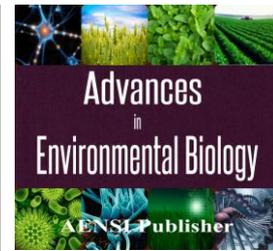




AENSI Journals

Advances in Environmental Biology

ISSN-1995-0756 EISSN-1998-1066

Journal home page: <http://www.aensiweb.com/AEB/>

The Relationship of the Body Imagewith Stress, Anxiety, Depression Among the Students of Kerman PNU

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 15 June 2014

Received in revised form

8 July 2014

Accepted 4 September 2014

Available online 20 September 2014

Key words:

body image, stress, anxiety, depression, students

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to survey the relationship of the body image with stress, anxiety and depression among the students of Kerman PNU. The methodology is descriptive and this study was done by the correlation method. The sample is 360 female students of Kerman PNU which were selected randomly. The data was gathered by the questionnaire of the body image and DASS-21. The data was analyzed by SPSS, Pearson test and T-test. Also the Cash model (1390) was used for the theoretical framework. The analysis of data showed that 15 students (4.2%) were satisfied with the appearance of their bodies completely, 338 students (93.9%) were satisfied with the appearance of their bodies relatively and 7students (1.9%) were not satisfied. The relationship of the satisfaction with stress, anxiety, depression was significant and inverse. There was a significant difference between the satisfaction of the married and single students. There were not significant differences between the stress, anxiety, depression of the married and single students.

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To Cite This Article: Fateme Afshinmehr and Nasim Saeid., The relationship of the body imagewith stress, anxiety, depression among the students of Kerman PNU 1, *Adv. Environ. Biol.*, 8(12), 1536-1545, 2014

INTRODUCTION

The psychological organization and the personality structure of person play an undeniable role in behaviors and life style. Today, the social, cultural and media pressures on the beauty and monitoring the body cause the people to manipulate his body and the satisfaction with own body image and the distance between the actual self and ideal self in this trend will be important [7]. Poor understanding of the body image and the dissatisfaction of the body can lead to the health and psychological problems such as depression and self-esteem. The self- esteem is a person's evaluation of its own and he usually keeps it. It indicates an attitude of the approval or disapproval.

Depression is a mood disorder which associates with the various degrees of despair, loneliness, failure and doubt and the feelings of guilt. Depression is a common disease and effect many people in the world and is called "psychic cold". It affects the behavior and performance, thoughts and feelings of human and he becomes dissociable and his relationships with others decrease. Its range starts with the feelings of depression, inadequacy and reluctance to life and in upper steps and by over time, it will lead to the absurd and suicide [9].

Problem statement:

One important aspect of the mental health that a person has a natural mental image of own body. Body image is a multidimensional and complex psychological constructs including the self-perceptions related to the body and the attitudes which includes thoughts, ideas, feelings, and behaviors.

More studies have been done on the conflict of women with their body images. It shows that this problem has psychological roots. Given that few studies have been conducted on the relationship of the body image with the appearance of the various psychological disorders in Iran, it seems that to study the relationship of the body image of girls and women with depression, anxiety and stress is necessary.

Range of the body image and its concerns has expanded more that it becomes an obsession of many people, especially girls and women, more time and money is daily spent on the though and changes in body appearance. Body image satisfaction requires the consent of 5 body factors: 1- fitness 2- beautiful appearance 3- physical health 4- cleaning and health and beauty of skin and hair 5- the ability to control the weight and dissatisfaction

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with the body image will follow the consequences such as anxiety, depression, social isolation, mental disorders, impaired self-concept and self-esteem.

The definition of the body image:

Body image is a personal image of a person from his body by himself that also it includes emotions. Sometimes, body image is referred as a self-concept. Mental image of body is often defined as a degree of satisfaction with physical appearance (size, shape and general appearance).

Comparing three concepts of body image (BI), body scheme (BS) and body awareness (BA):

In a simple definition, body scheme is composed of the connection between different parts of the body. In the coordination between the proprioception and the sense of touch and pressure stimulations, body scheme with the neural basis has a role in the perception of body position and the connections between its organs. In fact, body scheme is resulted from the coordination of the sensory stimuli and has a role in the movement and the perception of next skills.

Common disorders of body image:

When a person is not aware of the size, shape, location and method of binding body parts together and the function of the organs, the disorder of body image happens. Inability in the effective use of the body is occurred by two reasons: the disorders which have been caused during the movement growth of a person, such as cerebral palsy, hyperactivity, growth coordination disorder and ... or because of the training method imposed on the person, such as what occur in the conservative families.

The disorders which will be explained in following are caused by the body image detect or detect in body image is one of the reasons that caused it.

1) Eating disorders:

These disorders are defined by significant problems in the behaviors related to eating. These disorders are: anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa [10].

Anorexia nervosa:

It is a serious and life-threatening condition which is characterized by a disorder in body image and severe diet restrictions and is applied by a person on himself. It often leads to severe malnutrition. Mortality of about 5-18% of patients has been seen. It includes two types: limited kind without periodic overeating and periodic overeating- purging.

Bulimia nervosa:

It is taking a quick, periodic and uninhibited large quantities of food in short periods of time (periodic overeating) and followed by self-induced vomiting, use of laxatives, fasting, or vigorous exercise to prevent gaining weight (overeating and purging).

2) *Body dysmorphic disorder:*

It is a fantastic believe (not too delusive) based on that there is a disorder in the whole or a part of the appearance of the body. The patient complains of defects (e.g. wrinkles, hair loss, breast or penis is too small, age spots, tall). Hardy showed in his research that these people estimate others' facial attractiveness more than the actual size and their facial attractiveness less than the actual size and have a lot of preoccupations with their beauty.

Anxiety:

Anxiety is a mental painful condition of anticipating a threat or discomfort in the future. Its main features are fear, sadness and anticipating a maelstrom which has no way to escape, and is usually accompanied by feelings of helplessness in finding alternative solutions.

Types of anxiety disorders:

In the fourth manual of American Psychology Association to diagnose the mental illnesses statistically, the types of anxiety disorders were classified as following:

- Panic disorder without Agoraphobia
- Panic disorder with Agoraphobia
- Agoraphobia without a history of panic attack
- Simple phobia (specific phobia)
- Obsessive-compulsive
- Social Phobia (Social Anxiety)
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Anxiety disorder resulting from physical ailments
- Drug-induced anxiety disorder
- Anxiety Disorder that is not otherwise specified

In a national survey in America about the prevalence of anxiety disorders, the following results were obtained:

- Generalized anxiety disorder 2.5%
- Panic disorder 3.6%
- Social Anxiety Disorder 13.3%
- Simple phobia 11.3%
- Simple agoraphobia 6.8%
- Post-traumatic stress disorder 7.6%
- Experience any anxiety 28.7%

Types of anxiety:

Normal anxiety:

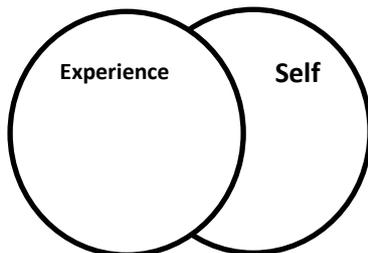
When a person faces with some creatures and events, normal anxiety is caused and it is necessary to supply a person's survival and compatibility with the environment. The anxiety is normal if it occurs in situations that most people can easily resolve them.

Abnormal anxiety:

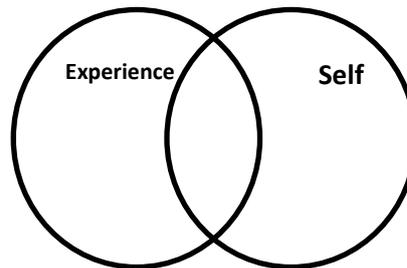
In severe and chronic anxiety, a person is placed in a state of pressure and strain caused by the internal conflict that despite applying various defense mechanisms, he will not be able to reduce it.

Alis's opinion

Alis justifies fear and anxiety with her ways. In his opinion, fear is to follow the belief or attitude or attacks given in a person. About anxiety, a person evaluates himself more pessimistically, negatively and morally and he can deprive the ability of confronting the problems and resolving it from himself.



A) Mode of mismatch and incompatibility



Reasons of anxiety:

In general, anxiety is caused by three following factors:

Biological and physical factors: anything that can disrupt the hormonal system is considered dangerous for the body. These factors are pregnancy, hypothyroidism or hyperthyroidism, low blood sugar, the existence of a gland in the adrenal glands which produces epinephrine hormone and irregular heartbeat.

Environmental and social factors: social factors such as family problems, feelings of isolation and rejection, ... and environmental factors are sudden and unexpected changes such as illness, earthquake, death of a kin and ...

Genetic and hereditary factors: the conducted studies on animals and twin who live with together or apart and were born from anxious parents show that the genetic factors are more effective. According to the latest researches, it seems that genetic factors play an important role in some anxiety such as panic and fear of open spaces [6].

The concept of stress:

Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychology and Psychiatry (1373) means stress as following:

“Whatever that produces the biological integrity of the organism and creates the conditions that the organism naturally avoids it is called stress.”

Stress process:

Stress involves the following three steps:

1. The step of alarm: the beginning of nerve pressure or the stage of alarm

2. The step of resistance: the stage of the person's resistance against the negative effects of stressors by his physical and emotional strength
3. The step of exhaustion: in this stage, a person is placed under stress for a long time and he is unable to fight it.

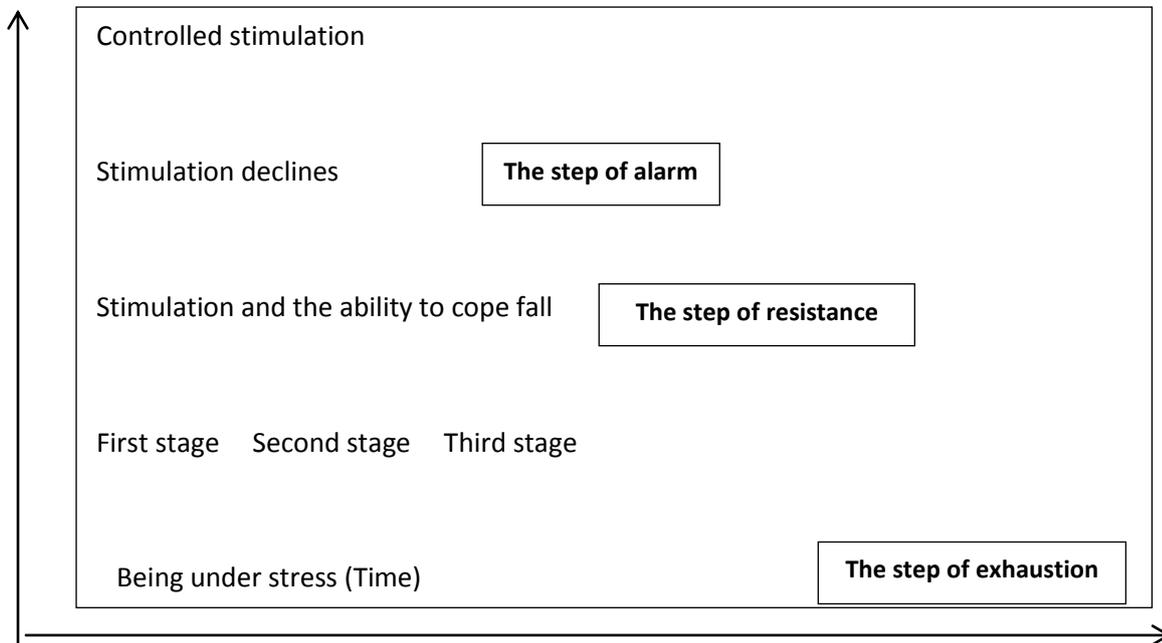


Chart 1-2: Three stages of stress [8].

In the view of White *et al.*, when people are under stress, they must have the necessary coping skills to reduce the stress. If the stress is managed and the effective coping skills are provided, a person will be able to meet the needs and challenges of his life in a better way.

The evolution of the stress theories:

The theories have been extracted from nearly a century of research on stress and offer different perspectives on stress as following:

- A) The theory of stress and coping (alarm, resistance and tire)
- B) The theory of environmental stress: external-internal
- C) The theory of stress transfer: internal-external

Signs of stress:

Some common symptoms of the excessive stress include increased irritability, high sensitivity to criticism and the symptoms of stress are such as nail biting, difficulty in sleeping and waking up too early in the morning, alcohol consumption and the increase of smoking, difficulty in digestion and the lack of focus.

Physical symptoms

1) The most important physical symptoms of stress are muscle cramps, headache, chest pain, stomach upset, diarrhea or constipation, increased heart rate, cold and wet hands, fatigue, profuse sweating, rash, rapid breathing, trembling, twitching, loss of appetite, weakness, fatigue and dizziness.

2) Emotional symptoms:

The emotional symptoms of the stress are anger, low self-esteem, depression, apathy, irritability, panic and phobic responses, lack of concentration, guilt, worry, agitation, anxiety and panic.

3) Behavioral symptoms:

In terms of behavior, the symptoms of stress are turning to alcohol and tobacco, loss of memory, confusion.

Coping with stress:

Humans rarely succumb to stress, but he tries to deal with it. In the view of Folkman and Lazarus, coping is "the cognitive and behavioral efforts of a person to overcome, tolerate, reduce or minimize the stress". They knew two items important in association with coping behavior:

One of them is cognitive appraisal and another one is the resources of coping. They believed that the cognitive appraisal depends on the past experiences and the resources of coping.

Required resources to combat stress:

- Health and Ability
- Positive Thoughts
- Locus of control
- Ability to socialize
- Family support
- Financial Services [6].

Ways to manage stress:

These ways are as changes in behavior, thinking, lifestyle and stressful situation:

- Change the life style
- Reduce caffeine intake
- Proper and balanced diet
- Eat slowly
- Relaxation exercises
- Change in stressful condition
- Financial planning and scheduling
- Assertiveness
- Solve the problem
- Détente.

Definition of depression:

Depression is a disorder that declines the person's mood and energy and he reaches the point of confusion. Depression has developed to the point that is called "cold of immune disorders". Depressed person has negative and personal view about himself, his environment and future, pessimistic mindset affects morale, motivation and relationship with others and makes him depressed.

Review of some research conducted in Iran:

Amidi in research that its aim was "to investigate the relationship between dissatisfaction with body image and body mass index in adolescent girls" showed that there is a significant relationship between body mass index and dissatisfaction with body image. So, satisfaction with body image reduces by the increase of body mass index. Also he found that most girls had normal height and weight but they were dissatisfied with their appearance.

Pasha in a study entitled "comparison of body image, body mass index, general health and self-concept among people who had cosmetic surgery, persons seeking cosmetic surgery and ordinary people of Behbahan City" showed that in terms of body image, body mass index, general health and self-concept, there is a significant difference among persons seeking cosmetic surgery, people who had cosmetic surgery and ordinary people.

Review of some research conducted abroad:

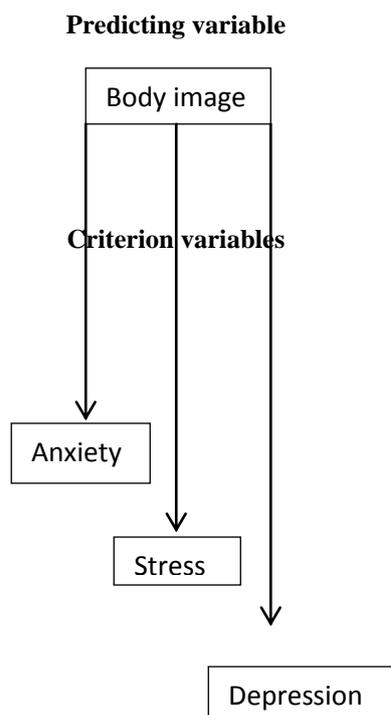
Jerry and Kossert showed that women who have evaluated their appearance more, have lower self-esteem and are influenced more by slimming pressure. Women use their appearance instead of other values as a source of self-esteem. Their findings showed that women pay attention more to the images of skinny women presented by the media and respond to them by high investment on body image.

Intense fear of negative evaluation by others leads to dissatisfaction with body image and a person is challenged by two following questions:

1. Is my value in the world influenced by my physical appearance?
2. Is my appearance unacceptable?.

In the three-year linear study, Cattarin & Tompson found that the ridiculous memories of body image in the past boost the negative self-concept and dissatisfaction with body image and also sociocultural theories suggest the wide impacts of social and cultural supports on the formation of body image and it seems that these impacts are more in western societies.

Conceptual model:

*Main hypothesis:*

There is a relationship between the body image of female students and their mental health.

Methodology:

This study is descriptive study and was done by correlation method. An important note in study with correlation method is that this study doesn't explain the cause-effect relationship and it merely describes a relationship [4].

*Types of variables:**Predicting variable:*

Body image

Criterion variables:

Anxiety, stress and depression

Research tools:

Selecting data collection tools depends on the purpose and method of research; so, given the aims and questions of this study, questionnaire had been used.

DASS-21 questionnaire:

In this study, the scale of depression, anxiety and stress (DASS-21) (Anthony, Bilang, Cox, Anas sue insun, 1998, quoted by Asghari Moghaddam) was used that formed by expressions associated with negative emotions (depression, anxiety and stress).

Body image questionnaire:

Body image questionnaire is a self-assessment which has 23 items in Likert-scale with 5 options (very low to very high). This questionnaire is a standard tool that extracted from Cash questionnaire and designed and validated to assessmental image of body.

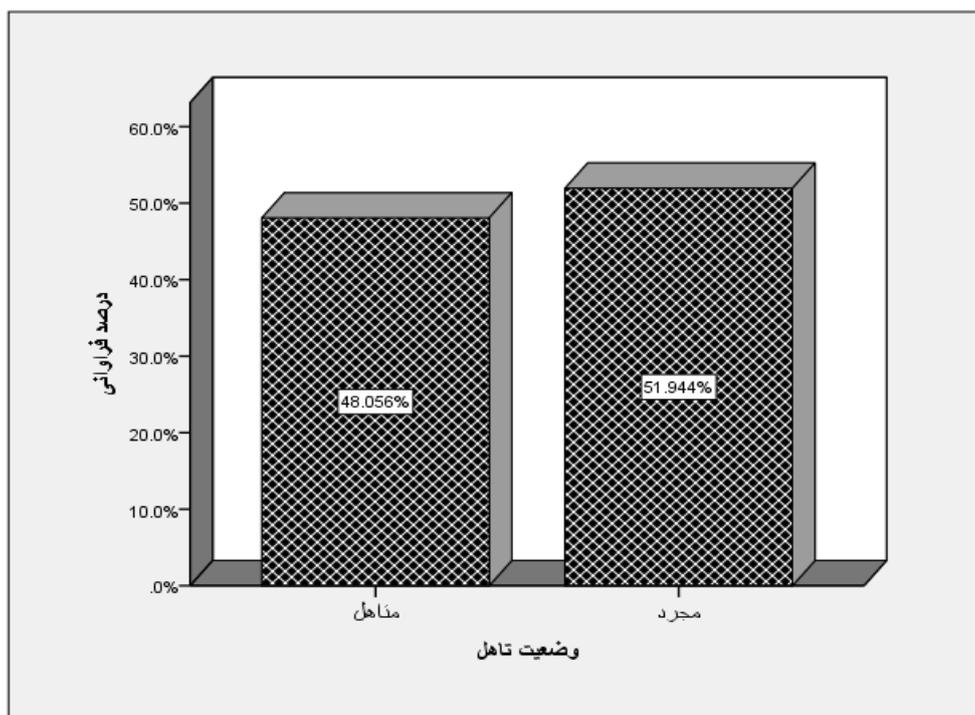
In order to determine the validity of the body image questionnaire, the formal validity was used and given that a feature of every scientific research is the tool and method of data collection must be acceptable, so, "Cronbach's alpha" method was used. The population of this study includes all female students of Kerman PNU in 1392 and it is about 5697 people. According to Morgan table, the sample size was obtained 360 people. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze data. SPSS20 software was used to analyze data. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, frequently table and bar chart were used to analyze demographic characteristics and the status of variables.

Results:**Marital status of the students:**

According to the analysis of data, 173 students (48.1%) of sample were married and 187 students (51.9%) were single (Table and Chart 1).

Table 1: Frequency distribution of students according to the marital status.

Marital status	frequency	percentage
Married students	173	48.1
Single students	187	51.9
Total	360	100

**Chart 1:** Percentage distribution of students according to the marital status.**Depression status of the students:**

239 (66.4%) of 360 students surveyed in this study had low depression, 107 students (29.7%) had moderate depression and 14 students (3.9%) had great depression (Table and Chart 2).

Table 2: Frequency distribution of the depression status of students.

Stress	Frequency	Percentage	mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Range
Low	239	66.4	10.17	3.50	0.147	1.02	1-21
Moderate	107	29.7					
High	14	3.9					
Total	360	100					

Anxiety status of the students:

226 (62.8%) of 360 students surveyed in this study had low anxiety, 122 students (33.9%) had moderate anxiety and 12 students (3.3%) had high anxiety (Table and Figure 3).

Table 3: Frequency distribution of the anxiety status of students.

Stress	Frequency	percentage	mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Range
Low	226	62.8	10.39	3.13	0.023	1.38	1-21
Moderate	122	33.9					
High	12	3.3					
total	360	100					

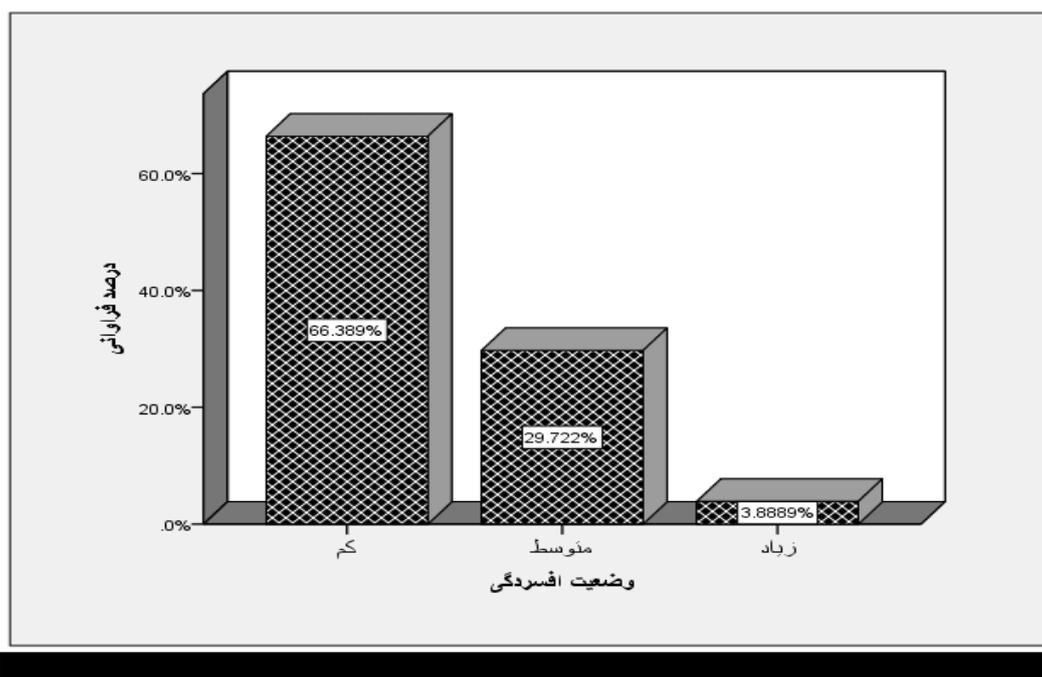


Chart 2: Percentage distribution of the depression status of students.



Chart 3: Percentage distribution of the anxiety status of students.

Stress status of the students:

242 (67.2%) of 360 students surveyed in this study had low stress, 102 students (28.3%) had moderate stress and 16 students (4.4%) had high stress (Table and Chart 4).

Table 4: Frequency distribution of the stress status of students.

Stress	Frequency	percentage	mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Range
Low	242	67.2	1.372	0.568	1.245	0.57	1-3
Moderate	102	28.3					
High	16	4.4					
Total	360	100					

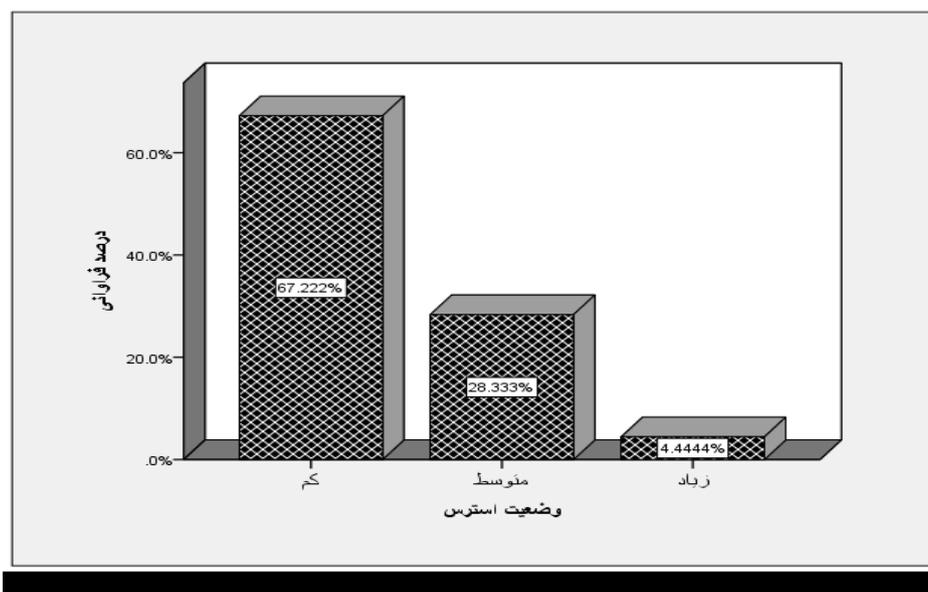


Chart 4: Percentage distribution of the stress status of students.

Analyzing data with Pearson test showed that there is a significant relationship between the satisfaction with body image of students and their depression. There is a significant relationship between the satisfaction with body image of students and their anxiety. There is a significant relationship between the satisfaction with body image of students and their stress.

According to the T-test, the marital status has no significant effect on the female students' depression, but other personal, social and family factors have significant effects on it. There is no particular difference between the anxiety of married and single students. Getting married had no significant effect on reducing stress.

Conclusion:

A negative body image can cause eating disorders such as Anorexia nervosa and Bulimia nervosa. Changing negative body image is important to treat this disorder, also it is important to prevent the return of eating disorders. According to the results of this study, there is a significant relationship between the satisfaction with the students' body image and their stress. This result is consistent with findings by Hosseini and Cash. Extreme fear can become illusory sense of deficiency in the body and will propel many of these teens to have cosmetic surgery to change their appearances. Given to the results, there is no significant difference between the satisfaction with body image of married and single students and married women are less satisfied with their bodies. There are no differences between the anxiety, stress and depression of married and single students.

Suggestions:

Holding workshop for children about the consequences of excessive preoccupation about appearance;

Parents try to boost the self-esteem and confidence of their children from childhood and make their judgments based on the abilities and talents of their children not their appearances;

Citizens are informed through the media that they should not use false medical tricks and harmful drugs to change their appearances.

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