

Influence of Self-Concept and Body Dissatisfaction on Social Introversion

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.7011059>

Received: 28 September 2023; Revised: 06 October 2023; Accepted: 10 October 2023; Published: 07 December 2023

ABSTRACT

This research was designed to examine the influence of self-concept and body dissatisfaction on social introversion which could be described as having limited social interaction and being preoccupied with one's thoughts. This study used survey research design adopting expo-facto design and a convenient sampling technique was adopted in distributing the questionnaires to the research participants because the population is homogeneous. Three research instruments were used in this research which are: Self-Concept Questionnaire (SCQ) by Robson (1989), Body Image Scale and willingness to communicate scale by McCroskey (1992) to measure self concept, body dissatisfaction, and social introversion respectively. The research involved two hundred and forty-seven respondents, of which 125 were males and 122 were females. Result obtained from the research using regression analysis indicates that body dissatisfaction has significant predictive influence on social introversion among undergraduates in Ekiti State. The report using regression analysis also indicated that there is a significant influence of resilience which is the only dimension of self-concept on social introversion. Also, using independent t. test, there is joint influence of self-concept and body dissatisfaction on social introversion while no significant sex different in self-concept, body dissatisfaction and social introversion has been reported. It is therefore concluded that self concept and having body dissatisfaction could predict social introversion. From the findings made, it is hereby recommended that other further researches could be considered in other geographical locations of Nigeria in order to validate generalization of the findings made.

Key words: self-concept, body image, social introversion, body dissatisfaction, undergraduates

INTRODUCTION

Learning and knowledge acquisition is a social process that is acquired through social communication, interaction and exchange of ideas between students and professors (Vygotsky, 1978 as cited in Tuovinen, Tang, & Salmela-Aro, 2020). The process of acquiring information depends mainly on effective communication between the students (receiver) and the professor (sender). This could be very important since social interaction have much influence on learning and knowledge acquisition by improving students' ability to think critically and enhance problem solving skills (Hurst, Wallace, & Nixon 2013). In fact, social introversion and social support from classmates has been researched as factors that significantly predict students' passive behavior during lecture (Murberg, 2010; Balder, 2007), moreover, social introversion was found as a factor that do influence how fast an individual can process an information, as such, social introverts do process information slower than social extroverts (Aron 1997), although this findings contradict the theory of personality by Eysenck who predicted that introverts actually require little external stimuli to obtain optimum level of performance (Eysenck, 1967, as cited in Küssner, 2017).

Social Introversion

The origin and early studies on introversion can be found in the work of Carl Jung (1921). According to Jung (1921) in his theory of personality, “introversion and extraversion are personality traits that exist on a continuum and at opposite poles”. Jung described introverts as individuals that focus their energy inwards or within towards more desolate or solitary thoughtful activities. Jung (1921) further defined introversion as “inward-turning of libido”. Social introversion was defined by Gormly and Gormly (1986) as a “little social interaction which is due to little interest in social interest and activities”. As such, individuals with social introversion do not necessarily have anxiety or fear towards social gatherings or social encounters, rather, they prefer to be occupied with their thoughts or interact with one person after the other. Social introverts can be characterized as being pre-occupied with their thoughts while having limited social interaction with others. Their interest in social gatherings is minimal which can be linked to avoidance and little to no interest in social gatherings and social activities. Studies on self-esteem (a construct closely related to self-concept) offers us a peek into the relationship that may exist between social introversion and self-esteem. Tuovinen, Tang, & Salmela-Aro in 2020 conducted a research on “Introversion and Social Engagement: Scale Validation, among 862 students in Finland, they concluded that social introversion significantly predict lower self-esteem among Introverts.

Self Concept

Self concept on the other hand, is simply an individual’s ideas and beliefs about oneself. Baumeister (1999) define self concept as a “person’s beliefs about him or herself, including the individual’s attributes and who and what the “self” is”. Baumeister (1999) explained self “as an individual’s totality, including the body, sense of identity, reputation, etc. self is a concept that include the biological aspect, otherwise known as the physical self and the self that is constructed out of meaning”. Self concept is a construct that Roger (1959) believed to have three different components which are the view of yourself (self image), the amount of value an individual put on oneself (self worth), and how your wish to be (ideal self). This invariably impacts on the body image an individual has on the self which could either be that of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Body Dissatisfaction

Body dissatisfaction refers to the “negative thoughts and feelings that an individual may have about their bodies and appearance” (Grogan, 1999, as cited by Holmqvist & Frisén, 2010). Body dissatisfaction is defined as a “negative subjective evaluation of the weight and shape of one’s own body” (Stice & Shaw, 1978 as cited by Glauert, 2010). An individual starts to get dissatisfaction about the body the moment there is a development of negative thoughts and emotions about the body. Body dissatisfaction even though is a covert process; it can be as a result of several external influences such as family, mentors, friends, social media e.t.c. (Webb & Zimmer, 2013; Woelders et al., 2010). Likewise too, internal factors do also influence body dissatisfaction such as self-concept and self-esteem (Alipoor, Sirus & Moazami, 2009).

Research on the relationship that exist between body dissatisfaction and social introversion is a research that is ongoing and on continuum. Agnus, Jithin, Neha, Neni, & Prinsha (2022) in a research conducted among undergraduates from Kerala revealed that there is a significant relationship between body dissatisfaction and social interaction anxiety. While Azevedo and Azevedo, (2023) investigated the relationship between social interaction avoidance and body image. They elucidate that positive body appreciation significantly predict low intention of social-interaction avoidance.

Studies have suggested and reviewed that university undergraduates do have issues related to self-worth which has led to problem developing and maintaining social relations and contact (Tajiksy, 2018), consequently, self-worth is a internal process that has been researched by Alipoor et al., (2009) to lead to

body dissatisfaction. Likewise, social media have induced and define the ideal body shape which leads adolescents to feel pressured and therefore exert pressure on themselves, in order to get the perception of fitting into the social group of ideal beauty and handsomeness. The inability or failure to achieve the defined ideal beauty might result in social withdrawal or social introversion. The outcome of inability to fit into the group of ideal handsomeness and beauty that has been created by the social media do pose a great deal of challenge because social interaction have a direct and significant relationship to academic performance of students, influence students' critical thinking, passiveness in class, and learning (Balder 2007; Hurst, Wallace, & Nixon 2013; Murberg 2010). More importantly, negative self-concept and body dissatisfaction have been reported to have a significant relationship with negative social outcomes (Bienvenu & Nestadt et al., 2017; Tolar, Trull & Sher, 2014). However, how they interrelate remains unclear.

Likewise, individuals who feel dissatisfied about their body can become obsessed with changing their body shape at all cost and might even result in the practice of some unhealthy and risky methods such as using breast enlargement drug, bleaching creams, risky surgery, unhealthy eating habits, and unhealthy exercise. Most often than not, those methods and practices do not result in the desired outcome which may result into intense feelings of disappointment, shame, and guilt. The consequence of these might be social withdrawal. To this end, this study seeks to find out how an individual's perception of self, satisfaction /dissatisfaction with body shape will influence the tendency to be socially introverted.

Therefore the purpose of this study is to examine the predictive influence of self-concept and body dissatisfaction on social introversion and to examine gender differences in Social Introversion while testing the following hypotheses;

1. There will be a significant influence of self-concept on social introversion among EKSU undergraduate students.
2. There will be a significant influence of Body Dissatisfaction on Social Introversion among EKSU undergraduate students.
3. Self-Concept and Body-Dissatisfaction will significantly predict Social Introversion among EKSU undergraduate students.
4. There will be a significant gender differences in Social Introversion among EKSU undergraduate students.

METHODS

This study used survey research design adopting expo-facto design. Structured questionnaire that contain sections that revealed the variables of this study was used to measure research participants' responses. The research participants for this study were students of Ekiti State University. A convenient sampling technique was adopted in distributing the questionnaires to the research participants because the population is homogeneous. Two hundred and fifty (250) copies of questionnaire were distributed after taking the necessary informed consent about the purpose of the research and without coercion to either participate in or withdraw from the research. However, two hundred and forty-seven (247) were retrieved and usable, of which was 125 males and 122 females.

Measures

Self-Concept was measured using Self-Concept Questionnaire (SCQ) by Robson (1989). The SCQ has five subscales which includes contentment and worthiness, attractiveness and approval, determinism and significance, and resilience. Body Image Scale, and willingness to communicate scale by McCroskey (1992) to measure body dissatisfaction, and social introversion respectively.

RESULTS

Table 1: Pearson correlation table showing the relationship among the variables

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean	SD
1	Social Introversion	—							28.66	3.03
2	Body image	.339**	—						14.88	1.81
3	Contentment & Worthiness	.172**	.166**	—					25.25	4.59
4	Attractiveness & Approved	.168**	.106*	.342**	—				15.55	2.89
5	Determinism & significance	.118**	.189**	.244**	.177**	—			13.04	2.62
6	Confidence & existence	.174**	.129*	.367**	.236**	.314**	—		33.14	4.87
7	Resilience	.247**	.111*	.167**	.211**	.135**	.229**	—	6.19	2.65

N =247. **Significant at .01; *Significant at .05

All the variables are significantly related

Table 2: Regression summary table showing the influence of the dimensions of self-concept and body image on social introversion

Variables	Beta	t	p	R	R ²	F	P
Constant	.297	8.77	.00				
Body Image		4.92	.00				
Contentment & worthiness	.048	.71	.47				
Attractiveness & approved	.069	1.08	.28	.42	.15	8.46	.00
Determinism & Significance	-.006	-.09	.92				
Confidence & Existence	.041	.95	.34				
Resilience	.178	2.89	.00				

There is significant joint influence of body dissatisfaction & self -concept on social introversion $R^2 = .15$, $F= 8.46$ $P <.01$. Meaning that the proportion of variance in social introversion hat can be explained by body image and self concept is only 15% though significant as the F-ratio shows that the two factors statistically significantly predict social introversion.

Body dissatisfaction has significant predictive influence on social introversion [$\beta = .297$ $t = 4.92$ $p < .01$] with body dissatisfaction contributing 29% while only resilience dimension of self-concept has significant predictive influence on social introversion. [$\beta = .178$ $t = 2.89$ $p < .01$] contributing approximately 18%.

Other dimensions of self-concept do not significantly predict social introversion.

Table 3: Independent t-test table showing sex difference in self-concept, Body dissatisfaction & social introversion

		Mean	SD	SE	T	p
Self-concept	Male	99.29	10.48	.93		

	Female	96.66	12.64	1.14	.423	.67
Body image	Male	14.87	1.61	.14		
	Female	14.88	2.00	.18	-.058	.95
Social introversion	Male	28.56	2.96	.26		
	Female	28.77	3.11	.28	-.545	.59
Content & worthiness	Male	25.23	4.33	.38		
	Female	25.26	4.87	.44	-.052	.96
Attraction & approve by others	Male	15.42	2.83	.25		
	Female	15.69	2.95	.26	-.719	.47
Determinism & Significance	Male	13.26	2.48	.22		
	Female	12.81	2.74	.24	1.34	.18
Confidence & Existence	Male	33.33	4.58	.41		
	Female	32.95	5.16	.46	.601	.54
Resilience	Male	6.27	3.25	.29		
	Female	6.11	1.87	.16	.488	.62

df = 245

There is no significant sex difference in self-concept, body dissatisfaction and social introversion.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that there is significant relationship among social introversion, body dissatisfaction and all the dimensions of self-concept. Therefore it can be deduced from the findings of this study that the greater an individual's self-worth the greater the body satisfaction and vice versa, and this impacts on social introversion.

Body dissatisfaction has significant predictive influence on social introversion contributing a beta weight of 49% to the total influence of self-concept and body image. Although, out of the five dimensions of self-concept tested, only resilience has significant predictive influence on social introversion, contributing beta weight of almost 29%, while other dimensions of self-concept do not significantly predict social introversion. The result correlates with the findings of Azevedo and Azevedo (2023) that explain that positive body appreciation significantly predict low intention of social-interaction avoidance.

The result of this study also indicates a joint influence of self-concept and body dissatisfaction on social introversion. It was established that there is significant combined influence of body dissatisfaction and self-concept on social introversion. Body dissatisfaction occurs when someone has persistent negative thoughts and feelings about their body. Body dissatisfaction is an internal emotional and cognitive process but is influenced by external factors such as pressures to meet certain appearance ideal. Rogers (1959) in his theory of self, Rogers believed that humans have a fundamental drive to seek for "self actualization" according to him, the more congruent the ideal self and the real self is. Self actualization is to achieve ones full potential and obtain the highest level of achievement we can. Moreover, this potential differs and varies from one person to another and tends to develop in diverse ways according to our personality.

However no significant sex difference in self-concept, body dissatisfaction and social introversion was found in the study.

RECOMMENDATION

From the findings made, it is hereby recommended that other interested researchers should consider other geographical locations in other part of Nigeria to validate generalization of the findings made. Furthermore, personality traits other than introversion should examine in relation to body dissatisfaction and self-concept on social introversion. Regarding the adverse influence of body dissatisfaction and self-concept on social introversion, the government should ensure total restriction of unethical features on social media. These would guide social network interaction to achieve the targeted desires of the different personality traits.

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