

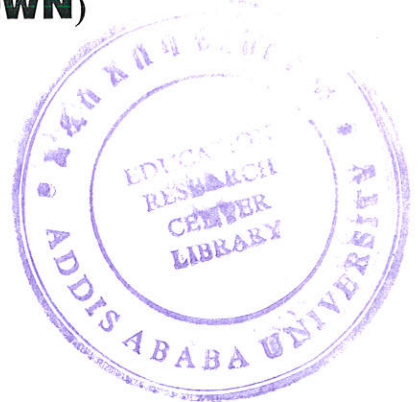
**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**BODY IMAGE PERCEPTION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP  
TO SELF-ESTEEM AND SOCIABILITY**

**(THE CASE OF STUDENTS AT TWO SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS OF BAHIR DAR TOWN)**

**BY**

**SHUMET ASRESS**



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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**



**BY**

**SHUMET ASRESS**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN THE PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN  
DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**July 2006**

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Body Image Perception and its Relationship  
To Self-Esteem and Sociability

(The Case of Students at Two Secondary  
Schools of Bahir Dar Town)

By  
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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between body image, self-esteem and sociability of adolescent girls; and how adolescent girls perceive their physical appearance. Participants were 284 female students at two secondary schools of Bahir Dar town with the age range between 13-21 years; who completed questionnaires. Additional 18 participants were selected for focus group discussion by dividing them into two sub groups.*

*Systematic random sampling was used to select participants.*

*The questionnaire contained measures of body image perception (satisfaction), self-esteem and sociability scales.*

*Results show that; there is a strong positive relationship between body image satisfaction and self-esteem; there is also a positive relationship between body image satisfaction and sociability. The proposed finding also indicated that as opposed to the hypothesis, based on different researchers; i.e. the ideal body image is to be thin; here it would appear that there is a greater acceptance of larger body size in school girls and that, for adolescents, being over weight may not be associated with social pressure or negative attitudes as in the case in the western culture.*

*This study also shows that most of the adolescent girls are dissatisfied with their physical appearance; they show a great deal of preoccupation with their appearance. And the adolescent girls perceive that others are more beautiful than themselves. They also perceive that; their friends, classmates', peers and families undermine them in rating their physical appearance.*

*In particular, our findings highlight the need for future research of a prospective nature incorporating psychological, socio-cultural, and maturational factors.*

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Adolescence is the period of transition from childhood to early adulthood, entered at approximately 11 to 13 years of age and ending at 18 to 21 years of age. The exact time period, however, depends on such diverse factors as the surrounding culture and biological development. The transition involves changes in biological, cognitive, and social development (Corsini, 1996 and Santrock, 1997).

Some have suggested that adolescence is the time when body image concern is at its peak in adolescent girls, due to physical changes. They are so conscious of physical beauty, and sensitive to their appearance; so even slight physical deviation or impairments may precipitate personality difficulties in general and affect the self-esteem in particular (Cash, 1997).

Body image involves our perception, imagination, emotions, and physical sensations of and about our bodies. It is not static but ever changing; sensitive to changes in mood, environment, and physical experience. It is not based on fact. It is psychological in nature, and much more influenced by self-esteem than by actual physical attractiveness as judged by others. It is not inborn, but learned. This learning occurs in the family and among peers, but these only reinforce what is learned and expected culturally (Lightston, et al, 2005).

When most people think about body image they think about aspects of physical appearance, attractiveness, and beauty. But body image is much more. It is the mental picture a person has of his/her body as well as their thoughts, feelings, judgments, sensations, awareness and behavior. Body image develops through interactions with people and the social world. It is our mental picture of ourselves; it is what allows us to become ourselves (Lightston, et al, 2005).

Body image may be seen as a psychological phenomenon significantly affected by societal factors. To understand it fully, we need to look not only at the experiences of individuals in relation to their appearance, but also at the cultural milieu in which the individual operates, for the image an Individual has of her body is largely determined by social experiences, and it is elastic, open, and changing with new information.

American society is preoccupied with the perfect human form. Any one who deviates from this ideal form is labeled different. Many relatively normal individuals have difficulty dealing with this issue of body appearance. In essence, whether a person is overweight or underweight or has a large nose by standards is not the determining factor in psychological health; instead, how a person perceives physical uniqueness influences his/her subjective wellbeing (Lightstone, et al, 2005).

Society provides messages about how people should ideally look and previous research has indicated these messages. Both the actual messages provided and the perception of the message influence body image (Swami and Tovee, 2005).

Female adolescent's image of herself is likely to be influenced also by the way her peers appraise her. To be acceptable to one's peer group during

adolescence one must not differ too much from others in physical appearance. If a youngster differs considerably she is likely to be avoided by others or to receive derogatory nicknames. These make adolescents keenly aware of the attitudes others have regarding their physical appearance (Jersild, 1969).

According to Jersild (1969), one aspect of adolescence physical development is that they show a great deal of preoccupation with their bodies and individual image of what their bodies like. Also Papalia (1999), states that adolescent's physical appearance is important for her social life and self-esteem and appearance affects how others react towards her; For example, physically attractive people are generally thought to have attractive personalities.

Each individual holds an idealized mental picture of his or her physical self, he or she uses this picture to measure concepts related to body image. Once an individual's percepts or concepts of this body image altered; emotional, perceptual, and psychosocial reactions can result (Kostanski, Fisher and Guhone, 2004). Our culture judges a man primarily in terms of how powerful, ambitious, aggressive and dominant he is, a woman is judged almost entirely in terms of her appearance, and her attractiveness to men. "Getting hit on" by males is what it sometimes takes to make her feel attractive, comfortable with her physical appearance (Littleton, Breitkopf, and Berenson, 2005).

A woman's body image encompasses her physical appearance, size and shape. Her body image is formed out of every experience she has ever had parents, role models, and peers who give her an idea of what it is like to love and value her physical appearance. Body image is formed from the positive and the negative feedback from people whose opinions matter to them. It is also the way they themselves have perceived their appearance

to fit or not fit to the cultural image (Dunkley, Wertheim and Paxton, 2001).

Many women have a distorted perception of what their physical appearance look like. They may look in the mirror and see a larger body than the one that they have. Large thighs, large buttocks, and a round abdomen may lead to distress for some women. Not fitting into the "cultural ideal" may cause body dissatisfaction in others (Furnham, Badmin, and Sneade, 2002).

Adolescent girls must adapt to socially acceptable norms. These norms include so-called "feminine" qualities: compliance, taking care of others, subduing their independent voices, and of course looking good. Since a woman's sense of self is influenced by how she sees herself in relationships, she puts extra efforts in trying to be the person she thinks others want her to be. Being accepted means adapting to one's perception of the expectations of one's peers--- or at least feels that way (Rosenbarm, 1993).

Thus, one's body image; the picture and evaluation of one's appearance is a basic part of one's self-esteem, while cultural standards of beauty are critical in forming this self-evaluation. One's attitudes are even more influential in determining one's self-esteem. Body image is socially constructed, so it must be investigated and analyzed within its cultural context (Bredin, 1999).

It is thus essential for individuals to make an honest assessment of how they see their appearance and how they feel about them. Therefore; this study attempts to assess such major issues, as the relationship between body image, self-esteem, and sociability; and mainly how body image is perceived by adolescent girls.

There is therefore, a need to examine how adolescent girls perceive their body image and how it affects their self-esteem and sociability in Ethiopian cultural context.

### **1.1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It is important to combat negative body image because it can lead to depression, shyness, social anxiety and self-consciousness in intimate relationships. Negative body image can also lead to an eating disorder. It is time that women stop judging their appearance harshly and learn to appreciate their inner being, soul and spirit. Women can menstruate, ovulate and create life (Thomas & Henry, 1994).

Since negative body image is a prevalent problem for many women & girls, and can also be a component of many serious disorders, it is critical that women learn to change their body image towards a healthy and positive view of self (AS-Sendi, Shetty & Musaiger, 2004).

A healthy body image occurs when a person's feelings about her appearance is positive, confident and self-caring. This image is necessary to care for the body, find outlets for self-expression, develop confidence in one's physical abilities and feel comfortable with who you are. To direct her behavior effectively, an adolescent must first of all acquire information about herself and her world. She must learn about her needs, potentialities, rational and irrational tendencies, and many other facets of her nature which enable her to feel in a realistic self-picture and develop a positive body image (Corsini, 1996).

Therefore, the present study shows the influences that impact a perception of body image & self-evaluation in adolescence females. And the differences in perception of physical appearance and presented cultural differences in self-evaluation at school adolescent girls, which

could be a starting point for further research. Also it seems important to provide an overview of the concept of body image in Ethiopian cultural context.

Hence; this study raised a preliminary issue for further research and so that more can be done on this body image concept in Ethiopian cultural context; to promote a healthy body image of female adolescents.

### **1.1.2 OBJECTIVES**

This study attempts to investigate not only the relationship between body image, self-esteem and sociability, but also examines one of the great paradoxes of adolescence which is the conflict between a young person's yearning to assert a unique self and an overwhelming desire to be exactly like her friends. So it is important to start to question why girls should feel compelled to "live up" to these unrealistic standards of beauty.

More importantly this study attempts to thoroughly describe the following objectives

1. Investigate the adolescent girls' reactions and feelings about their physical appearance and general body proportions.
2. Examine the relationship between body image and self-esteem.
3. Examine the relationship between body image and sociability.
4. Investigate the girls' feeling about others' perception to their appearance.

### **1.1.3 HYPOTHESES**

Based on past research findings, the researcher suggested the following major hypotheses:

1. Most adolescent girls are dissatisfied with their physical appearance (There is body image dissatisfaction among most adolescent girls).
2. Adolescent girls' body image ideal is to be thin.
3. Adolescent girls desire to loss weight.
4. There is a strong positive relationship between body image satisfaction and self-esteem.
5. There is positive relationship between body image satisfaction and sociability.

#### **1.1.4 DELIMITATION**

This study was delimited in scopes in terms of area, population and samples, and variables in such away that it could be manageable.

Regarding area delimitation, it is restricted to Bahir Dar town, with regard to population all grade 10 female adolescents at two secondary schools with the age rage of 13 to 21 have been considered in the study.

#### **1.1.5 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS**

**Adolescence:** Is the period of transition from childhood to early adulthood, entered at approximately 11 to 13 years of age and ending at 18 to 21 years of age (Corsinie, 1996).

**Body image:** It is the picture of our own body which we form in our mind related to our posture, stature, height, weight, appearance of eyes, teeth, nose, hair, hips and facial complexion; i.e. an adolescent girl's feelings and perceptions associated to her physical attractiveness in

rating scale, ranging from strongly agrees to strongly disagree (Lightstone, et al,2005).

**Self- esteem:** Is a personal evaluation of one's worth as a person (The judgment a person makes about his/her personal traits) in rating scale, ranging from strongly agrees to strongly disagree (Gloria, 1992).

**Sociability:** Is an interpersonal attractiveness during a relationship, interaction and the ability to have more friends in rating scale, ranging from strongly agrees to strongly disagree (Westen,1995).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM**

The way a person views his or her attractiveness directly affects self-esteem. Self-esteem is defined as an individual's perceived feelings of value and self-worth. A person with high self-esteem is more self-accepting, possesses high self-worth, and has a positive body image, while a person with low self-esteem is often self-critical, has low self-worth, and has a negative body image (Gloria, 1992).

The way we feel about ourselves affects the way we view ourselves. Because body image is important to our self-concept, when distortions occur, they can have pronounced effects. These effects range from our sense of well-being (like positive affirmations) to developing a predisposition to an emotional disorder (Tiggerman, 2005).

Body image distortion is when we perceive ourselves as being heavier (or smaller) than we actually are. Body image distortions occur more frequently for women than for men. When compared to men, women perceive themselves as heavier than others view them. Men are usually more accurate in measuring their own body shape. Research suggests that the distortions that women have over the difference between how they currently look and how they think they should look (perceived ideal beauty) is the cause of various disorders and appearance-related practices (Rand and Hall, 1983).

People are affected in a very fundamental way by how they perceive their appearance and how they think others perceive them. This perception is related to societal standards and cultural concepts. The adolescents'

concern with their physical appearance is to be expected, not only because of the role that appearance plays in peer acceptance but also because of the way perception of it affects self-esteem (Lefrancois, 1993).

The implications of one's perception of body image are important. Generally, the initial feedback and reinforcement we receive from others is about our appearance, how they move, early childhood experiences and later development is essential to personality development and the perception of body image. The concept of self initially involves from sensations and perceptions within the self and later from the perceptions of self communicated to the individual via feedback from the family, friends and peer groups. Blossoming of the body image is integrated with the socialization, which involves internalization of social standards of attractiveness, capability and normality. Individual's development of a positive or negative body image is thus influenced by the perception of on set of these standards.

Women are prone to more negative feeling about their appearance than men. In general, women are more psychologically invested in their physical appearance. Your body image is central to how you feel about yourself. Research reveals that as much as one fourth (1/4) of your self-esteem is the result of how positive or negative your body image is (Paxton, et al, 1991).

Since the appearance creates the first impression, eliciting a large amount of feedback and hence feelings of self-esteem are built, it is thus understandable a relationship would be seen between body image and self-esteem (Usmiain and Dailuk, 1997).

## 2.2 BODY IMAGE AND SOCIABILITY

Sociability is an interpersonal attractiveness during a relationship, interaction and the ability to have more friends. Body image is a powerful social variable. One factor that influences interpersonal attraction is physical attractiveness. Even in nonsexual relationships, physically attractive people are magnets. Attractive adolescents are more popular among their peers and are treated more leniently by adults. Attractive adolescents receive more cooperation and assistance from others, get better job recommendations, and have others self-disclosed to them more. Numerous studies show physical attractiveness to be a major, if not the major criterion of secondary school and college students' in judging initial attraction (Westen, 1995).

So people are affected in a very fundamental way by how they perceive their appearance and how they think others perceive them. They may form distorted impressions of themselves, and may see them much more negatively than others see them. In contrast some youngsters may hold very high standards for what they should be able to do with their appearance (Pope, Michale and Craighead, 1998).

Generally, Diggory in his book, 'Self-evaluation' described the relation between self-evaluation and social-evaluation as:

1. "When self-evaluation and social-evaluation are equal, the subject will be consistent with the culture and with her own possibilities."
2. "When self-evaluation is lower than social-evaluation the person will have strong interests, will be gratified by the results of her own behavior, and will be encouraged by social reactions to continue her efforts, will be modest and

unassuming until self-evaluation and social-evaluation achieve the parity of case '1' in the above."

3. "When self-evaluation is above social-evaluation the behavior of others is threatening to the "organization of phenomenal self," so the individual becomes defensive and sets high goals to prove that her self-evaluation is justified" (Deggory, 1966: 107).

According to the above ideas, adolescents' opinions of themselves have tremendous impact on their relationship & personality development. Generally, a favorable self-evaluation may be the key to success and happiness throughout life.

Adolescents worry about weight, complexion, and facial features and such feelings can have long-lasting repercussions; because;

1. Adolescents' physical appearance is important for their social life which in turn is important for their self-esteem; and appearance affects how others react to us; for example, physically attractive people are generally thought to have attractive personalities.
2. Adolescents who considered themselves attractive during earlier years have higher self-esteem and are happier than those who do not (Papalia, 1982).

So the physical aspects of adolescents exert a major influence on psychological well - being.

The body concept and physical development in adolescence have different meanings for girls and boys. In adolescence, for instance, girls are more critical of their appearance than are boys. That is, in adolescence females' evaluations of their physical attractiveness -are the most important predictors of their self-concept scores, whereas it is males' ratings of their self-effectiveness that better predict boy's self-concept scores. Generally,

for girls, popularity is strongly connected to physical attractiveness; for boys, popularity with peers is associated with athletic ability and, to a lesser extent, appearance (Rosenberg, 1982).

Girls are concerned about measuring up their in prettiness. Many of them worry that their breasts and genitals are the wrong size and shape that their hair, teeth, hips, legs are not attractive enough. Adolescents' who are attractive and who have a favorable body image tend to be happier, more socially successful and more pleased with themselves right into their adulthood than unattractive adolescents' with poor body image. Adolescents' body image is based not only on what their bodies look-like at present but on a lifelong accumulation of perceptions and feelings about their appearance. How parents, teachers, and peers judge their appearance also contribute to adolescents' body image. During the rapid changes of early adolescence, when many lose the sense of what "normal" looks like for themselves, other people's opinions can be especially important, and those peoples' judgments usually are based on stereotypes of physical attractiveness (Stewart, Perlmutter & Friedman, 1988).

Students who are accepted by their peers in turn feel better about being in the class and participating than do students who are rejected by others in the class. Most friendship begins because of proximity and physical appearance. Also attractive people are more popular and more likely to be chosen for leadership roles than the unattractive (Corsini, 1984).

A Premium is placed on looking good, and in a society where beauty and charm still strongly affect a women's social, marital and economic success, fat women risk downward social mobility. Furthermore attractive people are viewed as happier, more successful, smarter, more interesting, warmer, more poised and more sociable. For some girls, body image

dissatisfaction may interfere with their ability to form significant relationships, or to engage in activities they like (Conger, 1999).

So there can be no question that physical appearance is a powerful social variable. Research has shown that attractive individuals are considered more desirable romantic partners, more successful and are generally believed to possess more socially desirable traits than unattractive people (Sheryl & McCabe, 1997).

## **2.3 CAUSES OF BODY IMAGE DISSATISFACTION**

Body image is a person's inner conception of his or her own physical appearance. This conception may or may not correlate with objective reality. Each person holds an image of the physically perfect person in mind and evaluates his or her appearance against this ideal. A person who is pleased with his or her body shape and appearance is said to have a positive body image. The psychological construct of body image includes cognitive and emotional aspects as well as sensory input. For instance, we modify our ideas of our own appearance according to our emotional state as well as the reactions of others in the environment (Rosenblum & Lewis 1999).

The changes of puberty and resulting sexual maturation often make adolescents feel self-conscious and awkward about their appearance. Adolescent girls appear to be particularly vulnerable to developing a negative body image. They tend to ignore other abilities and focus on appearance as evidence of worthiness-with consequent lowered self-esteem and increased risk for psychiatric disorders, including eating disorders (J.J. Lerner and R.J. Lerner, 1989).

There is a large discrepancy between the majority of girls and the cultural ideal body form. This discrepancy leads many women and girls to feel inadequate and negative about their appearance. It is important to realize that only 4% of women genetically have the "ideal body" currently presented in the western media, the other 96% of women feel they must go to extreme measures to attempt to reach this unobtainable image (Lightstone, et al, 2005).

One major factor that contributes to females' body image dissatisfaction is social expectation of ideal body size and shape that is standard for that particular culture. In this regard, Thelen & Cormier (1995), found that girls have a harder time developing a positive body image. These researchers concluded that a negative body image results from social conditioning. When women can not attain the cultural ideal beauty standard, negative self-esteem in women is directly related to attractiveness (Santrock, 1987).

More and more adolescent girls are dissatisfied with their appearance due to a number of factors, including the growing disparity between our actual body weights and those of models and actors depicted in advertising and the media.

Besides media images, there are many other factors that influence body image. Most significantly, parents have a huge role in shaping their children's perception of and relationship with their appearances. The first layer of influence is what parents directly communicate about their child's body shape, weight, general appearance, and eating/exercise habits. The second layer is what parents teach by example-comments and behaviors related to their own bodies and appearance. When there is verbal criticism by family on the physical appearances of children it is likely that girls develop negative body image. Other factors that affect

body image include peers, teachers and coaches, gender, cultural background, and personality traits (Schwartz, et al, 1999).

### **2.3.1 SIGNS OF BODY IMAGE CONCERN**

Here are some signs that adolescent girls may be struggling with body image issues:

- Preoccupation with appearance, body shape or weight that gets in the way of daily life
- Consistent sadness or anger about body image
- Frequent self-depreciating comments
- Frequent comparison to others regarding appearance, body shape or weight
- Concern about a body part that seems average to others
- Increasing shyness or self-consciousness
- Attempts to "hide" with clothing or posture
- Eating or exercise habits that seem extreme
- Secrecy related to eating or exercise habits (Fabian & Thompson, 1989).

### **2.4 SOCIALIZATION OF BODY IMAGE PERCEPTION**

Through socialization processes, children learn that the male body should be developed, strong, functional and competent while the female body should be preserved, protected, & made more beautiful. This is also reinforced through toys, bill boards, & TV models of beautiful women and muscular male figures (Koff, Rierdan, and Stubs, 1990).

Girls are usually more concerned with appearance than boys because they have been socialized to overemphasize appearance. Girls have a harder time developing a positive body image than boys. A negative perception of body image results mainly from social conditionings. When

perceive their body image and how they think others perceive them. This perception is related to societal standards and cultural concepts. However, adolescents are not only simply affected by the social and cultural standard of physical beauty rather their attitudes and evaluation of certain body traits determine how they feel about themselves. If adolescents feel unattractive, unappealing, or in some way physically inferior; these self-perceptions are likely to have a powerful effect on self-esteem and other areas of their lives (Corsini, 1984).

## 2.8 PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

Body image influences behavior, self-esteem, and our psyche. When we feel bad about our physical appearance, our satisfaction and mood plummet. If we are constantly trying to push, reshape or remake our physical appearance, our sense of self becomes unhealthy; we lose confidence in our abilities. It is not uncommon for people who think poorly of their appearance to have problems in other areas of their lives, including sexuality, careers and relationships (Schwartz, et al, 1999).

People's physical characteristics and body image affect personality development, self-esteem, interpersonal attractiveness, career opportunities, sexual adjustment, and the prevalence of disordered eating behavior (Furnham, Badmin and Sneade, 2002).

Western society places a high value upon appearance. Self-worth is enhanced for those who are judged attractive. Those who are deemed unattractive can feel at a disadvantage. The message from the media, fashion and peers can create a longing to win the approval of their culture and fit in at any cost. And that can be disastrous to their self-esteem (Thelen and Cormier, 1995).

inadequacy and unworthiness we acquire defensive orientation that discourages growth and positive accomplishment. Such unfavorable feelings usually develop from an unrealistic picture of us in relation to other people (Pope, Mchale, and Craighead, 1988).

Self-devaluation (low self-esteem) not only stifles an individual's potential for growth and creative activity but, through the unconscious operation of defense mechanisms, may also lead to such socially undesirable characteristics as aggressiveness, hostility and a condemning attitude towards others. A person with high self-esteem is better able to admit her faults than the low self-esteem individual who is more apt to feel threatened by the perception of undesirable traits in her and thus rejects or distorts such perceptions in order to maintain a favorable self-picture (Campbell, 1984).

In Ethiopian culture, girls are important means for families to strength relationships with other families through marriage. This cultural process requires girls to have good physical appearance that is accepted in that culture. This is because one essential criterion in marriage is the girls' "beauty." In this regard the finding of Haile Gebriel (1994) in northern Ethiopia revealed that a peasant family strives to enhance its own status and enlarge its social network through marriage tie with a better endowed family. According to this researcher one of the essential criteria for a desirable marriage in that society is the beauty of the girl.

This practice puts high expectation that girls should be beautiful enough to attract the person with whom social relation is demanded. As a result it is a common practice in Ethiopia that girls who failed to attain standard physical appearance are criticized and given unfavorable comments while those who fulfilled the standard physical appearance are appreciated and given good comments by family members, peers and

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3 METHODS**

#### **3.1 DATA SOURCE**

The study was conducted on female adolescents of two secondary schools at Bahir Dar town. The target population of this study was 10<sup>th</sup> grade adolescent girls with the age range of 13-21 years.

In this study I wanted to hear from female students as to how they experience body image and other issues at secondary school. I chose to focus only on females, with whom most body image difficulties seem to occur (which is certainly not to say that men do not think or worry about their appearance). Therefore, I discussed with school girls, with the hope of uncovering the stories, experiences, complaints and thoughts they had about their body image, how it changes and how it is affected by the school environment and by the community at Bahir Dar town.

#### **3.2 SAMPLES AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

The sample which comprised 300 students was selected from two government owned secondary schools at Bahir Dar town. Two schools out of three were conveniently sampled using a simple random sampling method. A sample of 150 girls in grade 10 (age 13-21) were taken from each school, having a total population of 1023 grade 10 school adolescent girls (338 and 685 girls at Fasilo & Tana Haik Secondary Schools respectively). However because of the absence of answers for some questions, the total sample was 284. Using the schools' records, a systematic random sample of students was drawn from each school.

Only female students with the age range 13-21 years were included in the survey. Using the same sampling technique twenty additional participants (10 from each school) were selected for the focus group discussion session. However; two of them were not available at the focus group discussion session at one school & hence the participants who reduced to 8 at that secondary school. So the total participants at the focus group discussion were eighteen (18) in general.

### **3.3 Tools**

The main tools for this study was a self-report questionnaire contained of four sets of items and a general guidelines for focus group discussion.

The first set of the survey consisted of nine items concerning demographic characteristics related to age, number of siblings, parental educational level, weight and height.

At the second and third sets, body image perception (satisfaction) and sociability were two variables measured in the study. The researcher used the body image satisfaction (perception) and sociability scales which were self developed. The test lists thirty and twenty one items respectively; which participants needed to rate from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The fourth set consisted of 10 items on self-esteem, which was another variable measured in the study. It was measured using the Rosenberg (1965) self-esteem scale. The test requires subjects to rank the ten items from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Finally five items were designed as a general guideline for focus group discussion. Out of the above instruments only self-esteem items were adopted from Rosenberg (1965) self-esteem scale; the rests were self-developed.

### 3.3.1 TEST TRYOUT

Before the pilot study the items were translated into Amharic in order to make them easily understandable by secondary school students. In the test tryout all the three sets of scales (body image perception, sociability and self-esteem scales) were administered. Even though the adopted instrument (self-esteem scale) has already been standardized but not in Ethiopian cultural context; so, it would be imperative to note that pilot study should be made to check the reliability of the instrument in our local contexts. The five items designed as a guideline for focus group discussion was also discussed with six grade '10' female students to check the clarity of the items and statements to rephrase it again based on the feedback.

Finally the Amharic version of the instruments was pilot tested on a randomly selected sample of thirty grade 10 female students in Addis Ababa. The items that express negative ideas or intentions were reversely coded. Then, the responses of the participants were scored and the reliability of the items was computed by using Chronbach Alpha. In the case of body image perception scale, the items had an internal consistency of ( $r=0.87$ ), whereas items on sociability had internal consistency of ( $r=0.94$ ), and the reliability of self-esteem items ( $r=0.82$ ). Therefore, all items with minor modifications were used for the final study.

## 3.4 Procedures

Participants were given three separate self-report questionnaires as well as a demographic questionnaire to answer; and a general explanation was given before the questionnaire was completed. All questionnaires were administered in Amharic,; no consultation with peers was permitted.

Moreover, I decided to focus mainly on gathering information through focus group discussion guideline format. Each discussion followed the same general procedure, although the conversation stemmed in large part from the responses each discussant gave. I tried to allow the participants to guide the discussion, and to not lead them to give certain responses, or taint their ideas on this topic with my own.

After gathering up all of the data provided by the participants in the focus group discussion for three hours for each session, I was a little overwhelmed at reading through all of the information, attempting to organize it. What follows has been broken down into a discussion following the focus group discussion guidelines format thoroughly. And hence the information gathered through focus group discussion was analyzed by using verbal description qualitatively.

Finally Pearson product moment correlation was computed to see the relationship between body image perception and self-esteem, and between body image perception and sociability of adolescent girls.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 RESULT

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the body image perception and its relationship with self-esteem and sociability of adolescent girls at two secondary schools in Ethiopian cultural context.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

DEMOGRAPHICS: - Data for this study were collected from 284 secondary school adolescent girls (age 13-21) in attendance at two secondary schools in Bahir Dar town.

TABLE 1- Demographic Characteristics of Participants related to religious affiliation

CHARACTERISTIC	CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENT (%)
Religion	Orthodox	254	89.44
	Muslim	17	6
	Protestant	8	2.8
	Others	5	1.76

Table-1 shows the demographic characteristics of participants. As shown, the sample comprised 284 adolescent girls. A break down by religion indicated the following proportions. Orthodox, 89.44%, Muslim, 6%, Protestant, 2.8% and others 1.76%.

TABLE.2. Demographic Characteristics of Participants Related to age, height and weight

Characteristics	Category	Number	Percent (%)
Age groups	13-15 years	29	10.21
	16-18 years	222	78.17
	19-21 years	33	11.62
Total		284	100
Weight in kilogram	35-40 K.G.	52	18.31
	41-45 K.G	146	51.41
	46-50 K.G	64	22.54
	51-55 K.G	22	7.75
Total		284	100
Height in meter	1.45-1.55	87	30.63
	1.56-1.60	149	52.46
	1.61-1.70	35	12.32
	1.71-1.75	13	4.58
Total		284	100

As shown in table 2; the participants have an average age, height and weight of 16.3, 158.14 and 45.8 and respectively.

**TABLE.3.** Demographic characteristics of adolescent girls' families

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b> %
Number of family members	1-2	37	13.03
	3-4	112	39.44
	5 or more	135	47.54
Adolescent girls' mother	Alive	253	89.08
	Dead	31	10.92
Adolescent girls' father	Alive	209	73.59
	Dead	75	26.41

As indicated in table-3 most of the participants i.e. 47.54% have an average family size of 5 or more members. This table also shows that 26.41 & 10.92% of the participants had their father and mother dead respectively.

TABLE.4. Demographic characteristics of Adolescent girls' parents' educational background

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent %</b>
Mother's education	- Illiterate	48	16.9
	- Read and write	66	23.24
	- Elementary school	75	26.41
	- Secondary School	72	25.35
	- Diploma	17	6
	- Degree & above	6	2
Total		284	100
Father's education	- Illiterate	12	4.23
	- Read and write	54	19
	- Elementary school	33	11.62
	- Secondary School	92	32.39
	- Diploma	65	22.89
	- Degree & above	28	9.86
Total		284	100

Table 4, shows that the parental educational attainment levels reported by the students, show that nearly 65.14% of their fathers and 33.35% of their mothers had completed at least secondary school.

**TABLE.5.** Reliability coefficient of variables in the study

<b>No</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Reliability</b>
		<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>
1	Body image scale	0.87
2	Sociability scale	0.94
3	Self-esteem scale	0.82

Table.5 shows that the three scores computed were body image perception (satisfaction with physical appearance), Global self-esteem and sociability. Items were scored on 1 to 5 scales, where 5 represented the most satisfactory self-judgment i.e. strongly agree in that particular rating scale item. And as shown on the table the scales are highly reliable.

Table- 6 Body image Perception of Adolescent Girls

S/N	Items	Strongly agree		Agree		undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	My ideal body image is influenced by attractive people on TV or other media source	84	29.58	136	47.89	23	8.1	26	9.15	15	5.28	284	100
2	I am happy with the way I look	10	3.52	19	6.69	18	6.34	158	55.63	79	27.82	284	100
3	My friends rate me as physically attractive	2	0.7	16	5.63	67	23.6	142	50	57	20.07	284	100
4	I feel that being good looking is very important	239	84.15	26	9.15	14	4.93	5	1.76	-	-	284	100
5	People respect and like only those who are good looking (physically attractive)	63	22.18	122	42.96	36	12.68	41	14.44	22	7.75	284	100
6	I would be much happier and my life would be better if I were thinner	1	0.35	26	9.15	21	7.39	60	21.13	176	61.97	284	100
7	I wish I were taller	43	15.14	85	29.93	8	2.82	96	33.8	52	18.31	284	100
8	I like my facial complexion (my face is pretty)	9	3.17	34	11.97	29	10.21	135	47.54	77	27.11	284	100

The finding of table 6, item 1 shows that 29.58% of the adolescent girls strongly agree and also 47.89% of them agree related to the influences of media sources on

body image. This indicated that adolescent girls are highly influenced by attractive girls depicted on TV and other media sources.

Related to item 2, that 27.82% of adolescent girls strongly disagree i.e. strongly dissatisfied with their physical appearance and 55.63% also disagree i.e. dissatisfied with the way they look (physical appearance). The result of item 2, indicated that most of the adolescent girls dissatisfied with their physical appearance.

Table 6, item 3 revealed that 50% (half) of the adolescent girls disagree with the statement that their friends rate them as physically attractive. That means they believed that their friends considered them as physically unattractive.

As table 6, item number 4 & 5 shows that most of the adolescent girls give much emphasis for their physical appearance and considered it as a source of social prestige. But in contrast to the western cultures, item number 6, indicated that above 80% of the adolescent girls at Bahir Dar secondary schools do not prefer to be thin.

Items number 7 from table 6 above depicted that adolescent girls do not show much concern about their height; but 47.54% of them disagree for the statement stated at item number 8 above; that indicates most of the adolescent girls dissatisfied by their facial complexion.

Table -7 Sociability (Social Affiliation) of adolescent Girls

S/N	Items	Strongly agree		Agree		undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I can make friends easily	11	3.87	78	27.46	40	14.08	92	32.39	63	22.18	284	100
2	I enjoy entertainment with others	44	15.49	73	25.7	27	9.507	88	31	52	18.31	284	100
3	I have lots of friends	25	8.8	84	29.58	12	4.23	95	33.45	68	23.94	284	100
4	My friends enjoy playing with me	37	13.03	66	23.24	57	20.07	79	27.82	45	15.85	284	100
5	No matter how busy I am, I will make time for a friend in need	74	26.06	133	46.83	17	6	54	19	6	2	284	100
6	People tell me that I behave appropriately	65	22.89	90	31.69	42	14.79	64	22.54	23	9	284	100
7	I deserve to be loved and respected	72	25.34	167	58.8	-	-	33	11.62	12	4.23	284	100

As shown above in table 7, of item number 1,2,3,&4 out of 284 adolescent girls ; they indicated that, 32.39% disagree,25.7% agree,29.58% agree & 27.82% replied disagree respectively .

This finding implies that the participants are not sufficiently active in having, keeping and enjoying with friends.

Item number 5,6,&7 from the above table 7,shows that the participants make time for a friend in need and also they deserved to be loved and respected and they believed that others may be reported about them that as they have behaved appropriately.

Table - 8 Self-esteem of Adolescent girls

S/N	Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I feel that I am a person of worth at least on an equal basis with others	47	16.55	80	28.17	26	9.15	79	27.82	52	18.31	284	100
2	I am able to do things as well as most other people	40	14.08	73	25.7	46	16.2	84	29.58	41	14.44	284	100
3	I take a positive attitude toward myself	70	24.65	94	33.1	15	5.28	67	23.59	38	13.38	284	100
4	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	44	15.49	69	24.3	24	8.45	73	25.7	74	26.06	284	100
5	I feel that I have a number of good qualities	61	21.48	85	29.93	38	13.38	51	17.96	49	17.25	284	100

Item 1,2,3,4 & 5 from table 8 above indicated that between 35 to 52% of the adolescent girls refused to accept the above items. And answered disagree and strongly disagree for each of the items. This shows that out of 284 adolescent girls between 35 to 52% of them have low self-esteem.

Since the discussion part of the above finding is similar to the focus group discussion part; so to avoid redundancy, it is exclusively and thoroughly investigated & discussed at the focus group discussion part of the next session.

## 4.2 Correlational Analysis and Discussion

Table.9. **Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient**

No	Variable	Variable	
		Self-esteem	Sociability
1	Body image	0.81	0.72

Correlations between key variable scores are presented in table 6 above, for the total sample. It is seen in table 6 that body image scores correlated positively with scores of self-esteem, ( $r = 0.18$ ) which accounted 65.6% of the variability to self-esteem scores indicating that a higher body image satisfaction tended to have a higher self-esteem. That is, students who reported high scores on satisfaction with physical appearance also reported high scores on self-esteem.

These findings are consistent with findings from other studies that have shown that; the way a person views his or her physical appearance directly affects self-esteem. A person with high self-esteem is more self-accepting, possesses high self-worth, and has a positive body image, while a person with low self-esteem is often self-critical, has low self-worth, and has a negative body image (Gloria, 1992).

Similarly, Pope, Mchale, and Craighead, 1988; suggested that; the individual whose self-ideal has little relationship to her present body image is likely to encounter continual failure and frustration. So, low self-esteem is one of the greatest handicaps to personal effectiveness. Therefore, from feelings of inadequacy and unworthiness we acquire defensive orientation that discourages growth and positive accomplishment. Such unfavorable feelings usually develop from an unrealistic picture of ourselves in relation to other people.

Sociability scores correlated positively with scores on satisfaction with physical appearance (body image perception), ( $r=0.72$ ) indicating that high sociability experienced by the respondents tended to be associated with higher levels of satisfaction with physical appearance. It accounted 51.8% of the variability in sociability scores.

These findings are congruent with the findings by Rand and Hall (1983); they showed that attractive individuals are considered more desirable romantic partners, more successful and are generally believed to possess more socially desirable traits than unattractive people.

System's theory view also supported this finding by proposing that; an adolescent's body image plays a much greater role in his/her relationships with peers and general adaptation to the environment than believed and it is influenced tremendously by family relationships, attitude and acceptance (Swami & Tovee,2005).

Similarly, Papalia (1999); stated that adolescent's physical appearance is important for her social life and self-esteem and appearance affects how others reacts towards her; for example, physically attractive people are generally thought to have attractive personalities.

Also, according to Westen (1995), one factor that influences interpersonal attraction is physical attractiveness. Even in non sexual relationships, physically attractive people are magnets. Attractive adolescents are more popular among their peers and are treated more leniently by adults. Attractive adolescents receive more cooperation and assistance from others, get better job recommendations, and have others self-disclosed to them more. Numerous studies show physical attractiveness to be a major if not the major criterion of secondary school and college students' use in judging initial attraction.

Self-esteem and sociability scores showed a significant contribution to predictability of satisfaction with physical appearance. In other words, among the respondents who express greater satisfaction with their physical appearance also have a more positive sense of self-worth and sociability.

### 4.3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION ITEMS

At the focus group discussion session 18 adolescent girls participated from two secondary schools in two sessions. In one session 10 and in the second session 8 adolescent girls actively participated in the focus group discussion. The findings and interpretations of the whole sessions are presented as follow:

TABLE.10. Demographic characteristics of focus group Discussion Participants Related to age, height, weight and family size

CHARACTERISTICS	CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENT
Age groups	13-15 years	3	16.67
	16-18 years	11	61.11
	19-21 years	4	22.22
Total		18	100
Weight in Kilogram	35-40	3	16.67
	41-45	4	22.22
	46-50	7	38.89
	51-55	4	22.22
Total		18	100
Height in meter	1.45-1.55	4	22.22
	1.56-1.60	8	44.44
	1.61-1.70	4	22.22
	1.71-1.75	2	11.11
Total		18	100
Number of family members	1-2	1	5.56
	3-4	8	44.44
	5 or more	9	50
Total		18	100

successful and more pleased with themselves right into their adulthood than unattractive adolescents with poor body image.

The findings indicated that parental messages were the strongest influence on body image and those parents, peers, the media, and to some extent messages from male friends were the strongest predictors of body change strategies.

There can be no question that physical appearance is a powerful social variable. Research has shown that attractive individuals are considered more desirable romantic partners, more successful, and are generally believed to possess more socially desirable traits than unattractive people (Sheryl & McCabe, 1997).

Based on the findings from the focus group discussion, some of the key ideas suggested by the participants related to their body image perception were presented below.

One participant said,

*"The costs of body image dissatisfaction are imaginable. I suspect they have impacted every area of my life."*

The other participant, expressed the following, related to her preoccupation with body image issues:

*"I miss out on the opportunity to smile and open my eyes to the things around me.*

*Sometimes I only see myself.....even if there is so much more in life. I have missed out, on truly having fun in social situations because of focusing on myself and my looks, real or imagined. I have missed out on allowing myself to be loved wholly, because I am forever judging, forever critical of my own appearance and my own self. I can't walk into restaurants and other recreational centers around "Lake Tana" of whom so many youngsters enjoyed; and not take the first available seat. I hate being in public, I know the ridicule and discrimination (they considered me as slave using the Amharic word "Baria" because of my dark skin color and Short brush hair).*

Similarly Elkind, (as cited in Lefrancois, 1993), suggested; that, the imaginary audience to which the adolescent continually reacts explains why young adolescents are often very self-conscious. Because of their audience, many become terribly concerned with their hair, their clothing, and other aspects of their appearance. It is as if adolescents believe that others are as deeply concerned about them as they themselves are, and that these others constantly judge them.

For some women, body image dissatisfaction may interfere with their ability to form significant relationships, or to engage in activities they like. Adolescents' physical characteristics and body image affect personality development, self-esteem, interpersonal attractiveness, career opportunities, sexual adjustment, and the prevalence of disordered eating behavior (Furnham, Badmin & Sneade, 2002).

In socio-cultural theory and body image evaluation; society's conceptualization of the "ideal" female appearance, as reflected in mass media, may influence women's body image evaluation (Dunkley, Wertheim & Paxton, 2001).

Based on the focus group discussion; from the adolescent girls' point of view; a premium is placed on looking good, and "in a society where beauty and charm still strongly affect a woman's social, marital, and social mobility. Furthermore, attractive people are viewed as happier, more successful, smarter, more interesting, warmer, and more sociable.

## QUESTION NUMBER 2

2. DESCRIBE THE BODY IMAGE IDEAL (PERFECT BEAUTY) IN YOUR OWN PERCEPTION. IS THERE A STANDARD/ DO YOU FEEL PRESSURE TO LOOK AT CERTAIN WAY?

Society provides messages about how people should ideally look and previous research has indicated these messages, both the actual messages provided and the perception of the message influence body image (Tiggerman, 2005).

So the individual's body image is largely determined by social experiences, and it is elastic, open and changing with new information

Yet, it is unlikely that all young women are affected by idealized images to the same degree. Women who are more likely to be vulnerable are those whose attention is focused on appearance. According to Fredrickson and Roberts (1997), some women are more likely than others to see the self the point of view of an outsider, and to regard their appearance as objects of other people's gaze. The authors coined the term self-objectification to characterize the tendency to value appearance over and above ability or any other attributes. Such focus on physical appearance is believed to result in increased body shame and appearance anxiety, especially in conditions where the body is subjected to scrutiny (Monro & Huon, 2005).

The adolescent girls I discussed reflected similar ideas of body image, such as:

*Adolescent girls are usually quite style conscious and try to conform to the fashions of the day. However, within this framework, they try to modify current styles according to their own tastes and ideas of what is most becoming. Through varying her dress, hair style, and make up, a girl expresses her individuality and experiments to discover effects that in her judgment are most fitting.*

Related to this, Jersild, 1969, described that, the attention adolescent girls give to their appearance, including clothes and cosmetics, is related to other personal characteristics. While girls in the age range from thirteen to twenty one show a strong tendency to conform to prevailing fashions and to dress alike, there are many individual differences. The motivations most commonly underlying the girls' efforts to look well include a desire for approval, a desire for the internal satisfaction feeling well-groomed and a wish for sexual attractiveness. Concern about appearance is purposive and is "rooted in the girl's life story." Girls who were rated as giving much attention to appearance seemed to have a higher estimate of themselves than girls who were rated low in appearance.

According to Botta, and Cogan et al, (as cited in Molloy and Herzberger, 1998); body image is a symbol of beauty that varies across cultures. That is why, personal dissatisfaction with body as well as perception of attractiveness and weight has been experienced diversely in different ethnic groups. And they reported that black adolescent girls were more satisfied with their appearance and had a larger personal ideal size than white adolescent girls. Those studies indicated differences in perception of body image satisfaction among different ethnic groups.

Although every student I discussed with seemed to perceive body image and dissatisfaction as definite issues at school, almost all the group members gave descriptions of their own body image that seemed relatively healthy; such as:

*"My body image has always been pretty good.... I have always seen my physical appearance as beneficial, and I have never tried to make-up or any thing."*

*"I don't know what average is, but I would say mine is pretty positive, but it is really hard to keep a positive body image if all the people around you are feeling negatively."*

*"There are a lot of things about my appearance that I don't like, that I have had to come to terms with. But overall I am ok."*

*"I would say my body image is relatively realistic I would always rather be light skinned but it is not negative, but not really positive, either."*

*"I have always been really confident about my appearance, but it is a challenge here, especially because there is so much stress to be beautiful, which is something I will never be."*

These girls seemed pretty comfortable with their appearance. Are they all so well-rounded and reasonable that they managed to escape the high concern of attractiveness so many fall prey to? In talking with these girls, I hoped to get a sense of how their (seemingly positive) body image has developed how it has changed over time, and how they view the development and direction of their problem of widespread body dissatisfaction, both at school and in the society as a whole.

Related to body image, Susan Grogan, as cited in, Bredin, 1999; suggested that, we need to look not only at the experiences of individuals in relation to their appearance, but also at the cultural milieu in which the individual operates, for the image an individual has of her physical appearance is largely determined by social experiences, and is elastic, open and changing with new information. Research has suggested that most people have some reference group that furnishes social information relevant to body image (which may be friends, family or the media).

Extensive research has indicated that socialization processes (i.e., media, peer, family) are major determinants of these high levels of negative attitudes in adolescent girls (Kostanski, Fisher & Guhone, 2004).

One major factor that contributes to females' body image dissatisfaction is social expectation of ideal body size and shape that is standard for that particular culture. In this regard, Thelen and Cormier (1995), found that girls have a harder time developing a positive body image. These researches

concluded that a negative body image results from social conditioning. When girls cannot attain the cultural ideal beauty standard, negative self-esteem in women is directly related to attractiveness.

At Bahir Dar Secondary Schools, similar patterns exist. One participant stated:

*“For some people at this school, how they look determines how they feel that day. If their hair doesn’t look right or their clothes, it will ruin their day.”*

A lot of girls in my study also specifically mentioned comments from others as having a high impact upon their body image attitudes. This participant added,

*“It is definitely what people say (that influences my body image) and it is so much easier to let the bad things stick with you than the good things. I remember my mother saying it looked like, I had got thinner those things stick with you.”*

Thus, it would appear that there is a greater acceptance of larger body size in school girls and that, for adolescents, being overweight may not be associated with social pressure or negative attitudes as in the case in the west.

Although few researchers have considered body image in non-western cultures, work that has been reported indicates significant cultural differences in the meanings associated with thinness and plumpness. In poorer cultures, thinness is often seen as a sign of malnutrition, poverty and infectious disease, and increased weight may be viewed positively, as an indication of health, wealth and prosperity (Littleton, Breitkopf & Berenson, 2005). The participants similarly discussed this recognition of different priorities in Bahir Dar.

The participants also stated,

*“Compliments definitely influence in a good mood just makes you feel better about yourself.” Others similarly reflected that a mood is important in how they feel about their appearance; such as “If I am in a good mood, I don’t care so much about what I look like.” She also added; “some times, if I am in a good mood, I look at my physical appearance and I am really happy; but not other times.”*

She also mentioned;

*"I am definitely aware if someone makes, and of what other people say about physical appearance-even if a comment is not about me, especially coming from males." "If my classmate makes a comment about her appearance, or takes several minutes to find something to wear, constantly scowling at the mirror and complaining about some part of her appearance, I start to look at my own physical appearance negatively, too."*

So every one thinks about their physical appearance, talks about their appearance and those of other people (friends and famous people alike), and feels shame.

Similarly, Jersild, 1969, also stated that; female adolescent's image of herself is likely to be influenced also by the way her peers appraise her. To be acceptable to one's peer group during adolescence one must not differ too much from others in physical appearance. If a youngster differs considerably she is likely to be avoided by others or to receive derogatory nicknames; which make adolescents keenly aware of the attitudes others have regarding their physical appearance.

From the participants point of view an "all-important indication that a woman has the culturally correct body image is the attention she gets from men, which may take the form of getting marriage or merely a nice remark concerning her appearance."

As one participant stated:

*"The amount of male attention that I get here definitely is a strong influence gotten anywhere else or at any other time in my life."*

In that sense perhaps, women would feel better about themselves, in receiving more positive attention from men. The other participant also said that,

*"Getting males' attention" is what it sometimes takes to make me feel attractive and Comfortable with my appearance.*

Generally, the participants confirmed that; our culture judges a man primarily in terms of how powerful, ambitious, aggressive and dominant he is, a woman is judged almost entirely in terms of her appearance, and her attractiveness to men.

### QUESTION NUMBER 3

#### 3. DO YOU DISCUSS BODY IMAGE ISSUES/PROBLEMS WITH YOUR FRIENDS? HOW OFTEN? HOW DOES THIS MAKE YOU FEEL?

Body image is a constant topic of conversation among adolescent girls. Unsurprisingly, every student I talked with named their friends as a huge influence, both positive and negative, upon their body images. At such schools, where community is seen as very important and the fostering of strong friendships and relationships is a main goal of the classroom life staff, one would expect those you are constantly surrounded by to have a large impact on your life, and one would further hope that these influences are helpful in one's development. It seems that here friends do play a large role in the overall atmosphere students' surroundings, but this can be both positive and negative.

One took a positive standpoint on her friendships:

*"I think friends are a huge influence. So we definitely talk a lot, saying all the different things we like about our appearance and about other; we compliment each other, so it is not like it is negative for us."*

The other participant replied that

*"I think that body image is important at school because whenever you get a group of girls together, the conversation at some point will turn to body image."*

So a premium is placed on looking good and in a society where beauty and charm still strongly affect a women's social, marital and economic success; unattractive women risk downward social mobility. "Furthermore, attractive people are viewed as happier, more successful, smarter, more interesting, warmer, more poised and more sociable." For some girls body image dissatisfaction may interfere with their ability to form significant relationships, or to engage in activities they like (Conger, 1999).

The other added,

*"I don't have a lot of girl friends, and that is precisely why. I don't want to deal with all of those body image issues- I will not talk about body image because nobody wants to do it for real."*

She seemed frustrated in the lack of discussions about body image that weren't entirely focused on appearance; as a member of the school girls' club, she expressed a concern that more effort be made to take about wellness issues as a whole, not just on the appearance specifically.

As, Thelen & Cormier (1995), stated; western society places a high value upon appearance. Self-worth is enhanced for those who are judged attractive. Those who are deemed unattractive can feel at a disadvantage. The message from the media, fashion and their peers can create a longing to win the approval of our culture and fit in at any cost. And that can be disastrous to their self-esteem. Corsini, 1984, also described that, If adolescents feel unattractive, unappealing, or in some way physically inferior; these self- perceptions are likely to have a powerful effect on self-esteem and other areas of their lives.

In the goodness-of-fit model, researcher Richard Learner (as cited in Lightstone, et al, 2005), states each person and his/her context are unique as a result of the specific combination of the features that person and the conditions of his/her environment.

Individuals elicit reactions from others as a result of their physical and psychological characteristics. There reactions often feedback to the individual, providing the basis for further thought & action. For instance, adolescents whose style of dress and hair meets parental approval might not simultaneously meet peer approval, or vice versa. Problems in adjustment might develop as a result of mismatch or lack of goodness-of-fit, in either the peer or parent context (Lighstone, 2005).

Levels of self-esteem, anxiety, and sociability are related with body image dissatisfaction such that high levels of dissatisfaction are associated with lower levels of self-esteem and high levels of negative affectivity, particularly for females (Breakey, 1997).

One active participant expressed the idea that body image problems are sometimes not dealt within an open, honest manner among friends, saying:

*"On the surface, body image issues are sort of a joke, but I think there are some people in my class who have really severe issue- I don't address them because; I don't know how to deal with them but the jokes just cover-up the fact that there are serious issues." Why might these problems not be dealt within an open manner? Why isn't serious dialogue about body image problems promoted? I am reminded of a conversation I had with a close friend of mine a few days ago; we were gossiping about another friend of ours and after several minutes we realized how much we talk to each other about our other friends, often negatively.*

*What might we want to criticize and insult our friends behind their backs? Is it part of our nature to judge, compare and compete with one another? Does it really make us feel better about ourselves? In the same manner, why might women like joking or lightly discussing body image problems, without ever really hitting upon them seriously, to the extent to which they are the reality of our daily lives? I am left wondering how my relationships with my friends could be improved, not only if we gossiped less, but if we promoted a loving environment, not of competition but of openness and truth.*

## **QUESTION NUMBER 4**

**4. HOW HAS YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOUR BODY IMAGE CHANGED AS YOU HAVE GOTTEN OLDER/ COME TO SECONDARY SCHOOL? HOW IS YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOUR BODY IMAGE INFLUENCED BY OTHERS? AND HOW YOU FEEL OTHERS PERCEIVE YOU RELATED TO YOUR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE?**

A girl's body image encompasses her physical appearance, size and shape. Their body image is formed out of every experience they have ever had parents role models and peers who give them an idea of what it is like to accept and value their appearance. Body image is formed from the positive and the negative feedback from people whose opinions matter to them. It is also the

way they themselves have perceived their appearance to fit or not fit the cultural image (Dunkley, Wertheim & Paxton, 2001).

Many of the girls in my study noted a definite change in their thoughts and worries about their appearance after arriving at high school; and one participant replied that:

*"I think it is because the secondary school years are just meeting lots of new people, and you want to look good because you think that helps, but once you establish friendships, you don't care as much about the way you look."*

These comments comply with, earlier sentiments of competition amongst girls, and along with societal pressures to be attractive, and at school "standards" of appearance is idea that you need to look good to make friends.

According to Harter (1998, 1999), Sugar, (1993); (as cited in Wendy and Rogrs, 2000); based on attachment theory, peer friendship may influence self-perception of body image and self-competence in adolescents. The body image plays a much greater role in relationships with peers and general adaptation to the environment than once believed.

Peer pressure has been described as the primary mechanism for transmitting group norms. It has been suggested that peers exert influence by offering desirable rewards to those who conform to group norms and/or undesirable consequences to those who resist them.

According to Crockett, et al, (1984), (as cited in Wendy and Rogers, 2000), with increasing age, adolescent girls spend increasingly greater time talking with their same-sex friends, seeking the advice of same sex friends, wanting to be like their close friends, and being willing to share secrets and inner feelings with friends.

Since a girl's sense of self is influenced by how she sees herself in relationships, she puts extra efforts in trying to be the person she thinks others want her to be. Being accepted means adapting to one's perception of the expectations of one's peers.....or at least feels that way (Caradas, Lambert & Charlton, 2001).

So adolescents are continually receiving feedback on their own appearance, not only from their mirrors, but also from the behavioral and emotional responses of the men and women in their lives. In addition the media expose them constantly to a cultural standard of beauty with which to Judge their faces & other aspects of her physical characteristics & traits.

According to Corsini, 1984, adolescent girls are affected in a very fundamental way by how they perceive their body image and how they think others perceive them. This perception is related to societal standards and cultural concepts. If adolescents feel unattractive unappealing, or in some way physically inferior; these self-perceptions are likely to have a powerful effect on self-esteem and other areas of their lives.

Research suggests that social comparisons on the dimension of physical appearance tend to be upward, rather than downward; and that such comparison usually produces decrements in self-perceptions of attractiveness. So social comparison theory asserts that; upward coparison (i.e. comparing oneself to someone who is better of on the dimension of interest) is believed to decrease well-being (Morrison, T.G,Kaline and Morrison M.A,2004).

As one participant said;

*in elementary school I never really cared about how I looked, but when I came here, my awareness of my appearance totally shot up, my awareness of how I look totally changed.....because appearance is so important here.*

Adolescents' assessments of their body image may be related to other peoples' evaluations of their body image. Family members and friends are known to play an important role in communicating social norms to adolescents. The reaction and feedback regarding appearance that adolescents receive from significant others' in their social surrounding, such as parents and peers, are likely to influence the adolescents views about their appearance. The results showed that 46% of the adolescents thought that their parents and peers would consider them to be unattractive than they actually were (they reported perceived parental or peer underestimation). Within, the participants' point of view, a woman's sense of worth in our culture is still greatly determined by her ability to attract a man; social access to these resources is generally indirect, through marriage. Also, Al-send, Shetty & Musaiger, 2004; stated that; When a woman stands taller than a man she has broken a cardinal feminine rule, for her physical stature reminds him that he may be too short- inadequate, insufficient-for the competitive world of men. She has dealt a blow to his masculine image, undermined his footing as aggressor-protector.

The media's influence at school was perceived differently among my discussants, some seeing it as having a large impact, others not. The participants reported the following:

*"I think the media is less of an influence here." The participants replied related to media influence as follows. "It is more than I need to look like the girl in my class, rather than a model."*

*"I am inaccessible to media influences." "I am too busy to be absorbed with media influences, because my parents expected me to accomplish so many duties and responsibilities at home."*

Their comments reflect the underlying conviction of competition of never measuring up to high standards of attractiveness, femininity. No matter if the media is a persistent and prevalent influence in a woman's life here (or any where?), the oppressing societal patterns which teach woman that they must physically attractive remains inescapable.

So there can be no question that physical appearance is a powerful social variable. Research has shown that attractive individuals are considered more desirable romantic partners, more successful and are generally believed to possess more desirable traits than unattractive people (Sheryl & McCabe, 1997).

Many of the girls I talked with mentioned that comparing themselves with others, particularly in an atmosphere of competition, is a key influence on their body image. Like the stepmother, many girls perceive others as more attractive than themselves and feel envy, rage, and even violence toward one another.

One participant also reported similar feelings, such as;

*“it is all about competition in Bahir Dar; I feel fine until I see a girl who looks attractive (beautiful in physical appearance) then I think I should look that way.”*

So the participants reported that they constantly compared themselves to their sisters, mothers, and girlfriends.

The other participant, presented her sister's experience that,

*“she is a 19 years old girl, she repeatedly told me and other family members that she was ashamed of multiple aspects of her appearance including her small and flat nose, large breasts, dark skin and short hair, In reality, these deformities were minimal or non-existent. She spent several hours per day scrutinizing her appearance in the mirror and constantly asked me and other family members for reassurance that she looked okay.”*

Similarly, Jersild (1969) stated that, one aspect of adolescence physical development is that they show a great deal of preoccupation with their appearance and individual image of what they looked like. Also Papalia (1999), stated that adolescent's physical appearance is important for her social life and self-esteem and appearance affects how others react towards her; for example, physically attractive people are generally thought to have attractive personalities.

Also Corsini, 1984, suggested that, students who are accepted by their peers and like them in turn feel better about being in the class and participating than do students who are rejected by others in the class. Most friendship begins because of proximity and physical appearance. Also attractive people are more popular and more likely to be chosen for leadership roles than the unattractive.

The other participant reflected that

*"My body image definitely affected," if I am around people who are stressing about their appearance or are talking about it; also, negative comments from people. I still remember a comment from a kid in sixth grade. He told me I was very thin & dark skinned (used the term "Baria" in Amharic), but I wasn't, I was just medium even if I am not light skinned but those things stick with you."*

The data indicate that girls, who are classified as normal have minimal cognitive and affective body image dissatisfaction. In contrast, girls, who considered them very, thin (underweight) report greater levels of dissatisfaction. These findings do not support the hypothesis that a thin ideal may indeed be normative for females.

## QUESTION NUMBER 5

5. DO YOU THINK A POSITIVE BODY IMAGE IS IMPORTANT? WHY? WHAT SHOULD BE CHANGED CAN BE DONE?

With regard to item number 5, informants reported their feelings in the following ways:

*"If you fail to love yourself as you are it will cost you.... Just what it has cost me, trying to live up to what "society thinks" I should look like, how I look like in the mirror. I failed loves, relationships and results insecurity in my life."*

*"It is an image I give out .... People can tell how you feel about yourself by the look on your face and the way you carry your appearance. It doesn't matter the way I look, but if I am treating my physical appearance well, it will show."*

*"I am 18 and I have spent the last two years of my life disappointed with my appearance." If only I was beautiful, then I would be happy, then life will begin then I will be worthy of some ones love and marriage in the future; I have blamed my appearance for everything!"*

*Due to negative body image; I still continue living day to day telling myself I am ugly, dark color, undesirable and worthless. I have very little positive self-esteem, which has resulted in little confidence in myself and insecurities in social relationships. So far my extreme self-consciousness has cost me many social opportunities throughout the years."*

These findings are consistent with findings, from other studies that have shown that, adolescents worry about weight, complexion, and facial features and such feelings can have long-lasting repercussions; because adolescents' physical appearance is important for their social life which in turn is important for their self-esteem; and appearance affects how others react to us: for example, physically attractive people are generally thought to have attractive personalities (Papalia, 1982).

Other studies described that females lose their sense of self, individuality and fall victim to narrow definitions of beauty defined by the media and make them feel insecure about their looks. The media machine is economically driven as billions are spent on items such as cosmetics, new diets and clothes. This "beautifying" empire is dependent on females disempowerment. They count on them buying into their myths and misrepresentations." Females will never fit it, they can never be happy, thus they can never end the pursuit." Alas, the pursuit is endless, the products are endless, the damage to their self-esteem is endless, and the body hatred created is devastating. The impact that these images have on women is profound (Breakey, 1997).

Physical appearance is a means to many highly valued ends in our society and, if a person is physically attractive or perceives herself as unattractive, the success to this goal diminished, leading to anxiety and a general self-devaluation (Breakey, 1997).

Numerous studies have examined the impact specifically of self-esteem upon body image, most finding a positive relationship between the two. Research by Shantee Harries( as cited in, Furnham, Badmin and Sneade,2002), that is

consistent with past studies has suggested that adolescent girls' feelings and thoughts about the physical aspects of self are closely linked to other areas of their psychological development. Those secondary school girls who are satisfied with specific body parts (e.g. eyes, teeth, skin color, facial complexion, etc.) and processes; and report favorable feelings toward their appearance also show a clear educational, career, and life purpose as well as a sense of wellness. Unfavorable evaluations of appearance, on the other hand, have important implications for women's willingness to pursue activities, and dissatisfactions with specific body parts may also influence one's perceptions of and attitudes toward physical appearance.

At Bahir Dar secondary schools, similar patterns exist. One participant stated;

*"For some people at this school, how they look determines how they feel that day. If their hair doesn't look right or their clothes, it will ruin their day." A lot of girls in my study also specifically mentioned comments from others as having a high impact upon their appearance attitudes. This participant added, It is definitely what people say (that influences my body image)-and it is so much easier to let the bad things stick with you than the good things. I remember my mother saying it looked like I had got thinner-those things stick with you.*

*Others similarly reflected that; a mood is important in how they feel about their appearance; such as "if I am in a good mood, I don't care so much about what I look like." She also added; "sometimes, if I am in a good mood I look at my physical appearance and I am really happy, but not other times."*

I think it comes down to the really fundamental questions about their self-esteem. Discussing and promoting healthy views of their appearance is important because it reassures- or in some cases establishes-that they are useful, valuable human beings.

Similarly, Gloria 1992, described that, happiness, self-empowerment, satisfaction in work, good relationships, and success are all built on a foundation of healthy self-esteem. High self-esteem is a quiet, comfortable, feeling of acceptance and love for yourself as you are. It is respecting and valuing yourself as a worth while human being, honestly seeing your good and not-so-good qualities and taking care of and nurturing yourself, so you can become all that you are capable of being.

So a person with high self-esteem is self-aware, takes responsibility for life choices by being willing to pay consequences both good and bad, and is actualizing her potential. She also lives from a place of deep peace with the intention of honoring and respecting self and all others.

Perhaps it seems obvious that more could be done about these issues of body image and dissatisfaction, particularly if it is a prevalent one at school, and perhaps also the emphases needs to shift from being an individual problem, to a community problem, or from some thing that is entirely about the physical body, to a perspective that includes all aspects of a person's being.

One suggests:

*"People need to stop talking about appearance so much, and talk more instead about wellness, about spiritual aspects about economic aspects, being less stressed."*

Other participant reflected similar sentiments:

*"There is so much emphasis on physical appearance and body image. I see it getting worse. There is this idea that girls can do what they want, but you have got to look a certain way. It is about trying to change paradigms, and change takes a long time, and a lot of effort."*

Girls are taught that if they want to be successful, pretty and happy (like the girls on T.V or in magazines), they need to look a certain way. She offered similar pessimism:

*"at school, I don't think things will ever change, unless it happened on a much bigger level, like we redefined what people think is beautiful, "but" how do you change the attitudes of so many people? How can you*

*convince people that all girls with different physical appearance are beautiful?"*

Generally the participants briefly stated that; "Loving yourself" is the most important thing. It doesn't matter what other people think as long as you love yourself. People, who comment on other peoples' appearance, say things about other people to make themselves feel better. Love yourself and your beauty; and respect yourself. Have the self-respect you deserve. You deserve so much. Don't let what other people think; get in the way of how you feel about yourself. Next time someone pressures you to do something that goes against your values or you don't want to do, be strong and say no. That is respecting yourself. That is loving yourself. That is accepting yourself.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.1 SUMMARY

This study provides insight into the extent of body image perception, concerns and its relationship to self-esteem and sociability of school girls at Bahir Dar town.

Lightstone, et al, 2005 described that; concerns about body image range from a normal desire to look attractive to pathological concern with perfection. Today, more than ever, adolescents in America are prone to body image distortions and dissatisfaction. The reasons for this are multiple and include:

1. A discrepancy between adolescents' perception of their own physical characteristics and the expectations of their social environment,
2. The influence of the media and cultural expectations, and
3. Genetic and biological vulnerability. Adolescents with severe body image distortions are vulnerable to developing serious psychiatric disorders that can have life threatening consequences. Parents can help by providing guidance and information in a time of uncertainty and serving as role models of individuals who are comfortable with their appearance.

The study shows the existences of a distorted body image as reflected by failure of many, adolescent girls to perceive themselves as such.

As many of the girls in my study reflected upon, there are larger issues and paradigms that our society seems to stress, which will be hard to change. The fact remains that regardless of their economic worth, women are socialized to

rely on their “natural” resources-beauty, charm nurturance-to attract the opposite sex. The stakes of physical attractiveness for women are high, since appearance affects social success.

I was surprised to hear of the widespread recognition by my participants of a female student population that is highly concerned and dissatisfied with their appearance. I find it disappointing that so many beauty girls are giving emphases for what is wrong with their physical appearance (focused on minor deviations) within the scope of the larger world. And I can also speak the frustrations that come from being female and feeling pressures from their peers, from the media and from society at large to fit into a certain mold.

Obviously, this issue is complicated. The issues and ideals that surround and control this topic of girls’ body image are both many and fascinating to me. First, I think one of the most enlightening aspects of this study is the number of girls I discussed with, who not only recognized and criticized the “body image ideal” within which we live, but who were also able to speak wisely and in an educated manner about the process they have taken, including steps towards becoming more comfortable with themselves in an environment which isn’t always so welcoming.

The ability to generalize is not one of the strengths of this method, its strength lies instead in obtaining a broad range of perceptions and ideas, comments & experiences that may not fit neatly into categories but are valid precisely because they aim to encapsulate the depth of experiences. Weaknesses in this type of qualitative data collection revolve around the lack of generalizable results that are applicable to large social groups; although I think my findings are important and say a lot about body image issues in general and its relationship with self-esteem and sociability specifically. These findings may not apply either to other secondary school girls and, to males. But my

discussions and conversations with these girls have been fruitful specifically because some have been open-ended and qualitative.

My research is one step toward understanding the problems many girls face on a daily basis, which may reflect larger issues in a society. This study and the girls it has depended on have suggested that more can be done at school to promote a healthy body image. Perhaps greater emphasis should be placed upon wellness as a whole, to counteract so much emphasis on the appearance.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

This study shows the existence of a distorted body image among school adolescent girls, as reflected by the failure of many adolescents to correctly perceive their physical appearance. Adolescents also showed evidence of being conscious about their figures, for many were dissatisfied with their appearance.

Clearly, adolescent females with subjectively distorted body image, or those for whom there is a mismatch between their image and the environment, are at risk for several serious psychiatric disorders.

Negative body image is a serious problem and has damaging affects on women's self-esteem and it can lead to depression, as well as an eating disorder.

Generally we can conclude the major findings of this research as follows:

1. There is a strong positive relationship between body image satisfaction and self-esteem
2. Body image satisfaction & sociability are positively correlated (there is positive relationship between the two variables).
3. Adolescent girls at Bahir Dar secondary schools (83%) prefer to gain weight (to be fat) than thinner; as opposed to the thin body

ideal in the case of western culture (There is acceptance of larger body size).

4. Most adolescent girls (77%) show a great deal of preoccupation about their physical appearance.
5. More than 84% of the adolescent girls are dissatisfied with their physical appearance.
6. Most of the adolescent girls (61.8%) perceive that others are more beautiful than themselves.
7. About 70% of the participants also perceive that, their friends, peers, classmates and families would undermine them in rating their physical appearance (Rated as physically unattractive).
8. Most of the adolescent girls (87%) feel that their body image is highly influenced by attractive girls in their class, on television or other media sources.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATION

It is important to combat negative body image because it can lead to depression, shyness, social anxiety and self-consciousness in intimate relationships. It is time that women stop judging their appearance harshly and learn to appreciate their inner being, soul and spirit. Start to recognize you do not have to compare yourself to other women or women in the media. Begin to challenge images presented in the media & realize that your worth does not depend on how closely you fit these unrealistic images.

Generally, the following points are suggested to schools, parents and adolescent girls themselves to resolve problems related to body image issues.

### 5.3.1 HOW SCHOOLS CAN HELP

The school principals, teachers and counselors efforts should (improve their students' body image by):

- Focus on enhancing students' awareness of their appearance by providing didactic materials on natural body changes. The psychological and social components of maturation (e.g., increased emotional arousal), relationships with the opposite sex and issues with parents should be included.
- Maintain a library of material on body image distortion
- Encourage discussions on socio-cultural factors affecting body image satisfaction.
- Counseling may be able to help find comfort with their appearance, mitigate the effects of a negative body image, and enhance the development of a healthy inner core. Parents may also benefit from guidance in helping to promote a positive body image in their children.
- Increasing their awareness of what body image is, and the positive and negative influences that are part of their everyday lives.

### 5.3.2 HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

For those teens who have milder forms of body image distress, parents should:

- Help adolescents realize that they are valued because they are unique, not because of appearance.
- Accept their child's developing sexuality and encourage open expression of feeling.
- Discuss with their children the emphasis that society places on appearance and encourage them to be critical of advertising claims and the media,
- Praise their children's positive abilities and talents.
- Monitor negative comments about their own appearance.

### 5.3.3 WHAT EXPECTED FROM ADOLESCENT GIRLS TO IMPROVE THEIR BODY IMAGE SATISFACTION

To improve their body image satisfaction the adolescent girls should focus on the following points:

- Affirm that their appearance is perfect just the way it is
- Create a list of people they admire who have contributed to their life, their community, or the world. Was their appearance important to their success & accomplishments?
- Replace the time you spend criticizing your appearance with more positive, satisfying pursuits.
- Let your inner beauty & individuality shine
- Be an example to others by taking people seriously for what they say, feel, and do rather than how they look.
- Beauty is not just skin-deep. It is a reflection of your whole self. Love & enjoy the person inside.
- You know you are successful when you can look in the mirror and instead of asking, "What is wrong with it, "and say," There is nothing really wrong with me." And little by little you will find you can stop disliking your appearance.

Generally, this is the starting point. It is from this new way of looking at a problem that you can begin to feel better about yourself. Make this the time to accept the natural dimensions of your appearance instead of drastically trying to change them.

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Table.7 shows the demographic characteristics of participants in the focus group discussion. As shown, the sample was comprised of 18 adolescent girls, having an average age, weight and height of 16.6, 46.9 and 158.8 respectively. And 50% of the participants have an average family size of 5 or more members. This shows that most of the participants have normal height and weight ratio in general according to the body mass index formula. This data also indicates that most of the adolescent girls have grown in large family size condition; that creates favorable situation at home for discussing and giving feedback about body image issues among them.

### **Question Number -1**

#### **1. DESCRIBE HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE?**

The results revealed discrepancy among adolescents' perception of body image. There was a tendency for teenagers to underestimate their body image. Nearly three-fourth (74%) of the girls expressed discontent with their current body image. More than 46% of the adolescent girls thought that their parents and their peers would consider them to be physically unattractive.

These findings showed a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction with physical appearance, among girls. More than two-third of the girls, reported being dissatisfied with their physical appearance. This is consistent with previous studies of young adults in the United States (Sciacca et al, 1990) and Spanish adolescents ( Cuadrado et al, 2000) as cited in Monro & Huon, 2005, which showed that females are more likely to feel discontent about their figures.

According to Stewart, Perlmutter and Friedman, (1988); many of the adolescent girls worry that their breasts and genitals are the wrong size and shape that their hair, teeth, hips, legs are not attractive enough. Adolescents who are attractive and who have a favorable body image and to be happier more socially

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# Appendix

**አዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ**  
**የድህረ ምረቃ ፕሮግራም**  
**የሳይንስ ትም/ክፍል**

**I. መግቢያ**

የእዚህ መጠይቅ አላማ በአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ በሳይንስ ትም/ክፍል በዲቪዥን መንታል ሳይንስ ለሁለተኛ ዲግሪ ማሟያ ለሚደረግ ጥናት መረጃ ለማሰባሰብ ነው። ስለሆነም ከእዚህ በታች የተጠቀሱት ጥያቄዎች በጥንቃቄ መሞላታቸው ለጥናቱ ስኬታማነት እጅግ አስፈላጊ በመሆኑና የተሞሉት መረጃዎችም ሚስጢራዊነታቸው በአስተማማኝ ሁኔታ ስለሚጠበቅ ሁሉንም ጥያቄዎች በጥንቃቄ ደጋግመው ካነበቡ በኋላ በቅንነትና በታማኝነት እንዲሞሉላቸው በአክብሮት እጠይቃለሁ።

ሥለትብብርዎ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ !

**II. አጠቃላይ መረጃ**

- 1 ዕድሜ -----
- 2 ቁመት (በሴንቲሜትር) -----
- 3 ክብደት (በኪሎግራም) -----
- 4 ሐይማኖት -----
- 5 የቤተሰብ አባላት ብዛት    ሀ. 1      ለ. 2      ሐ. 3      መ. 4    ሠ. አምስት እና ከእዚያ በላይ
- 6 እናትሽ በህይወት አሉ፡    ሀ. አዎ  ለ. በህይወት የሉም
- 7 አባትሽ በህይወት አሉ :    ሀ. አዎ  ለ. በህይወት የሉም
- 8 የእናትሽ የትምህርት ደረጃ  
  ሀ አልተማሩም   
  ለ ማንበብና መጻፍ   
  ሐ የአንደኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት (ከ1-8ኛ ክፍል)   
  መ የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት (ከ9-12ኛ ክፍል)   
  ሠ የተቋም ሠርተፍኬት ወይም የኮሌጅ ዲፕሎማ ( $12^{+1}$  ወይም  $12^{+2}$ )   
  ረ የመጀመሪያ ዲግሪ እና ከእዚያ በላይ   
  ሠ አላውቅም
- 9 የአባትሽ የትምህርት ደረጃ  
  ሀ አልተማሩም   
  ለ ማንበብና መጻፍ   
  ሐ የአንደኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት (ከ1-8ኛ ክፍል)   
  መ የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት (ከ9-12ኛ ክፍል)   
  ሠ የተቋም ሠርተፍኬት ወይም የኮሌጅ ዲፕሎማ ( $12^{+1}$  ወይም  $12^{+2}$ )   
  ረ የመጀመሪያ ዲግሪ እና ከእዚያ በላይ   
  ሠ አላውቅም

**አዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ**  
**የድህረ ምረቃ ፕሮግራም**  
**የሣይኮሎጂ ትም/ክፍል**

III. የሚከተሉትን ዝርዝር ነጥቦች በጥንቃቄ ካነቡብሽ በኋላ ራስሽን በተሻለ ሁኔታ ይገልፀኛል ብለሽ ያመንሽበትን ክፍተለፊት ከሚገኙት አምስት ነጥቦች መካከል አንዱን በመምረጥ ምልክት አድርገረ::

ተ/ቁ	ዝርዝር ነጥቦች	1	2	3	4	5
		በጣም አልስማማም	አልስማማም	እርግጠኛ አይደለም	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
1	የእኔ ምናባዊ የሰውነት ቁመና ዕይታ (ሀሳባዊ የራሴ ምስል) በቴሌቪዥንና በተለያዩ መገናኛ ብዙሀን በሚቀርቡ ቆንጆና ውብ ወጣት ሴት ሞዴሊስቶች ተፅዕኖ ስር ነው (ሞዴሊስቶችን በቴሌቪዥን በምመለከትበት ጊዜ ስለራሴ ውበትና ቁመና ትኩረት እንድሰጥና እንድጨነቅ ያደርገኛል)					
2	አሁን ባለኝ የሰውነት ቁመናና ውበት ደስተኛ ነኝ					
3	ጓደኞቼ ሥለእኔ ቁንጅና ቢጠየቁ ቆንጆ መሆኔን ይመሠክራሉ					
4	ቆንጆ እና አይነግቡ መሆን በጣም አስፈላጊ እንደሆነ ይሰማኛል					
5	ጓደኞቼ አካላዊ ውበቴን (ቁንጅናዬን) መሠረት በማድረግ ሳይሆን በእኔነቴ ብቻ ይቀበሉኛል (ይቀርቡኛል)					
6	ሥለአለኝ የሰውነት ቅርፅ : መጠንና ክብደት ሁልጊዜም አስባለሁ። ይህን ለማስተካከልና ለማሻሻልም ሁልጊዜ ጥረቴ ይቀጥላል					
7	የአለኝ የሰውነት ቅርፅ እና ቁመና ስለሚያሳፍረኝ በእስፖርት፣ በውሀ ዋና እና በሌሎችም ተመሳሳይ ተግባራት ላይ ለመሳተፍ ፈቃደኛ አይደለሁም					
8	በቴሌቪዥንና በአንዳንድ መፅሔቶች ላይ ሞዴሊስቶችን በማይበት ጊዜ እነሱን የመሰለ የሰውነት ቁመና እንዲኖረኝ አፈልጋለሁ					
9	የሰውነት ቁመናዬ እንደምመኘውና እንደምፈልገው እንደሆነ ይሰማኛል (አምናለሁ)					

10	አንዳንድ የሠውነት ክፍሎችን ትክክለኛ ገፊት ስለሌላቸው በተቻለኝ ሁሉ ከሌሎች ሰዎች ዕይታ ለመከለል ጥረት አደርጋለሁ				
11	አሁን ካለኝ የሰውነት ቁመናና ውበት በተሻለ ሁኔታ ሆኜ (ሌላ ሆኜ) በተፈጠርኩ ብዬ እመኛለሁ				
12	ማንኛውንም የልብስ አይነት እና ጌጣጌጥ ብጠቀምም ያለኝ የሰውነት ቁመናና ገፊት አያስደስተኝም				
13	ሌሎች ሰዎች ስለእኔ የሰውነት ቁመናና ውበት በሚሰጡት አስተያየትና አመለካከት ከፍተኛ ትኩረት እሰጣለሁ				
14	ያለኝ የሰውነት ቁመናና ውበት ከጓደኞቼ ጋር መልካም ግንኙነት አንዲኖረኝ ጥሩ አስተዋፅኦ አድርገዎልኛል				
15	ሰዎች አክብሮት የሚሰጧትና የሚወዷት ጥሩ ቁንጅና ያላትን ሴት ነው				
16	የራሴን ቁንጅና በመስታወት በምመለከትበት ጊዜ አያስደስተኝም				
17	ቆንጆ ነኝ ብዬ አምናለሁ				
18	ክብደቴን ለመቀነስና የሰውነቴን አቋም ለማስተካከል በተደጋጋሚ ምግብ የማልበላበት ጊዜ አለ				
19	የሰውነት ክብደቴን ለመቆጣጠር በመፈለግ ያወፍራሉ ብዬ የገመትኋቸውን የምግብ አይነቶች አልመገብም				
20	ቀጭን ብሆን ኖሮ (ለወደፊቴም ጥሩ ሁኔታ የሚጠብቀኝ እና በህይወቴም) በጣም ደስተኛ እሆን ነበር				
21	ያለኝ የፊትና አጠቃላይ የቆዳ ቀለም ያስደስተኛል				
22	ጥሩ ፀገር አለኝ				
23	አሁን ካለኝ ቁመት በላይ ረዥም ብሆን ኖሮ እደሠት ነበር				
24	ቆንጆና ማራኪ አይኖች አሉኝ				
25	ጥርሶቼ ቆንጆዎች በመሆናቸው ያስደስቱኛል				
26	የጡቶቼ መጠንና ቅርፅ ያስደስቱኛለ				
27	የአፍንጫዬ ቅርፅና መጠን ያረካኛል				
28	ጥሩና አስደሳች ዳሌ አለኝ				
29	የፊቴ አጠቃላይ ገፊት (መልኬ) አስደሳች (ቆንጆ) ነው				
30	ያለኝ ቁመት ትክክለኛና እንደምፈልገው በመሆኑ ያስደስተኛል				

**አዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ**  
**የድህረ ምረቃ ፕሮግራም**  
**የሣይኮሎጂ ትም/ክፍል**

IV. የሚከተሉትን ዝርዝር ነጥቦች ካነበብሽ በኋላ በዝርዝር ከተጠቀሱት ከአምስቱ አማራጮች ውስጥ በተሻለ ሁኔታ የራስሽን አቋም አመለካከትና ግንዛቤ ያንፀባርቃል ብለሽ ባመንሽበት ላይ ምልክት አድርጊ::

ተ/ቁ	ዝርዝር ነጥቦች	1	2	3	4	5
		በጣም አልስማማም	አልስማማም	እርግጠኛ አይደለም	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
1	ብዙ ጊዜ ለብቻ ማሳለፍ ያስደስተኛል					
2	በቀላሉ ጓደኛ ማፍራት እችላለሁ					
3	ከሌሎች ጋር መዝናናት ያስደስተኛል					
4	ከብዙዎች ጋር አብሮ መሆን እወዳለሁ					
5	ብዙ ጓደኞች አሉኝ					
6	ጓደኞቼ ከእኔ ጋር መጫወት ያስደስታቸዋል					
7	ከእንግዶች ጋር በቀላሉ መግባባት እችላለሁ					
8	ማንኛውንም የግል አመለካከትንና የሚሠማኝን ስሜት ከወላጆቼ ጋር በግልፅ እወያያለሁ					
9	ከጓደኞቼ ጋር የቡድን ውይይት ስናደርግ አብዛኛውን ጊዜ የመሪነት ሚና እጫወታለሁ					
10	ከሠዎች ራሴን የማግለል ሁኔታ ይታይብኛል					
11	ከማላውቃቸው ሠዎች ጋር ብቀላቀልም ራሴን ዘና አደርጋለሁ (የመጨናነቅና ምቹት የማጣት ስሜት አይታይብኝም)					
12	ምንም ስራ ቢበዛብኝም ለጓደኞቼ ራሴን የቻለ ጊዜ ከመስጠት አልቆጠብም					
13	ከህዝባዊ ስብሰባዎች ለመሸሽ (ላለመሳተፍ) የምችለውን ሁሉ ጥረት አደርጋለሁ					
14	ሰዎች ጥሩ ባህርይ እንዳለኝ ይገልፁልኛል					
15	በማንኛውም ሁኔታ ከጓደኞቼ ጋር በምንወያይበት ጊዜ ከሌሎች የበለጠ የመናገር እና የሀሳብ ልውውጡን የመቆጣጠር (የመምራት) ሁኔታ ይታይብኛል					

	ማጋራት (ማካፈል) በሚጠበቅብኝ ጊዜ : ቦታና ሁኔታ ሁሉ የመረበሽና ያለመረጋጋት ስሜት ይነበብብኛል					
17	ከሰዎች ጋር እንድቀርብና እንድወያይ የሚያስገድዱኝን ሁኔታዎች እጠላለሁ					
18	በጋራ በሚዘጋጁ መድረኮች እና መዝናኛዎች ላይ ለውጥረት እና መጨነቅ እዳረጋለሁ					
19	በማንኛውም ማህበራዊ ሁኔታዎች እና ግንኙነቶች ወቅት የራሴን አመለካከት እና ሀሳብ ከማንፀባረቅ ወደ ጎሳ አልልም					
20	በሰዎች ለመወደድና ለመከበር ጥረት አደርጋለሁ					
21	በሌሎች ግለሰቦች ባልተለመደ ሁኔታ ጓደኛ ለማፍራትና ጓደኝነታችንን ዘለቁታ እንዲኖረው ለማድረግ ከራሴ የግል መንገድ እና አመለካከት ውጭ በመሄድ የጓደኛዬን ፍላጎትና ስሜት እስከመጠበቅ የሚደርስ መስወዕትነት እከፍላለሁ					

**አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ**  
**የድህረ ምረቃ ፕሮግራም**  
**የሳይንስ ትም/ክፍል**

V. ከእዚህ ቀጥሎ የሚገኙትን አስር ነጥቦች በትክክል ካነበብሽ በኋላ ራስሽን በተሻለ ሁኔታ ይገልፀኛል ብለሽ የመንሸበትን ከአምስቱ አማራጮች መካከል አንዱን በመምረጥ ምልክት አድርጌ::

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝር ነጥቦች	1	2	3	4	5
		በጣም አልስማማም	አልስማማም	እርግጠኛ አይደለም	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
1	ከሌሎች ያላነሰ ዋጋ ያለኝ ሰው እንደሆንሁ ይሰማኛል					
2	በርካታ ጥሩ ጎኖች እንዳሉኝ ይሰማኛል					
3	በአጠቃላይ ራሴን ስገመግመው በህይወት ዘመኔ ብዙም ያልተሳካልኝ ሰው መሆኔ ያመዝናል					
4	ማንኛውንም ነገር ከሌሎች ባላነሰ ሁኔታ የማከናወን ችሎታ አለኝ					
5	ብዙም የምመካበትና የምኮራበት ነገር እንደሌለኝ አምናለሁ					
6	ለራሴ ጥሩ አመለካከት አለኝ					
7	በአጠቃላይ ሲታይ በራሴ ሁኔታ እርካታ ይሰማኛል					
8	ለራሴ ጥሩ ክብር እና ዋጋ የምሰጥ ሰው እሆን ዘንድ (እንድሆን)አመኛለሁ					
9	አንዳንዴ ምንም ዋጋ የሌለኝና የማልጠቅም መሆኔ የሚሰማኝ ጊዜ አለ					
10	አንዳንድ ጊዜ ምንም ጥሩ ጎን እንደሌለኝ አድርጌ ራሴን እቆጥራለሁ (አስባለሁ)					

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ  
የድህረ ምረቃ ፕሮግራም  
የሣይኮሎጂ ትም/ክፍል

VI. ለቡድን ውይይት መነሻ ሀሳቦች

1. ሥለራስሽ የሠውነት ቁመናና ውበት በተመለከተ ምን ይሠማሻል?
2. አንድ ሴት ቆንጆ ለመባል ይህን መምሰል አለባት ተብሎ የተቀመጠ መስፈርት በማህበረሰቡ ውስጥ አለ? ይህን የቆንጅና መስፈርት እንድታሟይ በተለያዩ መልኩ ከማህበረሰቡ ጫና አሉብሽ? በአንች እይታ የተሟላ ቆንጅናና የተስተካከለ ቁመና ምን ማለት እንደሆነ ግለጭ?
3. ሥለሠውነት ቁመናና ውበት ምናባዊ ዕይታ እና በሚያስከትለው ችግር ዙሪያ ከንደኞቻችን ጋር ትወያያለሽ? ከተወያዩሽ ምን ያህል ጊዜ ይደጋገማል? በዚህ ርዕስ ላይ የሚደረግ ውይይት በአንቺ ላይ ምን አይነት ስሜት ይፈጥርብሻል?
4. ከአንደኛ ደረጃ ወደ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ት/ቤት በመምጣትሽ ሥለራስሽ አካላዊ ቁመናና ውበት ባለሽ ምናባዊ ዕይታ ላይ ምን ለውጥ አስከተለ? ሌሎች ሠዎችስ ሥለራስሽ ቆንጅናና ቁመና ባለሽ ምናባዊ ዕይታ ላይ እንዴት (በምን አይነት መልኩ) ተፅዕኖ ሊያሳርፉብሽ ይችላሉ? ሥለአንች ቁመናና ውበት ሌሎች ሠዎች አስተያየት እንዲሠጡ ቢጠየቁስ ምን የሚሉ ይመስልሻል?
5. ሥለራስሽ አካላዊ ቁመናና ውበት ምናባዊ ዕይታ ዙሪያ አወንታዊ የሆነ አመለካከት ማዳበር አስፈላጊ ነው ብለሽ ታስቢያለሽ? ለምን? ከእዚህ በተጨማሪ ወጣት ሄቶች ሥለራሳቸው ውበትና ቁመና ባላቸው ምናባዊ ዕይታ ጋር በተያያዘ የሚከሰቱትን ችግሮች ለመፍታት ወይም ለመከላከል ምን መደረግ አለበት?

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School of Graduate Studies**  
**Department of Psychology**

## **Introduction**

You are kindly invited to participate in a research study investigating perception of body image and its relationship with self-esteem and sociability of adolescent girls in two secondary schools at Bahir Dar town. This study is being conducted for a partial fulfillment of MA thesis in developmental psychology stream from the department of psychology at Addis Ababa University.

## **I. Background Information**

### **Direction**

The background questions below will be treated confidentially and will be used only to help interpret responses on the other parts of this survey instrument. Please read each of the following items and encircle the number of each item or fill the blank space as required.

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_
2. Height (in meter) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Weight (in kg.) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Religion \_\_\_\_\_
5. The number of family members  
a, 1      b, 2      c, 3      d, 4      e, five and more
6. Is your mother alive      a, Yes      b, No
7. Is your father alive      a, Yes      b, No

8. What is the highest level of education completed by your father?

a. Illiterate

e. Certificate or college diploma

b. Read and write only

f. First degree and above

c. Elementary education

g. Do not know

d. High school

9. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?

a. Illiterate

e. Certificate or college diploma

b. Read and write only

f. First degree and above

c. Elementary education

g. Do not know

d. High school

## II. Body image Perception Rating Scales

### Direction

This part of a questionnaire asks you about body image perception and satisfaction of your physical appearance. There are no right or wrong answers since students differ markedly. Please read the entire sentence across. First decide which one of the five parts of each statement best describes you. You will just choose one of the five numbers for each statement in the Likert rating scale.

**“Thank you in advance!”**

1. Strongly Disagree

4. Agree

2. Disagree

5. Strongly agree

3. Undecided

No Listed Items		1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	My ideal body image is influenced by attractive people on TV or other media sources					
2	I am happy with the way I look					
3	My friends rate me as physically attractive					
4	I feel that being good looking is very important					
5	My friends accept me as I am regardless of my physical appearance					
6	I am constantly thinking about my body size shape and weight and I am always working to improve it.					
7	I don't participate in sports, swimming and I don't participate in sports, swimming and other activities because I am embarrassed about my body posture.					
8	When I see a model in a magazine & TV I want to look like her.					
9	I think my physical appearance is exactly the way I always wish.					

10	I hide part of my physical traits such as eyes, teeth, hair, stature etc., because it is not perfect					
11	I wish I were someone with different physical appearance.					
12	No matter what clothes or adornments I use, my physical appearance does not please me.					
13	I am excessively concerned about people's opinions about my physical appearance.					
14	My physical appearance positively contributed to my interaction with my friends					
15	People respect and like only those who are good looking (physically attractive)					
16	I feel disappointed with what I see when I look at myself in the mirror.					
17	I am beautiful					
18	I commonly skip meals to lose weight					
19	I completely exclude foods from one food group in order to manage my weight					
20	I would be much happier and my life would be better if I were thinner					
21	I like my skin color (my skin is nice looking)					
22	I have a good hair texture (my hair is nice looking)					
23	I wish I were taller					
24	I like my eyes appearance					
25	I am satisfied with by my appearance of teeth					
26	My breasts are attractive (I like my breasts size)					
27	I have attractive nose					
28	I am satisfied with my hips					
29	I like my facial complexion (my face is pretty)					
30	I am just in the right height.					

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### **III. Guide lines for focus group discussion on body image perception**

#### **General Information**

A, Age \_\_\_\_\_

B, Height (in meter) \_\_\_\_\_

C, Weight (in kilogram) \_\_\_\_\_

D, The number of family members \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe how you feel about your physical appearance.
2. Describe the body image ideal (perfect beauty) in your own perception. Is there a standard (do you feel pressure to look at certain way)?
3. Do you discuss body image issues (problems) with your friends? How often? How does this make you feel?
4. How has your perception of your body image changed as you have gotten older (come to secondary school? how is your perception of your body image influenced by others? And how you feel others perceive you related to your physical appearance?
5. Do you think a positive body image is important? Why? What should be changed (can be done)?

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**IV. Sociability Scale**

**Direction**

This scale attempts to measure sociability; and on the following are listed a number of things characteristic of yourself or related to you. Consider each item carefully and put a check mark (√) in the column that shows how you agree or disagree with each item (which best represents your feelings ) according to the following a five point Likert Scale.

**“Thank you in advance!”**

1. Strongly disagree                      3. Undecided                                      5. Strongly agree  
2. Disagree                                      4. Agree

		1	2	3	4	5
No	Listed Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I enjoy spending long periods of time alone					
2.	I can make friends easily					
3.	I enjoy entertainment with others					
4	I like to be with lots of other people					
5	I have lots of friends					
6	My friends enjoy playing with me					
7	I can easily interact with strangers					
8	I can openly express my feelings with my parents					
9	I often play a leadership role in my peer group interaction					
10	I tend to withdraw from people					
11	I am at ease wit people I don't know					
12	No matter how busy I am, I will make time for a friend in need					

	gatherings					
14	People tell me that I behave appropriately					
15	When I am out with my friends, I dominate the conversation					
16	I feel uneasy in situations where I am expected to share my emotions					
17	I hate situations in which I am expected to socialize					
18	I get tense at formal gettogethers					
19	In social situations, I have something interesting to say					
20	I deserve to be loved and respected					
21	Unlike others, I really have to go out of my way to make and keep a friend					

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**V. Self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965).**

**Direction**

Self-esteem measurement is made using the Rosenberg self-esteem scale. And on the following are listed a number of things characteristic of yourself or related to you. Consider each item carefully and put a check mark (√) in the column that shows how you agree or disagree with each item (which best represents your feelings) according to the following a five point Likert scale.

**“Thank you in advance!”**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>1. Strongly disagree</b></p> <p><b>2. Disagree</b></p> <p><b>3. Undecided</b></p> | <p><b>4. Agree</b></p> <p><b>5. Strongly agree</b></p> |
|---|--|

No	Listed Items	1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others					
2.	I feel that I have a number of good qualities					
3.	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure					
4.	I am able to do things as well as most other people					
5.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of					
6.	I take a positive attitude toward myself					
7.	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself					
8.	I wish I could have more respect for myself					
9.	I certainly feel useless at times					
10.	At times I think I am no good at all.					

## Declaration

I, the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Shumet Asress

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

Date: July/2006

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor

Name: Teka Zewdie (PhD)

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