



The Effect Of Gratitude On Body Image Of Early Adult Women In Medan City

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Abstract

This study aims to determine The Effect of Gratitude on Body Image in Early Adult Women in Medan City. Based on the results of research conducted on 301 early adult female respondents aged 18–25 years in Medan City, it shows that H₀ is rejected and H₁ is accepted, which means there is a positive and significant influence between gratitude on body image, as much as 13.6% of variations in body image can be explained by the level of gratitude, while others are influenced by other factors outside the variables studied. In addition to gratitude, there are other variables or factors that also influence body image, including: Self-esteem (Rifka & Prasetyo, 2019), Social and media pressure (Perloff, 2014), Social comparison (Fardouly et al., 2015), Social support (Tiggemann & Slater, 2004) and Interpersonal Experience (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). The majority of respondents in this study had a high level of gratitude (74.4%), reflecting their ability to respond positively to life experiences, including their own physical condition. Individuals with high levels of gratitude tend to be more accepting of themselves as a whole, view their bodies as a gift, and are less affected by social pressures regarding physical appearance. These findings support the theory of Emmons & McCullough (2003), which states that gratitude is a form of positive emotion that can improve psychological well-being and self-acceptance, including physical aspects.

Keywords : Gratitude, Image, Body, Adult Women

INTRODUCTION

Today, the era of globalization has influenced almost all aspects of human life, including matters concerning appearance standards, which have also changed over time. Every human being is created by God Almighty with a unique and different appearance. Each has its own characteristics, starting from body shape, skin color, hairstyle, eye shape, and other physical features. Physical appearance is something that can be observed and assessed by others, as well as the individual themselves, so that it can give rise to perceptions and judgments. In addition, a person's assessment of their own physique, including appearance, shape, composition, and size, is known as body image.

Body image refers to an individual's personal perception of themselves, encompassing their feelings, thoughts, and emotions about their size, weight, and other body parts. This perception is important because it often correlates with their psychological well-being. In practice, individuals who have a positive evaluation of their body image tend to be more confident and satisfied with themselves. However, individuals are inextricably linked to their surroundings, which can observe and evaluate them, whether positively or negatively. However, body image is also often influenced by internal factors, such as interpersonal experiences, self-esteem, gratitude, and self-concept.

Body image is emphasized more in women than in men, causing many women to strive to achieve ideal beauty and body standards. Nowadays, beauty and a perfect body are highly desired by every woman and considered a *privilege*. This is supported by research by Buhlmann et al. (2020), which found that 41% of women focus more on their physical appearance, compared to only 27% of men.

Since childhood, women have been taught how to care for themselves, starting from how to behave, how to dress, to appearance. Therefore, appearance is very important for women to be considered beautiful both from the outside and inside. According to Chinta et al., (2023) stated that there is a stereotype in Indonesia, including in the city of Medan, that beauty must be white skin, a thin body, a tall posture, a thin face & straight hair, which seems to require women to look perfect (Chinta, Ghassani, & Lidwina, 2023). In reality, not all Indonesian women, including in the city of Medan, have these physical characteristics. Moreover, the characteristics of the people in the city of Medan are often identified with brown skin, square faces, strong jaws and hard facial lines. So, one step to meet these beauty standards is to change their body shape in various ways, such as through makeup, extreme diets, surgery, or cosmetic surgery, and in fact women will do anything to fulfill the existing beauty.

The pressure on women to maintain an attractive appearance at all times has also led to a surge in demand for plastic surgery. Demand for plastic surgery is on the rise in Indonesia. According to Yahsyi's data (Cannythea, 2021), five to six Indonesian patients come for plastic surgery every week. A survey of plastic surgeons from *the American Academy of Plastic Facial and Reconstructive Surgery* (AAFPRS) found that more than 40% of plastic surgeons stated that their patients sought plastic surgery to look perfect and presentable on social media. The annual statistical report from *the American Society of Plastic Surgeons* (ASPS) also shows that an increasing number of young adult women are undergoing cosmetic surgery to improve their appearance.

The number of Indonesian women undergoing plastic surgery is also on the rise in Korea. According to *the Medical & Wellness Team of the Korea Tourism Organization*, 2,385 Indonesian tourists came to South Korea for medical services in 2017. Of that number, 35.7% underwent plastic surgery. Data from *the Korea Health Industry Development* (KHIDI) in 2019 revealed that the number of Indonesian citizens (WNI) who undertook medical trips to South Korea reached 1.1% of the total 497,464 tourists, or around 5,472 people. This number is expected to increase in 2024, as more Indonesian tourists visit Seoul and other cities in South Korea. The main purpose is to undergo plastic surgery to enhance their appearance. Globally, body parts that are sought to beautify through plastic surgery, based on research by *the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery* (ISAPS) in 2020 include breast augmentation (16%), liposuction (15.1%), eyelid surgery (12.1%), nose job (16%), and chin and jaw surgery to make the face look slimmer. Indonesian tourists who come for plastic surgery are predominantly women aged between 19-45 years, with only a few aged 50-70 years.

The Thai government has also become a hub for international cosmetic surgery tourism, particularly in the specialty of gender-affirming surgery. According to data from *the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ISAPS)*, approximately 154,547 cosmetic procedures were performed in Thailand in 2020. ISAPS data places Thailand among the 10 Asian countries with the highest volume of invasive and non-invasive procedures. Bangkok and Phuket are the country's main cosmetic surgery centers (CNN Indonesia, 2024).

The Chairman of the Indonesian Plastic Surgeons Association (PERAPI) of North Sumatra, Dr. Frank Bietra Buchari, SpBP-RE(K), stated that in Medan City itself, the demand for plastic surgery is quite high. However, in 2018, the highest demand was for nose and breast surgery. Frank explained that plastic surgery patients are still predominantly women. He said that women who undergo this surgery are young women aged between 20-25 years old, usually to look more beautiful or fitter. Frank said that there is no valid data regarding the number of patients who undergo this plastic surgery. However, on average, there are approximately 35 cases per month.

One of the studies related to body image conducted by Mansyur et al., (2023) entitled "Skin Color Stigma towards Beauty Standards Among Social Studies Education Study Program Students of UIN Mataram in 2023", revealed that the perspective regarding beauty standards requires students to have white, smooth and clean skin first before they can be considered beautiful by most people. The stigma that arises among this group of students is characterized by various actions they show such as their consumptive behavior on beauty products, the use of filters on one of the existing applications on social media and others that can make the individual's appearance look more attractive, so it can be said that the stigma towards beauty standards has emerged and has an impact on the attitudes of students in general. (Mansyur, Sapitri, & Fidlawati, 2023)

Skin color is one of the highlights of the body. The general public's idea of perfect skin color is still a topic of discussion, in fact it often gives rise to debate. Some people think that beauty is an individual with white and smooth skin. Many people also have different opinions, for example, beauty is seen from one's attitude, or there are also those who think that beauty is an individual with brown or slightly dark skin, because it looks exotic. There are many thoughts on the meaning of beauty in society, but currently most people believe that beauty is someone who has white and clean skin. Or it can be concluded that the current standard of female beauty is having white skin (Mansyur et al., 2023) . This shows that body image problems are prone to occur in women, especially in early adulthood. Chakraborty & De (2014) revealed that the majority of subjects, as much as 60% of early adults, experienced *body image problems* . Sumanty et al. (2018) also revealed that 52.7% of early adult female students aged 18-25 at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung had negative *body image* . Furthermore, Ivana's (2021) research on early adult women aged 20-40 found that the majority of participants, 68%, had *negative body image* .

In Santrock (2011), early adulthood is a term that describes the transition period from adolescence to adulthood. The early adulthood age group is 18 to 25 years old and is characterized by experimental and search activities. In completing their developmental tasks, early adulthood must complete their developmental tasks in living daily life and not face problems that will affect the next stage of development. However, it is possible that in every individual's development will face challenges in life, such as: from personal, physical, social, cultural aspects, there are always things that affect the development of each individual. Early adulthood is said to be the peak of physical development, which means physical appearance plays a crucial role. When entering early adulthood, many changes

occur in a woman's body, such as body fat which will continue to increase until the end of the age of 20 years, strength and muscle health that begin to show signs of decline around the age of 30 years (Akbar, 2022) .

They naturally desire to appear attractive to others, especially the opposite sex. Women believe that having an ideal and attractive body will improve their love life and make it easier to engage in romantic relationships. The role of physical attractiveness in romantic relationships has long been crucial. To fulfill this desire, women are obligated to maintain their bodies and overall appearance, as body shape is a highly sought-after issue among many people (Partini, Yuwono, Amini, Salma, & Sumarno, 2023) .

Body image is a person's perception of their physical appearance, whether positive or negative, which comes from emotional experiences or feelings. (Edelweiss, 2020) . Excessive focus and judgment on one's appearance can lead to dissatisfaction with one's body image and negatively impact psychological well-being. Women's desire to appear beautiful and attractive to others tends to be more dominant (Suseno & Dewi, 2024) . This leads women, especially those in early adulthood, to do anything to appear more charming and beautiful to others. This includes looking at the physical appearance or body shape of other women, whom they consider ideal and beautiful. This often leads to women feeling dissatisfied with their physical appearance.

Previously, researchers conducted a preliminary survey by distributing *online questionnaires* to 30 young adult women aged 18-25 in Medan. The following are the results of the preliminary survey, which used "Yes / No" statements based on the indicators of the variables to be tested.

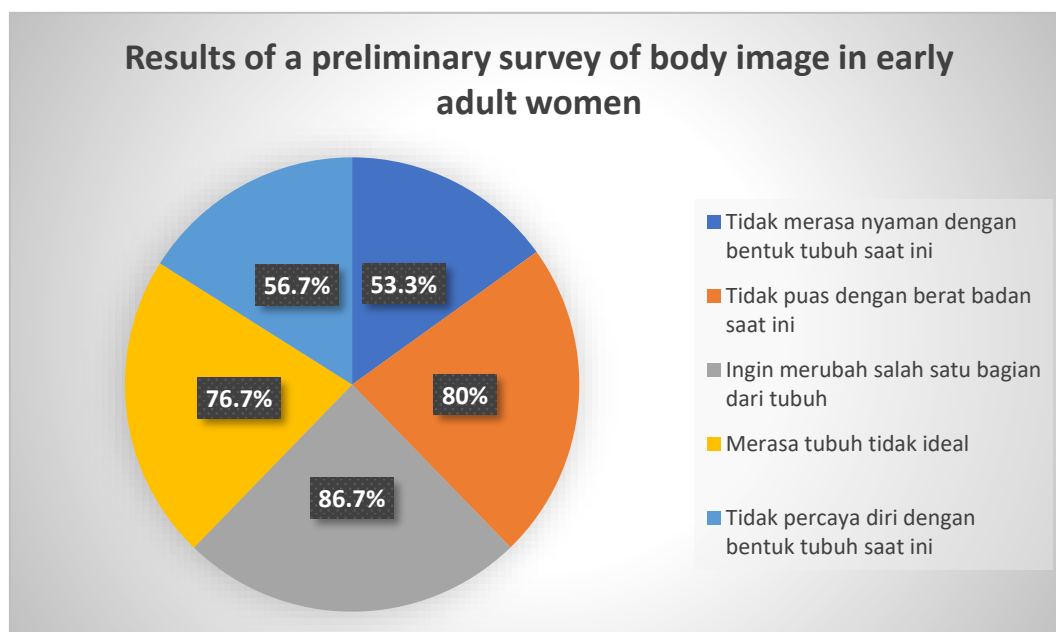


Figure 1. Results of an initial survey of body image in early adult women

Based on the survey results above, it can be concluded that young adult women in Medan have a low body image. Many young adult women feel uncomfortable and unattractive, so when they want to do something, they try to change their appearance, such as always wearing makeup (83.3%). and always edit photos with filters before sharing them on social media (80%), so that their appearance looks perfect. Furthermore, the majority of young

adult women also feel dissatisfied with their current weight and consider their body to be less than ideal. As a result, many young adult women have a desire to change, such as improving one part of their body to look perfect. In fact, there are 36.7% of young adult women who participate in slimming programs such as taking medication and 63.3% of young adult women who restrict their diets extremely due to concerns about their body shape. This is done because of dissatisfaction with their current body shape and makes young adult women feel insecure.

According to Romansyah and Natalia (2012) explains that body image is divided into 3 forms or criteria, an individual who has a good or positive body image, is someone who always views himself positively, feels comfortable with the conditions he has, is happy with himself no matter what his current form and condition. Then, an individual who has a moderate or sufficient body image, is an individual who is still unstable and still doubtful in assessing himself. Individuals sometimes feel comfortable with the body they have, and sometimes they also feel uncomfortable with themselves. However, individuals who have a sufficient body image can still accept the conditions they have well. Then, an individual who has a bad/low body image, is someone who is not confident, always feels inferior with the conditions he has, tends to worry easily and is unable to accept the conditions he has, so that individuals who have a bad body image tend to feel uncomfortable and have a high desire to change their physical appearance.

Women generally have a relatively strong desire to appear beautiful and charming in public. This understanding makes beauty and allure with an ideal body a priority for women, and a decline in physical beauty is an undesirable state.

An individual who is unable to achieve the changes that occur in their physique will certainly feel sad, disappointed, angry, and will give rise to various other negative emotions, such as shame and anxiety about the individual's physique, so that the individual will feel dissatisfied with their body shape. Dissatisfaction with body shape is a person's negative view of their body shape that arises due to an imbalance between the ideal physical shape and the actual physical shape (Dewi & Dianovinina, 2022) .

This is supported by research conducted by Tumakaka et al., (2022). This research was conducted on five people who met the characteristics, regarding dissatisfaction with body shape using qualitative research methods, the results were negative perceptions of body shape where the subjects assessed their bodies negatively, for example feeling ugly & too fat or thin. This situation then gave rise to various negative emotions such as shame, sadness, and anger. This caused the subjects to avoid social activities, they felt hesitant to participate in social activities such as organizing & studying because of lack of self-confidence, fear of socializing, and feeling uncomfortable. Then the subjects carried out body camouflage where individuals hid their body shape from the actual condition, for example wearing clothes with certain styles and using *makeup* to cover up flaws (Tumakaka, Meizara, Dewi, & Hamid, 2022) .

Women who experience dissatisfaction will express dissatisfaction with their bodies because they feel they are dark, fat, thin, not tall enough, dissatisfied with their nose, thighs, stomach and seeing someone more attractive than themselves so they have a desire to change their body shape. It was also found in the case of a student who went on an excessive diet by consuming eggs and boiled potatoes without rice for months which made her fall ill because she forced herself to have an ideal body as she wanted, namely having a thin body. From the study, it was stated that the student did whatever it took to achieve the ideal body,

without thinking about the harmful effects she would receive and only focused on the results (Novianti & Merida, 2021) .

Social media also plays a significant role in shaping women's body image assessments and satisfaction with their body image in early adulthood. Because on social media, everyone freely captures moments they find attractive, one of which is their physical appearance. Consequently, it's inevitable to see others' appearances and ultimately compare them to themselves. This is what leads to low body image in early adulthood women, as they constantly feel inadequate and perceive beauty standards as existing in others and not within themselves. According to *Napoeloncent's Social Media Demographics Data* (2021), Instagram is dominated by 25% of women aged 18-25.

This is proven by Nurul Syfa et al., (2024) entitled *Analysis of Body Image in Early Adult Women: A Study on Female Students at Bhayangkara University, Jakarta Raya*, revealed that there is a fairly strong influence between the intensity of Instagram use and the level of *body image* , which is expressed by a correlation value of 13.7%. This means that the higher the intensity of Instagram use, the lower the level of body image perceived by early adult women (Nurul Syfa et al., 2024) .

When individuals are able to accept their own strengths and weaknesses, whether in character, physical appearance, or other aspects, they will experience a high level of happiness. This statement is supported by research from Maulani (2019) , which showed that body image had a positive effect on happiness levels in early adult women, with a 24.3% positive effect.

This shows that an individual's satisfaction with their physical appearance has a strong and significant influence on their level of happiness. Therefore, the more satisfied an individual is with their physical appearance, the higher their level of happiness, especially for women. (Fitri, 2020) . And conversely, the more an individual feels dissatisfied with their physical appearance, the lower the individual's level of happiness will be (Maulani, 2019).

Research on body image is increasingly important to conduct because nowadays many problems have been discovered, where low body image affects an individual's psychological well-being. Moreover, in today's era, physical appearance is one that greatly influences in various things. For example, individuals who have a negative *body image* feel insecure and afraid of having difficulty in getting a job, because companies currently have high competition so in this case also consider the physical appearance of prospective employees, then feel anxious and afraid of having difficulty in finding a life partner, because appearance is one of the attractions to start a relationship, so, body shape is often used as a benchmark for beauty to determine the survival of a relationship (Margaretta & Rozali, 2018) .

One internal factor that contributes to a person's body image is gratitude, which exists in women. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), gratitude, or in English, gratitude, is a feeling that arises when someone feels grateful and thankful for the goodness received, whether from God, those closest to them, or their environment. Gratitude is a form of positive emotion that can encourage someone to reciprocate, appreciate, and be thankful for everything received. Chowdhury (2021) suggests that positive psychology defines gratitude as a way for someone to recognize the good things that happen in their life. Psychologists define gratitude as a positive emotional response when giving or receiving something positive from others. (Sukmawati, 2022) .

For individuals to be positively satisfied with their body image, women need to develop a sense of gratitude. Women who are able to know themselves are also able to accept

themselves, regardless of their condition, depending on their positive impression of their body. The more women are able to convey positive impressions, such as gratitude, about their body image, the greater their satisfaction with their body image and their psychological well-being will improve. This is in line with the opinion of Homan, KJ, & Tylka (2018), who stated that women who are grateful experience increased acceptance and appreciation of their body shape.

This is further supported by research conducted by Rahmad (2020), which states that gratitude has a positive correlation with body image in late adolescent girls. The higher their gratitude, the higher their satisfaction with their body shape and body image. Shabira & Uyun (2023) also stated that gratitude can influence the body image of female K-pop fans. This is because being grateful for their body shape can make women feel satisfied with their physique. (Rohman & Fauziah, 2023).

In Dwinanda (2016), it was revealed that increasing a person's positive feelings, such as gratitude, can reduce dissatisfaction with their physique. This is proven by the results of research conducted by Dwinanda (2016), which shows a positive and significant correlation between gratitude and body image. Therefore, the higher the gratitude, the more positive the body image will be. Individuals who show gratitude tend to have higher psychological well-being than those who are not grateful. Being accustomed to gratitude can help focus on the positive dimensions of life and support efforts to overcome negative body image beliefs. Gratitude can improve an individual's body image (Geraghty, Wood & Hyland, 2010).

Furthermore, gratitude is also associated with positive emotions such as happiness, pride, and hope (Emmons & Shelton, 2002). Gratitude not only makes people happy in the moment, but it can also be long-lasting (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). In other words, gratitude can encourage someone to give their life more meaning and be satisfied with it (Geraghty, Wood & Hyland, 2010).

Women's body image and gratitude influence their *psychological well-being*. Individuals with a positive body image tend to have high levels of psychological well-being because they are able to appreciate their bodies. Conversely, women with a negative body image tend to experience dissatisfaction with their physique, which can make it difficult to express gratitude and impact psychological well-being (Lee et al., 2014).

One activity that can be done to reduce body dissatisfaction is writing gratitude. The reduction in body image dissatisfaction is in accordance with research by Geraghty, et al., (2010) which states that writing gratitude can reduce body image dissatisfaction. Through the process of writing, individuals can record or immortalize the things they are grateful for in life on a regular basis. In line with research conducted by Toepfer, & Walker (2009), it explains that the activity of writing gratitude at some time is important for increasing subjective well-being (happiness, life satisfaction, and gratitude). Life satisfaction, happiness, and gratitude are part of the aspect of peace of mind.

Therefore, women with high gratitude differ from women with low gratitude. Whitbourne & Skultety (2002) explain that body image is the basic foundation of the entire human personality. If a person has a positive way of thinking, one of which is gratitude, then she is able to accept the physical changes she experiences, but if the woman thinks negatively, then she is less accepting or rejecting. Gratitude allows individuals to feel more positive in improving their body image in a more positive direction. Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in examining the effect of gratitude on body image in early adult women in the city of Medan.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted on young adult women in Medan City. This research is an organized and systematic study to obtain answers as a form of problem solving from the phenomena established in this study. Thus, this research is included in the type of quantitative research. According to Soegiyono (2011), quantitative research methods are research methods carried out based on empiricism in examining populations or samples in research that have been determined by researchers who aim to test the hypotheses that have been established in the study. Kuncoro (2018) defines a variable as something that can differentiate or change values. According to Soegiyono (2011), a research variable is defined as an attribute that has variations obtained from subjects, objects, or activities that can be studied and researched to draw conclusions. In this study there are 2 (two) research variables, namely: the independent variable and the dependent variable. Gratitude is a feeling of gratitude or an expression of gratitude felt by young adult women for the kindness, gifts, and recognition from God, others, and their surroundings, which will then influence early adult women to respond to a situation. With gratitude, early adult women will be more able to accept and love themselves. Gratitude will be measured using aspects according to Emmons, McCullough & Tsang (2002), including: Intensity, Frequency, Span, Density.

According to Sekaran and Bougie (Slamet & Prasetyaningrum, 2020), a subject is one of the members of a sample. Research subjects are the group that will serve as the source of data for a study. The subjects in this study were early adult women aged 18-25 years and residing in Medan (Pratama, Prasamtiwi, & Sartika, 2022) .

A research population is a collection of objects or subjects with specific characteristics identified by the researcher for study. This population is then used to draw conclusions. Based on this definition, the objects or subjects of this study are young adult women aged 18-25 in Medan City.

A sample is a subset of a population that has characteristics and a size that corresponds to the population. If the population is large and the researcher cannot study everything in the population, the researcher establishes sampling criteria for this study. Susilana (2015) states that a sample is a portion of a group of objects or subjects taken for research and considered representative of the entire population (Shabira & Uyun, 2023) .

In this study, researchers collected data by distributing a research scale online through WhatsApp groups, Instagram, and private chats with respondents. The distributed scale also included the research criteria. The criteria were early adult women aged 18 to 25, residing in Medan. After collecting all 371 respondents, the researchers analyzed the data using SPSS version 25 for Windows.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Subject Overview

This study required 301 early adult women aged 18-25 in Medan City. Based on a scale distributed by the researchers to the subjects, a description of the subjects was obtained based on age, residence, and employment status.

Description of research subjects based on age

Based on the age of respondents in the research sample, it can be seen that the number of female samples with an age range of 18 years was 31 people (10%), 19 years old was 30 people (10%), 20 years old was 55 people (18%), 21 years old was 77 people (26%), 22 years old was 63 people (21%), 23 years old was 22 people (7%), 24 years old was 14 people (5%), and 25 years old was 9 people (3%). The description of research subjects based on age can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Description of research subjects based on age

Age	Amount	Percentage (%)
18	31	10%
19	30	10%
20	55	18%
21	77	26%
22	63	21%
23	22	7%
24	14	5%
25	9	3%
Total	301	100%

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing uses simple linear regression which aims to see the influence of independent variables on the dependent variables in this study.

The hypothesis in this study is:

H1: There is an influence of gratitude on body image in early adult women in the city of Medan.

H0: There is no influence of gratitude on body image in early adult women in Medan city.

To test this hypothesis, calculations can be carried out using the *SPSS 20.0 for Windows program*, and the following values are obtained:

Table 2. Results of Simple Linear Regression Test

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2008.487	1	2008.487	46,909	.000 ^b
	Residual	12802.198	299	42,817		
	Total	14810.684	300			

a. Dependent Variable: BODY_CITRA
 b. Predictors: (Constant), GRATITUDE

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the significance value (p) = .000 where $p < 0.05$. Thus, it can be interpreted that the gratitude variable has an influence on body image. Therefore, hypothesis H1 is accepted, which means there is an influence between gratitude and body image in early adult women in Medan City.

Table 3. Hypothesis Test Results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.368	0.136	0.133	6,543

Based on the results of the regression analysis conducted in this study on the effect of gratitude on body image, the R value of 0.368 indicates a moderate relationship between the two variables. The R Square value of 0.136 means that approximately 13.6% of changes in body image can be explained by gratitude. Meanwhile, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.136 indicates that this model can explain approximately 13.6% of the variability, after taking into account the number of variables used. *The Standard Error of the Estimate* of 6.543 indicates how large the error in predicting body image is.

Table 4. T-Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error			
1	25,697	3,152	0.368	8,151	0.000
(Constant)					
Gratitude	0.369	0.054		6,849	0.000

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that in column B the constant (a) is 25.697, while the Gratitude value is 0.369. So the regression equation/model can be written:

$$Y = a + Bx$$

$$Y = 25.697 + 0.369 x$$

The conclusion is that the higher the gratitude, the higher the body image, and vice versa, if the lower the gratitude, the lower the body image of early adult women in the city of Medan.

Discussion

This study aims to determine whether gratitude influences body image in young adult women in Medan. Based on data analysis conducted on 301 young adult women aged 18–25, gratitude was found to have a positive and significant influence on body image. This means that the higher an individual's level of gratitude, the more positive their body image. Based on the results of the study, it shows that as many as 224 (74.4%) early adult women in the city of Medan have a high category of gratitude, which means they are able to respond to small things with feelings of gratitude, realize and be grateful for various aspects of life consistently: family, health, experiences, even trials, often express gratitude, both verbally (verbal) and in the form of behavior (non-verbal), and have high positive emotions: happy, satisfied, full of hope. As many as 25.2% of early adult women reported having moderate gratitude. And only 0.3% of early adult women have low gratitude. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Anisa & Ibrahim (Maulani, 2019) which also found

that the majority of early adult women have high gratitude, although there are a small number in the moderate and low categories.

On the other hand, the results of the study also showed that 200 (66.4%) early adult women had a moderate body image, meaning they had a moderate or adequate body image, but women were still unstable and still doubtful in assessing themselves. Women sometimes feel comfortable with the body they have, and sometimes they also feel uncomfortable with themselves. However, individuals who have an adequate body image can still accept their condition well (Nurul Syfa et al., 2024) . A total of 30.9% of early adult women reported having a high body image. And only 2.7% of early adult women had a low body image. This finding is in line with research by Punitha & Aswathy (2022), which also found that most early adult women had a moderate body image, although there were a small number with high and low categories.

The results of the regression analysis in this study found a relationship between gratitude and body image, with a correlation coefficient value of R of 0.368, indicating a positive relationship between gratitude and body image. This indicates that the higher a person's level of gratitude, the more positive their body image, although the strength of the relationship is relatively low. These results are consistent with research by Rahmad (2020), which found that the higher the level of gratitude, the higher the body image in late adolescent girls.

In addition, Davis et al. (Suseno & Dewi, 2024) also found that gratitude has a positive relationship with *body appreciation* . This research suggests that gratitude helps individuals see their bodies as worthy of appreciation and acceptance, regardless of their physical shape and size. With gratitude, individuals focus more on their body's functions and positive qualities, rather than on flaws or inconsistencies with beauty standards.

Gratitude is one pathway to psychological well-being, where it refers to positive emotional reactions to events and aspects of one's life that contribute to life satisfaction, including satisfaction with one's body image. This finding is consistent with research findings, which also show that individuals with high levels of gratitude are more able to accept their bodies as they are, reducing shame, anxiety, and the desire to drastically alter their appearance.

Then the coefficient of determination R Square value of 0.136 indicates that 13.6% of the variation in body image can be explained by the level of gratitude, while the rest is influenced by other factors not included in this study. This finding strengthens the understanding that although gratitude has a contribution to the formation of a positive body image, other factors such as social beauty standards, social media pressure, self-esteem and interpersonal experiences also play a role in shaping an individual's body image (Basri, Julianti, & Basri, 2022) . Gratitude provides an effective contribution of 13.6% to *body image* in early adult women in the city of Medan with a positive direction of influence on *body image* , meaning that the higher the gratitude, the higher *the body image* .

This finding aligns with the theory proposed by Emmons & McCullough (Hidayati, Pujiana, & Fadillah, 2020) , which states that gratitude is a positive emotion that can improve a person's psychological well-being, including self-acceptance and physical evaluation. Individuals who experience gratitude tend to view their bodies as a gift, not a deficiency, thus fostering self-acceptance and lowering physical *perfectionism* .

This is reinforced by previous research by Homan & Tylka (Lisa Astini, Nur Afni Safarina, & Ella Suzanna, 2022) , which showed that actively practicing gratitude can increase body satisfaction and reduce social pressures toward beauty standards. In the context of young

adult women in Medan, who are vulnerable to social expectations regarding ideal bodies, gratitude may act as a protective factor, helping individuals maintain a positive body image. Practically, the results of this study have important implications for education, families, and psychological counseling. Increasing gratitude can be incorporated into self-development programs or mental health training, whether in the form of gratitude journals, gratitude meditations, or daily reflections. The goal is to help individuals see themselves more holistically and positively, particularly in terms of how they accept their bodies. Thus, it can be concluded that gratitude acts as an internal factor that can strengthen positive body perceptions, despite often unrealistic external beauty standards. Although gratitude is not the sole determinant, it still has a positive contribution to body image. Gratitude encourages individuals to view their bodies from a more accepting and appreciative perspective, rather than solely based on external beauty standards. Therefore, strengthening gratitude can be used as a psychological intervention strategy to help individuals develop a healthier and more positive body image.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted on 301 early adult female respondents aged 18–25 years in Medan, it shows that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted, which means there is a positive and significant influence between gratitude and body image, as much as 13.6% of variations in body image can be explained by the level of gratitude, while others are influenced by other factors outside the variables studied. In addition to gratitude, there are other variables or factors that also influence body image, including: Self-esteem, Social and media pressure, Social comparison, Social support and Interpersonal experience.

The majority of respondents in this study had a high level of gratitude (74.4%), reflecting their ability to respond positively to life experiences, including their own physical condition. Individuals with high levels of gratitude tend to be more accepting of themselves as a whole, view their bodies as a gift, and are less affected by social pressures regarding physical appearance. These findings support the theory of Emmons & McCullough (Annishaliha, 2018) , which states that gratitude is a form of positive emotion that can improve psychological well-being and self-acceptance, including physical aspects.

Meanwhile, 66.4% of respondents had a moderate body image. This indicates that most young adult women still experience *ambivalence* in their body image. They sometimes feel satisfied with their bodies, but at other times they may feel uncomfortable, especially when compared to ideal standards established by social media or their surroundings. This aligns with research by Romansyah & Natalia (Selan, Nabuasa, & Damayanti, 2020) , which states that women with moderate body image are still in the adaptation and adjustment phase of their body image.

Thus, gratitude plays a significant role as an internal factor in developing a healthier and more positive body image. While not the sole determinant, gratitude can provide a psychological buffer against external pressures and social beauty standards. Therefore, strengthening gratitude can be an effective psychological intervention strategy to help young adult women develop self-acceptance and create a more positive, realistic, and balanced body image.

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