Introduction

- The body-positivity movement has been shown to have significant effects on increasing positive body image (Cohen et al., 2019)
- Research has also demonstrated a correlation between appearance-neutral self-compassion content and increased sense of self-worth (Wasylkiw et al., 2012)
- Past research has not directly compared the effects of viewing both the appearance-neutral and appearance-focused positive content on body self-esteem
- Past research in this and related content areas has lacked male representation

Hypotheses

- H1: Participants in both experimental groups will experience an increase in measures of body self-esteem
- H2: Participants in the appearance-neutral self-compassion condition will experience a greater increase in measures of body self-esteem than those in the appearance-focused body positive condition
- H3: Higher scores on measures of thin/muscular ideal internalization and/or trait appearance comparison will act as covariates in the relationship between the photo condition and body self-esteem

Stimuli

- Evaluated by raters for relevancy
- Each photo-exposure condition consisted of 20 images, presented to participants in random order
- Participants in body-positive condition shown images matching their reported gender identity

Measures

- SATAQ-4R-F/SATAQ-4R-M (α=.82/α=.75)
  - e.g. “I feel pressure from the media to be thin”
- PACS (α=.92)
  - e.g. “In social situations I sometimes compare my figure to the figures of other people”
- VAS items for SBA/SBS/SSC (α=.90/α=.96/α=.92)
  - e.g. “Despite my flaws, I accept my body for what it is”

Results

- Photo exposure condition had a significant effect on BSE (F(2,236)=11.5, p<.001) and both the body-positivity (p<.001) and self-compassion (p<.001) conditions differed significantly from the control condition
- There was not a significant difference found between the two experimental conditions (F(2, 236)=11.5, p=.88)
- Trait ideal internalization was as a significant covariate in the relationship (F(1,236)=1227.7, p<.001; trait appearance comparison did not play a role (F(1,236)=10, p=.75)
- Men and women differed significantly on both pre and posttest measures of BSE (t(261)=-3.19, p=.002), PACS (t(272)=5.73, p<.001), and SATAQ-4R scores (t(279)=4.226, p<.001)
- Both genders experienced a proportional increase in BSE after being exposed to either body positivity or self-compassion photo conditions

Discussion

- Both appearance-based and self-compassion content are effective at increasing body self-esteem
- Individuals with high ideal internalization tendencies should be encouraged to incorporate more appearance-neutral positive content into their social media habits
- Challenging thin/muscular ideals with diverse body type representation, combined with the protective properties of viewing self-compassion content may be most effective for increasing body self-esteem especially in those with high trait ideal internalization
- Appearance-neutral self-compassion content may be especially effective at increasing body self-esteem in men

Limitations

- More diverse participant population for more generalizable results

Future Research

- Further incorporate men and gender nonconforming individuals
- Propose alternative methods to increasing body self-esteem

References
