing nations. Specifically, SES and where a woman lives could be an important risk factor for internalizing thin ideals among young women. There is some evidence to suggest that living in a more urban area and having higher SES is associated with higher levels of BID (Swami, 2016; Swami et al., 2010), but there is also research that finds no difference in BID across SES warranting further exploration (Wassenaar et al., 2000).

It is possible that women with greater financial means can afford greater access to Western media, and women of urban areas could more easily access media than women in rural more remote areas. Alternatively, women may associate resources and economic advancement with thinness given that Westernization paralleled financial growth in many of the countries reviewed in the current study. Women of higher SES or living in urban areas may identify more strongly with the thin women of high status often portrayed in Western media. The explanations for these differences in BID across SES and location of residence warrant further investigation.

Future researchers might also consider how trends in BID across developing nations share similarities to Western nations such as gender differences in BID. For example, in Sudan, adolescent girls have lower body image perception compared to boys, and the two genders differ in how they cope with these negative feelings (Avci & Keven Akliman, 2018). Among Turkish adolescents, body image directly effects weight-related behaviors, but girls' body image is especially influenced by the media (Dogan et al., 2018). Lastly, the current models do not adequately consider the effects of economic and political hardships on the body image of young women. These stressors are uniquely stressful for women of developing nations, but like women in Western nations, they are increasingly sharing in the negative experiences of BID in relation to media influence (Swami et al., 2010, 2015). While enduring these hardships, body norms and body image can still have negative effects on women's mental health (Hackman et al., 2016). While psychological research is

far from representing every nation, gender, and developmental stage, an attempt to understand these differences and similarities would be a progressive step in creating culturally sensitive interventions for diverse populations.

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