



JAMBURA JOURNAL CIVIC EDUCATION  
<http://ejurnal.ung.ac.id/index.php./jacedu>  
E-ISSN : 2798-4818  
P-ISSN: 2808-2249

## The Relationship between *Social Comparison* and *Body Dissatisfaction* and Its Implications for the Formation of Character Values in Early Adult Students at Bina Mandiri University Gorontalo

Sitti Sulistia L Husain<sup>1</sup>, Fendi Ntobuo<sup>2</sup>, Sitti Rojijyah Puh<sup>3</sup>

University of Muhammadiyah Gorontalo<sup>1,2,3</sup>  
sittisultiahusain@gmail.com,  
fendintobuo@umgo.ac.id,  
sittirojijyah@umgo.ac.id,

---

### ARTICLE INFO

Article History:  
Submitted: April 2026  
Accepted: Mei 2026  
Published: Mei 2026

Keywords:  
Social Comparison;  
Body Dissatisfaction;  
Female Students;  
Body Image;

Corresponding author:  
Sitti Sulistia Larasati  
Husain  
sittisultiahusain@gmail.com

---

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship between *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction* and analyze its implications on the formation of character values in early adult female students at Bina Mandiri Gorontalo University. The method used is quantitative with a correlational design. The research population amounted to 306 active female students of the Department of Pharmacy, with a sample of 75 respondents taken using *stratified random sampling* techniques. Data were collected through a closed questionnaire of the Likert scale that had been validated and tested for reliability (Cronbach's Alpha > 0.90), then analyzed using the *Spearman* correlation test through SPSS 20. The results showed that the *level of social comparison* of female students was in the medium category (64.0%) and the *body dissatisfaction level* was also dominant in the medium category (73.3%). The bivariate test revealed a significant positive relationship between *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction* with a correlation coefficient value of 0.496 and a significance level of 0.001 ( $p < 0.05$ ). These findings indicate that the higher the tendency of female students to make physical comparisons digitally and socially, the higher the level of dissatisfaction with their bodies. The systematic implication of this phenomenon is the degradation of character values, which is characterized by the erosion of *gratitude*, integrity crises due to dependence on external validation, and a decrease in mental resilience and authentic self-acceptance. The recommendation of this study is the need for higher education institutions to integrate media literacy and *virtue-based* character education into the curriculum. Strengthening local wisdom values such as *mohuyula* (mutual respect) and *dila lo o'opu* (living modestly) is suggested as a counter-narrative to build the moral resilience of female students in facing the pressure of beauty standards in the digital era, so that they can refocus on developing their own identity and more meaningful academic achievements.

---

### INTRODUCTION

The early adulthood phase is a critical transition period in which individuals begin to form a more established self-identity, but at the same time become a period of vulnerability to social pressures related to physical appearance. This period, according to Santrock (2013), covers the age range of 18 to 25 years and is characterized by various psychosocial transitions, including adjustment to new social roles, academic demands, as well as the pressure to meet often unrealistic physical standards. During this time, individuals begin to form a more stable self-identity, including their perception of their

bodies. According to Hurlock, one of the important developmental tasks in the early adult phase is the ability to establish healthy social relationships, build independence, and accept oneself completely, including acceptance of physical conditions (Panjaitan & Rahmasari, 2021).

In today's digital era, female students are consistently exposed to digitally curated body images on social media, which triggers a continuous self-evaluation process. The phenomenon of social comparison arises when individuals use others as a benchmark to evaluate themselves, which often leads to unhealthy *upward comparisons* (Vogel et al., 2021). The theory of social comparison proposed by Festinger (1954) states that individuals have a natural tendency to evaluate their abilities, opinions, and conditions by comparing them to others. According to Schaefer & Thompson (2014), *social comparison* includes aspects such as physical appearance, weight, body shape, body size, and fat content. Technological developments exacerbate this; platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook are filled with visual content that displays unrealistic beauty standards due to the editing and filtering process (Arthantie & Rahmasari, 2024).

Exposure to these beauty standards significantly contributes to the emergence of body dissatisfaction. Body image dissatisfaction occurs when there is a sharp discrepancy between the current body perception and the desired ideal body. This global aesthetic pressure causes female students to view their bodies as objects that need to be improved, which lowers the level of psychological well-being and self-acceptance (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016). *Body dissatisfaction* is defined as a persistent negative evaluation of one's own body shape or size (Cooper et al., 1987). According to Cash & Pruzinsky (2002), this condition includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral components, such as negative thoughts, feelings of shame, and avoidance of social situations.

The impact of high social comparison and body dissatisfaction has serious implications for the formation of character values in female students. Traits such as *gratitude*, self-confidence, and self-integrity tend to weaken when the individual's primary focus is solely on external validation. The inability to accept oneself inhibits the development of positive character that should be the foundation for female students to become resilient and ethical individuals (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015). In the context of higher education, female students who are trapped in this cycle often experience a decrease in self-efficacy that has an impact on their academic and social performance.

The development of strong character values can actually be a *protective factor* against the negative influence of social media (Pounders et al., 2016).

Although the relationship between these two variables is well established, there is a significant research gap on how this process systematically inhibits the formation of character values. Recent research shows a shift in value orientation from "internal character" to "external validation," which triggers a crisis of self-integrity (Choukas-Bradley et al., 2022). There is a literature gap in explaining how *body dissatisfaction* erodes character values such as gratitude and self-acceptance due to a materialistic mindset (Cwynar-Horta, 2019). It has not been widely researched how the value of *resilience* functions as a protector (Gwynne & Barber, 2021). The current focus is still dominated by general mental health, rarely touching on the ethical-moral character aspects related to respecting the body as a trust (Holland & Tiggemann, 2021). Therefore, an in-depth study is needed so that higher education institutions can formulate relevant character strengthening programs (Yurdagül et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the literature gap shows that *social comparison* fundamentally intervenes in the formation of character values such as integrity and honesty towards oneself (Ahadzadeh et al., 2024). The theory of *Self-Compassion* as part of character development is beginning to be explored, but there is still little research linking low values of "self-acceptance" to unethical behaviors such as digital image manipulation (Fardouly et al., 2023). College students with low gratitude character scores tend to fail to view the body as a productive function (Pounders & Mabry-Flynn, 2021). The urgency of this research lies in strengthening *body esteem* rooted in character integrity (Melandri et al., 2020), especially to counter toxic beauty standards that threaten moral identity (Harriger et al., 2022).

In the context of Indonesia's socio-culture, physical appearance is a benchmark of success, especially for women. Studies reveal that 88% of Indonesian women are dissatisfied with their body shape (Namira & Nurani, 2024), and 91% go on a strict diet (Nariswari, 2021). Data from *the Mental Health Foundation* (2019) also shows that 34% of adults experience anxiety due to body image. Female students, including at Bina Mandiri University (UBM) Gorontalo, are a vulnerable population. A preliminary study through interviews with students of the Department of Pharmacy UBM Gorontalo

revealed that respondents often compared their bodies with peers or public figures, which triggered a sense of insecurity.

Several previous studies confirmed a strong relationship between *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction* ( $r = 0.854$ ), as well as a contribution of 74.8% in certain groups (Nisa & Rifani, 2024). However, specific research on female Pharmacy students is still limited. In fact, they are exposed to an environment that demands rigor and perfectionism, which has the potential to reinforce social comparisons. Based on the description above, this study aims to examine the relationship between *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction* in female students of the Department of Pharmacy, Bina Mandiri University Gorontalo in order to encourage the development of mental well-being interventions and appropriate character strengthening.

Based on the above background description, this study aims to examine the relationship between *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction* and analyze its implications on the formation of character values, such as gratitude, integrity, and mental toughness, in early adult students at Bina Mandiri Gorontalo University. Through this in-depth understanding of psychosocial dynamics, research is expected to be a scientific basis to develop appropriate intervention strategies in improving mental well-being, encouraging sincere self-acceptance, and strengthening the foundation of female students' character to have moral resilience and a strong self-identity amid the pressure of digital era beauty standards.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This type of research uses quantitative methods. The main objectives of this method are examine the relationship between variables and assess how much changes in one variable affect other variables (Scott, 2023). This research was carried out at the Pharmacy Study Program, Bina Mandiri University Gorontalo. The population in this study is all active female students of the Pharmacy Study Program, Bina Mandiri University Gorontalo which totals 306 people. The sample techniques used are *probability sampling* by the *Stratified Random Sampling*. The research variables consist of *Social Comparison* as an independent variable (X) and *body dissatisfaction* as a bound variable (Y). Conceptual definition *Social Comparison* refers to the mechanism by which a person compares his own opinions, abilities, achievements, and characteristics with

those of others, while *body dissatisfaction* refers to a negative view of physical aspects and awkwardness related to body form in the midst of social interaction.

The operational definitions of the two variables are poured into the indicators, including the dimensions *Social Comparison* according to Thompson (2014) such as physical appearance, body weight, body shape, body size, and body fat, as well as the dimensions of employee engagement such as *self-perception of body shape, comparative perception of body image, attitude concerning body image alteration, and severe alterations in body perception* (Cooper et al., (1987)). The research instrument was in the form of a closed questionnaire using the Likert scale with favorable and unfavorable item scores, compiled based on variable indicators, and tested for validity using product moment correlation, with valid criteria if  $r$  is calculated  $> r$  table (0.368). The results of the validity test showed 11 valid items out of 34 statements *Social Comparison* and 34 valid items from 18 statements *Body Dissatisfaction*. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha with the results *Social Comparison* of 0.944 and *Body Dissatisfaction* by 0.955, so both are declared reliable.

Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to all respondents. The collected data were analyzed using univariate analysis to describe the frequency distribution of each variable and bivariate analysis to test the hypothesis with the Pearson Product Moment correlation test, after previously conducting prerequisite tests in the form of normality tests (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) and linearity tests. The zero hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) states that there is no significant relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement, while the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) states that there is a significant relationship between the two. This research process is carried out through stages: Preparation, including initial observation, problem identification, and instrument preparation; (2) try out to test the instrument; Implementation of data collection; and Data processing using SPSS version 20 for Windows.

## **RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **Results**

#### **4.1 Results of Analysis of the Relationship Between *Social Comparison* and *Body Dissatisfaction* in Female Students of the Department of Pharmacy, Bina Mandiri University, Gorontalo City.**

##### **Univariate Analysis and Statistical Descriptive Test**

Univariate is used to describe or describe the data that has been collected as it is without intending to make conclusions for the general public or generalizing. The characteristics of the respondents in this study include age or *gender* which the results in this study will be explained as follows;

**Table 1.**  
**Age Characteristics**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 Years	4	5.33%
19 Years	11	14.67%
20 Years	19	25.33%
21 Years	17	22.67%
22 Years	17	22.67%
23 Years	6	8.00%
24 Years	1	1.33%

Based on the table above, it is known from the results of the study that the characteristics of the respondents based on the age category are 4 respondents aged 18 years, 11 respondents aged 19 years, 19 respondents aged 20 years, 17 respondents aged 21 years, 17 respondents aged 22 years, 6 respondents aged 23 years, and 1 respondent aged 24 years. Furthermore, at the stage of statistical descriptive test regarding the analysis of *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction data* through the SPSS application version 20, statistical data was obtained which is displayed in the table below:

**Table 2.**  
**Descriptive Test Results**

Variable	Min	Max	Red	Std.Dev
<i>Social Comparison</i>	11.00	55.00	26.09	11.92
<i>Body Dissatisfaction</i>	34.00	136.00	76.77	21.05

From the table, it can be concluded that the descriptive statistical data for *Social Comprasion* has a minimum value of 11.00, a maximum value of 55.00, an average value of 26.09 and a Standard Deviation of 11.92. As for the *Body Dissatisfaction variable*, the minimum value is 34.00, the maximum value is 136.00, the average value is 76.77 and the deviation is 21.05. There are also several categorizations including variable categories. The level of *Social Comprasion* with *Body Dissatisfaction* was divided by the researcher into three categories, namely low, medium, and high. This classification is determined after the mean and Standard Deviation (SD) are known. Based on the mean value and Standard

Deviation, the researcher then determined the level of the Organizational Culture and *Employee Engagement* category using the following classification standards:

**Table 3.**  
**Formula Categorization norms**

Categories	Norm Formula
Low	$X < (red - 1SD)$
Medium	$(red - 1SD) \leq X < (red + 1SD)$
Height	$(red + 1SD) \geq X$

**Description:**

X = Total Score

M = Red

SD = Standard Deviation

Based on the norms of categorization of the respondents, the respondents of this study can be grouped into 3 categories in each variable. The categorization can be seen in the following table:

**Table 4.**  
**Categorization Norms**

Categorization	<i>Social Comparison</i>	<i>Body Dissatisfaction</i>
<b>Low</b>	$X < 14$	$X < 55$
<b>Medium</b>	$X 14 \leq 38$	$X 55 \leq 97$
<b>Height</b>	$X > 38$	$X > 97$

**Table 5.**  
**Results of the categorization of the Social Comparison Scale**

Yes	<i>Social Comparison</i>	Frequency	Present (%)
1	Low $X < 14$	16	21.3%
2	Medium $X 14 \leq 38$	48	64.0%
3	Height $X > 38$	11	14.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source : Data Processing Results 2025

Based on the table above, it can be seen that respondents who have a *social comparison* with the low category are 16 respondents with a percentage (21.3%), the medium category is 48 respondents with a percentage (64.0%), and for the high category as many as 11 people with a percentage (14.7%).

**Table 6.**

**Results of the Body Dissatisfaction *Scale categorization***

Yes	<i>Social Comparison</i>	Frequency	Present (%)
1	Low $X < 55$	16	21.3%
2	Medium $X 55 < = 97$	48	64.0%
3	Height $X > 97$	11	14.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source : Data Processing Results 2025

Based on the table above, it can be seen that respondents who have *body dissatisfaction* with the low category are 7 respondents with a percentage (9.3%), the medium category is 55 respondents with a percentage (73.3%), and for the high category as many as 13 people with a percentage (17.3%).

**Bivariate Analysis (Normality, Linearity and Product Moment Correlation Test)**

Based on the results of the research, a grouping can be carried out that refers to the categorization criteria based on the assumption that the scores of the research subjects are distributed normally. The results in this study will be explained as follows:

**1. Normality Test**

The normality test is one of the basic tests that is carried out before conducting further or more data analysis in normal data, often used as a basis in some statistical tests even though all data is not required to be normal. The normality test functions to see the sample data we take or use following or approaching the normal distribution (The distribution of the data does not tend to be left or right). Distribution refers to quantitative phenomena in the natural sciences or social sciences.

The normality test uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test method with the help of SPSS Version 20 *for windows*. Normally distributed data if the significance value (p-value) is  $> 0.05$  while the data is abnormally distributed if the p-value  $< 0.05$ .

**Table 7.**  
**Normality Test Results**

Variable	Sig.	Remarks
<i>Social Shopping</i>	0.007	Abnormal
<i>Body Dissatisfaction</i>	0.010	Abnormal

Based on the table, the results of the normality test showed that the kolmogrov-Smirnov score of *the social comprasion* variable had a score of 0.007 with  $p < 0.05$ , while the score on *the body dissatisfaction* variable was 0.010 with  $p < 0.05$ . The significance

value obtained from the *variables of social comprasion and body dissatisfaction*  $< 0.05$ , it can be said that the two variables are not normally distributed.

## 2. LINEARITY TEST RESULTS

The test results can be seen from the significance value that can be obtained from the *deviation from linearity test* with the help of the SPSS version 20 program. If the significant value is greater  $> 0.05$ , then there is a relationship between the two variables. Conversely, if the significant value is smaller  $< 0.05$ , then there is no relationship between the two variables or is non-linear.

**Table 7.**  
**Linearity Test Results**

Variable	Sig.	Remarks
Organizational Culture <i>Employee Engagement</i>	0,854	Linear

It can be seen from the table, the linear test of *social purchase and body dissatisfaction* variables produced a significant value of 0.854 with ( $p > 0.05$ ) which means 0.854 is greater than 0.05. This information shows that there is a significant linear relationship between the *social comprasion* (X) variable and *body dissatisfaction* (Y).

## 3. PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION TEST

The correlation test technique used by the researcher is the Pearson correlation test through the SPSS 20 *for Windows program*. The following is a table of the results of the correlation test:

**Table 8.**  
**Correlation Test Results**

Variable	Sig.	Correlation Coefficient	Remarks
<b>Organizational culture</b> <i>Employee engagement</i>	0,001	0.496	Significant

Based on the results of the table above, it shows that  $p = 0.000$  ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) with a value of  $r = 0.419$  ( $r^2 = 0.065$ ). This value shows that about 17.5% of *employee engagement variables* can be explained by organizational culture variables. This indicates that there is a significant correlation or relationship between organizational culture and *employee engagement*. This can be interpreted that when the company's organizational culture increases, the level of *employee engagement* in employees tends to increase as well. Thus the hypothesis can be declared acceptable.

## DISCUSSION

### 4.2 The Relationship Between *Social Comparison* and *Body Satisfaction* in Female Students of the Department of Pharmacy, Bina Mandiri Gorontalo University.

The results of this study revealed a significant positive relationship between *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction* in female students of the Department of Pharmacy, Bina Mandiri Gorontalo University. These findings confirm the theory of social comparison and provide a new perspective in the context of sociocultural studies, particularly in understanding how social and cultural dynamics affect the self-perception of individuals, especially young women in Indonesia (Buunk & Gibbons, 2005). In the context of *Socio-Cultural Studies*, these findings indicate that body dissatisfaction is not just an individual psychological problem, but is also a product of prevailing social and cultural constructions. Indonesian society, which is still strongly influenced by collective values and social norms, places physical appearance as one of the markers of social status and acceptance. Narrow beauty standards such as slim bodies and fair skin have been internalized through various channels, from mass media, advertising, to everyday interactions. College students as part of the socially and digitally active young generation are vulnerable to pressure to conform to these standards. This explains that TikTok users tend to make more frequent social comparisons and experience higher body dissatisfaction (Arthantie & Rahmasari, 2024).

The dominance of *physical appearance* in *social comparison* in respondents shows that in an increasingly globalized visual culture, physical appearance is a highly valued social capital. In a sociocultural perspective, the body is no longer just a biological entity, but also a symbol that represents identity, class, and even morality. Women who do not meet the dominant beauty standards often experience stigmatization or *body shaming*, which in turn reinforces feelings of inconfidence and dissatisfaction with the body. This phenomenon needs to be further reviewed in the framework of a patriarchal culture that still places the female body as an object and a measuring tool for self-success.

In addition, the finding that the majority of respondents were in the category of *moderate body dissatisfaction* (73.3%) indicates that body dissatisfaction has become a kind of hidden norm among young women. In sociocultural studies, this can be seen as a form of cultural hegemony in which non-inclusive beauty standards are successfully reproduced and widely accepted without realizing it. Social media as one of the new socialization agents plays a crucial role in reinforcing these standards through content that is uniform and often does not represent the diversity of the human body.

But on the other hand, the results of this study also open up space for reflection on the importance of character education and media literacy in building resilience to social pressure. Character education that emphasizes the values of empathy, self-acceptance, and integrity can be a fortress for female students in the face of the onslaught of unrealistic beauty standards. In addition, media literacy, especially in interpreting visual content on social media, needs to be integrated into the higher education curriculum so that students can be critical of the media messages they receive.

In the context of Gorontalo local wisdom that prioritizes the value of simplicity and togetherness, there is actually the potential to develop a *counter narrative or counter narrative* to global beauty standards. Local values such as mohuyula or mutual respect and dila lo oopu or modest living can be revived to create a social environment that is more supportive of accepting diverse bodies. Unfortunately, in this study, the value of this value has not appeared to be a significant balancing factor. This indicates that the influence of global culture and the media is more dominant in shaping the perception of the female student body.

The implications of these findings are not only relevant for the world of psychology, but also for policymakers in the fields of education and public health. Within the framework of *Civic Education*, female students need to be encouraged to become critical citizens and be aware of the rights to their own bodies, including the right not to receive stigmatization based on appearance. Meanwhile, in terms of public policy, regulations are needed that limit media content that encourages unhealthy beauty standards and public campaigns that educate the public about the importance of a positive body image.

However, this study has several limitations, including a limited sample of one study program and university, and does not include moderator variables such as self-esteem or social support. Further research is suggested to explore more deeply the role of local wisdom values and character education in moderating the relationship between *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction*, so as to formulate contextual and culture-based intervention models. Overall, this study reinforces the evidence that body dissatisfaction in young women is a phenomenon that cannot be separated from sociocultural contexts. By understanding the root of this problem, it is hoped that a more holistic strategy can be developed through education, policy, and social movements to create an environment that supports mental well-being and self-acceptance.

## 4.2 The Relationship Between *Social Comparison* and *Body Satisfaction* of Character Values in Early Adult Students at Bina Mandiri University Gorontalo

The results of this study provide an in-depth picture that the phenomenon of *social comparison* and *body dissatisfaction* is not just a problem of physical perception, but has systematic implications for the formation of female student character values. The finding that the majority of respondents were at a moderate level in both variables indicated a serious challenge in internalizing intrinsic character values. When female students are trapped in the behavior of comparing themselves constantly, there is a shift in value orientation from internal characters to external validation that is superficial (Choukas-Bradley et al., 2022).

From the perspective of character education, one of the fundamental values that is affected is *gratitude*. Female students who have a high level of *social comparison* tend to fail to appreciate their own condition, which according to the latest theory is a form of character erosion of gratitude for *body function* in pursuit of mere aesthetics (Pounders & Mabry-Flynn, 2021). This weakening of gratitude causes female students to view the body not as a mandate or a gift that must be maintained, but as an object that must always be corrected to conform to fluid and unrealistic social standards (Holland & Tiggemann, 2021).

Furthermore, this dynamic affects the formation of the values of self-integrity and honesty. The discrepancy between self-image on social media and physical reality often encourages individuals to manipulate digital images in order to gain recognition. Recent studies show that this reliance on digital validation can weaken the principle of self-honesty, where female students feel they have to "deceive" the public view to cover up their dissatisfaction (Fardouly et al., 2023). This creates a moral identity crisis in which female students' self-esteem is no longer based on character qualities, but rather on the amount of visual appreciation received from their social environment (Ahadzadeh et al., 2024).

Another aspect that is very crucial is the value of mental resilience (*resilience*). Students at Bina Mandiri Gorontalo University, especially in the Department of Pharmacy which has a high academic load, need a strong character to deal with pressure. However, chronic *body dissatisfaction* has been proven to reduce self-efficacy and individual

fighting power. Contemporary research confirms that female students who focus too much on physical deficiencies tend to have lower mental resilience when faced with social challenges, as their psychological energy is drained to conduct negative self-evaluations (Gwynne & Barber, 2021). Toxic beauty standards on social media such as TikTok have become a real threat to the stability of female students' character if not accompanied by the development of strong character literacy (Harriger et al., 2022).

The development of the value of *self-acceptance* is also a critical point in this discussion. Within the framework of positive psychology and character, self-acceptance is the key to mental health. However, the hegemony of visual culture adopted by female students through social media makes this value difficult to achieve. Failure to accept oneself as a whole not only has an impact on anxiety, but also on the loss of authenticity in interacting (Vogel et al., 2021). Without character-based interventions, female students will continue to be trapped in destructive physical competition, which ultimately distances them from local wisdom values such as simplicity and self-respect (Yurdagül et al., 2021).

Therefore, these findings confirm that character education in higher education should not only touch the cognitive aspect, but must be able to build a value system that protects female students from the adverse effects of social comparison. Building a *virtue-based* character and appreciation for one's uniqueness is a strategic step to break the chain of dissatisfaction (Melandri et al., 2020). Educational institutions need to realize that female students who have strong character and high self-confidence will be more immune to unhealthy beauty standards, so they can focus on developing academic potential and making more meaningful social contributions (Wang et al., 2020).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between social comparison and body dissatisfaction in female students of the Department of Pharmacy, Bina Mandiri Gorontalo University, which was proven by the results of the Spearman correlation test with a coefficient value of 0.496 and a significance level of 0.001 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Descriptively, the level of social comparison was in the medium category (64.0%), which shows the tendency of female students to compare their physical appearance in public spaces, while the level of body dissatisfaction was also dominant in the medium category (73.3%) which reflected concerns about body shape as a result of sociocultural

construction and social media hegemony. This phenomenon systematically has an impact on the degradation of female students' character values, which can be seen from the erosion of the value of gratitude for bodily functions, integrity crises due to dependence on external validation, and a decrease in mental toughness and authentic self-acceptance. Although the value of Gorontalo's local wisdom has the potential to be a balancer, the toxic dominance of global culture requires the strengthening of virtue-based character education and holistic media literacy to build moral resilience and restore the focus of female students to academic potential and more meaningful self-identity.

### **Bibliography**

- Ahadzadeh, A. S., Pahlevan, S., & Ong, F. S. (2024). Social media use and body image dissatisfaction: The mediating role of social comparison and the moderating role of self-esteem and character strength. *Journal of Media Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-1105/a000388>
- Arthantie, S. D., & Rahmasari, D. (2024). The relationship between social comparison and body dissatisfaction in early adult women of TikTok users. *Character: Journal of Psychological Research*, 11(1), 465–480.
- Buunk, A. P., & Gibbons, F. X. (2005). Social comparison orientation: A new perspective on those who do and those who don't compare with others. In *Social comparison and social psychology: Understanding cognition, intergroup relations, and culture*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511584329.003>
- Cash, T. F., & Pruzinsky, T. (2002). *Body image: A handbook of theory, research, and clinical practice*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Choukas-Bradley, S., Roberts, S. R., Maheux, A. J., & Nesi, J. (2022). The perfect storm: A developmental–sociocultural framework for understanding adolescent girls' body dissatisfaction and body-focused behaviors on social media. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 25(4), 681–701. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-022-00404-5>
- Cooper, P. J., Taylor, M. J., Cooper, Z., & Fairburn, C. G. (1987). The development and validation of the Body Shape Questionnaire. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 6(4), 485–494.
- Cwynar-Horta, J. (2019). The commodification of the body positive movement on Instagram. *Visual Studies*, 34(1), 36–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1472586X.2019.1653340>
- Fardouly, J., & Vartanian, L. R. (2016). Social media and body image concerns: Current research and future directions. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 9, 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsy.2015.09.005>
- Fardouly, J., Vartanian, L. R., & Magson, N. R. (2023). The impact of social media on body image and the role of appearance-based character traits in young adults. *Body Image*, 45, 112–121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2023.02.008>

- Gwynne, P., & Barber, B. L. (2021). Protective factors against body dissatisfaction: The role of resilience and self-compassion in young women. *Body Image, 38*, 115–124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2021.03.013>
- Harriger, J. A., Thompson, J. K., & Tiggemann, M. (2022). TikTok, body image, and the development of character-based resilience in young women. *Body Image, 41*, 275–280. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2022.03.006>
- Holland, G., & Tiggemann, M. (2021). "Strong beats skinny" every time: Appearance- and function-oriented motivations for exercise and body image. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 54*, 101914. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2021.101914>
- Melandri, A., Riva, G., & Dakanalis, A. (2020). The role of virtues and character strengths in body image satisfaction among university students. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(21), 7892. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17217892>
- Namira, S., & Nurani, G. A. (2024). The influence of fat talk and subjective well-being on adolescent women's body image. *Journal of Psychology, 20*, 123–131.
- Nariswari, S. L. (2021). Three reasons why it is important to have body positivity to live happier lives. *Kompas.com*.
- Nisa, A. T. R. C., & Rifani, R. (2024). The relationship between social comparison and body dissatisfaction in early adult women. *Pinsi Journal of Art, Humanity & Social Studies, 4*(3), 309–316.
- Panjaitan, M. E., & Rahmasari, D. (2021). The relationship between social comparison and subjective well-being in UNESA psychology students who use Instagram. *Journal of Psychological Research, 8*(5), 1–14.
- Pounders, K., Kowalczyk, C. M., & Stowers, K. (2016). Insights into the motivation of selfie posting: Impression management and self-esteem. *European Journal of Marketing, 50*(9–10), 1879–1892. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-07-2015-0502>
- Pounders, K., & Mabry-Flynn, A. (2021). Understanding the role of gratitude as a character strength in the relationship between social comparison and body satisfaction. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 22*, 1543–1562. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00284-3>
- Schaefer, L. M., & Thompson, J. K. (2014). The development and validation of the Physical Appearance Comparison Scale–Revised (PACS-R). *Eating Behaviors, 15*(2), 209–217. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eatbeh.2014.01.001>
- Sugiyono. (2023). *Quantitative, qualitative, and R&D research methods*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Tylka, T. L., & Wood-Barcalow, N. L. (2015). What is and what is not positive body image? Conceptual foundations and dimensional structure. *Body Image, 14*, 118–129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2015.04.001>
- Vogel, E. A., Gornostay, I., & Ramo, D. E. (2021). Social media use and body image: A review of recent research. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 37*, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2020.06.009>

- Wang, Y., Wang, X., Yang, J., & Zeng, P. (2020). Social networking site addiction and adolescent body dissatisfaction: A moderated mediation model. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 273, 563–571. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.03.170>
- Yurdagül, C., Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2021). The relationship between social media use and body image satisfaction: A systematic review. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 19(5), 1545–1566. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-019-00149-x>