Building Positive Body Image through an Interactive Body Positivity Program: A Positive Psychology Perspective

Ogle, J.P.*, Park, J and Monhait, N.
Colorado State University, USA.

Abstract

Purpose: With this pilot study, we evaluate the outcomes of an interactive body positivity program designed to mitigate symptoms of negative body image and to support the development of positive body image among college women who self-identified as experiencing struggles with body dissatisfaction. To develop the body positivity program, we adopted a positive psychology approach to nurturing positive body image. The specific purpose of this research was to explore college women's perceptions about how participation in the program supported changes in their ways of thinking relative to body image. **Methods:** In-depth interviews were conducted with nine participants before and after program participation. Data were transcribed and were analyzed using the constructionist grounded theory approach. **Findings:** Participants uniformly appreciated the opportunity to be a part of our program. Although participation did not wholly ameliorate participants' body image concerns, participants frequently articulated post-program experiences reflective of the positive psychology conceptualization of flourishing and of the core features of positive body image, including (a) a newfound appreciation and care for the self/body, (b) flexible thinking, (c) engaged coping, and social support. Participants also offered recommendations for future offerings of the program. **Conclusions:** Participation in our program served a protective function against feelings of body negativity by strengthening participants' body images and by providing participants' access to a "toolkit" of skills to combat body negativity when it did arise. In the future, it will be important to build upon this exploratory analysis by assessing whether the benefits discovered in the present work are sustained long-term. **Advances in Knowledge:** Our interactive body positivity program represents a beginning effort to develop, pilot, and evaluate a body positivity program grounded in positive psychology and related empirical work on the concept of positive body image.

Introduction

Positive psychology emphasizes the promotion of health by assisting people to identify, enhance, and foster their strengths so that they can build happy and meaningful lives (1,2). Proponents of positive psychology argue that positive mental

health represents the absence of negative mental health *as well as* characteristics associated with positive mental health, such as flexible thinking, enriched interpersonal relationships, and resilience (1,3,4). As such, within therapeutic interventions, it is essential to both minimize negative characteristics of a mental health construct (e.g., body image) as well as to foster positive characteristics of that construct (1). According to the positive psychology perspective, minimizing negative characteristics without nurturing positive characteristics will yield an intermediate mental health state, but not one characterized by exceptional well-being, or "flourishing" (1,5,6). Individuals who flourish have generally positive affect, which allows them to appreciate themselves, to engage in flexible thinking and proactive coping, and to feel accepted in and positive about their social relationships (1).

In recent years, researchers have dedicated attention to conceptualizing and exploring the construct of positive body image, adopting a positive psychology perspective to do so (1,7,8). This research suggests that positive body image is independent of negative body image, is multifaceted, and is protective. This work further suggests that positive body image is not incumbent upon satisfaction with all components of one's appearance, is not limited to aspects of physical appearance at the exclusion of other aspects of the body (e.g., functionality), and is not indicative of being vain or narcissistic (7). Core features of positive body image identified through this work include body appreciation, body acceptance and love, a broad conceptualization of beauty, inner

positivity, and filtering information in a body positive manner (1, 8).

Researchers also have identified characteristics that promote and emerge from having a positive body image (1, 8, 9-11). This work suggests that positive body image is supported by being unconditionally accepted by others, by developing media literacy skills, by embracing one's spirituality, and by practicing self-compassion. Consequences or outcomes of having a positive body image may include offering help to others suffering from negative body image; engaging in self-care behaviors (i.e., behaviors to nurture the mind, body, and soul); and opting to befriend others who also have a positive body image.

With this exploratory pilot study, we describe and evaluate the outcomes of a body positivity program grounded in positive psychology and designed to mitigate symptoms of negative body image and to support the development of positive body image, including "appreciating, honoring, and celebrating" the body (1) through interactive discussions and activities. With our initial offering of the program, we chose to target the needs of early adult college women[1] (aged 18-22) who self-identified as experiencing struggles with body dissatisfaction. Among young women, dissatisfaction with the body has been found to increase during the transition from adolescence to early adulthood, a trend that is linked to attendant increases in body mass index (BMI) (13). It has been argued that demands for thinness and attractiveness may be particularly intense within the

---

[1]We did not target college men, as well, because their body image concerns differ qualitatively from college women's (12).

context of the college campus, prompting concern for and attentiveness to body image among college women, in particular (14). As many as 90% of college women report some degree of dissatisfaction with the body (15), which places them at increased risk for compromised self-esteem, depression, and disordered eating (16). Our key research question for this inquiry, then, was whether participants perceived a change in their body images and selves by virtue of their participation in our body positivity program?

Methods

Program Development

Wood-Barcalow et al. (8) and Tylka (1) have put forth calls suggesting that researchers and clinicians invoke their seminal work in the area of positive body image as a foundation for the development of interventions and programs designed to support positive body image. With the design and delivery of our interactive body positivity program, we answered this call. In keeping with the spirit of the work undertaken by Wood-Barcalow et al. (8) and Tylka (1), we adopted a positive psychology perspective to create the body positivity program. Although Steck et al. (4) supported the adoption of a positive psychology perspective in the prevention of eating disorders and identified an eating disorder prevention program (17) that had "high compatibility" with the positive psychology perspective, prior to our effort, researchers had not previously invoked positive psychology and related body positivity research as a model to guide the design of a body positivity program.

Consistent with the positive psychology approach, our body positivity program seeks to nurture positive body image by positioning participants to "flourish" (1,5,6). Participants met every other week across eight weeks. Table 1 includes a summary of the content of each program session, including objectives that guided the session, topics covered in the session, sample activities participants completed, and core features of the positive psychology perspective on body image integrated into session content. We purposefully opted not to include content addressing weight-loss strategies in our program curriculum, as we sought to mitigate negative body image and to support positive body image among women regardless of their weight/body mass index (BMI) (18). In facilitating the program sessions, we attempted to foster experiential learning and interactions among participants whenever possible through in-session discussions and hands-on activities.

With the present work, we consider the analysis of qualitative data collected to address outcomes of participation in our body positivity program; analyses of quantitative data are forthcoming. Insomuch as qualitative approaches emphasize participants' voices, they are valuable in understanding the meanings that individuals assign to a lived experience (19). Thus, of interest in the present analysis were college women's perceptions about how participation in our body positivity program – that is developed with a positive psychology perspective – supported (or did not support) changes in their ways of thinking and seeing relative to their body image and their sense of self.

Participants

The body positivity program was piloted to nine women in spring 2018[2]. The program was offered on the Colorado State University (CSU) campus, where all participants were enrolled as undergraduate students. Upon obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board, participants were recruited via emails sent to the CSU student body. Email content promoted the body positivity program for women aged 18-25, struggling with body image satisfaction, currently not in counseling or therapy, able to speak and English, and willing to participate in the program. Prior to being accepted into the program, participants who responded to the recruitment email were screened to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria. Specifically, a researcher contracted the participants and asked them (a) to rate on their body image satisfaction on a 5-point scale (1 being not satisfied at all and 5 being highly satisfied) and (b) whether they were receiving counseling or therapy for their body image or related concerns. Individuals who responded 4 or 5 on the body image satisfaction scale and who were involved in psychological treatment were not qualified to participate in the body positivity program.

Demographic profiles for participants are reported in Table 2. Within Table 2, and throughout the discussion, participants are referred to by code

identifiers (e.g., P1, P2, etc.). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 20 years (mean = 18.6 years). Six participants self-reported their race/ethnicity as "White," two participants self-reported their race/ethnicity as "Hispanic," and one participant self-reported her race/ethnicity as "Black." Participants' body mass indices (BMIs) were calculated based upon self-reported weight and height and ranged from 21.8 to 46.1 (mean = 27.5). Three participants were classified as "normal weight" based upon their BMIs, five participants were classified as "overweight" based upon their BMIs, and one participant was classified as "obese" based upon her BMI.

Data Collection

All nine participants gave written, informed consent to participate in two assessment sessions immediately before and after the program. As part of the initial assessment session, we conducted a semi-structured, face-to-face pre-program interview with each participant to gain an understanding of (a) her baseline body image/level of satisfaction, (b) her critical/shaping body image experiences, (c) her current body image coping mechanisms, and (d) her body image goals/hopes for the future. And, at the conclusion of the program, we again interviewed each participant using a semi-structured, face-to-face approach. With these post-program interviews, we explored perceived impacts of participation in our body positivity program upon participants' (a) body image, in general, (b) approaches to managing feelings of body image dissatisfaction, (c) responses to media messages about the body, and (d) interpersonal interactions related to the

---

[2]We originally recruited 13 participants, but 4 participants discontinued their enrollment in the course of the program due to schedule conflicts. This was understandable given that the participants were drawn from the college student population, and all sessions were scheduled on Saturday mornings. Later, with the agreement of study participants, we shifted program sessions to late weekday afternoons, and the issue was resolved.

body/appearance. Recommendations for future offerings of the body positivity program also were explored. All interviews were audio-recorded. Most interviews lasted between 45 to 75 minutes.

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim. Prior to beginning the data analysis, we divided the interviews into meaningful chunks of text, a process referred to as "unitizing" the data (20). Although our aim was not to develop a new theory, we adapted elements associated with the "constructionist grounded theory" approach (21) to analyze our data. We valued this approach for its emphasis upon gaining interpretive understanding of participants' realities and its focus upon identifying emergent meanings within the data (21). First, we adapted an "open coding" process to search each text unit, line by line, for key concepts meanings within the data (21,22). Although, during this process, our primary aim was to understand participants' views of their realities, we also remained attuned to how the "sensitizing concepts" of positive psychology and positive body image could deepen our understanding of the data (i.e., insomuch as participants' realities aligned with prior understandings in the literature) (21). Next, we compared concepts identified through open coding to one another and grouped similar concepts together under more general "categories," engaging in "constant comparison" (21-23). We then developed the concepts and categories into a coding guide (i.e., a list of inductively generated codes), which the first author applied to the data by identifying all instances of each concept/category in the data, thereby facilitating a more in-depth analysis. During this process, the first author continued to search the data for new meanings, incorporating additional concepts and categories into the coding guide as needed. Finally, we adapted more conceptual, directed searches of the data for fit with emerging themes – sometimes referred to as "selective coding" (22) – to characterize the essence of the participants' perceptions of how participating in the body positivity program contributed to their experiences of body and self.

We adapted several strategies to establish trustworthiness and dependability of data collection and analysis (24). To encourage open dialogue with participants, we guided participants to be candid in their interview responses and reassured them that there were no "right or wrong answers" to the questions asked. All interviews were conducted by the body positivity program staff who were acquainted with the participants, which could have increased participants' comfort in sharing their experiences within the program.[3] Additionally, throughout the data analysis process, we engaged in regular dialogue, contemplating meanings and relationships discovered within the data until mutual understanding among authors was achieved. And, to confirm the reliability of the first author's application of the coding guide to the data, the third author independently coded three randomly selected transcripts (i.e., 1/3 of the data). Interrater reliability between the first and third authors was 85% and was calculated by dividing the number of agreements about coding decisions by the total number of

---

[3]It is possible, however, that the interviewers' affiliation with the body positivity program may have compromised some participants' willingness to disclose negative experiences within the program. This is a limitation of the study.

coding decisions made. The authors negotiated disagreements about the application of the coding guide.

Results

In the following discussion, we present themes that emerged from our analyses of pre-program and post-program interview data. In analyzing our data, we took the position – often advanced by qualitative researchers – that, if even a single participant reported an experience, it could produce a meaningful insight and be worthy of careful consideration to the research. Further, rather than to yield to the positivistic impulse to quantify our data by reporting frequency counts for the occurrence of various themes or subthemes, we have used terms such as "most," "many," "selected," and "few" to provide a sense of how many participants within the data set shared a given perspective. Such an approach is generally considered most appropriate with a small, purposive sample (25).

Pre-Program Interview Data: A Critical Interpretive Lens

Brief narrative sketches of the critical body image experiences each participant shared in her pre-program interview are presented in Table 2. These sketches – and the themes discussed in this section – offer a critical interpretive lens for understanding the potential for our body positivity program to give rise to more positively-charged body image experiences.

Body Image Concerns, Behaviours, and Coping Mechanisms

In their pre-program interviews, participants alluded to the importance of personal physical appearance at various junctures in their lives; P6 noted that this focus had intensified during her college years, owing, in part, to the campus environment:

> *[Now], I focus more on what I look like and my physique and stuff like that. It's more important to me than it was in high school…seeing the [student rec center], I want to utilize it as much as possible, so I think that kind of made me think more about it, and "Oh, I can do this now, and I can try this…" (P6)*

Although all participants self-identified as struggling with issues of body image satisfaction at the outset of the program, there was variation in the depth of their body image concerns, with some participants expressing deeper and more wholesale discontent with the body as compared to others:

> [*I: How do you feel about your body?*] I would say, pretty negative. I've always kind of felt that way. I've just never really been confident at all, so. Yeah, pretty bad, I guess. (P3)
>
> [*I: How do you feel about your body?*] I don't hate [my body] as much as I did [when I was an adolescent], for sure…there's still obviously pieces I want to fix. I mean, I feel everyone's like that. But, like, I'm not afraid to go wear a bikini; I'm not afraid to wear tight clothes. There's some days where it's, "Meh, I feel like wearing a baggier shirt," or something, or just like I'm not quite happy

with it today," but, I don't, I don't hate on my body. (P5)

Selected participants also acknowledged that their body images were somewhat "fluid," which is consistent with Melnyck et al.'s (26) observation that body image may vary somewhat across situational contexts:

> You know, it really varies from day to day. There's some days that I'm like, I'm extra confident in what I've got, like, "Yeah, you rock it." And, then, there are other days where I feel a little bit lesser, like less confident, because obviously, I am a little bit on the heavier side, and there are times where I just feel inadequate because everyone else is not as heavy, and they are like the ideal beauty standard, so it just really changes from day to day. (P1)

In articulating specific body image concerns, participants frequently alluded to their perceived failure to meet cultural demands of hegemonic femininity, which perpetuates a unidimensional ideal of female beauty that privileges the slenderness and the looks and realities of White, heterosexual, physically able-bodied women (27-29). In this vein, several participants shared a resolute desire to lose weight; P9 weighed herself three times per day, and expressed,

> I feel like I still want to lose weight…[I] imagine myself at a certain weight that I would like to be at and just kind of changing, like getting better, and kind of looking different. Looking more put together. I think that's what I'm always trying to do. (P9)

In critiquing their bodies and appearances, participants also often regarded themselves as "body parts" rather than as whole individuals with unique bodies and souls. In prior work, this tendency has been linked to body-focused negativity and has been found to be more common among women (30):

> [I: What types of concerns do you have about your body?] Weight. 'Cause I've been going to the gym lately trying to fix it. My hair, 'cause society tells me I should have it straight and relaxed, and it's taken me awhile to actually like my natural hair, so I'm working on that. But it's a process…I guess those are the first things. But like if I stare in the mirror too long, I can pick out like everything. Like, "Ooh there's the acne, there, oh you got some wrinkles there. Wait, you're 19. What are you doing? Why do you have wrinkles?" (P1)

> [I: What types of concerns do you have about your body?] My stomach's my big one. It's the, bigger than I want to be. Um, obviously I want bigger boobs and butt, 'cause why not? Um, and then, I kinda got the double chin after I came to college. Like that Freshman 15, and so like that's always something that I like kind of look at when I'm taking a picture. I kind of make sure that I don't like push my chin down too much…(P5)

Participants' body image concerns prompted and were entwined with varied body-related behaviors and coping mechanisms. Many participants had dieted or engaged in severe forms of food restriction at some point in their young lives. Often, participants framed experiences with dieting in rather

negative terms, sharing "dieting failures" and the perception of dieting as ineffective or as a source of frustration:

> *I am like constantly trying diets and stuff…I feel like nothing really works…I've tried…diets where you basically starve yourself for like a week, and then you lose all this weight in a week, but then it goes right back on, so it doesn't really work. (P3)*

In spite of a history of discouragement and disappointment, several participants continued to intermittently restrict their food intake in various ways (e.g., omitting various foods from their diets, consuming diet products, consuming foods perceived to be "healthy"), often with the intent of losing weight. Participants framed exercise more positively than dieting, praising it for its capacity to support self-image and to assist with stress management. However, exercising, too could be a source of guilt and shame, when participants could not make time for it, or when participation in it did not achieve desired (weight loss) ends. Selected participants also sometimes sought to soothe their body image concerns by pushing such concerns to "the back of [their] minds" (P1). Such an approach to confronting body image concerns might be considered a form of disengaged coping, or an attempt to evade a stressor or to shield oneself from a stressful situation (31). A limited number of participants also acknowledged participation in more constructive, engaged/proactive coping approaches to addressing body image concerns (31), such as soothing body concerns through the creation of feminist art or by working with a school counselor to find her voice,

so that she could "speak up about how [she] was feeling" (P5).

Critical Experiences: Body Image As Embedded in Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Sociocultural Contexts

Participants' critical body image experiences were intimately embedded in interconnected intrapersonal, interpersonal, and socio-cultural contexts. For instance, body image concerns were often intertwined with one's **intrapersonal characteristics**, such as one's subject position as a woman of color or as an "early bloomer. As the following comments suggest, experiences of the intrapersonal were tightly interwoven with those of the interpersonal and with socio-cultural discourses privileging hegemonic constructions of femininity:

> *Dang, where can I start? Um, man, just interactions with other people are the cause of my self-loathing…I'll use this example, cause it was recent. Um, "Oh you're pretty for a black girl." And that takes a toll on you…like [they're] actually being mean and racist at the same time. (P1)*
>
> *…around middle school, I was bullied a lot. I was called fat and stuff. I like, I just developed a lot earlier…than everyone else…that's when it got really bad, and then it just kind of keeps going…it was always the boys…awful. But, yeah, it hasn't really gone away. (P3)*

The role of **interpersonal** interactions in giving rise to their body image concerns, in particular, was a central theme in participants' pre-interview accounts, with participants sharing stories

of peer, familial, and health care provider influence. Participants spoke candidly about severe food restriction that had its roots as a dare from an adolescent friend (P5), about a mother who required her daughter to diet and wear a corset for eight months in preparation for her *quinceañera* (P4), and about a mother who put down her own body (P7) or her daughter's body (P5):

> *I remember one day that always sticks out. My mom…called me, "fat"…She tries to tell me she…was probably just joking or something…Like, I know you weren't. Like…I know how you meant it. You were trying to be helpful and trying to get me back to being more active, but that's not how I took it, and I never will take it that way. Like, that hurt. (P5)*

As reflected in P5's comment below, such forms of social feedback played a palpable role in shaping participants' body image concerns and behaviors:

> *[I: How did you respond to your mom's comment?] …I was very shocked, and…I definitely stood in front of the mirror for awhile, looking at my body…kind of like the body dysmorphia thing, where, like you see your body like 10 times heavier than it really is. Then, I started to weigh myself more, and like I still kind of have a problem with like "the number" [on the scale]. (P5)*

Participants also acknolwedged the **sociocultural** context, and in particular, the hegemonic ideal of femininity, which demands slenderness – along with the "right" amount of muscularity and curves in "certain places" (27-29) – as an unmistakable influence upon girls' and women's body images insecurities and concerns. Participants were quite critical of the hegemonic ideal, acknowledging it as out of reach for most girls and women to emulate:

> *[The ideal] is trash, 'cause nobody even fits it…it's just so crazy that we all try to fit this, and it's not even achieveable. (P1)*
>
> *It's really sad…from the time we're very young, we're…brainwashed into thinking…if you're super thin in the waist and have like a big ass and skinny legs…I mean, it's the whole Barbie thing…you're supposed to look like a certain way; you're supposed to look like a Kardashian. Like, that's such an unrealistic body standard, I think. (P3)*

Selected of participants also referenced an awareness of the media and fashion industry's use of techniques to digitally manipulate imagery of the female body (e.g., airbrushing). Even in spite of their relatively critical stance about the hegemonic ideal, some participants made comments suggesting that they struggled to resist this ideal, sometimes invoking it as a standard of comparison with which to gauge the cultural value of their own bodies and selves:

> *I'm not 100% comfortable with my body…society and your culture affects you…it makes a huge impact on your self-image, and the negativity of it. (P1)*
>
> *I think you always strive for it, in a way…people on TV always kind of look alike, in a way. Like, kind of beautiful…I…compare myself to them (P9)*
>
> *I think that [the ideal is] very exclusive of basically everyone, except for blonde hair,*

blue eyes, white women, who are a size 2, and everyone else who doesn't fit that description, just feels very out of place…I feel like [the ideal] affects a lot, cause, I'll see clothes on the models on the posters in stores or something, and like, that'd look cute, if I was like her size, or something (P7).

Body Image Aspirations: Goals for Engagement in the Interactive Body Positivity Program

When asked about their goals for participating in the interactive body positivity program, participants noted that they hoped to improve their body image, to become more accepting of and compassionate toward themselves, and to "fight the power" of societal pressures to be thin (P2):

> *I just want to have a better image of myself. Have better self-love. I definitely need to work on that…In my family, we were taught to…put others before ourselves, and that's not always healthy. 'Cause you keep doing it, then you neglect your own self and your own self-care (P1).*
>
> *[I want to] appreciate [my body]. To accept that things like stretch marks are normal…they're nothing bad…that I don't have to look like Kim Kardashian or these glorified celebrities to be beautiful. So, just learning to love my body for what it is…even if I don't have what I want. (P3)*

Post-Program Interview Data: Moving toward A More Positive Body Image

Analyses of post-program interview data revealed that participants uniformly appreciated the opportunity to be a part of our body positivity program, finding the experience to be valuable and rewarding and characterizing the program as "helpful," "informative," "educational," "fun," "enjoyable," and "empowering." Notably – and consistent with the aim of the program – all participants perceived that by virtue of their engagement in the program, they had evidenced movement toward a more positive body image:

> *[The body positivity program] has made me more body positive…thinking positive…about what your body can do…and that's made me more positive. (P6)*
>
> *I feel like [the body positivity program] helped me…become more content with…myself and…the people around me. (P7)*

Also of significance, however, is that most participants noted that their newfound feelings of body positivity coincided with continued body struggles and feelings of body insecurity, reflecting the complexity, multidimensionality, and fluidity of body image (26):

> *I still have like the…daily struggles of, "Oh, am I skinny enough?," or whatever. But, now, I have the tools to be able to say, "No, that's what society wants you to think," or, "that's coming from past experiences with other people saying"…and then, being able to say, "I can feel comfortable in my own skin and actually be able to work through it*

36

within my own self and try and be more comfortable." (P8)

As P8's comments suggest, to some degree, participation in the body positivity program served a protective function against these continued feelings of body negativity by strengthening participants' body images and by providing participants' access to a "toolkit" of skills to combat body negativity when it did arise (i.e., helping them to "filter" negative body image information in a body-protective manner (1,8). Thus, although participation in the program did not wholly ameliorate participants' body image concerns, as we discuss below, participants frequently articulated post-program experiences reflective of the positive psychology conceptualization of *flourishing* and of the core features of *positive body image* (1,8).[4]

Newfound Appreciation and Care for the Self and Body.

Almost all participants shared that, since participating in the body positivity program, they had made concerted efforts **to accept and love their bodies** and **to demonstrate self-compassion** towards themselves in times when they were experiencing moments of bodily concern:

> *[In the body positivity program], we learned [to] accept yourself [and] to love…the body you're in…I'm just trying to work on that…and to change my feelings…when I do have negative feelings about myself. (P3)*

In seeking to accept their bodies "as is," these participants described how they were working to be less critical of and more forgiving of aspects of the self that they did not "like," even invoking the truism of self-compassion that they should treat themselves as a "loving friend" might (32).

> *Instead of trying to cut myself down all the time, when I do, I'm like, "Wait, but I wouldn't do that to another person." So, I think…[I'm] changing that. (P8)*

Many participants also spoke about "combatting [body negativity] with positivity," as illustrated in the following comment:

> *[I: How do you manage feelings of body negativity?] Um, combatting that with positivity. So, when I saw like a pimple on my forehead…I [was] like, "It's okay, 'cause my eyes look good today," or, "My smile is great." (P3)*

P8 identified her participation in the "Practicing Self-Compassion" activity (see Table 1) as critical in her recently discovered capacity to emphasize body positivity over negativity:

> *…writing the letter to yourself really stuck with me…because I've never really talked to myself…in my head in a super positive way. So, writing it down on paper and then reading it back to myself, it seemed to help. And, I feel like…I could do that in the future, too, as an exercise, just to help myself, again. (P8)*

Additionally, a couple of participants articulated how, after their engagement in the body positivity program, they had become more confident about accepting compliments without feeling the need to

---

[4] Interestingly, participants' post-program experiences did not vary in any distinct ways along BMI. What was clear is that participants approached program content from a standpoint of lived experience with body dissatisfaction, independent of BMI.

offer a deprecating remark about the self, seemingly finding the courage to transcend Western cultural expectations for women to deflect praise about the self (33). And, as they became more accepting of themselves, several participants also began to value those aspects of themselves that they perceived as "unique," "special" or more authentically "themselves." For instance, P4 shared how her participation in the program prompted her to abandon her decision to "go blonde" and to instead embrace the beauty of her brunette hair.

An enhanced sense of appreciation for and acceptance of the body also prompted several participants to **adopt a deepened commitment to caring for the body.** This commitment frequently took form of a pledge to "treat the body with more respect" (P4) by honoring it "as is" without feeling obliged to change it to align with cultural ideals:

> *I look at myself more like this is the body I'm in. 'Cause I've always wanted to be very bony, and I don't have the structure for that…I'm trying to accept that more…when I look in the mirror…like this is the body that I have, so I need to take care of it…I think learning in this class…it's not so much about the body you wish you had, it's the body you have and…how well you take care of that…I don't think I took very good care of myself…so, it's nice to have a change. (P3)*

For these participants, caring and respecting the body also frequently encompassed a paradigm shift in which they replaced a focus on calories and/or weight with an emphasis on eating and fitness for health and wellness:

> *Since the start of the program…I started exercising more…and, I've just been eating a lot better foods that actually make me feel good…and not necessarily for weight loss, 'cause, like, I've done every single diet in the past…and it was just a constant back and forth…so now, I'm trying to be healthy rather than to lose the weight…just like be healthy at the weight that I am. (P3)*

Additionally, a number of participants shared that, since their engagement in the body positivity program, they had adopted a more compassionate and forgiving attitude toward themselves when they occasionally experienced "lapses" in their healthful eating and fitness routines:

> *I'm not, I used to get upset with myself about eating a candy bar, and now…I'm not like as hard on myself…I just try and make sure I'm doing better the next day. I don't beat myself up about it, and I'm not like upset with myself….(P5)*
>
> *[The body positivity program] kinda helped me with thinking of things, like you don't have to be perfect all of the time, like if I didn't have a good work-out, not to beat myself up over it. Not to like think negatively, but think really positively about what my body can do, and like what it is able to do rather than like, "Oh, well, I could have done this." (P6)*

For P5 and P6 to demonstrate this kind of mercy toward themselves for their occasional "body lapses" represents significant growth; in their pre-program interviews, both participants described rather rigid perspectives on issues of body/weight

and fitness (e.g., a preoccupation with weight [P5] or fitness [P6]).

Flexible Thinking. Analyses also revealed that, in their post-program interviews, participants demonstrated a flexible and multifaceted understanding of appearance and beauty, both in terms of cultural beauty ideals and in terms of themselves and others as subjects (1). For instance, several participants shared a ***relativistic understanding of beauty*** that acknowledged how shared cultural meanings regarding which appearances are beautiful are socially constructed, varying across time and place:

> *[I: What changes have you noticed in how you think about cultural ideals of beauty?] I definitely think it's…realizing that every country has its unique idea of beauty. Like…China and Japan want super, super pale skin, like huge eyes, and like here, we want like tanner skin, bigger boobs, bigger butt…So, realizing that, like especially our view on women's bodies right now... the ideal image is literally unattainable. Like it's not possible for a woman to actually look like that naturally, and so like realizing that you shouldn't believe what society thinks the woman should look like, because…that changes over time, and it's always changing…Like you should just follow what's healthy for you. (P5)*

As echoed in P5's remarks above, the deepened recognition that cultural beauty ideals are dynamic – and, frequently "out of reach" for most "real" women – positioned some participants to discount or question these ideals. Thus, although participants continued to express concerns about their bodies, at least some also were moving toward the embracement of a world view in which they saw beauty and value as being embodied in diverse forms and as being independent of achieving a singular cultural ideal.

In addition to understanding the relativistic nature of what is considered beautiful from a cultural perspective, taking part in the body positivity program also moved many participants to expand their own understanding of the concept of beauty to include more than their physical appearances – including their "presence" and their guiding beliefs:

> *[I've come to see that beauty] is not just physical, it's mentally, the way you like…how poised you are, and how you stand, how you talk, what you believe in. (P4)*

We characterized participants' acknowledgement that they were "more than" their appearances as the ***Multidimensional Self***. For P2, the "My Beautiful Partner" activity – completed during Session 1 of the program – was instrumental in supporting the development of the Multidimensional Self:

> *[The body positivity program] made me realize that I'm more than just what I appear to be. I have so much more that I can offer to the world just besides my waist size…like even the first session…I was like, "Wow, this is very enlightening." (P2)*

Central to several participants' articulation of the Multidimensional Self was an emphasis upon the functional aspects of the body, or all of the things that the body allows one to do and be within the

larger world, including the body's creative, expressive, and cognitive capabilities:

> *[Now], when I'm by myself, I'm not thinking about [my physical appearance] as much…Instead…now, I'm thinking more about school, and like how I want to better myself, academically and like, personally. I'm trying more to work on myself on the inside. (P3)*

This shift among participants from a critical gaze focused upon the evaluation of specific body parts to a more forgiving gaze that emphasizes the functionality of the body is noteworthy, as in prior work, focusing on what the body can do – rather than how it looks – has been linked to positive body image among young adult women (34).

Engaged[5] Coping. Analyses revealed that, after taking part in the body positivity program, participants described adopting varied ***engaged coping strategies*** to proactively manage and minimize the psychological effects of their body image concerns (31,36). For instance, participants ***invoked newly honed media literacy skills*** – the focus of Session 2's program content – in seeking to cope with body image concerns. Most participants expressed that the media literacy component of the program was valuable in building or further fortifying their awareness of the ways in which

technology (e.g., Photoshop) is frequently used to digitally manipulate imagery of the female body. Armed with this knowledge, participants launched well-articulated critiques of media representations of women, suggesting that they did not align with their first-hand observations of what "real" women look like. This sense of mismatch in perception – which Condor (37) refers to as "double consciousness" – is reflected in P5's comments below:

> *I'm definitely a lot more critical when I see media. I'm definitely like looking for Photoshop…for stuff that's unattainable. Like, when I see a 50 year old woman…and she has absolutely no wrinkles, I'm like, "That's…not realistic…because I'm getting wrinkles!"…We don't look like what the magazines show us! Like, go outside into the world, and you'll notice that no one looks…like that. (P5)*

Significantly, several participants further suggested that, since participating in the body positivity program, they had begun to disengage from making social comparisons with media imagery of the body, largely owing to their recognition that such imagery had been digitally altered and was therefore an inappropriate target of comparison:

> *I really liked when we…went over the Photoshop stuff…I wasn't really super aware of how prevalent people use Photoshop, and like made me realize, like, "Oh, wow, these people aren't even real."…Like looking through my social media, like Instagram and Twitter, I was kind of like, "Hmm, I don't know if that's real or not?" Like, I shouldn't be comparing myself to them, because I*

---

[5]In prior work, proactive coping, or coping undertaken in anticipation of a stressful experience (35), has been linked to flourishing. Here, we characterized the coping strategies described by participants during their interviews as "engaged" rather than as "proactive," because not all of the coping strategies discussed by participants represented future-oriented coping. For instance, reframing of a past interpersonal interaction was not undertaken in advance of the stressful situation. Like proactive coping, engaged coping does require the demonstration of initiative, and in this way, could be considered "proactive" (31,36).

don't think it's real. 'Cause there's so much Photoshop." (P6)

Interestingly, a couple of participants noted that, although they still engaged in self-to-model comparisons (or at least visually engaged with media imagery of models/celebrities) after participating in the program, their strengthened sense of self positioned them to experience such comparisons/viewings in a new way:

> On Twitter, there's a lot of models…and before, I would really beat myself up about it, be like, "I need to look like that." It would kind of make me angry at them, or jealous. But now, I look at them, and I recognize they're beautiful…but, I'm not angry at them, anymore...Sometimes, I still wish I looked like them, but then, I realize… "I'm me." So, that's okay…that's good, too. (P4)

A handful of participants also offered critical analyses of the social impacts of idealized and sexualized media representations on women:

> The biggest problem is…sexually portraying women as bodies…women are trying so hard to improve their bodies because we think that we're seen as our bodies rather than as who we are. (P5)

In the above comments, then, P5 questions the very tangible ways in which hegemonic representations of women may compel women to focus on the surfaces of their bodies and to participate in regimens of bodily maintenance in order to meet cultural demands of femininity, a state of play that P5 clearly found quite problematic (38).

In their post-program interviews, selected participants also shared how they had adopted

coping strategies – taught within the context of our program's third session – to **mitigate the impact of negative (real and imagined) body-related feedback from others in their lives.** The most common coping strategy participants referenced was the "reframing" of interpersonal exchanges that might otherwise bias them toward body dissatisfaction (39). Here, participants recounted how they invoked reframing to see such interpersonal exchanges "in a new light," prompting a reconsideration of the intention of other actors:

> Over Christmas, [my mom] gave me presents that were larger than my normal size, and it like freaked me out! I was like, "Do you think I've gained weight?" Like, "What?" And, we talked it out, and it was all good. It was like just a mistake, I guess. But, like I realize that like I still have some small little things that can like set me off. But like, I'm trying to do better on that and not like take it as like negative feedback, but just more like it could be an accident -- it could literally have been an accident. (P5)

Through reframing, then, P5 came to see what she might have interpreted as an affront from her mother as an honest mistake on her mother's part. P5 also sought to assuage tense body-related exchanges with her mother through the adoption of a second coping strategy taught within our body positivity program – being more assertive (39). Thus, when P5's mother "crossed a line" in her discussions about P5's body, P5 confronted her, noting, "You need to stop discussing my body." In the context of this discussion, P5 was able to share her concerns with

her mother, with the goal that the two of them could achieve mutual understanding of the situation.

Social Support. In their post-program interviews, several participants articulated how their involvement in the body positivity program had prompted varied experiences in which they were either ***the recipients or the providers of social support***, or those behaviors undertaken to help an individual navigate a stressful experience or reach a personal goal (40). The social support received and shared by participants was affective/emotional in nature and included expressions of concern, care, reassurance, sympathy, empathy, and love (41).

Many participants were especially grateful for the affective/emotional support provided by other one another within the context of the body positivity program. Participants experienced our program as a "safe space" where "everyone was respected" and where they could "talk about things [they didn't] really talk about a lot" (P4). For some participants, expressions of empathic concern from other program participants were especially significant in the journey toward improved body image. Here, support from other program participants took the form of normalizing participants' bodily concerns. Seemingly, hearing similarly-situated others share their bodily struggles rendered the experience of living with bodily concern less stigmatizing:

> *...The number one thing was that...other people felt the same way. Because...being in a group setting...it helped other people being there and like with the same issues, you know, that they feel about their body. So that was really nice to have the support*

> *of others...around the same age as me...'Cause...when I first came to college, I was like, "Everyone's so thin and beautiful,"...but it's nice to like be in a room where people are like, "Actually, I don't feel good about myself either," So... it helped me...learn that... unfortunately...it's a normal thing, but with like the support of others, you can kinda help yourself with it. (P3)*

Participants also sought and received emotional/affective support from sources beyond the context of the body positivity program. For instance, involvement in the program highlighted for some participants sources of emotional/affective support within their existing social circles:

> *In the middle of the program, I realized that I have a really good support group of friends that [sic] told me that...I don't meet the ideal beauty standards, but that I'm still beautiful...And, I started to notice that, as well, with the program. Like, I don't need to lose a lot of weight to be a phenomenal person. (P2)*

Some participants noted that the emotional/affective support of romantic partners during the program experience was particularly significant to the progress they evidenced in the program; these individuals helped participants to process their experiences in the program. In a couple of cases, participants also shared that their engagement in the body positivity program had laid a foundation for the forging of a healthier, more supportive relationship with family members, particularly parents:

42

[The body positivity program] has…opened up a new…relationship with my parents because…they …think…it was like almost like a phase or something that I was like really self-conscious…Then, when I told them, "I'm doing…this study at school and it's like for body positivity." They were…like, "Oh…why do you need that?" And, I was like, "Oh, I still feel this way." And, so…it's…opened up a new dialogue for my parents, so I think we like have a better relationship because…my dad used to…tease me…I grew up kind of chunky and so [he's] like called me, "Chunks"…And…now he like doesn't say that after…I told him I was in this…So that's good. I mean, it's opening up a new dialogue…they're definitely gonna ask me about it when I go home…which will be good…I can tell them I'm healthier now and trying to better myself, so. (P3)

Participants' recognition of these readily accessible sources of support and acceptance is significant, as in prior work, support and unqualified acceptance by others have been found to promote (and develop from) positive body image (1,8).

Recommendations for Future Offerings of the Body Positivity Program.

Although, as noted, all participants shared that they were grateful for the opportunity to participate in the body positivity program and perceived that they had benefitted from their engagement in the program, several participants also made recommendations for further strengthening the

program. The most commonly shared suggestion was to provide even "more space for discussion" (P3). Thus, dialogue among members – and the ensuing support shared – was perceived as a "strong aspect that could be elaborated upon" (P6). Another suggestion was to further expand the multicultural focus of the program, particularly in relation to discussion around what it means to be beautiful. P6 mentioned that this was especially relevant owing to the racial/ethnic diversity of the participants, themselves. Finally, P5 proposed that the program content more openly tackle the complexities and difficulties inherent in moving along the path toward improved body image:

[Include] more about…the thoughts that you have and how to stop just those thoughts or like...what happens when you have negative thoughts and like how to just boost yourself up without like making it superficial. 'Cause like…all the little posters that [say], "You're beautiful." Sometimes those just feel stupid since like I don't need to hear that, like I don't feel good, I don't want to hear like, "'Oh, you're beautiful just the way you are," cause sometimes it just like makes me angry instead. (P5)

Conclusions

This work represents a beginning effort to develop, pilot, and evaluate a body positivity program grounded in positive psychology and related empirical work on the concept of positive body image. Although most participants in our sample acknowledged that engagement in the body

positivity program did not wholly mend their body image concerns and anxieties, all participants perceived that, through their involvement in the program, they had come to embrace a more positive body image[6]. This perception of strengthened body image was born out within participants' post-program accounts, where they described experiences echoing features of *flourishing* and *positive body image* that parallel characterizations of these concepts in existing work. For instance, according to their accounts, participation in the body positivity program moved participants to demonstrate acceptance, compassion, and care toward their bodies and selves; to embrace a complex, multidimensional, and flexible understanding of beauty; and to reinforce their understanding that cultural beauty ideals are not "natural" or "given," but rather, are socially constructed. In comparing these participant experiences to how positive body image has been characterized in prior work, there are noticeable intersections with concepts of *body appreciation*, *body acceptance and love*, *a broad conceptualization of beauty*, *inner positivity*, *flexible thinking*, and *self-compassion* (1,9-11,42) – themes that were interwoven into the program content. Notably, participants also described how the program helped them to develop skills (e.g., various engaged coping skills) and/or to recognize and appreciate resources (e.g., sources of social support) that could assist them in managing feelings of bodily

---

[6]This is consistent with the proposition that negative and positive body image are independent of one another and can coexist as well as the idea that positive body image does not imply strong satisfaction with all aspects of one's appearance (1,8,42).

concern when they did arise. Here, participants "*filtered information in a body-positive manner*" as they applied media literacy skills and reframed interpersonal interactions, coming to feel *more accepted* in and *positive about their social relationships* (1,42). Thus, in various ways, participants perceived that engagement in the body positivity program positioned them to better accept and honor their bodies while at the same time fortifying them to withstand diverse risk factors for negative body image, including their own critical judgments of the self, unrealistic media representations, and negatively-charged interpersonal interactions. To this extent, findings from this work provide some preliminary evidence that our body positivity program grounded in the tenets of positive psychology may be helpful in moving early adult college women with body image concerns toward positive body image.

In considering future offerings of the body positivity program, it will be important to integrate participants' suggestions for strengthening the program. Perhaps the most challenging of these suggestions is to address P5's counsel that we ensure that the program's content tackles broader issues that complicate women's movement toward body acceptance and love, and ultimately, the achievement of body positivity. Key here may be addition of an activism/social change component to the program (18). Such a component could emphasize that, although assisting women to cope with various aspects of their social environment may be helpful in strengthening body image, the most enduring change may come about by prompting *shifts* in the social environment such that a broader

range of bodily sizes, shapes, and appearances come to be valued and accepted (18). Although, there has been some positive movement in this direction in recent years (43), our participants' pre-program accounts suggested that they still felt quite stifled by contemporary Western beauty ideals and norms. Through their consumer power, however, women may have the potential to play a critical role in prompting future changes in cultural representations of women's bodies (18). The key, then, is helping women to be empowered and to find a way to mobilize this potential.

Findings from the present analysis lend a richness of understanding as to how early adult college women struggling with body dissatisfaction benefitted from participation in the body positivity program. In the future, it will be important to build upon this exploratory analysis. For instance, the present work focused upon short-term outcomes for participants in the 8-week body positivity program. Thus, in the future, it will be critical to assess whether the benefits discovered in the present work are sustained long-term. Also of interest will be whether these benefits are experienced among other populations who grapple with body image concerns, such as adolescents, bariatric patients, and members of the LGBTQIA+ population. With each offering of the body positivity program, it will be important to tailor the program content for the given target population. Finally, replicating the present program offering and evaluation with a larger and more racially/ethnically diverse sample would be valuable. Although the current sample was somewhat racially/ethnically diverse, the small sample size did not afford a deep understanding of whether individuals of different racial/ethnic backgrounds may respond in different ways to the content of our body positivity program.

References

1. Tylka TL. Positive psychology perspectives on body image. In: Cash TF, editor. Encyclopedia of Body Image and Human Appearance, Vol. 2. Cambridge, MA: Elsevier, Inc; 2012. p. 657-663.
2. Seligman ME, Csikszentmihalyi M. Positive psychology: An introduction. Am Psychol. 2000; 55(1):5-14.
3. Keyes CL, Lopez SJ. Toward a science of mental health: Positive directions in diagnosis and interventions. In: Snyder CR, Lopez SJ, editors. Handbook of positive psychology. Oxford, UK: University Press; 2002. p. 45-59.
4. Steck EL, Abrams LM, Phelps L. Positive psychology in the prevention of eating disorders. Psychol Sch. 2004;41(1):111-117.
5. Fredrickson BL, Losada MF. Positive affect and the complex dynamics of human flourishing. Am Psychol. 2000;60(7):678-686.
6. Williams EF, Cash TF, Santos MT. Positive and negative body image: Precursors, correlates, and consequences. Paper presented at; the meeting of the Association for Advance of Behavior Therapy; 2004.
7. Tylka TL, Wood-Barcalow NL. What is and what is not positive body image? Conceptual foundations and construct definition. Body Image. 2015;14(1):118-129.
8. Wood-Barcalow NL, Tylka TL, Augustus-Horvath CL. "But I like my body": Positive body image characteristics and a holistic model for young-adult women. Body Image. 2010;7(2):106-116.
9. Daye CA, Webb JB, Jafari N. Exploring self compassion as a refuge against recalling the body-related shaming of caregiver eating messages on dimensions of objectified body consciousness in college women. Body Image. 2014;11(4):547-556.
10. Duarte C, Ferreira C, Trindade IA, Pinto-Gouveia J. Body image and college women's quality of life: The importance of being self-compassionate. J Health Psychol. 2015;20(6):754-764.
11. Wasylkiw L, MacKinnon AL, MacLellan AM. Exploring the link between self-compassion and body image in university women. Body Image. 2012;9(2):236-245.
12. Tylka TL, Bergeron D, Schwartz JP. Development and psychometric evaluation of the Male Body Attitudes Scale (MBAS). Body Image. 2005;2(2):161-175.
13. Bucchianeri MM, Arikian AJ, Hanna PJ, Eisenberg ME, Neumark-Sztainer D. Body dissatisfaction from adolescence to young adulthood: Findings from a 10-year longitudinal study. Body Image. 2013;10(1):1-7.
14. Low KG, Charanasomboon S, Brown C, Hiltunen G, Long K, Reinhatler K, Jones H. Internationalization of the thin ideal, weight, and body image concerns. J Soc Behav Pers. 2003;31(1):81-90.
15. Neighbors LA, Sobal J. Prevalence and magnitude of body weight and shape dissatisfaction among university students. Eat Behav. 2007;8(4):429-439.
16. Stice E, Shaw HE. Role of body dissatisfaction in the onset and maintenance of eating pathology: A synthesis of research findings. J Psychosom Res. 2002; 53(5);985-993.
17. Phelps L, Dempsey M, Sapia J, Nelson L. The efficacy of a school-based eating disorder prevention program: Building self-esteem and personal competencies. In: Pirian N, Levine MP, Steiner-Adair C, editors. Preventing eating disorders: A handbook of interventions and special challenges. New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel Press; 1999.
18. Paquette MC, Leung R, Staats H, Raine K. Development of a body image program for adult women. J Nutr Educ Behav. 2002;34(3):172-174.
19. Creswell JW. Qualitative research and research design: Choosing among five approaches. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage; 2013.
20. Guetzkow, H. Unitizing and categorizing problems in coding qualitative data. Journal of Clinical Psychology [Internet]. 1950. [cited 2019 Mar 22]; 6(1):47-58. DOI: 10.1002/1097-4679(195001)6:1<47::AID-JCLP2270060111>3.0.CO;2-I
21. Charmaz K. Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In: Denzin NK, Lincoln YS, editors. Handbook of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications; 2000. p. 509-536.
22. Strauss A, Corbin J. Basics of qualitative research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications; 1990.
23. Glaser BG. Theoretical sensitivity. Mill Valley, CA: Sociological Press; 1978.

24. Lincoln YS, Guba EG. Naturalistic inquiry. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage; 1985.

25. Pratt MG. Fitting oval pegs into round holes: Tensions in evaluating and publishing qualitative research in top-tier North American journals. Organ Res Methods. 2008;*11*:481-509.

26. Melnyk SE, Cash TF, Janda LH. Body image ups and downs: Prediction of intra-individual level and variability of women's daily body image experiences. Body Image. 2004;1(3):225-235.

27. Bordo S. Unbearable weight: Femininsim, Western culture, and the body. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press; 2003.

28. Holliday R, Hassard J. Contested bodies: An introduction [Internet]. In: Holliday R , Hassard J, editors. Contested bodies. New York, NY: Routledge; 2001[cited 2019 April 21]. p. 1-17. Available from: https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203455975

29. Krane V. We can be athletic and feminine, but do we want to?: Challenges to femininity and heterosexuality in women's sport [Internet]. Quest 2001[cited 2019 April 21];**53**:115-133. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2001.1049173 3

30. Halliwell E, Dittmar H. A qualitative investigation of women's and men's body image concerns and their attitudes toward aging. Sex roles. 2003; 49(11-12): 675-684.

31. Carver CS, Vargas S. Stress, coping, and health. In: Friedman HS, editor. The Oxford handbook of health psychology. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press; 2011. p. 162-188.

32. Braun TD, Park CL, Gorin A. Self-compassion, body image, and disordered eating: A review of the literature. Body Image. 2016 Jun; 1(17):117-31.

33. Miles P. Compliments and gender. In: Kellerman E, Bley-Vroman R, editors. Special issue on gender and language. Occasional Paper No. 26. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Department of English as a Second Language; 1994. p. 85-137.

34. Alleva JM, Diedrichs PC, Halliwel E, Martijn C, Stuijfzand BG, Trenenman-Evans G, et al. A randomized-controlled trial investigating potential underlying mechanisms of a functionality-based approach to improving women's body image. Body Image. 2018;*25:* 85-96.

35. Aspinwall, LG. Future-oriented thinking, proactive coping, and the management of potential threats to health and well-being. In: S Folkman, editor. The Oxford handbook of stress, health, and coping. New York, NY: Oxford University Press; 2011. p. 334-365.

36. Tandon SD, Dariotis JK, Tucker MG, Sonenstein FL. Coping, stress, and social support associations with internalizing and externalizing behavior among urban adolescents and young adults: Revelations from a cluster analysis. J Adolesc Health. 2013; 52(5):627-633.

37. Condor, S. Sex role beliefs and "traditional" women: Feminist and intergroup perspectives. In: Wilkinson S, editor. Feminist social psychology. London: Open University Press; 1986. p. 97-118.

38. Featherstone M. The body in consumer culture. Theory Cult Soc. 1982;*1*(2): 18-33.

39. Thompson, JK, HeinbergLJ, Altabe M, Tantleff-Dunn S. Exacting beauty: Theory, assessment, and treatment of body image disturbance. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association; 1999.

40. Tolsdorf CC. Social Networks, Support, and Coping: Exploratory Study. Fam Process. 1976;15(4):407-417.

41. Bambina, A. Online social support. Youngstown: Cambria Press; 2007.

42. Tylka TL, Wood-Barcalow NL. What is and what is not positive body image? Conceptual foundations and construct definition. Body Image. 2015;14(1):118-129.

43. Canvas8. The changing face of beauty: 2004 to 2024 [Internet]. London:Dove UK; 2014 [cited 2019 Mar 22]. Available from: https://www.canvas8.com/static-assets/media/docs/canvas8-dove-the-future-of-beauty.pdf