

## Abstract

The present study assessed the effect of media's portrayal of slim models on young women's levels of body dissatisfaction. Participants, 111 Chinese female undergraduates, were randomly exposed to photos from magazines containing either thin-model or fat-model. Their subsequent levels of body dissatisfaction were measured by self-ideal discrepancy. Results indicated that exposure to the thin-model resulted in heightened body dissatisfaction. Some subjects actually changed their original intentions concerning losing or gaining weight after exposure to photos. Furthermore, results revealed that even individuals with good pre-test body image were vulnerable to the adverse media effects. The importance of social comparison process in explaining how media message transmitted to the recipients and other factors in affecting body image are discussed.