



## **BODY IMAGE AND EATING DISORDER BETWEEN ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES**

**Dr. Thingnam Nandalal Singh\* & W. Geetarani Devi\*\***

\* Department of Physical Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh

\*\* Paragon School, Sector-24, Chandigarh

### **Abstract:**

*The main purpose of the study was to compare the body image and eating disorder between female athletes and non-athletes. To achieve the objectives of the study, a total of female thirty (30) athletes and thirty non-athletes (30) were selected randomly from Panjab University as the subject of the study. The age of the subjects ranged between 20-26 years. To determine the significance difference on body image and eating disorder, t-test was calculated with the help of SPSS software. The level of significance was set at 0.05 level of confidence. Statistical calculation on gathered data showed that there were significant differences found on body image (t-value 3.610), eating disorder (t-value 2.178) between female athletes and non-athletes. As per value of mean and SD of female athletes body image (mean=8.07, SD=4.22) and eating disorder (mean=29.24, SD=9.55) and female non-athletes body image (mean=23.04, SD=12.33), eating disorder (mean= 21.55, SD=3.00) it can conclude that athletes have poor body image and eating disorder as compared to non-athletes.*

**Keywords:** Body Image, Eating Disorder, Athlete & Non-Athlete

### **Introduction:**

Body Image is a person's mental picture of her or his body. Many women are excessively concerned about his body image and tend to have low body esteem because they believe themselves to be overweight. Books, films; TV and popular magazines (especially women's magazines) consistently send messages that our society esteem thin women and disdains heavy ones whereas maintaining appropriate body size is associated with good health, attempting to achieve and unrealistic ideal of slimness in oppressive to many women. Failure to med unrealistic standards leads many women to judge themselves as unattractive and lowers their self-esteem. A lean body is associated with high status, sexual attractiveness, youth-fullness, and a demonstration of the personal power to be trim and fit in a culture in which sedentary habits and overeating are common. (Edlin and Golanty, 2004). Some girls and young women compare themselves to models on ads, in terms of their physical attractiveness (Martin and Xavier 2010). The desire to lose weight is highly correlated with poor body image, with more women than men wanting to lose weight (Susan et al. 2005). Research by Martin and Xavier (2010) shows that people feel more pressure from society to be then after viewing ads featuring a slim model.

Eating Disorders are complex psycho-physiological conditions that manifest as compulsive, unusual eating behavior. There of the most common eating disorders are anorexia nervosa, a voluntary refusal to eat; Bulimia binge eating and immediate purging of the ingested food either by vomiting or by using laxatives; and binge eating disorder, episodes of binge eating without subsequent purging. Anorexia nervosa is a disorder accusing most commonly is adolescent females, characterized by abnormal body image, fear of obesity and prolonged refusal to eat, sometimes resulting in death. Bulimia is marked by a voluntary restriction of food intake followed by binge-purge cycle; extreme overeating, usually of high-calorie junk food, immediately followed by self-induced vomiting, use of laxatives, or intense exercise Like anorexia nervosa,

bulimia occurs primarily in young women with a morbid fear of becoming fat, who pursue thinness relentlessly. Binge Eating Disorder is an uncontrolled consumption of large quantities of food in a short period of time, even if the person does not feel hungry. The growing prevalence of eating disorders is caused, experts say, by young women trying to emulate advertising models and actors that they see on TV, in films and magazines, and on the internet (Ehle et al 1982).

**Objectives of the Study:**

The objectives of the study were to compare the body image and eating disorder between selected female athletes and non-athletes.

**Methodology:**

For the purpose of the study, a total of thirty (30) female athletes and thirty (30) female non-athletes were selected randomly as the subject of the study. To assess body image; Body Image Questionnaire (Nash, 1997) was used. To assess eating disorder; Eating Disorders Inventory (Garner, Olmstead and Poolivy, 1983) was administered. The age of the subjects ranges between 20-26 years. To determine the significant difference on Body Image and Eating disorder, t-test was applied with the help of SPSS software. For testing hypothesis, the level of significance chosen was 0.05.

**Findings:**

The comparison of body image between female athletes and non-athletes is presented in Table-1.

**TABLE -1**  
**COMPARISON OF SCORES ON BODY IMAGE BETWEEN FEMALE ATHLETES (A) AND NON-ATHLETES (NA)**

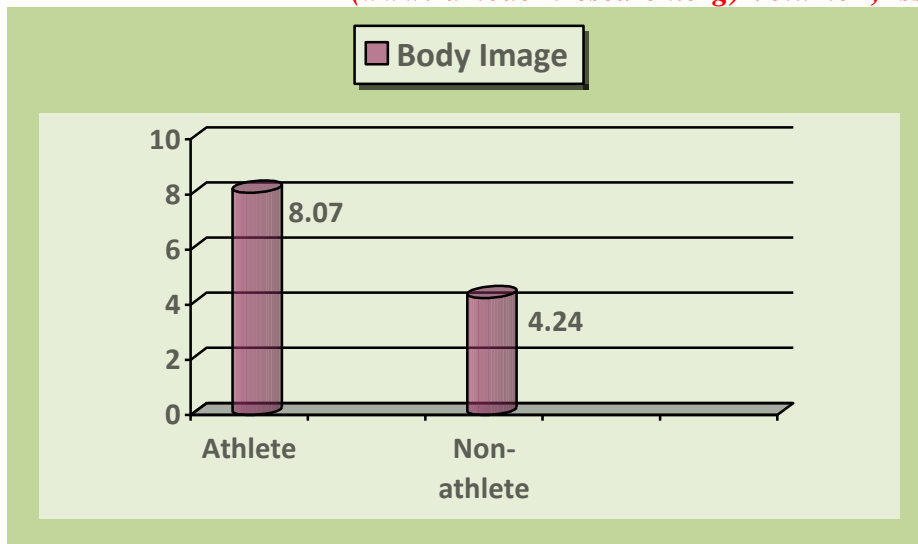
Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	SED	t-value
Body Image	A	30	8.07	4.22	3.84	1.07	3.610*
	NA	30	4.24	4.01			

*\*Significant at .05 level*

*t'.05 (58) = 2.00*

A perusal of inside of table-1 pertaining to female athletes and non-athletes on Body Image would show that the first group i.e. athletes had secured the mean and SD values of 8.07 and 4.22 respectively. On the other hand, non-athletes had secured mean and SD values of 4.24 and 4.1. The t-value was found to be statistically significant as the value obtained was 3.610 whereas; the tabulated value was 2.00 which 58 degrees of freedom at .05 level of significant.

Mean scores of female athletes and non-athletes on Body Image are depicted graphically in figure-2.



**Fig: - 2**

**THE GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF MEAN SCORES OF FEMALE ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES ON BODY IMAGE**

The comparison of Eating Disorder between female athletes and non-athletes is presented in Table-2.

**TABLE-2**

**COMPARISON OF SCORES ON EATING DISORDER BETWEEN FEMALE ATHLETES (A) AND NON ATHLETES (NA)**

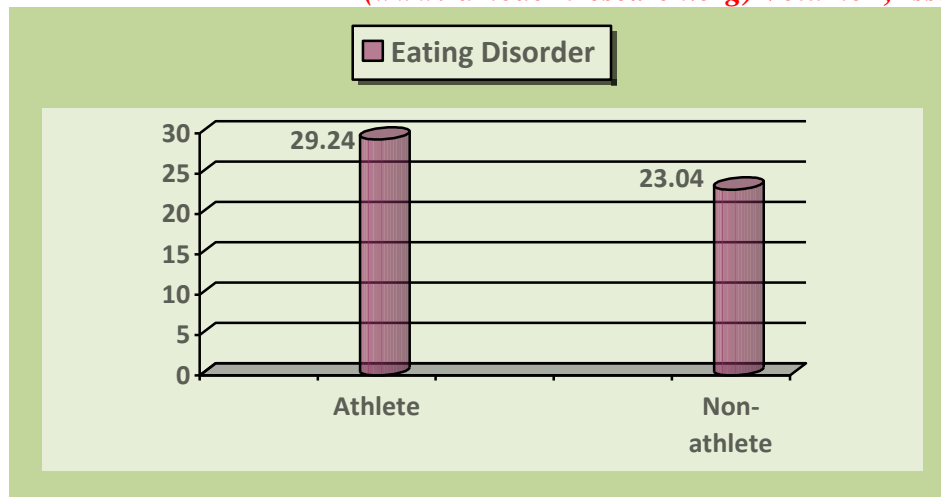
Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	SED	t-value
Eating Disorder	A	30	29.24	9.55	6.20	2.85	2.178*
	NA	30	23.04	12.33			

*\*Significant at .05 level*

*t'.05 (58) = 2.00*

A perusal of inside of table 2 pertaining to female athletes and non-athletes on the variable Eating Disorder would show that the first group i.e. athletes had secured the mean and SD values of 29.24 and 9.55 respectively. On the other hand, non-athletes had secured mean and SD values of 23.04 and 12.33. The t-value was found to be statistically significant as the value obtained was 2.178 whereas; the tabulated value was 2.00 which 58 degrees of freedom at .05 level of significant.

Mean scores of female athletes and non-athlete on eating disorder are depicted graphically in figure-2.



**Fig: - 2**  
**THE GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF MEAN SCORES OF FEMALE ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES ON EATING DISORDER**

**Discussion of Findings:**

From the above investigation it was revealed that there were significant differences obtained on body image and eating disorder between female athletes and non-athletes of Panjab University campus. The probable reason could be that the female athletes have a unique factor to the sport environment and to the particular sport. Most of the comparisons within the sport will be made with teammates; fat talk that occurs among girls and young women within the sport environment, research by Anderson et.al. 2011, suggests that weight and body image pressure from teammates may be greater. Another factor is the conflict when making their body more muscular through sport specific weight training; some female athletes feel that it is disadvantage with regard to attaining/ maintaining society's thin ideal. It increased stress that they place on their bodies on daily basis. These finding of study was supported with the study conducted by De Bruin et.al., 2007.

**Conclusions:**

In the light of the findings and limitations of the present study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Significant difference was found among female athletes and female non-athletes of Panjab University Campus on body image.
2. Significant difference was found among female athletes and female non-athletes of Panjab University Campus on eating disorder.
3. Female athletes have poor body image and eating disorder as compared to female non-athletes.

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