






Body Dissatisfaction and Depressive Symptoms in Youth: The Mediating Role of Self-Criticism

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Trevor Archer  Professor Department of Psychology University of Gothenburg, Sweden trevorcsarcher49@gmail.com	Reviewer 1: Mahdi Khanjani  Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran. Email: khanjani_m@atu.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Zahra Yousefi  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. Email: yousefi1393@khuif.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The opening statement “Adolescence is a sensitive developmental stage characterized by profound biological, psychological, and social changes” is too general. It should be narrowed down to focus specifically on vulnerability to depressive symptoms, rather than developmental changes broadly.

The age range (15–24 years) includes both adolescents and young adults. Since the title and framing emphasize “youth” and “adolescents,” clarify the rationale for including participants up to 24 years old.

While reliability is described, it would strengthen the manuscript to provide the Cronbach’s alpha for the present study sample, not just “typically above 0.85.”

The manuscript states “The unique contribution of the present study is the identification of self-criticism as a mediating mechanism.” This risks overstating originality, since prior work (e.g., Nariswari & Muttaqin, 2023) already examined self-criticism mediation. The contribution should be reframed to emphasize the Kenyan context.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The discussion of family functioning (“family adaptability and supportive parenting practices are protective”) could be better integrated with the study’s focus on self-criticism. How does family functioning potentially foster self-critical tendencies?

The text “Body dissatisfaction is particularly significant in adolescence due to heightened sensitivity to appearance” should be supported with more recent cross-cultural evidence, especially since the current study was conducted in Kenya.

The statement “few studies have explicitly tested this mediating model in diverse adolescent populations” should be strengthened with citations of African or non-Western studies to highlight the novelty of this research.

The direct, indirect, and total effects are clearly presented, but confidence intervals for indirect effects should also be reported, ideally via bootstrapping, to strengthen mediation claims.

The statement “Adolescents who perceive their bodies negatively are more prone to internalize these concerns” should connect more explicitly to cognitive theories (e.g., Beck’s cognitive model), not just descriptive phrasing.

The text “Self-criticism, as a maladaptive cognitive style, may intensify negative body perceptions” would benefit from integrating neurocognitive mechanisms (e.g., rumination, default mode network hyperactivation) for depth.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.