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NEGOTIATING THE FEMALE-ATHLETE PARADOX: EXAMINING GENDER
IDENTITY AND BODY IMAGE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	iv
List of Tables.....	viii
Abstract.....	ix
Chapter	
	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	
Overview.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
Gender Identity Development.....	4
Measuring gender identity.....	5
Athletic Identity and Gender Identity.....	9
Body Image in Female Athletes.....	12
The media's role.....	15
Gender Identity and Body Image in Female Athletes.....	16
III. METHODS	
Participants.....	25
Instruments.....	26
Demographics Questionnaire.....	26
Athletic Identity Measurement Scale.....	26
Hoffman's Gender Identity Scale.....	27
Objectified Body Consciousness Scale.....	29
Social Physique Anxiety Scale.....	30
Procedure.....	32
Research Questions.....	32
Data Analysis.....	32
IV. RESULTS	
Preliminary Analysis.....	34
Multiple Regression Analysis: Athletic Identity, Gender Self-Confidence, Body Image.....	35
V. DISCUSSION	
Limitations and Future Research.....	38

Appendix A: Instruments.....	58
Demographic Questionnaire.....	58
Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS).....	59
Hoffman Gender Scale (Form A) (Revised).....	60
Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS).....	61
Social Physique Anxiety Scale (SPA).....	64

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: <i>Frequencies and percentages of participants by sport</i>	54
Table 2: <i>Reliability, Means, and Standard Deviations Table for Predictor and Criterion Variables</i>	55
Table 3: <i>Summary of Final Step of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Objectified Body Consciousness (OBC)</i>	56
Table 4: <i>Summary of Final Step of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Social Physique Anxiety (SPA)</i>	56
Table 5: <i>Summary of Final Step of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Body Shame</i>	56
Table 6: <i>Correlations between variables</i>	57

ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of gender identity and athletic identity on body image in National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I and II female athletes. One hundred and thirty female athletes took part in the study. Participants completed a demographic questionnaire, the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale, the Hoffman Gender Scale, the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale, and the Social Physique Anxiety Scale. Two regression analyses were conducted with the Social Physique Anxiety Scale and Objectified Body Consciousness Scale as criterion variables. The regression analyses revealed both full models predicted significant variance in the criterion variables. More specifically, after controlling for age and sport, athletic identity, and gender self-acceptance were found to be significant predictors of objectification and social physique anxiety scores.

Chapter One

Introduction

Overview

With the enforcement of Title IX, female athletes have obtained substantial gains in the realm of sport. Unfortunately, despite these gains female athletes continue to encounter various problems as they enter into the historically male-dominated sport culture that reinforces the values and traits associated with stereotypical views of masculinity. More specifically, since the culture of athletics is traditionally viewed as possessing stereotypical masculine characteristics, females who immerse themselves in this athletic culture find themselves living within two cultures: the sport culture, emphasizing stereotypical masculine characteristics and the larger Western social culture where traditional views of femininity clash with sport ideals (Krane, Choi, Baird, Aimar, & Kauer, 2004). Scholars suggest that, within the traditional dualist perspective of Western culture, the traditionally labeled masculine traits of physical power, competition, aggression, and toughness that are emphasized in sport are incompatible with the traditional stereotypical traits of femininity.

Proceeding with this line of reasoning, researchers have hypothesized being a female athlete creates a paradox in which women experience dissonance in identifying with their two incompatible roles of athlete and woman, thereby creating a gender role conflict (Ross & Shinew, 2008; Royce, Gebelt, & Duff, 2003). Further research in this area has also found female athletes who experience gender role conflict report significant body image concerns (Miller & Levy, 1996). Considering research has shown negative body image increases the risk of female athletes developing eating

disorders, further insight into the factors that contribute to negative body image in female athletes is essential (Berry & Howe, 2000). Thus, exploring the potential influence of gender identity on body image issues for female athletes may provide meaningful information.

While research suggests female athletes may experience a paradox and thus gender role conflict, recent research analyzing the female-athlete paradox indicates there is no significant difference between female athletes and nonathletes in their experience of gender role conflict (Cox & Thompson, 2000; George, 2005; Hall, Durborow, & Progen, 1986; Lantz & Schroeder, 1999; Miller & Heinrich, 2001; Miller & Levy, 1996; Ross & Shinen, 2007; Ross & Shinen, 2008; Royce et al.). This along with other evidence suggests female athletes are successfully negotiating the female athlete paradox. Thus the question emerges: How are female athletes negotiating their athletic and gender identity? Qualitative research (Cox and Thompson, 2000; Greenleaf, 2002; Krane, et al, 2004, Krane, Michalenok, & Stiles-Shipley, 2001; Ross & Shinen, 2008) indicates female athletes negotiate this conflict by isolating these two competing roles. Nevertheless, research also suggests that female athletes report discontent with their bodies not meeting the socially accepted standards of femininity which, in turn, may contribute to feelings of social physique anxiety and objectification. Moreover, qualitative research shows while female athletes engage in behaviors society deems feminine, they do not feel the current social definition of femininity fully represents their experiences as females (Ross & Shinen, 2008). Therefore, research utilizing instruments that perpetuate Western culture's limited dualistic view of femininity and masculinity may not fully capture female athletes' experiences of gender identity.

In addition to gender identity measurement limitations, previous research on the female-athlete paradox has assumed homogeneity among female athletes' level of athletic identity. In other words, many researchers have assumed participating in sport equals a high athletic identity. However, research indicates athletes vary in the extent to which they identify with the athlete role. Furthermore, the salience of their athletic identity changes overtime (Brewer, Raalte, Linder, 1993).

Statement of the Problem

Considering the limitations of current quantitative data examining female athletes' gender identity, the present study expands upon this research by examining whether the Hoffman Gender Identity Scale can shed additional light on how female athletes negotiate the seemingly incompatible roles: athlete and woman (Ross & Shiner, 2008; Royce et al., 2000). Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to examine how female athletes negotiate the various cultural discourses in larger Western society and the athletic culture utilizing a measure designed to more fully capture the complex nature of feminine gender identity. In other words, this study will explore the following research questions: (a) Does athletic identity relate to the importance female athletes place on their self-defined femininity (gender self-definition)? (b) Does athletic identity relate to how comfortable female athletes feel as members of their gender based on their definition (gender self-acceptance)? (c) Do athletic identity, gender self-definition, and gender self-acceptance predict significant variation in objectified body consciousness? (d) Do athletic identity, gender self-definition, and gender self-acceptance predict significant variation in social physique anxiety?

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Gender Identity Development

Gender Identity Development Theory. Scholars acknowledge that gender differences do exist between females and males (e.g., Bem, 1977; Spence & Buckner, 2000). However, while sex is determined by biology, physiology, and hormones, gender is constructed through socially determined boundaries of how we think about and relate to females and males (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Therefore, once sex differences are identified based on biological and physiological differences (male vs. female), gender is then continually established based on these categories through displays which are socially determined as being appropriate for his or her sex (Bordo, 1993; West & Zimmerman). Through this process, Western culture has created limiting dualistic categorizations of what it means to be feminine or masculine (Bordo; Spence & Buckner; West & Zimmerman). These limiting definitions of gender describe masculinity as being competent, aggressive, independent, striving, and conscious; whereas femininity is described as being passive, dependent, nurturing, relational, and appearance focused (Bordo; Hall, Durborow, & Progen, 1986; Krane et al., 2001; Markula, 1995; Markula, 2003; Messner, 1988; Ross & Shinew, 2008; West & Zimmerman). In fact, recently sociology and psychology researchers have criticized the limitations of the current gender identity instruments which perpetuate this traditional dualistic perspective of gender (Hoffman, 2001; Hoffman & Borders, 2001; Lantz & Schroeder, 1999; Spence & Buckner).

This dualistic gender perspective arises from socialization processes and result in socially sanctioned gender behaviors which occur through complex “socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits” as natural expressions of masculinity and femininity (West & Zimmerman, p. 126). Therefore, rather than gender being based on our biological sex, gender is something we “do” in our interactions to convey what we would like about our sexual natures using conventional behaviors (West & Zimmerman, p. 129). Furthermore, because society identifies gender as arising out of one’s biological sex, it is argued that gender is a continuous part of one’s identity despite the act one is engaging in. For instance, while other roles (such as being nurse or student) tend to be situational identities, gender is pervasive, thus, “gender is not a set of traits, nor a variable, nor a role, but the product of social doings” that are embedded in everyday interactions (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 129). In fact, gender is usually used to provide a more detailed description of a role. For instance, when discussing an athlete who is female, we specify by saying female athlete. Therefore, regardless of the activity in which we engage, one can argue that we are constantly within the role of gender. This begs the question: “Can we ever *not* do gender?” (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 137). This argument is interesting considering scholars argue “if female athletes can maintain a psychological separation of the athletic self from the feminine self, there would appear to be no basis for . . . gender role conflict” (Royce et al., 2003, p. 10).

Measuring Gender Identity. As mentioned earlier, researchers have recently voiced concern over the limitations of current instruments used to analyze gender (Hoffman, 2001; Hoffman, 2006; Hoffman, Hattie, & Borders, 2005; Spence &

Buckner, 2000). Despite the fact researchers have rejected the early biological/essentialist explanation of gender differences, they have unfortunately retained the traditional dualistic perspectives of femininity and masculinity by utilizing instruments that measure stereotypical personality differences in males and females such as the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) and the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Andre & Holland, 1995; Hall et al., 1986; Houseworth, Peplow, & Thirer, 1989; Koivula, 1995; Lantz & Schroeder, 1999; Miller & Levy, 1996; Spence & Buckner, 2000). Scholars also argue that since definitions of what is deemed masculine and feminine are socially constructed, the complex multifaceted nature of masculinity and femininity cannot be fully captured. Furthermore, research has shown the current instruments (BSRI and PAQ), which were first developed 25 years ago, may not fully reflect the changes that have occurred within society (Hoffman et al., 2001). For instance, since the development of these instruments, there have been substantive changes within society that have reshaped what Western culture deems feminine (Hoffman; Hoffman & Borders; Spence & Buckner, 2000), e.g., the large influx of women into athletics.

In an attempt to respond to the limitations of previous gender identity instruments and societal changes, Hoffman (2001) proposed a model for understanding and measuring masculinity and femininity which focuses on individuals' perceptions of self as a gendered being (Hoffman & Borders, 2001). Her model for better understanding and measuring masculinity and femininity is based on Lewin's (1984) construct of "gender self-confidence" (Hoffman, 2006, p. 187). According to Hoffman, gender self-confidence is defined as "the intensity of an individual's belief that he meets

his personal standards for masculinity (maleness) or that she meets her personal standards for femininity (femaleness)” (p. 187-188). Hoffman emphasizes that the Hoffman Gender Scale (HGS) is not intended as a measure to capture all aspects of masculinity and femininity, but rather to measure gender self-confidence as one component of gender identity. In an attempt to measure the overarching component of gender self-confidence, the HGS is composed of two subscales: gender self-definition and gender self-acceptance. While gender self-definition refers to the degree of importance an individual places on her/his self-defined femininity or masculinity, gender self-acceptance refers to how comfortable an individual is as a member of his or her gender based on their definition. Individuals who have high gender self-acceptance view themselves positively as a female or a male, but do not necessarily feel their gender is a critical part of their identity.

Hoffman (2004) analyzed the relationship of gender self-confidence to subjective well-being within an ethnically diverse population. The results of this study showed there was no correlation between gender self-definition and subjective well-being for women or men; however, gender self-acceptance was found to be correlated with subjective well-being for women and men (Hoffman). According to Hoffman, this finding was expected considering “it is not the degree to which one defines oneself by one’s gender but rather an individual’s comfort with their self-defined gender (self-acceptance) . . . that would contribute to subjective well-being” (Hoffman, p. 189). In other words, unlike how comfortable one feels as a member of their gender, the degree of importance an individual places on their self-defined gender does not directly impact psychological health.

Hoffman (2006) further explored the HGS by examining women's levels of gender self-acceptance and self-definition compared to the statuses of feminist and womanist identity development. In this study, Hoffman found gender self-definition to be positively correlated with Revelation, Embeddedness/Emanation, and Active Commitment statuses of feminist identity development and the Immersion-Emersion status of womanist identity development. Hoffman also found gender self-acceptance to be positively correlated with Synthesis and Active Commitment statuses of feminist identity development and the Internalization status of womanist identity development. These findings support the hypothesis that women's contentment with their identity as a woman is related to an Achieved Female Identity status. Additionally, gender self-acceptance was negatively correlated with the Encounter and Immersion-Emersion statuses of womanist identity development. This supports the idea that women who are in a crisis or in search of their female identity were likely to be uncomfortable with their identity as a woman.

Furthermore, in comparing ethnically diverse females' levels of gender self-acceptance and self-definition to the statuses of feminist and womanist identity development, Hoffman (2006) found a significant positive correlation of gender self-acceptance with ethnic identity which suggests a "somewhat parallel process of identity development for women with respect to gender and ethnicity; that is, women with an achieved female identity also frequently possess an achieved ethnic identity" (p.366). While gender self-definition's association with ethnic identity and the Active Commitment achieved female identity status may provide additional support for the

parallel process described above, gender self-definition was not related to the other two achieved female identity development statuses.

Athletic Identity and Gender Identity in Female Athletes

Because gender is culturally determined, feminists have consistently questioned and challenged current social definitions of gender. They have also argued that while dominant culture sets standards of what it means to be feminine (ideal body, thin, and toned), women are neither powerless victims of cultural constructs nor are they free from the cultural constraints placed upon them (Bordo, 1993; Cox & Thompson, 2000; Messner, 1988). Furthermore, women are also frequently exposed to various cultural discourses on the meaning of gender and within these various exposures some cultural discourses are more powerful than others. Therefore, it can be argued that while female athletes experience dominant Western society's traditional discourses on femininity, they are also immersed in an environment where women experience physical empowerment which clashes with traditional views of femininity. In addition, female athletes are frequently surrounded by teammates, other athletic peers, coaches, and various others within the sport culture, all of whom influence their identity development (Brewer et al., 1993). Therefore, it's possible that the sport environment may create a different discourse that acts as a potential "agent of women's liberation" (Therberge, 1994, p. 191). Consequently, athletics could be considered a domain where gender relations and images of traditional femininity can be challenged and changed because female athletes are in the position actively resist stereotypical views of females as passive objects primarily appreciated for their appearance. In fact, some scholars and

researchers suggest this resistance is occurring (Markula, 2003; Messner, 1998; Ross & Shiner, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, research examining gender identity has utilized instruments that retain the traditional dualistic perspectives of femininity and masculinity (Andre & Holland, 1995; Hall et al., 1986; Houseworth et al., 1989; Koivula, 1995; Lantz & Schroeder, 1999; Miller & Levy, 1996; Spence & Buckner, 2000). According to studies utilizing these instruments, male athletes do not differ from male nonathletes on masculinity; however, female athletes tend to be classified as masculine and/or androgynous significantly more than female nonathletes (Andre & Holland, 1995; Hemphill, 1998; Houseworth et al.; Ugucioni & Ballantyne, 1980). To illustrate, Ugucioni and Ballantyne (1980) were among the first to measure gender identity in female athletes using the Bem Sex Role Inventory. Like Hemphill (1998) and Andre and Holland (1995), their study found competitive athletic participants were more androgynous or masculine than noncompetitive athletes and nonathletes. Research also indicates female athletes classified as masculine reported significantly higher levels of athletic identity than participants classified as undifferentiated or feminine (Jackson & Marsh, 1986; Lantz & Schroeder, 1999). In contrast, masculine respondents were not significantly different from androgynous participants with respect to athletic identity. Furthermore, participants classified as androgynous reported higher levels of athletic identity than did participants classified as feminine. Based on these findings, the authors suggest female athletes can hold more stereotypical masculine characteristics without being less stereotypically feminine, and that female athletic involvement has positive benefits without producing any loss in stereotypical characteristics of femininity or self-

concept. Interestingly, unlike male athletes who have been shown to hold more conservative and less egalitarian attitudes towards women than male nonathletes, studies have found female athletes who scored highest on masculinity had the most liberal attitudes towards women (Houseworth et al., 1989). In summary, the studies described above suggest that the gender role orientation of female athletes is related to their athletic role, although the nature of this relationship may be unclear.

Another limiting issue with previous research analyzing female athletes' experience of gender identity and body image issues is the assumption that all high school or college athletes identify similarly with their role as athlete. In other words, many researchers have assumed participating in sport equals a high athletic identity. However, athletes vary in the extent to which they identify with the athlete role and the salience of their athletic identity changes overtime (Brewer et al., 1993).

Research analyzing athletic identity in athletes has found individuals ascribing to a more exclusive athletic identity tend to interpret themselves and events in terms of the implications on their athletic functioning (Brewer et al., 1993). Additionally, research indicates that while there are benefits associated with having a strong athletic identity, there are also many costs. For instance, when one identifies exclusively with an athletic identity, they are less likely to explore other career, education, and lifestyle options (Murphey, Peptitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Pearson & Peptitpas, 1990). Increases in athletic identity have also been shown to be associated with increases in athletes' trait and state anxiety (Masten, Tusak, & Faganel, 2006). However, research has also shown that when an individual is able to maintain a strong, but not exclusive athletic identity, they can experience long term positive psychological benefits from their athletic

identity (Kleiber & Malik, 1989). Based on research examining athletic identity, it is possible the degree to which female athletes identify with the athletic role may influence their ability to reconcile their two identities: gender identity and athletic identity.

Body Image in Female Athletes

According to the literature, body image is referred to as the internal perception an individual has about their physical or outer appearance. To examine the construct of body image in female athletes, this study utilized objectification and social physique anxiety. Objectification theory was developed to explain women's experience of body image within dominant Western society. According to this theory, Western culture views and treats females' bodies as objects that are valued primarily for their use and exploitation by others, thereby acculturating women to internalize observers' perspectives as the primary view of their physical self (Fredrickson & Roberts; Parsons & Betz, 2001; McKinley & Hyde, 1996). The basic tenet of this theory is that the "feminine body is constructed as an object of male desire and so exists to receive the gaze" of others (McKinley & Hyde, p. 183). Women have internalized this view of the female body, thereby causing women to perceive and evaluate their body based on the unachievable standards determined by dominant society (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). Once this feeling of objectification becomes internalized, women begin engaging in self-surveillance to ensure they comply with societal standards of beauty. When they do not meet these standards they experience body shame. This internalization can also lead to women feeling responsible for how their body looks and believing that if they exert enough effort they can control and comply with the unachievable standards of dominant

society. McKinley & Hyde (1996) suggest that it is this belief in the ability to control their appearance that may decrease some of the stress for women associated with body surveillance and the internalization of cultural body standards, thus providing positive psychological benefits.

Social physique anxiety has also been identified by scholars as another important variable related to negative body image in exercisers and athletes (Hart, Leary, and Rejeski, 1989). The term social physique anxiety (SPA) was coined to describe the concern one may have that others are negatively evaluating her/his body or physical appearance. Women with high social physique anxiety reported more stress during physique evaluations, experienced more negative thoughts about body appearance, and felt less comfortable having their body evaluated than did low social physique anxiety participants. Other studies have found that females who exercise to primarily enhance their appearance have high levels of SPA, and SPA may also increase women's risk of engaging in unhealthy eating and exercise behaviors (Crawford & Eklund, 1994; Eklund & Crawford, 1994; Haase, Prapavessis, & Owens, 2001; Johnson, Diehl, Petrie & Rogers, 1995; McDonald & Thompson, 1992). Krane et al. (2002) also suggests physically active women who are concerned about presenting the social ideal body shape and size of being thin and toned react with increased social physique anxiety. Social physique anxiety has also been found to be related to self-monitoring of appearance, and females who anticipate a male's gaze have significantly higher body shame and social physique anxiety (Calogero, 2004).

In an effort to develop an understanding of how participating in athletics impacts women's' body image, research has compared female athletes' body image to female

nonathletes. These studies have provided mixed results. While some studies show being an athlete increases body image, other studies show participating in sport negatively impacts body image in female athletes (Berry & Howe, 2000; Krane et al., 2002; Miller & Heinrich, 2001; Miller & Levy, 1996; Raalte, Schmelzer, Smith, & Brewer, 1998; Snyder & Kivlin, 1975; Thompson & Fleming, 2007). Researchers are currently trying to identify possible reasons for these discrepancies.

Quantitative studies have shown female athletes may struggle with body image due to their identities as a female and an athlete. For example, Parsons and Betz (2001) found that female athletes who participate in athletics had higher body shame. Considering research has shown negative body image increases the risk of female athletes developing eating disorders, further understanding factors that contribute to negative body image in female athletes is essential (Berry & Howe, 2000). Thus, exploring the potential influence of gender identity on body image issues for female athletes may be meaningful.

Research has also suggested that the type of sport may influence competitive athletes' level of social physique anxiety (Raalte, Schmelzer, Smith, Brewer, 1998; Snyder & Kivlin, 1975; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1976). For instance, women who participated in stereotypically viewed masculine sports requiring a high degree of strength and aggressive body contact tend to have lower body image as well as lower perceived femininity than female athletes who participated in more traditional "feminine" sports (Snyder & Kivlin, 1975; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1976). This perception may be justifiable considering research indicates women with significant muscle development tend to be evaluated negatively by nonathletes as well as athletes

(Freeman, 1988; Royce, et al., 2003). In other words, it is the female athlete's physique that determines whether she is seen as feminine. (Royce et al.).

The Media's Role. There is little doubt the media plays a significant role in transmitting dominant cultures' values and definitions of what it means to be feminine (Buyesse & Embser-Herbert, 2004; Greenleaf, 2002; Haase, Prapavessis, & Owens, 2001; Harrison & Fredrickson, 2003; Krauchek, Ranson, & Vivian 1999; Salwen & Wood, 1994; Shugert, 2003; Thomsen, Bower, & Barnes, 2004). In particular, one way the media defines gender for women is through sexual objectification. Sexual objectification emphasizes society's belief that a woman's body is valued more highly than any other aspect of her being (Gurung & Chrouser, 2007; Knight & Giuliano, 2003; Smolak & Murnen, 2008; Thomsen et al., 2004). While there has been an increase in media attention of female athletes (Huffman, Tuggle, & Rosengard, 2004; Koival; Royce et al., 1996; Shifflet & Revelle, 1994), upon deeper inspection, research shows that female athletes who receive this attention are doing so by displaying socially sanctioned feminine behavior, specifically that of a sexual object.

Unfortunately, exposure to media images that emphasize an athlete's aesthetic beauty rather than athletic ability has a negative effect on physical ability and body image (Harrison & Fredrickson, 2003; Thomsen et al., 2004). While participating in athletics can have a positive effect on body image, female athletes have to contend with images that show them as objects to be looked at and evaluated based on their appearance instead of acknowledging their body as a finely-tuned instrument. For example, while female high school athletes' participation in sports appears positively related to instrumentality and an internal locus of control, both of which have been

shown to be related to higher esteem and lower psychological distress, it is also related to body shame (Parsons & Betz, 2001). This suggests females who participate in sports during high school, particularly sports associated with femininity, have concern about failing to meet cultural standards for female beauty. This is consistent with qualitative findings indicating that while female athletes are proud of their physical athletic feats, they also express discontent with their bodies not meeting the socially accepted standards of femininity (Cox & Thompson, 2000; George, 2005; Krane et al., 2001; Krane et al., 2004; Ross & Shiner, 2008).

Gender Identity and Body Image in Female Athletes

Research has found female athletes who experience gender role conflict experience a high degree of body image concerns. To illustrate, a study conducted by Miller and Levy (1996) revealed that female athletes had significantly more positive physical appearance, athletic competence, and body image self-concept than female nonathletes; however, body image self-concept emerged as significantly inversely correlated with gender role conflict.

In a group of middle school and college age female athletes and female nonathletes, Miller and Heinrich (2001) also found gender role conflict to be inversely related to participants' physical appearance, body image, and global self-concepts. However, in this study nonathletes perceived greater gender role conflict than athletes, with middle school athletes reporting the same level of gender role conflict as college athletes. As predicted, female athletes rated themselves significantly higher on instrumental attributes than female nonathletes, and female athletes had a significantly more positive self-concept than female nonathletes. In addition, the results suggest

significant inverse relationships between body image, physical appearance, and global self-concept and role conflict, suggesting that higher levels of self-concept may mediate gender role conflict.

Similarly, Parsons and Betz (2001) showed women who participated in two or more athletic seasons during high school had higher levels of personal efficacy and body shame. In fact, the results showed those participating in more sports have higher scores on personal efficacy and body shame than those participating in fewer sports. The authors suggest several tentative explanations for these findings: First, it appears as though the “potential concern over failing to meet cultural standards for female beauty” is related to higher level of sport participation, especially those emphasizing the female body and femininity (Parsons & Betz, p. 220). Additionally, “physical activity is consistently and positively related to instrumentality and an internal locus of control, both of which have been shown to be related to higher self-esteem and lower incidence of symptoms of psychological distress” (p. 220).

Interestingly, while the quantitative research analyzing female athletes’ gender role orientation has been criticized for instrumentation problems, qualitative research eschews the dualistic perspective of gender identity, thereby providing more depth and understanding of female athletes’ unique experiences. This research indicates female athletes have an understanding of traditional definitions of femininity, but they have “also constructed their own definitions of acceptable gender displays” (Ross & Shinew, 2008, p. 53). Additionally, other research indicates while female athletes are proud of their powerful bodies, they also experience varying degrees of dissonance about their bodies being more muscular than the feminine ideal (Cox & Thompson; Fallon & Jome,

2007; George, 2005; Krane et al., 2001; Krane et al., 2004; Miller & Levy, 1996; Parsons & Betz, 2001; Ross & Shinew). For example, scholars have suggested that some female athletes recognize the conflict between their athletic body and the social preference for stereotypical feminine characteristics (Cox and Thompson, 2000; Greenleaf, 2002; Krane et al, 2004, Krane et al., 2001; Ross & Shinew, 2008). Also, while some of these athletes expressed pride in their bodies, several acknowledged that strength training led to them being teased about their musculature (Greenleaf, 2002; Krane et al., 2004; Ross & Shinew, 2008). Similarly, female athletes varied in their level of discomfort regarding the conflict they experience between their athletic body and social ideals. For instance, Greenleaf (2002) found whereas one athlete described feeling uncomfortable in social situations because of her height and large muscular body, another athlete described being comfortable with her body even though she was aware her athletic body was bigger than the ideal thin female form. Therefore, it appears as though some female athletes reduce this conflict between their athletic body and social ideals when they perceive themselves primarily as an athlete. A common theme found within the interviews was the difficulties female athletes had in finding clothes to fit their body size. “Thus, while they may have liked their muscularity for the purpose of performance or feeling strong, they did not like it because it made fitting into clothes difficult” (Greenleaf, p. 1).

Along the same line, Krane et al. (2004) found athletes expressed feeling marginalized and perceived themselves as different from “normal” women, primarily due to difficulties they had with their larger and more muscular body. They described being concerned that too much muscle tone would result in them appearing less

attractive and interfere with them fitting into trendy clothing. Krane et al. (2001) also found that while some female athletes were proud of their strong, muscular bodies, they also worried that their muscularity would detract from their perceived femininity.

Furthermore, several studies found female athletes engaged in creating an image consistent with socially prescribed feminine appearances at very specific times and contexts, while at other times they chose not to (Krane et al., 2004; Ross & Shinew, 2008). Like Krane et al. (2004), Ross and Shinew (2008) indicated the female athletes “did not tirelessly perform femininity to compensate for being athletes. Rather, they seemed content in maintaining an athletic image at times while still embracing and promoting a traditional feminine image outside of sport on occasions of their choosing” (p. 52). As described by West and Zimmerman (1987), it appears as though the female athletes in these studies are “doing” and “displaying” gender by finely fitting gender to situations and modifying and transforming gender as the occasion demands. Thus, “managing such occasions so that, whatever the particulars, the outcome is seen and seeable in context as gender-appropriate or, as the case may be, gender-inappropriate” by also making sure to display gender appropriate behavior at some point (West & Zimmerman, p. 135). Therefore, while female athletes at times engaged in behaviors that fit with the stereotypical notion of femininity, they also appeared to embrace their athleticism and felt comfortable choosing not to engage in feminine behaviors in certain contexts. These findings would seem to suggest that some female-athletes may experience their gender as being separate from their athletic identity.

An additional intriguing aspect of female athletes’ experience of gender identity highlighted in the qualitative research concerns female athletes’ description of what it

means to be female. When defining femininity, studies show some female athletes focused on the importance of appearance, such as “petite and dainty,” “soft, girly, and clean”, while others relied more on specific behaviors (Krane et al., 2004, p. 319). Interestingly, in one study, the female athletes expressed a desire to deconstruct gender. This was evident by their dissatisfaction with their definitions relying primarily on stereotypes portraying women as inferior. For instance, two female athletes articulated they believed femininity could include more than just gender stereotypes. (Ross & Shiner, 2008).

Qualitative studies exploring female athletes’ experience of their femininity and body image indicate female athletes have an understanding of traditional definitions of femininity, but they have also constructed their own views of how to acceptably display gender (Harris, 2005; Ross & Greenleaf, 2006; Ross & Shiner, 2008). When asked what the term femininity meant to them, female athletes’ answers ranged from focusing on conventional descriptors such as “wearing make-up,” and being “passive” to unconventional descriptors such as managing “a career and a family . . . [and] at the same time can have time for fun. And like don’t have to dress up all the time, don’t have to sit there and look good to impress somebody else” (Ross & Shiner, p. 52). To summarize, the most common finding in these studies was that while female athletes seemed proud of and empowered by their athletic bodies, they also recognized and embraced the need to do femininity “when [they] need to” in certain contexts by focusing on creating the socially appropriate appearance, such as wearing make-up and certain clothes, and doing their hair (Ross & Shiner, p. 52).

A qualitative study conducted by Mean and Kassing (2008) reflected findings supportive of the above mentioned research. However, unique to this study was the tendency of female athletes to highlight their differences from female nonathletes and male athletes while also engaging in discourses that rendered their female identity as invisible when discussing their athlete status. This suggests that female athletes have constructed their identity by resisting other identities, thereby creating a narrow definition of what it means to be a female athlete. As Harris (2005) and Cox and Thompson (2000) found, participants in this study discussed concerns about having muscles within a culture that views female musculature as indicating a questionable sexual orientation. This interpretation of findings supports other research that indicates female athletes try to distance themselves from the possibility of being identified as a feminist and/or lesbian because of the social stigma this identity carries (Harris, 2005).

In a similar vein, research suggests female athletes' appearance is a key factor in determining if they can be considered feminine in Western society. Based on information gathered from male and female college athletes and nonathletes, it was found that depending upon the woman's physique, collegiate female athletes are respected and seen as feminine. More specifically, this study found female body builders and other women with bulky muscles were viewed as unfeminine (Royce et al., 2003). Additionally, research found female rugby players felt their physical appearance significantly negatively impacted their ability to enact the feminine gender role (Fallon & Jome, 2007). These responses suggest it is not athletics specifically, but one's physique and one's self-presentation that may affect perceptions of femininity, which is

consistent with other research (Duff, Hong, & Royce 1999; Krane et al., 2001; Maguire & Mansfield, 1998; Markula, 1995).

Some research suggests that while “it does not appear that the women athletes . . . deliberately sought to be politically active agents of resistance and change. . . their ability to develop themselves as athletes, their navigation of the sport environment . . . may allow them to resist constraining dominant ideologies” of femininity. “It is possible that some women athletes may be developing a sense of agency, rather than existing as victims of Western patriarchal society. Female athletes who are supported in the sport context and feel valued as athletes may be prompted to question gender prescriptions. However, being powerful has not replaced being sexy, and while women may be able to celebrate their athleticism, another layer of expectations has been created” (Ross & Shiner, 2008, p. 54). In fact, due to the socially induced fear of being labeled as lesbian and the subsequently marginalization, scholars suggest female athletes have the same pressure, if not more, to display the socially sanctioned correct form of femininity. Therefore, it can be argued that being a female athlete means not only expressing your competitive, physically competent characteristics, but also demonstrating you can comply with the stereotypical beauty standards society places on women.

Like female nonathletes, female athletes are well aware of which behaviors and appearances are deemed appropriately feminine by society. Females “are neither dupes nor critics of sexist culture; rather, their overriding concern is their right to be desired, loved, and successful on its terms” (Bordo, 1993, p. 20). Ironically, as female athletes who perform the socially sanctioned definition of femininity “reap benefits such as positive media attention, fan adoration, and sponsorship . . . and financial and political

clout, they reinforce the socially constructed expectations for feminine behavior and appearance of sportswomen” (Krane et al., 2004, p. 316). Thus, projecting the appropriately accepted feminine appearance and behavior to obtain the power and avoid subsequent marginalization is not without cost (Cox & Thompson, 2000; George, 2005; Harris, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Research suggests female athletes are in a unique position that may afford them the opportunity to reconstruct the definition of femininity. However, this unique context comes with additional pressures. Therefore, deepening our understanding of how female athletes’ are constructing and perceiving their gender identity and body image is important. Thus the question emerges: How do female athletes negotiate their athletic and gender identity and how does this influence their body image (Bordo, 1993; Hoffman et al., 2005; Spence & Buckner, 2000; West & Zimmerman, 1987)? Consequently, the purpose of this study is to utilize an instrument that is not confined by dualistic stereotypical gender characteristics to further examine how female athletes negotiate the various cultural discourses in larger Western society and the athletic culture in an effort to construct their experience of femininity and body image.

Based on the literature review, the following research questions are proposed:

- (a) Does athletic identity relate to the importance female athletes place on their self-defined femininity (gender self-definition)?
- (b) Does athletic identity relate to how comfortable female athletes feel as members of their gender based on their definition (gender self-acceptance)?
- (c) Do athletic identity, gender self-definition, and gender self-acceptance predict significant variation in objectified body consciousness?
- (d) Do

athletic identity, gender self-definition, and gender self-acceptance predict significant variation in social physique anxiety?

Chapter Three

Methods

Participants

A convenience sample of 130 intercollegiate female athletes from three universities in the Southwestern and Midwestern regions was obtained. Participants competing for a NCAA Division I or Division II university were solicited by the researcher via email. The sample consisted of female athletes participating in one or more of the following sports: soccer, volleyball, golf, field hockey, swimming/diving, synchronized skating, basketball, softball, rowing, track and field, cross country, and gymnastics. See Table 1 for the frequencies and percentages of the participants from each sport.

Participants ranged in age from 17 to 23 years old, with a mean of 19.5 years. The sample was made up of primarily Caucasian participants (80.8%; $n = 105$), followed by participants who self-reported as being American Indian (5.4%; $n = 7$). The remaining sample self reported their racial identity as the following: African American (3.1%; $n = 4$), multiracial/ethnic (3.1%; $n = 4$), Asian (2.3%; $n = 3$), Latina (2.3%; $n = 3$), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1.5%; $n = 2$), and 1.5% ($n = 2$) declined to respond.

Academically speaking, the majority of the sample reported being freshman (36.2%; $n = 47$), followed by sophomore (26.2%; $n = 34$), juniors (22.3%; $n = 29$), and then seniors (14.6%; $n = 19$). In terms of athletic eligibility, 40.8% ($n = 53$) identified as freshman, 29.2% ($n = 38$) as sophomore, 19.2% ($n = 25$) as juniors, and 10.8% ($n = 14$) as seniors.

Instruments

Five instruments were administered in this study. Participants completed a demographic questionnaire and the following four instruments: Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer et al., 1993); Hoffman Gender Scale (HGS; Hoffman et al., 2001); Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS; McKinley & Hyde, 1996); and Social Physique Anxiety Scale (SPAS; Hart, Leary, & Rejeski, 1989).

Demographic Questionnaire. Five demographic questions were asked of the participants (Appendix A), which included information concerning the athlete's sport, age, academic year in college, year of athletic eligibility, and race/ethnicity.

Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS). The AIMS (Brewer et al., 1993) is a 10-item instrument used to measure how much one identifies with the athletic role including the strength and exclusivity of this identification. Participants rate each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* (7) to *strongly disagree* (1). When the AIMS was originally developed it was determined to be a unidimensional measure of athletic identity. Although, further research indicated the AIMS could be used as a multidimensional measure consisting of four subscales: (a) self-identity (how individual views self as an athlete), (b) social identity (how individual receives others' perceptions of him or her as an athlete), (c) exclusivity (how strongly an individual relies on athletic identity and how weak they define self with other important roles), (d) negative affectivity (degree individual negatively responds affectively to not being able to participate in sport). An example item of the AIMS is: "Sport is the most important thing in my life." To score the AIMS, all items are calculated with higher scores indicating higher perceived athletic identity. The internal consistency of the AIMS has

been found to range from .81 to .93 (Brewer et al., 1993). This study further demonstrated the AIMS to be a highly reliable measure with a Cronbach's alpha of .82.

While research has shown the AIMS as a unidimensional measure to have construct validity and reliability, the multidimensionality of the AIMS has shown less favorable results. To illustrate, the four subscales have been shown to be moderately correlated. Additionally, the internal consistencies of three of the four subscales have been found to be poor to adequate. Therefore, using the subscales of the AIMS may prove to be problematic. Also, Martin, Eklund, and Mushett (1997) found the following Cronbach's alphas for the subscales: Self-Identity (.66), Social Identity (.51), Negative Affectivity (.62), and Exclusivity (.77). The current study found the following internal consistency reliabilities for the AIMS subscales: Negative Affectivity (.61), Social Identity (.51), Self-Identity (.75), and Exclusivity (.72). Correlations among the subscales ranged from .34 to .57, indicating that, for the most part, the subscales were measuring separate, but related factors. Given the higher internal consistency reliability scores and lower subscale correlation values for the Self-Identity and Exclusivity subscales, examining their separate impact on the criterion variables may provide additional valuable information.

Hoffman Gender Scale (HGS: Form A). The HGS (Hoffman et al. 2001) is an instrument designed to measure gender self-confidence, which is defined as the intensity of an individual's belief they meet personal standards for femininity/masculinity. The HGS measures gender self-confidence through two seven-item subscales that measure gender self-definition and gender self-acceptance, respectively. Gender self-definition is defined as how strongly one identifies with their

gender based on their personal definition of femininity/masculinity. Gender self-acceptance is defined as how comfortable one is with being a member of their gender based on their personal definition of femininity/masculinity.

The HGS has two separate forms for males and females with each consisting of parallel items that measure gender self-confidence; this study utilized the version for females. Form A is designed to obtain respondents' personal definitions of femininity by asking respondents to answer the question, "What do you mean by femininity?" Then, based on their personal definition of femininity, the respondents are to answer 14 items that compose the two subscales measuring self-definition and gender self-acceptance. The Likert-type items are scored on a scale of 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. The total scores of each subscale range from 7 to 42, with higher scores suggesting higher levels of that construct. Scores on Gender Self-Definition show the degree a woman defines her overall identity by her self-defined femininity (femaleness) (Hoffman et al., 2000). Scores on Gender Self-Acceptance indicate how comfortable a woman is with being a member of her gender based on her personal definition of femininity. Sample HGS items include, "My perception of myself is positively associated with my biological sex" (HGS-SD), and "My sense of myself as a female is positive" (HGS-SA). For the purposes of this study, both subscale scores were utilized.

Studies analyzing the psychometric data of the HGS provide support for the factor structure and internal consistency of the two factors gender self-definition and gender self-acceptance (Hoffman, 2006; Worthington & Dillon, 2003). Discriminative validity for the HGS is supported by findings that the two constructs, self-definition and self-acceptance, are different constructs than those purportedly measured by the Bem

Sex Role Inventory (Hoffman, 2005). Internal consistency is high for the HGS, with alphas ranging from .88 to .92 for the Gender Self-Definition subscale and .87 to .95 for the Gender Self-Acceptance subscale (Hoffman, 2000; Hoffman, 2006; Worthington & Dillon). The current study found similar internal consistency for the HGS with Cronbach's alpha for the gender self-definition subscale at .88, and Cronbach's alpha for gender self-acceptance subscale at .89 (Hoffman, 2001; Hoffman, 2006; Worthington & Dillon).

Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS). The OBCS (McKinley & Hyde, 1996) is a 24-item instrument based on feminist theory about the social construction of the female body. Because women's bodies are objectified by the media as well as through constant interpersonal interactions in terms of men's sexual gaze, objectified body consciousness creates a state in which women experience their body from the perspective that the female body is constructed as an object to be watched. The OBCS (Appendix C) has three subscales: (a) Self-Surveillance (viewing the body as an outside observer), (b) Body Shame (feeling shame when the body does not conform), and (c) Appearance Control Beliefs. For this study, the OBCS used a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly agree* (7) to *strongly disagree*, (1) with a middle anchor point of neutral. The scores for each subscale range from 8 to 56, with higher scores indicating a higher level of that construct. Additionally, the overall score on the OBCS suggests a higher experience of perceiving one's body as an object to be objectified. Examples of questions for each subscale are as follows: (a) "During the day I think about how I look many times." (Self-Surveillance reversed score item), (b) "Even when I can't control

my weight, I think I'm an okay person.” (Body Shame), (c) “I really don't think I have much control over how my body looks.” (Control Beliefs).

McKinley and Hyde (1996) demonstrated the OBCS's construct validity by correlating the three subscales with other measures hypothesized to measure the same constructs and different constructs. Convergent and divergent evidence showed that the Self-Surveillance subscale is a good measure of concern about feelings of appearance to others. The Body Shame subscale is a good measure of the internalization of cultural body standards and evaluating a sense of failure for not achieving the socially sanctioned body ideal. The Control Beliefs subscale is good measure of beliefs about ability to control appearance. Subsequent studies have provided further evidence for the construct validity and reliability of the OBCS as well (Parsons & Betz, 2001; Prichard & Tiggemann, 2005; Tiggemann & Kuring, 2004; Tiggemann & Slater, 2001). Test-retest reliability of the OBCS has been shown to be .79 (McKinley & Hyde). The internal consistencies of the OBCS subscales with undergraduate college females were found to be moderate to high: Self-Surveillance (.89), Body Shame (.75), and Control Beliefs (.72). Similarly, this study found the internal consistencies of the OBCS subscales to be moderate to high, with Cronbach's alphas of .83 (Self-Surveillance), .85 (Body Shame), and .65 (Control Beliefs). Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha for the total OBCS was moderate at .80

Social Physique Anxiety Scale (SPAS). The SPAS (Hart et al., 1989) is a 12-item measure developed to assess the degree to which people experience anxiety when they feel others are observing or evaluating their physiques. The development and the validation of the SPAS (Appendix D) is based on the importance of providing a useful

understanding of people's body image concerns, especially in fitness and exercise settings. It is argued that people who think others view their body favorably or who are disinterested in others' reactions to their physiques may rarely experience social physique anxiety. However, those who may be chronically concerned with how others view their physiques, either because their bodies are objectively unattractive or because they hold unrealistic negative perceptions of their physiques, experience high levels of social physique anxiety. The SPAS is a 12-item measure that has respondents rate each item on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *not at all* (1) to *extremely true for me* (5). The scores on the SPAS range from 12 to 60, with the higher scores indicating greater the body image concerns. A sample SPAS item includes reversed item 5, "I am comfortable with how my body appears to others."

Hart et al. (1989) examined the construct validity of the SPAS on a sample of undergraduate men and women. Construct and criterion-related validity of the SPAS was demonstrated by the SPAS scores correlating as expected with measures of social anxiety and body esteem. Also, women who scored high on the SPAS experienced more distress when confronted with a fitness-related evaluation than those who scored low on the measure. Subsequent research on the SPAS has continued to show construct validity and reliability of the instrument (Krane et al., 2002). Recent research has indicated item 2 on the SPAS may negatively impact the psychometric properties of the scale (Crawford & Eckland, 1994; Krane et al.; Larabee & Beesley, 2008). However, this study did not reveal item 2 to negatively impact the psychometric properties of the scale; therefore, all items were included in the analysis. As shown in previous studies, this study found the SPAS to have high internal consistency with an alpha of .93.

Procedures

Prior to recruiting potential participants, permission was obtained from the respective athletic departments and coaches. Recruitment of female athlete participants was conducted through email. The female athletes were provided a link that sent them to the online informed consent form. After consenting to the study, female athletes completed five questionnaires which included a brief demographics form, the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale, Hoffman's Gender Identity Scale, the Social Physique Anxiety Scale, and the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale. Due to the fixed online format for questionnaires, it was not possible to control for order effects.

Research Questions

Based on the literature review, the following research questions are proposed: 1) Does athletic identity relate to the importance female athletes place on their self-defined femininity (gender self-definition; HGS-SD)? 2) Does athletic identity relate to how comfortable female athletes feel as members of their gender based on their definition (gender self-acceptance; HGS-SA)? 3) Do athletic identity (AIMS), gender self-definition (HGS-SD), and gender self-acceptance (HGS-SA) predict significant variation in objectified body consciousness (OBCS)? 4) Do athletic identity, gender self-definition, and gender self-acceptance predict significant variation in social physique anxiety (SPAS)?

Data Analysis

Two multiple regressions (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) were conducted, the first with Objectified Body Consciousness Scale scores as the criterion variable and the second with Social Physique Anxiety Scale scores as the criterion variable. Predictor variables

were scores on the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (athletic identity) and the Hoffman Gender Scale (gender identity). The demographic variables age and sport were entered first in order in order to control for their respective effects. Then, athletic identity was entered in the second block because, as the literature suggests, it may influence female athletes' gender identity and body image. Next, the Hoffman Gender Scale was entered in the last block in an attempt to determine its unique contribution beyond the variance explained by athletic identity.

Chapter Four

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Various preliminary analyses were performed on the data. Of the initial 171 participants, 41 were excluded from the multiple regressions due to missing data.

The means and standard deviations of all variables included in the multiple regressions are presented in Table 2. The preliminary exploration of the data indicated the demographic variable age significantly correlated ($r = -.20, p < .05$) with the OBCS subscale Self-Surveillance. This showed a trend where younger participants showed increased levels of self-surveillance. Additionally, the demographic variable sport was significantly correlated ($r = .18, \square p = .04$) with the criterion variable social physique anxiety.

To determine if sport type such as individual versus team sports was related to athletic identity, gender self-confidence, objectified body consciousness, or social physique anxiety, the participants' reported sport was categorized as an individual or team sport. No significant correlation or difference was found between sport type and athletic identity, gender self-confidence, social physique anxiety, or objectified body consciousness. To determine if sport uniform such as revealing versus non-revealing uniform was related to other variables, the participants' reported sport was categorized as an individual or team sport. No significant correlation or difference was found between uniform type and athletic identity, gender self-confidence, social physique anxiety, objectified body consciousness, or social physique anxiety.

The correlation between the two subscales of the Hoffman Gender Scale, Gender Self-Acceptance and Gender Self-Definition, was moderate to large indicating multicollinearity among these variables. As a result, the overall Hoffman Gender Scale score was substituted in lieu of the separate subscales as a single predictor variable. As for the correlations among other instruments administered, the results indicated that higher levels of the criterion variable social physique anxiety (SPAS) and the Objectified Body Consciousness subscale, Body Shame, were associated with lower levels of gender self-acceptance (Hoffman Gender Scale subscale) and gender self-confidence (Hoffman Gender Scale subscale). Additionally, higher levels of the criterion variable athletic identity (i.e., Athletic Identity Measurement Scale) were associated with higher levels of body shame (i.e., Objectified Body Consciousness subscale) and overall objectified body consciousness (OBCS). While the correlations among these variables were significant, the intercorrelations were small to moderate. Consequently, multicollinearity was determined not to be an issue among these variables.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Models:

The first of the two models conducted utilized the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale as the criterion variable. According to the results, the R^2 explained by the regression model was significant and explained 9% of the variance in Objectified Body Consciousness Scale ($F [3,124] = 3.82, p < .05$; (adjusted $R^2 = .06$), which is considered a small effect size (Cohen, 1988). In the first step of the model, age did not account for significant variance, $R^2 = .02$ (adjusted $R^2 = .01$), $\Delta F(1, 126) = 2.50, p > .05$. Next, athletic identity was entered and accounted for significant variance $\Delta R^2 =$

.04, $\Delta F(1, 125) = 5.84, p < .05$, with $R^2 = .06$ (adjusted $R^2 = .05$). In the final step, gender self-confidence did not account for significant variance $\Delta R^2 = .02, \Delta F(1, 124) = 2.91, p > .05$, with $R^2 = .09$ (adjusted $R^2 = .06$).

To obtain a better understanding of how the individual predictors contributed to the variance in objectified body consciousness scores, the final step was examined. The final step of the model indicated that age, athletic identity scores, and gender self-confidence were significant predictors of objectified body consciousness. The Beta weights provide evidence of the relative impact of the individual predictors. The AIMS ($\beta = .21, p < .05$) showed the greatest individual contribution to the model. Gender Self-Confidence ($\beta = -.15, p > .05$) and Age ($\beta = -.16, p > .05$) were the weakest predictors and nonsignificant.

The second of the two models conducted utilized social physique anxiety as the criterion variable. According to the results, the R^2 explained by the regression model was significant and explained 17% of the variance in the criterion variable social physique anxiety ($F[3, 126] = 8.60, p < .01$ (adjusted $R^2 = .15$), which is considered a medium effect size (Cohen, 1988). In the first step of the model, sport accounted for significant variance, $R^2 = .03$ (adjusted $R^2 = .03$), $F(1, 128) = 4.34, p < .05$. Next, athletic identity was entered and accounted for significant variance, $\Delta R^2 = .04, \Delta F(1, 127) = 4.96, p < .01$, with $R^2 = .07$ (adjusted $R^2 = .05$). In the final step, gender self-confidence accounted for significant variance $\Delta R^2 = .10, \Delta F(1, 126) = 15.31, p < .01$, with $R^2 = .17$ (adjusted $R^2 = .15$).

To obtain a better understanding of how the individual predictors contributed to the variance in social physique anxiety scores, the final step was examined. The final

step of the model indicated that sport, athletic identity scores, and gender self-confidence were significant predictors of social physique anxiety. The Beta weights provide evidence of the relative impact of the individual predictors, with the gender self-confidence ($\beta = -.32, p < .01$) and showing the greatest individual contributions to the model. AIMS ($\beta = .18, p < .05$) and Sport ($\beta = .18, p < .05$) were also significant contributors to the model.

Due to the correlations among the OBCS Body Shame subscale and the predictor variables (AIMS and HGS), an additional regression analysis was conducted. According to the results, the R^2 explained by the regression model was significant and explained 17% of the variance in the criterion variable OBCS Body Shame ($F[2, 125] = 9.01, p < .01$ (adjusted $R^2 = .15$), which is considered a medium effect size (Cohen, 1988). In the first step of the model, athletic identity was entered and accounted for significant variance $\Delta R^2 = .11, \Delta F(1, 128) = 15.49, p < .01$, with $R^2 = .11$ (adjusted $R^2 = .10$). In the final step, gender self-confidence accounted for significant variance $\Delta R^2 = .06, \Delta F(1, 127) = 9.01, p < .01$, with $R^2 = .17$ (adjusted $R^2 = .15$).

To obtain a better understanding of how the individual predictors contributed to the variance in OBCS Body Shame scores, the final step was examined. The final step of the model indicated that athletic identity scores and gender self-confidence were significant predictors of OBCS Body Shame scores. The Beta weights provide evidence of the relative impact of the individual predictors, with AIMS ($\beta = .32, p < .01$) and gender self-confidence ($\beta = -.24, p < .01$) showing the greatest individual contributions to the model.

Chapter Five

Discussion

This study explored the potential impact of athletic identity and gender self-confidence on body image in female athletes. As made evident by a thorough review of the literature, no study to date has explored how this combination of variables, especially gender self-confidence, may influence body image in female athletes. The sample used in the current study was comprised of NCAA Division I and II female collegiate athletes participating in various sports. The data was collected via an online survey.

The current study first explored if athletic identity relates to the importance female athletes place on their self-defined femininity and how comfortable they feel as members of their gender based on their definition of femininity. The results indicate that female athlete's athletic identity does not appear to be related to the degree of importance they place on their self-defined femininity or how comfortable they feel as members of their gender based on their definition of femininity.

The results of this study did reveal that gender self-acceptance had a significant negative relationship with female athletes' social physique anxiety and body shame. Consequently, when female athletes have a high comfort level with being a member of their gender based on their personal definition of femininity, their internalization of socially sanctioned body standards and concern when others are evaluating their physique is low. These results corroborate similar findings by Hoffman (2004) which showed there was no correlation between gender self-definition and subjective well-being for women; however, gender self-acceptance was found to be correlated with

subjective well-being for women. More specifically, this current study support Hoffman's view that since gender self-definition "in and of itself implies little about one's psychological health . . . [because] it is not the degree to which one defines oneself by one's gender but rather how comfortable one is with (self-acceptance) their self-defined femaleness . . ." (Hoffman, p. 189).

Interestingly, the results also revealed that higher levels of athletic identity had a positive significant relationship with body shame and overall objectified body consciousness. Therefore, female athletes' who identify strongly with the athlete role reported higher levels of internalization of socially sanctioned body standards and concern that others are evaluating their physique. Furthermore, the results showed higher levels of gender self-confidence were associated with higher levels of control beliefs in female athletes. In other words, female athletes who have higher beliefs they are able to control their appearance also have more confidence in themselves as a member of their gender. Hyde & McKinley (1996) hypothesized that control beliefs of this nature may relieve some of the stress women experience due to body surveillance and the internalization of cultural body standards. Consequently, having a high belief in being able to control appearance may provide females with positive psychological benefits. As proposed in previous research, it appears as though female athletes in this study who feel they can "do" and "display" gender by modifying and transforming their appearance as the occasion demands feel more confidence in themselves as a member of their gender. Therefore, while female athletes appear to embrace their athleticism and feel comfortable choosing not to engage in feminine behaviors in certain contexts, their confidence in themselves as a member of their gender is associated with the belief that

they can engage in behaviors that allow them to fit their notion of femininity (Krane et al., 2004; Ross & Shiner, 2008).

The current study also explored whether athletic identity and gender self-confidence significantly influenced female athletes' objectified body consciousness. The results of the regression analysis indicated athletic identity as the only variable that accounted for significant variance in female athletes' objectified body consciousness. Age and gender self-confidence did not contribute significantly to female athletes' objectified body consciousness scores. The model showed that regardless of age, the higher the athletic identity, the more likely it was for a female athlete to experience their bodies as objects that are valued primarily for their use and exploitation by others.

However, because preliminary correlations indicated the Body Shame subscale may have been contributing to the majority of the positive relationship between athletic identity and overall objectified body consciousness, an additional hierarchical regression utilizing the Body Shame subscale in lieu of the overall OBCS score. The results of that regression analysis indicated that both athletic identity and gender self-confidence significantly predicted female athletes' body shame, with the significance attributable to athletic identity and gender self-confidence. The model revealed that the higher the athletic identity and the lower the gender self-confidence, the more likely it was for a female athlete to have a greater internalization of cultural body standards as well as a sense of failure for not achieving the socially sanctioned body ideal.

These results indicate that as female athletes ascribe greater importance to their involvement and accomplishments in sports, they experience greater discontent with their bodies for not meeting the socially accepted standards of femininity (Cox &

Thompson, 2000; George, 2005; Krane et al., 2001; Krane et al., 2004; Ross & Shinew, 2008). Therefore, despite valuing their body as a finely-tuned instrument for accomplishing athletic feats, female athletes unfortunately still experience their body as being an object to be looked at and evaluated based on their appearance. Therefore, while it may be possible that some female athletes are “developing a sense of agency, rather than existing as victims of patriarchal society, being powerful has not replaced being sexy” as defined by dominant Western society (Ross & Shinew, 2008, p. 54). Furthermore, “while women may be able to celebrate their athleticism, another layer of expectations has been created” (p. 54). Being a female athlete means not only expressing your competitive, physically competent characteristics, but also demonstrating you can comply with the stereotypical beauty standards society places on women.

The current study also explored whether athletic identity and gender self-confidence significantly influenced female athletes’ social physique anxiety. The results of the regression analysis indicated that both athletic identity and gender self-confidence significantly predicted female athletes’ social physique anxiety, with the significance attributable to sport, athletic identity, and gender self-confidence. The model revealed, depending upon the sport, the higher the athletic identity and the lower the gender self-confidence, the more likely it was for a female athlete to experience a high degree of anxiety when they feel others are observing or evaluating their physiques. Therefore, female athletes with higher athletic identity and lower gender self-confidence may be chronically concerned with how others view and evaluate their physiques. Based on the theory behind social physique anxiety, female athletes may be

concerned and interested in others' perceptions of their physique because they believe their bodies are objectively unattractive or because they hold unrealistic negative perceptions of their physiques. As discussed in previous literature, this anxiety about their physique may be justified in light of the fact that research indicates women with significant muscle development tend to be evaluated negatively by nonathletes as well as athletes (Freeman, 1988, Royce et al., 2003). However, based on the current study's findings, it is perhaps not athletics specifically, but one's physique and self-presentation combined with one's gender self-confidence that may have the greatest effect on social physique anxiety (Duff, Hong, & Royce 1999; Krane et al., 2001; Maguire & Mansfield, 1998; Markula, 1995).

In addition to the findings mentioned above, the correlations from this study show that female athletes' with more exclusive athletic identity experience lower gender self-acceptance and higher social physique anxiety and body shame. Examining these findings through the lens of previous research, these findings suggest that as female athletes' become more exclusive in their athletic identity; they may not explore and develop a positive sense of their gender identity, which in turn increases negative body image. If this holds true, then it seems important for female athletes to develop greater gender self-confidence as a buffer against body image disturbances.

In closing, although female athletes may be in a position to actively resist stereotypical views of females as passive objects, they are also immersed in a culture where they are still valued for their appearance. Research suggests that while female athletes may not be deliberately seeking to be agents of resistance and societal change, their negotiation of the sport environment may help them negotiate some of the

constrictions of these dominant ideologies. It appears that female athletes are well aware of which behaviors and appearances are deemed appropriately feminine by society, and like female nonathletes, they wish to be accepted, appreciated, and loved (Bordo, 1993). To facilitate the possibility of the sport environment being a domain where female athletes can challenge and change gender relations and images of traditional femininity, they need to be encouraged to explore and cultivate a greater sense of gender self-confidence. Therefore, developing a greater sense of gender self-confidence may not only buffer female athletes against body image disturbances, it may also facilitate their sense of agency, thus transforming the sport environment into a potential “agent of women’s liberation” (Therberge, 1994, p. 191).

Implications for Counseling

According to the findings of this study, sport psychologists and other mental health professionals treating female athletes with body image issues need to be cognizant of the role athletic identity and gender identity play in female athletes’ body image. Female athletes with poor body image may need an opportunity to discuss their beliefs about femininity as well as the degree they feel they meet their personal standards for femininity (femaleness). Furthermore, female athletes may need to discuss how they can integrate their gender identity with their role as an athlete. In the course of this discussion, the counselor may need to increase female athletes’ awareness of how dominant Western culture’s creation of limiting dualistic categorizations of gender may negatively and positively influence their gender identity. This recognition may increase their comfort and confidence in themselves as a member of their gender; thereby, decreasing the negative body image they are experiencing. To facilitate this discussion

in counseling Hoffman (2006) suggests using the HGS items or the instrument as a whole. Utilizing the various questions on the HGS will help the counselor encourage female athletes' exploration of their personal definition of femininity. When utilizing questions from the HGS, one must also offer female athletes an opportunity to discuss and integrate their various other salient identities, such as ethnic and/or athletic identity. This will allow the female athlete to construct a more integrated complex perception of themselves and others; thereby, possibly decreasing any conflict may experience between their various roles and identities.

It is also important to note since dominant western society is permeated with stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, challenging traditional views of gender difficult for many individuals, including sport psychologists and other athletic staff working with female athletes. As individuals immersed within dominant Western culture, mental health professionals need to be aware of how our own internalized views of socially acceptable forms of femininity and masculinity may continue to impose unhealthy restrictions of gender on men and women. Mental health professionals may need to explore and challenge their own perceptions of gender in an effort to provide a nonjudgmental space that will allow female athletes an opportunity to construct an accepting perception of their gender identity.

Limitations and Future Research

The current study has some limitations. First, the sample used in this study consisted of Division I and Division II female collegiate athletes who were primarily Caucasian (80.8%), thus restricting generalizability of the findings to other competitive levels and athletes from other racial/ethnic populations. As mentioned by Hoffman et al.

(2000), additional research with more culturally diverse samples is necessary to assess how ethnicity, age, class, and sexual orientation might be related to female athletes' athletic identity, gender self-confidence, and body image. It would also be worthwhile to explore how cultural aspects of identity might relate to athletic identity, gender self-confidence, and body image. Finally, additional studies should be conducted in a variety of geographical areas and with samples from other athletic competitive levels.

Another limitation of this study involves the high number of sports represented in the sample. While having a large representation of sports can be viewed as a strength, it limits the ability to examine in depth how certain sports may influence female athletes' athletic identity, gender self-confidence, and body image. Studies analyzing how the unique context inherent in each sport could offer additional insight into how various female athletes negotiate their gender identity and athletic identity. For instance, a basketball player who plays center may have a different experience of her athletic identity, gender identity self-confidence, and body image than a female long-distance runner.

Considering previous research has shown that female athletes tend to have higher levels of instrumentality, an internal locus of control, and higher body shame compared to female nonathletes, future research examining whether or not personal efficacy and instrumentality interact with athletic identity, gender self confidence, and body image could provide additional insight into female athletes' unique identity and body image issues.

Another area of research that may prove beneficial would consist of examining how female athletes' experience of their body changes in conjunction with their

decision to end their athletic career (e.g., when NCAA female athletes graduate and discontinue their athletic career). For example, this study suggests that female athletes' who identify exclusively with their athletic role may be less likely to explore and develop a positive sense of their gender identity and body image. Thus, understanding more about athletic identity development and the potential co-influences of gender identity and body image could provide insight into how female athletes manage this transition.

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Table 1
Frequencies and percentages of participants by sport

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
1.Volleyball	3.1%	4
2. Cross Country	12.4%	16
3.Track/Field	15.6%	19
4.Basketball	4.6%	6
5. Soccer	6.2%	8
6. Field Hockey	3.8%	5
7. Swim/Diving	6.2%	8
8. Tennis	7.7%	10
9. Softball	11.5%	15
10. Synchronized Skating	6.2%	8
11. Gymnastics	3.1%	4
12. Golf	2.3%	3
12. Rowing	18.5%	24

Table 2
Reliability, Means, and Standard Deviations Table for Predictor and Criterion Variables

Variable	α	M	SD	N
1.Age	-	19.51	1.42	128
2. Sport	-	7.21	4.02	128
3. HGS Total	.92	63.50	11.59	128
4.HGS SD	.88	28.55	6.85	130
5.HGS SA	.89	34.99	5.85	130
6.AIMS	.82	49.54	8.75	130
7.SPA	.93	32.20	10.11	130
8.OBCS	.80	101.85	14.15	130

Note. HGS Total = Hoffman Gender Scale – higher scores indicate a higher confidence in one’s gender. HGS SD = Hoffman Gender Scale – subscale Gender Self-Definition; higher scores indicate a strong identification with gender self-definition. HGS SA = Hoffman Gender Scale – subscale Gender Self-Acceptance; higher scores indicate higher level of comfort with one’s defined gender. AIMS = Athletic Identity Measurement Scale; higher scores indicate higher identification with athlete role. SPA = Social Physique Anxiety Scale; high scores reflect higher levels of anxiety about physique in social situations. OBCS = Objectified Body Consciousness Scale; higher scores reflect higher levels of feeling objectified.

Table 3

Summary of Final Step of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Objectified Body Consciousness (OBC)

Variable	Step	B	SE B	β	R^2	ΔR^2	F Change	df
Sport	1	.44	.21	.18*	.03*	.03*	4.34*	(1, 128)
AIMS	2	.20	.10	.18*	.07*	.04*	4.96*	(1, 127)
HGS	3	-.28	.07	-.32**	.17**	.10**	15.31**	(1, 126)

Note. AIMS = Athletic Identity Measurement Scale; higher scores indicate higher identification with athletic role.

HGS = Hoffman Gender Scale; higher scores indicate higher gender identity self-confidence

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Summary of Final Step of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Social Physique Anxiety (SPA)

Variable	Step	B	SE B	β	R^2	ΔR^2	F Change	df
Sport	1	.44	.21	.18*	.03*	.03*	4.34*	(1, 128)
AIMS	2	.20	.10	.18*	.07*	.04*	4.96*	(1, 127)
HGS	3	-.28	.07	-.32**	.17**	.10**	15.31**	(1, 126)

Note. AIMS = Athletic Identity Measurement Scale; higher scores indicate higher identification with athletic role.

HGS = Hoffman Gender Scale; higher scores indicate higher gender identity self-confidence

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Table 5

Summary of Final Step of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Body Shame (OBC subscale)

Variable	Step	B	SE B	β	R^2	ΔR^2	F Change	df
Sport	1	.44	.21	.18*	.03*	.03*	4.34*	(1, 128)
AIMS	2	.20	.10	.18*	.07*	.04*	4.96*	(1, 127)
HGS	3	-.28	.07	-.32**	.17**	.10**	15.31**	(1, 126)

Note. AIMS = Athletic Identity Measurement Scale; higher scores indicate higher identification with athletic role.

HGS = Hoffman Gender Scale; higher scores indicate higher gender identity self-confidence

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Table 6: Correlations among variables

Variable		Age	Sport	OBC Surveillance	OBC Shame	OBC Control	OBC Total	AIMS Total	AIMS Exclusive	AIMS Self-ID	HGS Total	HGS Accept	HGS Defn
OBC Surveillance	Correlation	-.20*	.05	--	.54**	-.25**	.79**	.04	.25**	-.02	-.16	-.26**	-.04
	Significance	.02	.57		.00	.00	.00	.64	.00	.87	.08	.00	.63
OBC Body Sham	Correlation	-.11	-.02	.54**	--	-.17	.85**	.33**	.37**	-.20*	-.25**	-.38**	-.11
	Significance	.20	.79	.00		.06	.00	.00	.00	.02	.00	.00	.23
OBC Control	Correlation	.11	.10	-.25**	-.17	--	.13	-.10	-.09	-.14	.22*	.30**	.12
	Significance	.23	.26	.00	.06		.13	.26	.34	.11	.01	.00	.17
OBC Total	Correlation	-.14	-.02	.54**	.85**	.13	--	.19*	.24**	-.18*	-.16	-.26**	-.05
	Significance	.15	.79	.00	.00	.13		.03	.01	.04	.07	.00	.61
AIMS Total	Correlation	.14	-.17	.04	.33**	-.10	.19*	--			-.03	-.09	.02
	Significance	.12	.16	.64	.00	.26	.03				.71	.33	.84
AIMS Exclusive	Correlation	.10	.03	.07	.37**	-.09	.24**	.82**	--		-.07	-.19*	.05
	Significance	.27	.70	.42	.00	.34	.01	.00			.45	.03	.60
AIMS Self-ID	Correlation	-.23**	-	-.19*	-.14	.01	-.18*	.65**	.44**	--			.07
	Significance	.01**	.24**	.03	.11	.87	.04	.00	.00		.12	.16	.46
			.01								.18	.07	
SPA	Correlation	-.06	.18*	.64**	.63**	-.29**	.63**	.16	.25**	-.20*		-.52**	-.14
	Significance	.47	.04	.00	.00	.00	.00	.07	.00	.02		.00	.10
HGS Total	Correlation	.03	-.11	-.16	-.25**	.22*	-.16	-.03	-.07	.12		.90**	.93**
	Significance	.71	.22	.08	.00	.01	.07	.71	.45	.18	--	.00	.00
HGS SA	Correlation	.08	-.12	-.26**	-.38**	.30**	-	-.09					.66**
	Significance	.35	.17	.00	.00	.00	.26**	.33	-.19*	.16	.90**		.00
							.00		.03	.07	.00	--	
HGS SD	Correlation	-.02	-.08	-.04	-.11	.12	-.05	.02					--
	Significance	.87	.37	.10	.23	.17	.61	.84	.05	.07	.93**	.66**	
									.60	.46	.00	.00	

Note. OBCS-Objectified Body Consciousness Scale; OBCS Surveillance-Objectified Body Consciousness Scale subscale Self-Surveillance; OBCS Shame-Objectified Body Consciousness Scale subscale Body Shame; OBCS Control-Objectified Body Consciousness Scale subscale Self-Control Beliefs; AIMS-Athletic Identity Measurement Scale; AIMS Exclusive-Athletic Identity Exclusivity Subscale; AIMS Self-ID-Athletic Identity Self-Identity Subscale; SPA-Social Physique Anxiety Scale; HGS-Hoffman Gender Scale; HGS SD-Hoffman Gender Scale subscale Gender Self-Definition; HGS SA-Hoffman Gender Scale subscale Gender Self-Acceptance; * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Appendix A

Demographics

A. Please circle your sport:

- | | | | | |
|------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Volleyball | Track | Synchronize Skating | Swimming/Diving | |
| Golf | Field Hockey | Tennis | Softball | Cross Country |
| Basketball | Soccer | Gymnastics | Rowing | |

B. Please mark the number of seasons you have been competing in your current sport.

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

B. Please mark the number of seasons you have been competing in your current sport.

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

B. Please write in your current age _____

C. Please make an X beside your ethnicity

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African American/Black | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latina |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian/White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial and/or multiethnic | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

E. Please mark the class you are currently considered in college.

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

Directions: In the following questions, please mark the circle with the answer that best fits for you.

1. I consider myself an athlete

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I have many goals related to sport

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. Most of my friends are athletes

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. Sport is the most important part of my life

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I need to participate in sport to feel good about myself

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. Other people see me mainly as an athlete

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. Sport is the only important thing in my life

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport.

Strongly Agree Moderately Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Moderately Disagree Strongly Disagree

Hoffman Gender Scale (Form A) (Revised)

PLEASE NOTE: Complete Form A if you are female. Complete Form B (reverse side) if you are male.

What do you mean by femininity?

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements by rating it a "1," "2," "3," "4," "5," or "6" as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. When I am asked to describe myself, being female is one of the first things I think of. _____
2. I am confident in my femininity (femaleness). _____
3. I meet my personal standards for femininity (femaleness). _____
4. My perception of myself is positively associated with my biological sex. _____
5. I am secure in my femininity (femaleness). _____
6. I define myself largely in terms of my femininity (femaleness). _____
7. My identity is strongly tied to my femininity (femaleness). _____
8. I have a high regard for myself as a female. _____
9. Being a female is a critical part of how I view myself. _____
10. I am happy with myself as a female. _____
11. I am very comfortable being a female. _____
12. Femininity (femaleness) is an important aspect of my self-concept. _____
13. My sense of myself as a female is positive. _____
14. Being a female contributes a great deal to my sense of confidence. _____

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OBC Scale

Directions: In the following questions, please mark the answer that best fits for you.

1. I rarely think about how I look.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I think it is more important that my clothes are comfortable than whether it looks good on me.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. I think more about how my body feels than how my body looks.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I rarely compare how I look my with how other people look.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. During the day, I think about how I look many times.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I often worry about whether my clothes I am wearing make me look good.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. I rarely worry about how I look to other people.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. I am more concerned with what my body can do than how it looks.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. When I can't control my weight, I feel like something must be wrong with me.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made the effort to look my best.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

11. I feel like I must be a bad person when I don't look as good as I could.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

12. I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

13. I never worry that something is wrong with me when I am not exercising as much as I should.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

14. When I am not exercising enough, I question whether I am a good enough person.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

15. Even when I can't control my weight, I think I am an okay person.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

16. When I am not the size I think I should be, I feel ashamed.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

17. I think a person is pretty much stuck with the looks they are born with.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

18. A large part of being in shape is having that kind of body in the first place.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

19. I think a person can look pretty much how they want if they are willing to work at it.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

20. I really don't think I have much control over how my body looks.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

21. I think a person's weight is mostly determined by the genes they are born with.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

22. It doesn't matter how hard I try to change my weight, it's probably always going to be about the same.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

SPA Scale

Directions: In the following questions, please mark the answer that best fits how you feel.

1. I am comfortable with the appearance of my figure.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

2. I would never worry about wearing clothes that might make me look too thin or overweight.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

3. I wish I wasn't so uptight about my figure.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

4. There are times when I am bothered by thoughts that other people are evaluating my weight or muscular development negatively.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

5. When I look in the mirror, I feel good about my figure.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

6. Unattractive features of my figure make me nervous in certain settings.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

7. In the presence of others, I feel apprehensive about my figure.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

8. I am comfortable with how fit my body appears to others.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

9. It would make me uncomfortable to know others were evaluating my figure.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

10. When it comes to displaying my figure to others, I am a shy person.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

11. I usually feel relaxed when it is obvious that others are looking at my figure.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

12. When in a bathing suit, I often feel nervous about the shape of my body.

Not at all slightly moderately very extremely characteristic

