

APPEARANCE ANXIETY IN LEBANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY

Masculinity and Femininity in Relation to Appearance Anxiety across University

Men and Women in Lebanon

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the Master of Art in Psychology - Emphasis: Clinical Psychology  
at Haigazian University.

Beirut - Lebanon

May 2020

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University Men and Women in Lebanon**

By Kohar Balekdjian

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May 2020

*DEDICATION*

*I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mother, to whom I also dedicate all my success,  
now and always...*

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**Abstract**

Research has shown that cultural context has an influence on self-objectification. Masculinity and femininity are cultural constructs that were found to be related to self-objectification. Hence, the study aimed to investigate the relationship between gender role identity (masculinity-femininity) and self-objectification particularly appearance anxiety among the Lebanese university students. This was a quantitative survey study in which five hypotheses were tested using a convenience sample of 152 university students with a range age between 18 and 20 years old. Data were collected through the administration of two questionnaires, Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) (1987), and the Appearance Anxiety Scale (AAS) (Dion, Dion, & Keelan, 1990). The results yielded a positive significant correlation between appearance anxiety and masculinity in males, and contrary to what expected, a significant positive correlation was obtained between masculinity and appearance anxiety in females too. With regard to femininity, both in males and females, no significant correlation was obtained between femininity and appearance anxiety. Limitations and clinical implications were discussed at the end of the study.

*Keywords:* self-objectification, appearance anxiety, femininity, masculinity, Lebanon, university students.

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Media nowadays focuses a lot on physical beauty and sexual appearance (Karsay, Knoll & Matthes, 2017; American Psychological Association [APA], 2007). Given that the ideal portrayed body is quite unattainable (Wolf 1991), such sexualized media causes body dissatisfaction (Halliwel, Malson & Tischner, 2011). This in turn leads to self-objectification (Moradi, 2011; Karsay et al., 2017).

Self-objectification is considered a psychological phenomenon whereby people come to perceive themselves as physical objects due to their internalization of how others perceive their bodies (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Consequently, due to the experience of being objectified by others, individuals start to place great emphasis on their physical appearances in order to appeal to others (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). This was shown to lead to a myriad of adverse consequences such as depression, anxiety, thinness drive, sexual dysfunction, stronger endorsement of cosmetic surgery, various types of eating disorder as well as decreased sense of self-worth (Calogero, Pina, Park, & Rahemtulla, 2010; Choma, Pozzebon, Visser & Bogaert, 2010; Tiggemann and Williams, 2012; Tiggemann, 2013; Jones & Griffiths, 2015). More specifically, these negative effects were also found to result from the afore-mentioned self-objectification, which is synonymous with appearance anxiety (Moradi & Huang, 2008). Appearance anxiety is defined as focusing on when and how one's body and appearance will be judged (Choma et al., 2010). Although self-objectification theory was originally described in relation to women, there is evidence indicating that self-objectification processes and outcomes also apply to men (Oehlhof, Musher-Eizenman, Neufeld, & Hauser, 2009). In fact, male body image concerns quite prevalent (Michaels, Parent, & Moradi, 2013; Parent & Moradi,

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2011; Schwartz, Grammas, Sutherland, Siffert, & Bush-King, 2010), and the emerging literature on self-objectification in men also shows that men experience similar consequences as women, due to self-objectification. However, according to the literature, men tend to report less self-objectification compared to women (Moradi and Huang, 2008; Choma et al., 2010; Rollero & Picolli, 2017).

Given that self-objectification was reported to pose a variety of detrimental psychological consequences that are similar in both females and males, and given self-objectification's high prevalence (Holland, Koval, Stratemeyer, Thomson, & Haslam, 2016), it becomes imperative to identify the factors which play a role in accentuating self-objectification. Primarily, according to objectification theory (Frederickson and Roberts 1997), it is considered a socialized internalization of an observer's perspective of one's body. With the cultural context being considered a variable that predicts behavior (Gibson, Thompson & O'Sullivan, 2016); it follows that societal and cultural variables could play a role in predicting self-objectification in men and women. Masculinity and femininity are two socially acquired constructs that are embedded in one's culture and are rooted in one's social gender (Burke & Stets, 2015). While masculinity refers to the degree to which individuals see themselves as masculine and incorporating the gender roles that are applicable to males, femininity refers to the degree to which individuals see themselves as feminine and incorporating the gender roles applicable to females (Burke & Stets, 2015). These two constructs undergo internalization and influence the individual's self-concept and how he/she will approach interpersonal relationships (Alvaro et al., 2012). Because self-objectification's central importance lies on the internalization of gendered socialized experiences (Frederickson and Roberts 1997), masculinity and femininity constructs become relevant to understanding self-

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objectification (Choma et al., 2010) especially that both males and females express both masculinity and femininity (Burke & Stets, 2015) but the level of reported femininity and masculinity can differ in both of them (Ghaed and Gallo, 2006).

It is also important to note that individuals can express both masculinity and femininity. Instead of conceptualizing masculinity and femininity as opposite ends of a continuum where masculinity on one end precludes one from being feminine on the other end, it can be said that masculinity and femininity are separate dimensions that can be combined. Therefore, people can be masculine or feminine simultaneously (Burke & Stets, 2015; Borgatta & Montgomery, 2000; Spence, 1984).

In fact, prior research has shown that masculinity and femininity are sociocultural predictors of self-objectification (Choma et al., 2010; McKay, 2014; Loughnan et al., 2015). Hence, given the impact of the cultural milieu on self-objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), particularly appearance anxiety (Moaradi, Huarq, 2008), the present study aimed to investigate the role of masculinity and femininity in relation to appearance anxiety.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how gender role identity: masculinity and femininity will be correlated with self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety among Lebanese participants as well as to compare the level of appearance anxiety between males and females.

### **Rationale**

The factors that were reported in the literature as predictors of self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety, masculinity and femininity have only been minimally addressed to date. Based on the literature review, it was evident that the majority of the studies on self-objectification and its predictors are conducted in the West (Choma et al., 2010; McKay, 2014; Rollero & Piccoli, 2017) with only a dearth of studies conducted elsewhere. Lebanon is one such country where little empirical research has investigated self-objectification and its determinants. Hence, this study provided a different contextual setting (Lebanon) for the investigation of cultural predictors of self-objectification.

Lebanon, according to Hofstede, is a society high on masculinity with a score of 65/100 (based on Geert Hofstede scale available online). A country higher on masculinity will allow for a higher endorsement of masculinity in its society (Burke & Stets, 2015). According to Hamieh and Usta (2011), men in Lebanon tend to be high on masculinity maintaining the role of authority figures and decision makers characterized by dominance and control while women tend to exhibit more of the feminine characteristics as they are expected to be good housewives, obedient, and devoted to the family. With prior research indicating that masculinity is associated with less self-objectification and femininity is associated with higher self-objectification, the present study helped in understanding whether masculinity and femininity as experienced in Lebanon will be correlated with self-objectification specifically appearance anxiety.

Also, the literature includes a notable gap with respect to the gender effect on self-objectification. Objectification Theory is primarily a feminist theory which was originally constructed to explain the socio - cultural pressures that affect women deferentially (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Lindner, 2014). Hence, the majority of the

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studies on self-objectification are done on females. However, given the increase in the evidence with self-objectification processes and outcomes being also applicable to men (Oehlhof, Musher-Eizenman, Neufeld, & Hauser, 2009; Wiseman & Moradi, 2010; Michaels, Parent, & Moradi, 2012), studies on self-objectification began to focus on men as well (Strelan & Hargreaves, 2005; Lindner, 2014; Michaels, Parent, & Moradi, 2012; Parent & Moradi, 2011). However, no studies were conducted in Lebanon or the Arab world that investigated self-objectification in a men population.

### **Research Questions**

Since there is an impact of cultural factors of masculinity and femininity on self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety, the aim of the present study was to answer the following questions:

Is gender role identity, (masculinity/femininity) correlated with appearance anxiety in Lebanon?

Do males possess less self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety compared to females in Lebanon?

### **Significance of the Study**

This paper contributed to the theoretical understanding of the objectification theory, which underlies the notion that the different levels of endorsement of the socio-cultural variables influence self-objectification and appearance anxiety. It provided more information about each variable and explained the relationship between them. It also added to the existing literature regarding gender (masculinity and femininity) in regards to self-objectification theory and appearance anxiety.

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As a clinical implication, the following study helps mental health providers particularly in encouraging their sensitivity to cultural conflicts arising from social internalizations related not only to the bodily characterization of the individual, but also the acceptance of the individual as whole in the face of the cultural pressures.

### **Overview of Methodology**

The study was an empirical quantitative survey design that employed a convenient sample of 152 Lebanese students from Haigazian University, for data collection. A simple demographics questionnaire, Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) and Appearance Anxiety Scale (AAS), were used. The data of the study was analyzed using a number of statistical methods. Primarily, correlational analyses were used to test the correlation between each of masculinity and femininity with appearance anxiety with an emphasis on investigating this correlation between males and females separately. Independent sample t-tests as well as a series of ANOVA analyses were conducted to investigate the differences of appearance anxiety levels among the demographic factors.

It is vital to note that this specified sample of university students was chosen because transition of students from a school to university causes psychological, academic, and social shock. In this process, the subjects of body image and perceptions of body shape and size become central to them (Dhurup & Nolan, 2014). This is why university students form the needed sample where appearance anxiety can be explored.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter talks about self-objectification in relation to cultural influences concerning masculinity and femininity, how men and women acquire appearance anxiety and how the culture itself promotes and encourages self-objectification.

This chapter also presents theoretical information and previous empirical research with regard to self-objectification in men and women.

It also talks about the Lebanese culture and how it impacts women's and men's self-objectification. Also, this chapter attempts to explain how women and men feel objectified and how that affects their appearance anxiety with an emphasis on how levels of femininity and masculinity in men and women influence their respective levels of self-objectification and appearance anxiety.

Gender paradigm is also explained in this chapter by comparing traditional view of masculine men versus the contemporary views of muscular men and self-objectification. Lastly theoretical and empirical information in this chapter explain the differences existing among men and women in the objectification theory.

#### **Self-Objectification in relation to Culture (Masculinity – Femininity)**

The literature has documented the impact of cultural factors such as masculinity and femininity on male and female self-objectification (Choma et al., 2010; McKay, 2014; Loughnan et al., 2015). Primarily, masculinity and femininity are two socially maintained constructs that are part of one's culture and are rooted in one's social gender (Burke & Stets, 2015). When these two constructs are internalized from the culture, they tend to influence one's self-concept and how one will approach interpersonal

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relationships (Alvaro et al., 2012). Masculinity is described as the degree to which individuals see themselves as masculine and incorporate the gender roles that are applicable to males, while femininity refers to the degree to which individuals see themselves as feminine and incorporate the gender roles applicable to females (Burke & Stets, 2015). Given that the conformity to the sociocultural ideals of beauty standards and the socialized internalization of an observer's perspective is more typical of those with stereotypical female characteristics, this shows that endorsed feminine characteristics by an individual cause one to become vulnerable to self-objectification and are most likely to be influenced by its negative effects (Rollero & Picolli, 2017). For example, women who endorse a traditional role and adopt feminine personality traits tend to have more negative attitudes towards their bodies, unlike women with more male traits (Franzoi, 1995).

With regard to masculinity sociocultural factor and self-objectification, individuals (males or females) high on masculinity are less vulnerable to self-objectification and the experience of the associated negative consequences, because these individuals are less willing to conform to the cultural standards (Hamieh & Usta, 2011) and are more likely to resist socialization pressures (Choma et al., 2010). Especially that individuals who are high on masculinity possess traits such as independence and self-confidence (Spence et al. 1973), and heightened self-confidence allows them to engage less in anxiety appearance as they feel more physically assured (Davids, 2012; Choma et al., 2010). Having said that, it can be hypothesized how gender role identity (femininity-masculinity) i.e. factors of cultural context lead one to experience appearance anxiety in males and females.

**Self-objectification in Women.** With beauty playing a key role in both men and women's considerations (Langlois et al., 2000), traditionally more women than men are socialized with the importance of "working on" their appearance (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997; Liss et al., 2011; Tartaglia and Rollero, 2015). Women routinely receive gender-specific cultural messages which focus on woman's physique as a central aspect of their personhood (Oswald & Lindstedt, 2006), and more specifically, they continue to receive reward from fitting into societal beauty standards (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997; Liss et al., 2011; Tartaglia and Rollero, 2015). As the woman feels forced to constantly evaluate her body, there becomes a higher risk for her to fall victim to the internalization of negative, objectifying messages; as a result of that, women who see their body shape as deviating from cultural expectations will start to experience strong internal distress which leads to body negativity and objectification (Adams, Behrens, Gann, & Schoen, 2017). According to the objectification theory, it is the cultural milieu that encourages girls and women to adopt an objectified perspective on their bodies as they are largely exposed to internalized gender-specific messages about women and their bodies, so that eventually they come to view and "treat themselves as objects to be looked at and evaluated" (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Adams et al. 2017).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that females who strongly endorse feminine gender roles are also probable to report experiencing less appearance anxiety. It is speculated that women who strongly subscribe to cultural expectations might work towards the ideal. As such, it is possible that they also perceive themselves as being closer to the ideal—not necessarily in body shape and size, but in dress and use of cosmetics, for example. If so, femininity in this case might have a protective effect, at least, in relation to experiencing anxiety about one's body (Choma et al., 2010).

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It is true that Lebanon is a patriarchal society and gender inequality exists in Lebanon where power is found to be in the hands of men; which allows men to be the dominant decision-makers and authority figures in comparison to women (Hamieh & Usta, 2011). Such characteristics of men may lead to the subjugation of women (Zuhur, 2002) and in a tendency for their perception as property of men. However, Lebanese culture also raises girls in a very feminine way and women nowadays are constantly rewarded for looking feminine as they really look closer to the ideal feminine figure that is all about curves and attractiveness. Since childhood Lebanese girl's ego is enriched with the fact that they look like a beautiful doll and they are raised with the family's repetitive encouragement and admiration to finally become one. So it is as if women derive their confidence from their looks and feminine characteristics. More specifically, popularity and normalization of cosmetic surgery within Lebanese society (Mallat, 2011; Tabeek, 2015) and the exceptional growth in the consumption of beauty related products and services is excessively common in Lebanon (LFA Retail Activity Indicator, 2015); also aids Lebanese women in reaching the beauty ideals that are accentuated by the Lebanese culture. Therefore, as they perceive themselves to being closer to the ideal, they will experience less appearance anxiety (Choma et al., 2010). In fact, it was shown that those women who conform to cultural standards of beauty in Lebanon are bestowed with numerous important benefits among which social acceptance and benefiting from societal mating preferences are strongly salient (Ogle & Damhorst, 2005). Having said that, it is hypothesized that Lebanese women will report lower levels of self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety due to the cultural milieu.

**Self-objectification in men.** Although self-objectification theory was originally described in relation to women (Davids, 2012; Rollero & Picolli, 2017), this theory is also applicable to men (Oehlhof et al., 2009). As women are influenced by the exposure to sexually objectified media, so are men. Current research has documented the rise of male body-image dissatisfaction (Schwartz, Grammas, Sutherland, Siffert, & Bush-King, 2010). More specifically, there is an increased tendency in westernized media representations to focus on men's bodies and the muscular ideal (Pope et al., 2000; Thompson & Cafri, 2007; Lanzieri & Cook 2013; Daniel et al., 2014). This muscular ideal body shape: wide shoulders, a larger upper body, and a flat abdomen (Leit et al., 2001). Nevertheless, this standard of beauty is not attainable for most men and some go through various means to achieve it like the use of anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs (Pope, Gruber, et al., 2000).

In fact, the social pressure to obtain muscular appearance (Cafri & Thompson, 2004) has increased men's body image concern (Johnson et al., 2007; Daniel et al., 2014); thus, playing a critical role in causing men to become victims of self-objectification (Daniel & Bridges, 2004). Having said that, we can hypothesize that the accentuated masculinity dimension in renders them to be vulnerable to self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety.

***Impact of Lebanese culture on women's Self-objectification.*** Given that Lebanon is a patriarchal society, high on masculinity with a score of 65/100 (Geert Hofstede scale), gender inequality is still rife in Lebanon where power is found to be mostly in the hands of men; thus, allowing men to assume the roles of dominant, decision-makers and authority figures in comparison to women (Hamieh & Usta, 2011).

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Such characteristics of men may lead to the subjugation of women (Zuhur, 2002) and in a tendency for their perception as property of men. Furthermore, the objectification theory pointed to the fact that women are rooted in gendered oppression that is imposed by men and patriarchal social structures (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Consequently, living in a patriarchal social system and being subordinated to men who are the primary authority and central figures in social organizations makes the prevalent self-objectification of females seem normal (Pauls, 2008). However, as mentioned above, in the Lebanese culture the very men who objectify women also since childhood enrich their daughter's egos to look more and more like the ideal women and therefore raise them accordingly. Therefore, Lebanese women will show lower levels of self-objectification, appearance anxiety as they will feel that they look closer to the global ideal feminine figure (Choma et al., 2010). As a matter of fact, in such a Lebanese patriarchal society, as women conform to cultural standards of beauty, they become much more probable in experiencing numerous important benefits among which are the social acceptance and the societal mating preferences that they can acquire (Ogle & Damhorst, 2005).

***Impact of Lebanese culture on men's Self-objectification.*** In a country such as Lebanon, high on masculinity and patriarchy (based on Geert Hofstede scale available online; Hamieh & Usta, 2011), power is mainly given to men by which they are expected to assume the roles of dominant decision-makers and authority figures (Hamieh & Usta, 2011). By enjoying this power and benefiting from the patriarchal system, their masculinity becomes reinforced (Hamieh & Usta, 2011). Nevertheless, this enforcement of masculinity only allows them to be even more exposed to an increased pressure to conform to the traditional norms of masculinity (Parent & Moradi, 2011). In this case, the very power structures that are perpetuated by men's power pressure forces them to

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conform to masculinity standards (Wiseman & Moradi, 2010). This allows the internalization of cultural appearance standards to become applicable to men as well (Wiseman & Moradi, 2010).

Previous research showed that a rigid masculine gender role positively predicts male body dissatisfaction (Schwartz & Tylka, 2008). In particular, masculinity, mainly socialized masculine gender roles, was reported to be associated to male body-image concerns (McCreary, Saucier, & Courtenay, 2005). In fact, masculinity has been identified to be associated with a strong and muscular appearance, and in a patriarchal system male power is associated with physical muscular representation (Parent & Moradi, 2011). For this reason, masculinity-related cultural standards may create pressure for men to have a muscular body and may be linked to a number of body image concerns (Cafri & Thompson, 2004; Leit et al., 2001). Muscularity has been shown to be associated with power, and strength which are factors associated with male gender standards (Michaels et al., 2013). Having said this, Lebanese men will be vulnerable to self-objectification due to Lebanese cultural pressures.

**Self-objectification and femininity-masculinity in women.** Numerous studies in the literature have pointed to the association between masculinity-femininity and self-objectification in women. For example, a study conducted by Choma and colleagues (2010) pointed that highly feminine individuals possess characteristics such as being concerned with how others are doing and feeling, as well as kindness and helpfulness. So, it was hypothesized that, individuals who strongly subscribe to stereotypical feminine gender roles may be most vulnerable to self-objectification, and thus most susceptible to its negative effects. In contrast, people who strongly endorse stereotypical masculine

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gender roles possess traits such as independence and self-confidence. Such individuals may be relatively less vulnerable to self-objectification and the associated negative outcomes, because the socialization pressures to view oneself as an object to be used by others should be lower. Nevertheless, the result of this study highlighted the negative relationship obtained between femininity and appearance anxiety given that when females feel closer to the ideal, would be no room for appearance anxiety to be experienced (Choma et al., 2010). This finding is in accordance to how femininity and beauty are interacted in the Lebanese culture whereby women are particularly raised to be very feminine and are constantly rewarded for looking feminine i.e. look closer to the ideal feminine figure that is all about curves and attractiveness. With Lebanese girl's ego being enriched with the fact that they look like a beautiful doll, women derive their confidence from their looks and feminine characteristics.

Hence, it would be hypothesized that women who endorse high levels of femininity are less likely to report self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety. In the same vein, women who also endorse high levels of masculinity will also be more likely to report lower levels of self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety given that such women will and are more likely to resist socialization pressures (Choma et al., 2010). These women are also more likely to possess traits such as independence and self-confidence (Spence et al. 1973), and heightened self-confidence allows them to engage less in anxiety appearance as they feel more physically assured (Davids, 2012; Choma et al., 2010).

**Self-objectification and masculinity in men.** The literature has provided mixed results with regard to the relationship between masculinity and self-objectification in men. Primarily, in a study carried out by Schwartz and Tylka (2008), it was revealed that

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high entitlement levels resulted in higher levels of body esteem in a sample of men. Since masculinity and entitlement are related (Hill & Fischer, 2001), this indicated that masculinity is related to higher body esteem and the negative relationship between self-objectification and higher masculinity levels.

Exploring this interaction suggests that men with low success/power/competition and a high level of self-assertive entitlement reported the highest levels of body esteem. Conversely, men with low levels of success/power/competition and low levels of self-assertive entitlement reported the lowest levels of body esteem (Schwartz & Tylka, 2008).

Another study also revealed that men who affirmed their masculinity were more likely to report lower appearance anxiety compared to men with less masculinity traits (Hunt, Gonsalkorale & Murray, 2013).

However, the literature has also shown that masculinity can be positively related to body dissatisfaction, this can be explained to result from what is known as “gender role conflict paradigm”. (O’Neil, Good, & Holmes, 1995) which might cause the relationship between masculinity and self-objectification in men to take a different direction.

Gender role conflict is explained to result when a man feels that there is a difference between his perceived and ideal self in his specified cultural context. Accordingly, this causes him to be exposed to pressures to conform to traditional masculine norms, which on the long run will lead to his experience of negative outcomes in cognition, emotion, and behavior. This increased pressure to conform to these traditional norms of masculinity then leads men to reduce their worth to their physical appearance especially that muscularity was explained to be an extension of masculinity (Parent and Moradi 2011). In fact, this hyper-expression of masculinity through their

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drive of muscularity development is intended to mask their perceived gender-related inadequacies i.e. their experience of gender role conflict (O'Neil 1981). For this purpose, the endorsement of rigid traditional masculine roles in a cultural context like Lebanon leads to the enforcement of men to acquire an unrealistically muscular body in order to be regarded as masculine (Leit et al., 2001). In fact, it is important to note that body image is an integral part of a male identity specifically when men feel pressured to adhere to rigid masculine norms (Shwartz et al., 2010). Consequently, those men who internalize these cultural messages and perceive accordingly that their body appearance is incompatible with the muscular ideal may experience low body esteem (Schwartz & Tylka, 2008).

Moreover, previous studies found in the literature have addressed the influence of internalization of cultural standards of appearance, on the relationship between masculinity and self-objectification in men. For instance, in a study conducted by Davids, Watson and Gere (2018), it was revealed that men who had an increased conformity to masculine norms were also more susceptible to the internalization of cultural standards of appearance, which increased the likelihood of self-objectification. Endorsement of male-specific gender roles among the men predicted muscle drive, and a significant correlation emerged between masculinity and body image concern in a study conducted by McCreary, Saucier, and Courtenay (2005). Similarly, the study conducted by Martin and Govender (2011) revealed that men with greater dissatisfaction with their level of muscularity endorsed more traditional masculine gender roles or attitudes.

Consequently, as previously stated, given that Lebanon is high on masculinity and patriarchy (Hamieh & Usta, 2011), and given that men in this case are susceptible to pressure to conform to masculine gender norms and might experience accordingly gender role conflict (Parent & Moradi, 2011), Lebanese men who score high on masculinity are

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more likely to report self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety rather than lower levels of appearance anxiety.

**Femininity and self-objectification in men.** With regard to femininity and self-objectification, the literature has shown that men who endorse high levels of femininity are more likely to report self-objectification. For example, a study conducted by Choma and colleagues (2010) revealed that men who endorsed more feminine characteristics were more likely to report greater body shame, a subset of appearance anxiety. The results also indicated that less masculinity was correlated with greater appearance anxiety and self-surveillance among men. Hence, it was hypothesized in this study that men who score higher on femininity will also be more likely to report self-objectification like appearance anxiety.

**Self-objectification in Men versus Women.** As stated previously, men report less self-objectification compared to women (Moradi and Huang, 2008; Choma et al., 2010; Rollero & Picolli, 2017). More specifically, women are also found to report appearance anxiety compared to males (Zheng & Sun, 2017). Hence, it was hypothesized in the study, that men will report lower levels of self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety compared to women. According to the literature, the high appearance anxiety experienced by women compared to men results from women's exposure to the increased sexualization with this exposure being consistently reported across different societies (Moradi & Huang, 2008; Zheng & Sun, 2017).

### **Hypotheses**

Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses were investigated:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** There is a negative relationship between femininity and self-objectification (i.e. anxiety appearance) in Lebanese women.

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** There is a negative relationship between masculinity and self-objectification (i.e. anxiety appearance) in Lebanese women.

**Hypothesis 3 (H3):** There is a positive relationship between masculinity and self-objectification (i.e., anxiety appearance) in Lebanese men.

**Hypothesis 4 (H4):** There is a positive relationship between femininity and self-objectification (i.e. anxiety appearance) in Lebanese men.

**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Men will show lower levels of self - objectification (appearance anxiety) compared to Lebanese women

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Methodology**

This chapter explains the details of the research method used comprising the sample size, the ethical considerations, materials and the scales used, and the procedure followed. Finally, the small pilot study that was done before the main research and its importance will be presented.

#### **Sample Size**

Sample size was calculated using Andy Field's calculation (Field, 2014) based on the quantitative survey design of the study. Since the number of predictors in the study is two, expecting a small effect size would yield a sample size of 476. However, due to time constraints, the number was considered too high to achieve, and assuming a medium effect size, the sample size would become 85 which the number was considered somewhat small. To balance between the time availability and adequate number of participants, the target sample size was set to 150

#### **Participants**

A total of 152 participants were recruited for this study using snowball and convenient sampling. The sample consisted of 60 males (39.5%) and 92 females (60.5%) with the majority's age ranging between 18 and 20 years (N=74.3%).

Most of the participants were Lebanese (N=129, 84.9%) and they were all students from Haigazian University.

#### **Ethical considerations**

Before the data collection phase, the researcher applied for IRB clearance from the Ethics Committee at Haigazian University and was granted approval to proceed. Participation in the present research was voluntary. Participants were informed about

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their right to withdraw from the study whenever they wanted. They were also assured that all information obtained from them was to remain private, confidential and anonymous and that the researcher was the only person allowed to access the data. The administrator of the questionnaire was available for any questions related to the non-clarity of the scales and items. All this information was presented to the participants face to face as form of consent.

**Materials**

The materials comprised a participant information letter, purpose of the research project and rights and benefits of the study, (Check Appendix A). A letter of a consent form (Check Appendix B), a demographics questionnaire and four scales questionnaires in English. The demographics questionnaire consisted of questions like: gender, age, occupation, nationality, education level, and relationship status. (Check Appendix C).

The survey part consisted of four scales: Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) (1987), the Appearance Anxiety Scale (AAS) (Dion, Dion, & Keelan, 1990), the Body surveillance subscale of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBC) (McKinley & Hyde, 1996) and the Body Shame subscale of Objectified Body Consciousness (OBC-Shame) (McKinley & Hyde, 1996).

The scales were administered in the English language. However, the two questionnaires of body shame and body surveillance were eliminated from this study because of their considerably low reliabilities ( $\alpha=.136$  and  $\alpha=.275$ , respectively). To examine the low reliability, an additional pilot study was done on 25 people followed by a cognitive interview, an interview done after students filling the questionnaires which comprised of questions asked to them, to check the comprehension level of the participants and/or the difficulty level of the questions, however all 25 students reported

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no difficulties in comprehending or completing the questionnaires. Eventually, it was decided to drop the two questionnaires and proceed with the appearance anxiety scale together with the personal attribute's questionnaire, noting the fact that the appearance anxiety scale already has questions about body shame and body surveillance.

**Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) (1978).** To measure masculinity and femininity, the Personal Attribute Questionnaire (Spence & Helmreich, 1978) was used. It is a self-report scale that assesses masculinity and femininity in terms of the respondents' self-perceived possession of various traits that are stereotypically believed to differentiate between males and females, but are considered socially desirable in both sexes (Robinson, Shaver & Wrightsman, 1991). The PAQ originally consisted of 24-items divided into three 8-item subscales: instrumental (masculinity), expressive (femininity) and instrumental-expressive (masculinity-femininity), which is in fact rarely used (Robinson, Shaver & Wrightsman, 1991). Respondents describe themselves by choosing between two contradictory characteristics (e.g., between “very rough” and “very gentle”) using a five-point scale whereby A = 0, B = 1, C = 2, D = 3 and E = 4. Hence, the focus was on 16 items; eight for masculinity (instrumentality) and eight for femininity (expressivity). An example of an item for masculinity: “not at all competitive” or “very competitive” and femininity “not at all emotional” or “very emotional”. To score the PAQ, each subscale responses are summed up with higher total scores reflecting endorsement of the given gender role.

The PAQ is known to have adequate internal consistency; for example, based on a sample of 477 undergraduate participants, the results revealed satisfactory reliability for the PAQ with  $\alpha = .76$  and  $\alpha = .81$  for masculinity and femininity respectively (Brase,

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Adair and Monk; 2014). In another study by Amidona (2007) internal consistency was found to be adequate with  $\alpha = .76$  (masculinity) and  $\alpha = .79$  (femininity). PAQ scale is also considered to have satisfactory validity (Robinson, Shaver & Wrightsman, 1991). (Check Appendix D).

**Appearance Anxiety Scale (AAS) (1990).** The Appearance Anxiety Scale (AAS; Dion, Dion, & Keelan, 1990) consisted of 30 items reflecting apprehension or anxiety about one's physical appearance and the extent to which it will be evaluated by others. The items are rated on a 5-point likert type rating scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always). The scoring procedure included the calculation of a mean score with higher scores reflecting greater appearance anxiety. Example of sample items: (1) I feel nervous about aspects of my physical appearance and (2) I worry about how others are evaluating how I look. A very high internal consistency (.91) was reported for AAS in college-age females (Tiggeman & Slater, 2001). Similarly, high internal consistency was also reported for AAS (.94 for women and .92 for men) (Lindner, 2014). In previous studies, scores on the AAS were positively correlated with scores on measures of social anxiety, self-esteem, and shyness in undergraduate men and women (Dion et al., 1990); demonstrating a good validity for the scale. (Check Appendix E).

**Procedure**

An official permission was granted by the university's ethics committee and Haigazian students, were approached on campus individually and were debriefed about the topic, procedure and significance of the study. They were then given some time to decide whether they wanted to participate or not. Those who accepted were handed the consent form first and then the questionnaire booklet. The surveys were administered in a

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paper and pencil format. Two assistants were entitled to help with the collection of data procedure. The assistants were psychology students and were familiar with the survey method of administering questionnaires.

The design of the study was a survey design. Participants were sampled through a non-probability sampling method, and people were individually approached on campus, also they were approached by groups in classes, thus constituting a convenient sampling. An additional pilot study was done on 25 people followed by a cognitive interview by the assistants, to check the comprehension level of the participants but they reported no difficulties in comprehending or completing the questionnaires. Finally, it was decided to drop two of the questionnaires (the Body surveillance subscale of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBC) and the Body Shame subscale of Objectified Body Consciousness (OBC-Shame) and proceed only with the appearance anxiety scale together with the personal attribute's questionnaire. This was done because of the low reliability of the two questionnaires.

## Chapter 4

### Results

This chapter presents the obtained results. First, the chapter starts with presenting the descriptive sample characteristics of the participants followed by reliability analyses of the instruments used in the research. Next, the statistical analysis used to test for the hypothesised relationships will follow.

Table 1

*Individual demographic characteristics as a percentage of the sample (N =152)*

Characteristics	N (percentage)
Sex	
Male	60 (39.5%)
Female	92 (60.5%)
Age	
Range (17-20)	20 (76.1%)
Range (21-23)	(21%)
Range (25-31)	(2.1%)
Majority (18-20)	113 (74.3%)
Nationality	
Lebanese	129 (84.9%)
Syrian	15 (9.9%)
Australian, Russian, Brazilian, Venezuelan, Canadian,	6 (4.1%)

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## University Student

Yes	152 (100%)
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## Education Level

One or more years of university	81(53.3%)
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High school graduate	30 (19.7%)
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Some uni for less than one year	18 (11.8%)
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Bachelor Degree	16 (10.5%)
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Master's Degree/12 <sup>th</sup> grade	(2.6%)
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## Religion

Muslims	86 (56.6%)
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Christians	55 (36.3%)
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## Relationship Status

Single	133 (87.5%)
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In an open relationship	13 (8.6%)
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Engaged/Married	3 (2%)
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**Reliability Analysis.** Internal consistency for the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) and Appearance Anxiety Scale (AAS), were assessed through Cronbach's alpha (see Table 1). Reliability of the femininity subscale of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) was moderate ( $\alpha=.74$ ). Reliability of the masculinity subscale of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) was very low ( $\alpha=.51$ ). However, given that by deleting the item "can make decisions easily versus difficulty in making

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decisions” Cronbach alpha of the scale ( $\alpha$ ) increased to .68, consequently this item was deleted. The reliability of appearance anxiety scale was very low ( $\alpha=.36$ ). However, by deleting the items 8, 11, 12, 15, 20 and 22, the reliability increased to  $\alpha=.66$ ; revealing an acceptable moderate reliability.

Table 1

*Reliability coefficients of the Scales ( $\alpha$ )*

Scales	Present Study	Previous studies
Femininity Subscale	.74	.81
Masculinity Subscale	.68	.76
Appearance Anxiety scale	.66	.91

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**Main Analysis**

The following hypotheses were tested:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** There is a negative relationship between femininity and self-objectification (i.e. anxiety appearance) in Lebanese women.

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** There is a negative relationship between masculinity and self-objectification (i.e. anxiety appearance) in Lebanese women.

**Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Masculinity is positively correlated to self-objectification (i.e., anxiety appearance) in Lebanese men.

**Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Femininity is positively correlated to self-objectification (i.e. anxiety appearance) in Lebanese men.

**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Men will show lower levels of self – objectification (appearance anxiety) compared to Lebanese women

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**Hypothesis Testing.** Pearson Correlation “r” analyses were conducted to test for the hypotheses formulated for the study. Primarily, correlational analyses were conducted between each of the variables/scales i.e. masculinity, femininity and appearance anxiety among females and males. No significant correlation was obtained between femininity and appearance anxiety among females and males respectively ( $r = .12, p = .226$ ;  $r = -.05, p = .706$ ) (See Table 2). **Hypothesis (1)** nor **Hypothesis (4)** were not supported.

With regard to the correlation between masculinity and appearance anxiety among females, a significant positive correlation was obtained ( $r = .50, p = .000$ ) indicating that females who more strongly endorsed masculinity would feel more anxious towards their appearance (see Table 2). This finding was significant but in the opposite direction of what was predicted Hypothesis 4.

Significant positive correlation was obtained between masculinity and appearance anxiety in males ( $r = .297, p = .021$ ) indicating that males who more strongly endorse masculinity tend to feel more anxious towards their appearance; this result supported **Hypothesis (3)** (see table 2).

Table 2

*Correlation matrix for the correlation coefficients between each of masculinity and femininity with appearance anxiety in males and females*

	Femininity	Masculinity
Females		
Appearance Anxiety	.12	.50
	$p = .226$	$p = .000$

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Males		
Appearance Anxiety	-0.05	.29
	$p = .706$	$p = .042$

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**Independent sample t-test.** Independent sample t-test was conducted to test for the mean difference between females and males on appearance anxiety. No significant differences were found ( $t(150) = .160, p = .873$ ); thus, **Hypothesis (5)** was not supported.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how gender role identity: masculinity and femininity correlated with appearance anxiety among Lebanese participants as well as to compare the level of appearance anxiety between males and females specifically among university students in Lebanon.

Primarily, our results showed a positive significant correlation between levels of masculinity and appearance anxiety in females, rejecting hypothesis 2 which stated a negative correlation instead. An explanation may be suggested here that the reason behind masculinity positively correlating with appearance anxiety among females can be attributed to the Lebanese cultural expectations and pressures governing females to strive for the ideal femininity in body shape, appearance and character. So, females who endorse low feminine gender roles and high masculine gender norms feel like they are deviating from this ideal body the culture expects them to have, thus causing them to experience high levels of appearance anxiety (Choma et al., 2010).

Of this finding, a study conducted on a sample of female athletes whereby the results yielded a positive relationship between appearance anxiety and masculine gender role (Bastug et al., 2019). The positive correlation between masculinity and appearance anxiety in women could be explained mainly in the athletic domain. An explanation in literature focused on the fact that women who are into sports are afraid to look masculine and hence have a fear of masculinization especially that they considered their muscular body to be a barrier to being perceived as feminine (Krane et. al, 2004, Evans, 2006). More specifically, it has been concluded that the characteristics of athleticism are

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culturally hinted as masculine which contradicts femininity (Evans, 2006). For female students, it is seen that they are not accepted as normal when they prefer to participate in football and basketball, which are sports that are more appropriate for men, rather than gymnastics and volleyball which are more feminine sports (Koca and Demirhan, 2005). Women athletes other than gender norms are exposed to labeling and negative judgment of the society such as "masculine" or "lesbian" "(Koca, 2005; Kleindienst-Cachay and Heckemeyer, 2008).

As predicted, the results of the present study yielded a positive association between masculinity and appearance anxiety; hence, supporting hypothesis 3. Lebanese culture expects and pressures Lebanese men to be the macho men. Whether it's taking all the decisions at home or oppressing the wife and kids or even having all the power at hand, Lebanese men are expected to be manly in every way. On the other hand, the muscular shape is becoming a trend day by day and men now more than before are expected to be the decision makers and the powerful body builders as well. It is as if muscularity is a vital part of the masculine ideal and without it men are not completely masculine. This creates an insecurity in Lebanese men, especially men that have small figurine or who do not necessarily have that huge body. And especially men who internalize society's or culture's messages of this masculine/muscular ideal. This causes a conflict in men to strive to reach the "ideal" the culture expects them to look like. This, according to the literature is called the gender role paradigm. Hence the usage of steroids and the habit of attending the gym regularly and lifting weights.

The literature includes mixed results with regard to the relationship between masculinity and self-objectification in men, while some studies revealed that men who

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affirmed their masculinity were more likely to report lower appearance anxiety compared to men with less masculinity traits (Schwartz & Tylka, 2008; Hunt, Gonsalkorale & Murray, 2013), other studies showed the opposite, just like our study. For instance, in a study conducted by Davids, Watson & Gere (2018), it was revealed that men who had an increased conformity to masculine norms reported increased likelihood of self-objectification including body surveillance and body shame. In the same vein, endorsement of male-specific gender roles (i.e., male sex-specific behaviors, male-type behaviors, and unmitigated agency) among the men predicted muscle drive, and a significant correlation emerged between masculinity and body image concern (McCreary, Saucier, and Courtenay, 2005). A study conducted by Martin and Govender (2011) revealed that men with greater dissatisfaction with their level of muscularity endorsed more traditional masculine gender roles or attitudes.

Similar to the effects of the exposure to sexually objectified media on men, the growing tendency to focus on men's bodies and the escalation of the muscular ideal through westernized media representations (Pope et al., 2000; Thompson & Cafri, 2007; Lanzieri & Cook 2013; Daniel et al., 2014) was asserted to lead to the experience of self-objectification in men (Daniel & Bridges, 2004). This explained the positive correlation between appearance anxiety and masculinity among men. More specifically, this increase in men's body image concern (Johnson et al., 2007; Daniel et al., 2014) is explained to be accentuated through the social pressure to obtain muscular appearance (Cafri & Thompson, 2004). As a matter of fact, masculinity is associated with a strong and muscular appearance. The patriarchal system, a system like Lebanon, relates male power to their physical muscular representation (Parent & Moradi, 2011), therefore, masculinity-related cultural standards may create pressure for men to have a muscular

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body and may be linked to a number of body image concerns (Cafri & Thompson, 2004; Leit et al., 2001). Muscularity has been shown to be associated with power, and strength which are factors associated with male gender standards (Michaels et al., 2013). This allows men to experience an increased pressure to conform to the traditional norms of masculinity (Parent & Moradi, 2011). This conformity then lets the internalization of cultural appearance standards become applicable to men as well (Wiseman & Moradi, 2010). Therefore, given that Lebanon is high on masculinity and patriarchy (Hamieh & Usta, 2011), and given that men in this case are susceptible to pressure to conform to masculine gender norms (Parent & Moradi, 2011), this explained the obtained finding with regard to the relationship between masculinity and appearance anxiety in our study; i.e. men might experience negative body perception as they attempt to meet gender role ideals of muscularity associated with a masculine and patriarchal structures (Olivardia, 2001; Parent & Moradi, 2011; Michaels et al., 2013).

Nevertheless, the results revealed no significant correlations between femininity and appearance anxiety in females as well as in males, hence, hypotheses (1) and hypothesis (4) were not supported.

In light with hypothesis (1) which was not supported due to the obtainance of the non-significant result between femininity and appearance anxiety, it can be speculated that perhaps because all participants are university students, female individuals might be experiencing beauty threats or engage in constant comparison beauty evaluations with other peers especially that it has been asserted that anxiety and body image dissatisfaction is highly prevalent among university students (Medina-Gomez et al., 2017).

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In light of hypothesis (4) being not supported due to the obtainance of non-significant results between femininity and appearance anxiety in men, it can be concluded that it is because feminine males although maybe rejected from the culture, but feel a sense of belongingness with similar feminine males, hence it works as a protective factor. In a study done on males, females and effeminate males the following results were obtained (Noor, Rahman, Farooqui, Nasr & Noon, 2003). In this study it was expected that effeminate men will report higher levels of distress but contrary to prediction, results didn't show that which could be due to the fact that the truth was not reported. Another explanation was because they received a lot of support from each other on campus. These students normally stayed together because males or females didn't want to associate with them. In doing so, the togetherness provided a sense of belongingness and hence served as a protective factor. While it was expected they had a negative perception towards themselves when they were with the other males and females on campus, it wasn't so when they associated with their similar effeminate peers (Noor et al., 2003).

Finally, among our sample of 152 university students, our study revealed that there was no significant difference in appearance anxiety between males and females, which completely refuted Hypothesis (5) which stated that men will show lower levels of self-objectification (appearance anxiety) compared to women.

The non-significant interaction between gender and appearance anxiety suggests that self-objectification is applicable to men as much as it is applicable to women; especially that an increase of self-objectification for men was also reported in research (Choma et al., 2010; Kozak, Frankenhauser, & Roberts, 2009; Michaels, Parent, & Moradi, 2012; Parent & Moradi, 2011; Wiseman & Moradi, 2010).

For instance, although objectification theory was originally proposed to explain the experiences of girls and women living in a culture characterized by pervasive sexual objectification of women, men, too, are increasingly being objectified in western media (Leit et al. 2001; Pope et al. 2001), with the idealized male image becoming more muscular and unattainable (Olivardia et al. 2004). Related evidence indicates that men are less satisfied with their bodies than they were in the past (e.g., Garner 1997). The percentage of men who experience body dissatisfaction has nearly tripled in less than 30 years (Kozak, Frankenhauser & Roberts, 2009). This seems to be related to the growing tendency to objectify men's bodies in Western societies, which increases body image concerns among men (Johnson et al., 2007; Daniel et al., 2014). In line with findings about women, men's self-objectification is also demonstrated to be correlated with lower self-esteem, negative mood, worse perceived health and disordered eating (Calogero, 2009; Rollero, 2013; Register et al., 2015; Rollero and De Piccoli, 2015). As such, it has come to be shown that self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety and its negative consequences are being equally experienced by both men and women; and thus, might lead to the non-significant results with regard to the differences in appearance anxiety between men and women in our study.

### **Conclusion**

The results of our study indicated that although western studies revealed that women report higher appearance anxiety levels compared to men, such result was not obtained in our Lebanese sample. No significant difference was found between both genders regarding appearance anxiety between males and females. The non-significant correlation could be due to the fact that specifically in the Lebanese culture, self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety is an equally problematic condition for both men

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and women, as women continue to be victims of sexualization and men victim of strictly masculine gender norms (Hamieh & Usta, 2011). The negative relationship between masculinity and appearance in anxiety in females and the positive relationship between masculinity and appearance anxiety in males was supported. However, a non-significance correlation between femininity and appearance anxiety in females and in males was obtained. It appears that the cultural context plays a vital role in how the relationship between masculinity-femininity and appearance anxiety is manifested in a specified cultural context like Lebanon.

### **Clinical Implications**

Knowing how gender role identity possesses a significant role in negatively impacting one's appearance anxiety and how individuals are strongly prone to internalize society's expectations of appearance, it becomes important for clinicians to take into consideration these unique sociocultural factors that affect men and women (Davids et al., 2018). In addition, it is significant to note that men with body image concerns may also be less likely to seek psychological help given the potential gender role conflict that they may be suffering from (Shepherd and Rickard 2012); thus, causing them to experience emotional restriction and an appearance of competence and health. For this purpose, clinicians are always encouraged to routinely ask about body image concerns among their male clients, even if it does not appear to be the presenting concern (Davids et al. 2018). Additionally, counseling psychologists, school counselors and other mental health professionals should, through prevention activities, engage in educating men and young adults about societal norms regarding masculinity and appearance. Connections should be drawn

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about the psychological risks (such as a drive for muscularity) that come from conformity to these norms, while also addressing the male dominance may be perpetuated at a broader level when men engage in behaviors associated with traditional masculinity (such as striving for a muscular appearance which is maintained through having a high drive for muscularity) (Pope et al., 2000).

On another note, therapists also need to work on empowerment and developing positive self-esteem among their patients who seem to report appearance anxiety and encourage a strong individuality (through CBT) not to conform or internalize the cultural or media's or false messages (Breines, Crocker and Garcia, 2008). For instance, it is also necessary for therapists to change and shift the magnified and overanalyzed opinions and beliefs about the idealized version of the perfectly shaped woman and the perfectly muscular man, that is, for most, unattainable or inadvisable to seek (Breines et al., 2008).

Given that it was reported that women who are into sports are afraid to look masculine and hence have a fear of masculinization especially that they consider their muscular body to be a barrier to being perceived as feminine (Krane et. al, 2004, Evans, 2006), therapists can also work on raising awareness about the female athlete profile according to the standards of sport experts. The goal would be to increase the proportion of women engaged in sports in the society, to support the girls who are new to the sports and not to create false opinions about the sportswomen (Gulsum Bastug; Taner Yilmaz; Erkan Bingol; Ilker Gunel (2019).

### **Limitations**

A number of limitations emerged in this study. Primarily, the study made use of instruments to assess variables in the Lebanese culture that were developed originally in the west. The scales were also not translated into Arabic and the exclusion of the Lebanese participants who lack the knowledge in speaking English took place; hence, this might have created a restriction of scores and threatened the internal validity especially that the study aimed to investigate the associations among the variables in the Lebanese cultural setting where Arabic is the official Language (Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). Also, the participants were recruited through a convenience method; this is a threat to external validity and might have affected the generalizability of the results since the participants' involvement in the study were not assigned randomly. Moreover, the generalizability of the results might have also been affected by the collection of data only from the Beirut region. Also, the Beirut region is considered to be mainly representative of a higher degree of westernization and urbanization in comparison to the Lebanon at large (Saleh, 2014; Dwairy et al., 2006a). Future research may want to examine the effect of other insidious cultural factors that may impact individuals based on gender in relation to self-objectification and appearance anxiety. Given the obtainance of non-significant result, future studies might investigate the variables of the study with larger sample sizes and use a community sample instead of using only a university sample.

For future studies, it is recommended, in the context of our variables to try to re-include the two questionnaire of body shame and body surveillance that were dropped from our studies for their low reliability scores. In conclusion, since femininity was not significant with both males and females, looking at the items of Personal Attributes

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Questionnaire, it can be concluded that the items of the scale were not really related to body image or appearance anxiety, so it would be very interesting to replace the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) with another questionnaire that has to do more with the characteristics of masculinity and femininity, in the context of our variables.

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## Appendix A

### Participant information letter

Dear Ms./Mr.

I am Kohar Balekdjian, a student at Haigazian University from the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. I am currently carrying out a research study titled “Masculinity and Femininity in relation to Appearance Anxiety across University Men and Women in Lebanon” advised by Dr. Hanine Hout.

You are being asked to take part in this study since I need your help to carry out my study and to be able to collect the necessary data to complete it.

Kindly read the below information to decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

#### **Purpose of the Research Project**

The purpose of this study is to evaluate whether gender role identity: masculinity and femininity will have a positive relationship with self-objectification i.e. appearance anxiety among Lebanese university participants as well as to compare the level of each of the self-objectification variables between males and females.

Theoretically, this paper will hopefully contribute to the objectification theory, which supports the idea that the different levels of endorsement of the socio-cultural variables influence self-objectification. It will also add to the existing literature regarding gender (masculinity and femininity) in regards to self-objectification theory and appearance anxiety.

According to the Institute for women's studies in the Arab World, body dissatisfaction and disordered eating may not simply be due to dissatisfaction with weight or appearance but could also be a maladaptive coping mechanism against the cultural pressures in the Arab world. Therefore, as a clinical implication, the following study will help mental health providers particularly in encouraging their sensitivity to cultural conflicts arising from social internalizations.

#### **What will I be asked to do?**

- If you choose to participate in this research study, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire. Your participation will involve completing 3 surveys that entails statements that you will have to rate based on agreement, and a demographic form for approximately 30 minutes.
- Participation in this project is voluntary. You are free to withdraw anytime without having to give any reason for your withdrawal.

**What are my rights?**

- Participation in this study is completely voluntary, anonymous and confidential. Your name or any other identifying information will not be asked. The information gathered will be accessed by professionals for the purpose of the study and for completion of the study.
- Data you provide along with data from all participants in the present research will be stored in aggregate in a password protected folder. The data will be analyzed and reported in aggregate. Only the principle investigators of this study will have access to the compiled data which will be stored for a period of 10 years post data. During this time, you have the right to inspect the data.
- You have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time for any reason. Your decision to refuse participation or withdraw will not involve any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Discontinuing participation in no way affects your relationship with Haigazian University.
- This research study has been reviewed and has received clearance from the Haigazian University ethics committee, advisor: Dr. Hanine Hour. If you have any further concerns about your rights as a research participant, please, do not hesitate to contact me, Kohar Balekdjian, mobile number: 03/481 457.

**What are the risks and benefits of participation?**

- Participation in this study does not involve any physical risk or emotional risk to you.
- You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research; however, your participation does help researchers better understand whether gender role identity: masculinity and femininity will be correlated with self-objectification.

**Contact information**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research you may contact:

Name: Kohar Balekdjian

Telephone: 03/481457

Email: kbalekdjian@hotmail.com

## Appendix B

## Participant consent

**Masculinity and Femininity in Relation to Appearance Anxiety across University Men and Women in Lebanon**

Please read the following statements and place a check mark in the boxes adjacent to them.

I have volunteered to participate in this research project conducted for purposes of study. My participation is voluntary and does not involve payment of any kind.
I agree to allow my son/daughter to participate in this research project conducted for purposes of study. My decision is voluntary and does not involve payment of any kind.
I know that I can choose to withdraw from participation any time without any penalties or consequences whatsoever. I also hold the right to decline to respond to any question(s) that I may feel uncomfortable with.
My participation may involve answering 2 questionnaires and a demographic questionnaire.
I have been assured that the researcher will maintain my identity securely confidential. I have been assured that the information I provide in this questionnaire will be used for the purpose of academic study only.
I have received the assurance that this research study has been duly reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Haigazian University.
I agree that the data gathered be kept in a secure location under the care of the study investigators for a period of 5 years as per the regulations of the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Haigazian University.
I have read, listened and fully understood the explanation given to me. All my questions have been satisfactorily answered.
I, therefore, choose to voluntarily participate in this research study.
I have received a copy of this consent form co-signed by the investigator.

Participant consent

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix C Demographics

Thank you for your interest in our study. Please read the below questions and select a response that suits you best.

1. **Gender:**  Male  Female
2. **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Are you a university student?**  Yes (if yes is selected skip to Q6)  No
4. **What is your occupation?** \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Nationality:** \_\_\_\_\_
6. **What is the highest education level you have achieved?**
  - No Schooling  1 or more years of university, no degree
  - Nursery school to 8<sup>th</sup> grade  Bachelor's degree (for example: BA, BS)
  - 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade  Master's degree (for example: MA, MEng, MBA)
  - 12<sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma  Professional degree (for example: MD)
  - High school graduate - high school diploma or the equivalent  Doctorate degree (for example: PhD)
  - Some university, but less than 1 year
7. **You are (If not a student skip this question):**
  - Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior  Masters student
8. **Are you in relationship?**  Yes  No  Divorced  Widowed
9. **Type of committed Relationship:**  married  engaged  dating
10. **Length of the relationship:**  6 months and less than one year  one year and less than three years  three years and less than five years  five years and less than 10 years  10 years and less than 20 years  20 years or more

## APPEARANCE ANXIETY IN LEBANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

## Appendix D

**Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) Directions:** The item below inquires about what kind of person you think you are. Each item consists of a pair of characteristics, with numbers from 1 to 5 in between. For example

Not at all artistic 1....2....3....4....5 very artistic

Each pair describes contradictory characteristics- that is, you cannot be both at the same time, such as very artistic and not at all artistic. The letters form a scale between the two extremes. You are to choose a letter which describes where YOU fall in the scale. For example, if you think that you have no artistic ability, you would choose 1. If you think that you are pretty good, you might choose 4. If you are only medium, you might choose 3, and so forth.

Not at all aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	Very aggressive
Not at all independent	1	2	3	4	5	Very independent
Not at all emotional	1	2	3	4	5	Very emotional
Very submissive	1	2	3	4	5	Very dominant
Not at all excitable in a major crisis	1	2	3	4	5	Very excitable in a major crisis
Very passive	1	2	3	4	5	Very active
Not at all able to devote self completely to others	1	2	3	4	5	Able to devote self completely to others
Very rough	1	2	3	4	5	Very gentle
Not at all helpful to others	1	2	3	4	5	Very helpful towards others
Not at all competitive	1	2	3	4	5	Very competitive
Very home orientated	1	2	3	4	5	Very Worldly
Not at all kind	1	2	3	4	5	Very kind
Indifferent to others approval	1	2	3	4	5	Highly needful of other's approval
Feelings not easily hurt	1	2	3	4	5	Feelings easily hurt
Not at all aware of feeling of others	1	2	3	4	5	Very aware of feelings of others
Can make decisions easily	1	2	3	4	5	Has difficulty making decisions
Gives up very easily	1	2	3	4	5	Never gives up easily
Never cries	1	2	3	4	5	Cries very easily
Not at all self-confident	1	2	3	4	5	Very self-confident
Feels very inferior	1	2	3	4	5	Feels very superior
Not at all understanding of others	1	2	3	4	5	Very understanding of others
Very cold in relations with others	1	2	3	4	5	Very warm in relations with others
Very little need of security	1	2	3	4	5	Very strong need of security
Goes to pieces under pressure	1	2	3	4	5	Stands up well under pressure

## Appendix E

**Appearance Anxiety Scale (AAS; Dion, Dion, & Keelan, 1990)**

1. I feel nervous about aspects of my physical appearance						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
2. Concern about my appearance has prompted me to diet.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
3. I enjoy looking myself in the mirror.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
4. I am self-conscious about the way i look.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
5. I am aware of my appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
6. I am unconcerned about how aging will affect my appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
7. I worry about how others are evaluating how i look.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
8. I am comfortable with my appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
9. I like how i look.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
10. I feel ill at ease if i do not have enough time to make myself look good in the morning.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	

## APPEARANCE ANXIETY IN LEBANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

11. I am unconcerned with how others feel about my appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
12. Because much of my physical appearance is beyond my control, i do not dwell on it.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
13. I get nervous when others comment on my appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
14. My appearance bothers me enough that i have thought about having cosmetic surgery.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
15. Negative remarks about how i look do not bother me.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
16. I feel helpless to change my appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
17. If i wear a hat on very cold days, i worry it might make me look less attractive.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
18. I worry about how I'll look as i grow older.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
19. I feel comfortable with my facial attractiveness.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
20. I am satisfied with my body weight.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
21. I would like to change the way i look.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	

## APPEARANCE ANXIETY IN LEBANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

22. I am satisfied with my body's build or shape.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
23. I would be uncomfortable without products to enhance my appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
24. I feel uncomfortable with certain aspects of my physical appearance.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
25. I feel ashamed of my physique or figure.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
26. I feel that most of my friends are more physically attractive than myself.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
27. I wish i was better looking.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
28. I am concerned or worried about my ability to attract members of the opposite sex.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
29. I am confident that others see me as physically appealing.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
30. I am satisfied with my height.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree			Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	