

Perception of Females Towards Male Physique for Spouse Selection Among Females Of Child-Bearing Age In Patani, Delta State

**Memory Queensoap Ph.D^{*1}; Dogitimiye Memeory²; Meshack Gbaye²;
Ayebanengimote Victor² & Blessing Dick Alfred³**

¹Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education, Federal University Otueke, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

²Department of Health Information Management Technology, School of Allied Medical Sciences, Bayelsa State College of Health Technology, Otuogidi, Ogbia-Town, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

³Department of Community Health Sciences, School of Public Health Sciences, Bayelsa State College of Health Technology, Otuogidi, Ogbia-Town, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The way people perceived things determine their level of choice making on issues concerning their lives. This study was determined to assess the females' perception toward males' physique for spouse selection. The study adopted a descriptive research survey design upon a sample of 150 females of child bearing age 15-45 years through a stratified random sampling technique. A self-designed questionnaire was used to obtain data. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity. The reliability coefficient of the instrument through test re-test method was 0.75. Analysis of data was done with Microsoft Excel 2010 and Graph Prism Pad 5. Results of the study indicates that respondents like thin body image and size of male for spouse selection as well as liking to have a thin body image and size with mean/standard deviation of $1.71 \pm .99$ and $1.14 \pm .99$. Also, testing of the null hypothesis shows a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.68, R square of 0.47 and a calculated P value of 0.000 which is $P < 0.05$. This implies that there was a statistically significant relationship between respondents' choice of male body image and body image they like to be. It suggests that respondents select spouse based on body image they like to be. The study therefore concluded that females' perception of male physique for spouse selection is proportional to what they like to be. Thus, the study among others recommends that social counselors should carry out routine educational enlightenment and advocacy among females for spouse selection.

Keywords: Perception, Physique, Spouse Selection, Image, Child-bearing age and Role Fit

INTRODUCTION

There is no gainsaying the fact that selection of spouse is a deal for life time. Families are formed through the union of male and female. This union, called marriage became possible through selection. Males search for females while the females accept the males. Consequently, selecting a male is one of the most important decisions of people during their life time, remarked, Maliki (2009). This is taken as a serious issue because most divorces/separations are influenced by one factor or the other. According to Maliki (2009) male selection is a process through series of steps which includes external characteristics, attitudes and beliefs, role fit etc.

Similarly, (Tovee & Cornelissen, 2001) asserted that male selection is one of the most fundamental problems for any organization. Nevertheless, the perception of attractiveness also plays an important role in human male choice which body traits are attractive and has a profound effect on everyday life (Trebicky, Kleinsner, & Havlicek, 2013). Perception is all about how one may view a particular

object, individual or thing. Females in their course of getting married aligned themselves to several factors for the particular man to possess.

In the process of mate selection by any individual several factors attract an individual to a partner. As the relationship develops and progresses they come to realize that those qualities that formed the basis of attraction are not what they desire, resulting to a break-up of the relationship. The phenomenon creates emotional instability among undergraduates characterized by inability to concentrate on their academic pursuit which is primary reason for attending university (Malaki, 2009). So mate selection is a very important issue in the life of both male and female. Therefore, since all the factors cannot be measured at a particular research work, it became imperative to look at the male physique and how it influence selection for marriage.

Consequently, men perceived that increase in muscularity attract females in essence women would be especially, attracted to men who display exaggerated secondary sexual characteristics (facial muscularity, broad shoulder etc.) (Fredrick, et al., 2007). Meanwhile it became obvious that female perception on male physique for mate selection is yet to explore considerably, especially in this part of the world. This informed partly, the researcher to investigate the female perception towards male physique for spouse selection which became a necessity. On the other hand, this research was necessitated to fill the knowledge gap. Against this background, the researcher aimed at assessing the perception of female toward male physique for spouse selection in Patani.

Statement of Problem

One of the most fundamental problems for any organization is mate selection. It is very important that serious concern is given to the physical cues that honestly signal a male to be more desirable than another. Selection of the opposite has turned some people over stay as well as problems at home. Many female stay longer than necessary at home waiting for a partner because of selection implications. This cuts the boundaries of religious bigotry. It became worrisome for individuals, parents, relatives, etc. to complain in one way or the other because the joy of any family is seeing her daughters/wards getting married. This in fact is a socio-cultural problem which can affect the psycho-social life of the individual especially the female folks.

Previous studies revealed that much work had not been done in this area, especially in this part of the world, Patani in Delta State hence it is necessary to carry out this research as to assess females' perception on male physique for spouse selection using Patani against the background of the problem.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perception is derived from a Latin Word, *Perceptio* or *Percipio*, which describes as an organization and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment. It is difficult to denote perception without knowing what sensation is all about (Iruo, 2006). Sensation is described as an environmental stimuli impinging on a sense organ and the message is relayed to the corresponding area in the brain. This informs that it is only when information is interpreted that it can be said to be perception (Iruo, 2006).

According to (Ogbebor & Egbule, 2006), perception is the process whereby the individual become aware of objects, qualities or relations through the use of the sense organs. It is the ability of the individual to learn about his surrounding through his sense organs. In other words, what the individual perceived depends on what he brings with him from the past experience and what his present needs and wishes are as he faces the world. This however implies that sensory experiences are gathered and processed in the brain which eventually dictates what behavior that will be exhibited (Ogbebor & Egbule, 2006).

All perception signals in the nervous system, which in turn result from physical or chemical stimulation of the sense organs. Perception depends on complex. Functions of the nervous system, but subjectively seems mostly effortless because this processing happens outside conscious awareness.

Generally perception can define as the ability of a person understanding something within or outside an environment. Perception like most concepts within the social science disciplines (what other writers refer to as social perception) is defined in many ways. From chambers Dictionary it is an act of being aware of one's environment through physical sensation, which donates an individual's ability to understand.

Consequently, the importance of perception in education and health cannot be overemphasized here. Perception is the outcome of the learning process. How one perceives what he learnt so he becomes of

it. Individual perceived things, objects, events, etc. in their daily lives which directly or indirectly affect their behavior or personality. Perception affects the ability to think rationally. Peoples' perception of things makes them react towards one another positively or negatively. Perception is an emotional force which helps in building motivational tendencies (Ogbebor & Egbule, 2006).

According to Nelson and Quick (1997: 83-84) social perception is the process of interpreting information about another person. This definition made us to understand that opinions formed about other persons depend on the amount of information available to you and to the extent of which you can clearly interpret what you have acquired (Oghene Ochuko, 2009).

Selecting a mate (spouse) is a problem and one of the most important decisions people make during their lifetime; it is what humans share with most other animals because of successful reproduction which is a natural selection. (Jrank.org). Spouse selection is a step by step method, it has been observed that when an individual make contact with a new person he/she applies four filters which are;

- **Attitude and Beliefs:** There should be a match of ideas in basic area, such as perception in sex, religion or politics.
- **External Characteristics:** Does this person match in quality of appearance or manner.
- **Role Fit:** Those both ideas about appropriate sex role match.
- **Physique:** Do you both like individual body build.

It also determine ones daily activities, expenditure of physical and mental energy, it offer social status and also provides opportunities for advancement (Newman 1995). In the process of spouse selection in child bearing age mostly university students, various qualities attract an individual to a partner, as it develop and progresses. They come to find out that those qualities that has brought them together are not what they really desire which might result to break-up and result in emotional break-down (inability to concentrate) which might also lead to confusion and low-esteem and also negative self-concept (Maliki, 2009).

Male physique and spouse selection is a social issue that has affected homes indirectly or directly. According to (Tovee & Cornelissen, 2001), one of the most fundamental problems for any organism is mate selection. The paper stated that it is vital to be sensitive to physical cues that honestly signal that one individual is more desirable than another and use them to choose a partner who is mostly to enhance our chances of successful production. It has been observed that in women two potentially critical cues are shape and weight scaled for height.

There is a relationship between human physique and spouse selection regards the view of (Honekopp, et al., 2007). The paper advanced that physical attractiveness plays an important role in human mate selection. It has been observed that the perception of attractiveness is an evolved adaptation which promotes preferential mating with individuals of high mate value. Mate value refers to as the total value of the characteristics that an individual possesses in terms of the potential contribution to his or her mate reproductive success (Fisher, Cox, Bennett, & Gavric, 2008).

Moreover, mate value is intrinsic to an individual, and by defining it solely with respect to someone else, the emphasis on the individual, for example, their self-assessment, is lost. Hence, mate value can be appropriately defined as the total sum of the characteristics an individual possesses at a given moment and within a particular context that impact on their ability to successfully find and retain a mate. This study in no doubt aimed at considering the physique of the male and how females are attracted to them. It suggests therefore that there is an unbroken relationship between body image and size with selection of a spouse.

(Trebicky, Kleinsner, & Havlicek, 2013), asserted that there is a great degree of development of masculine traits which is related to high levels of testosterone. They said that women exhibit consistency in their preferences for men's physique which may present a cue to a higher level of muscularity or sexual dimorphism, physical fitness and health. A moderate degree of development of muscularity and height appears to be most attractive.

The relationship between male physique and spouse selection cannot be over emphasized here. According to (Garza, Heredia, & Cieslicka, 2016) physical characteristics play an important role in determining attractiveness and selecting a potential mate.

This article examines female perceptions of attractiveness using eye movements to explore ways and views of attractiveness (Garza, et al., 2016). It also revolve around it, role in male attraction which has

an ample evidence that physical attractiveness plays an important role in various social interactions thereby ranging from how well children are treated, job interviews to Juridical out comes, its primary focus lies in romantic relationships (Trebicky et al 2012).

The tendency to be attracted to individuals of the opposite sex exhibiting certain traits provides the individuals reaching sexual maturity to reproduce and enhance the chances of survival of offspring, and also explain how preferences are related to the fitness of man attractiveness towards females, furthermore the amount of muscle mass, physical strength or motivation to male development without allocating the energy which would otherwise be used to maintain the level of immune competence (Trebicky, et al., 2012).

It is generally not only the personal matter but also the relative evaluation of society places of the spouses, however, it has been observed legally and traditionally that spouse selection is very important both for females, guidance, and researchers that conduct related topics, health workers (medical social workers, community health workers).

RESEARCH METHODS

A descriptive survey research design was used to carry out the perception of females towards male physique for spouse selection among adolescents in Patani. This design became appropriate for the fact that it helped the researcher to summarize and organize obtained data in its natural setting in order to describe variables identified. This study was carried out at Patani Community in Patani Local Government Area of Delta State. It is bounded on the East by River Fcados, on the West by Umehin Isoko Local Government Area, on the North by Abarie while on the South by Agoloma, all in Patani Local Government Area of Delta State. The community is rich in oil and mineral resources. The major language of the community is Ijaw and they speak English too. The people of Patani are mainly fishermen, farmers, petty traders and civil servants. Patani community has one hospital and one health center, they have three (3) government primary school, (2) two secondary school and seven (7) private Primary and Secondary School in the community. They have one police station, a council headquarters, a post-office, a market that holds every 12 days and several churches and hotels. It is a lively community.

The population of study comprised of all females of child bearing age (15-45) in Patani, Patani Local Government Area. Twenty percent (20%) of the total population forms this age bracket and records showed that Patani community has a population of 1200 persons (National Population Commission, 2006). Thus, the study population became approximately 240 females.

The sample was determined with Taro Yamen's formula to become 150. This sample size was selected randomly through stratified random sampling technique. That is to say the population was divided to groups in their natural compounds viz: Ekise, Akoware, Ogenware, Osouware and Tawari. Each of these compounds forms a stratum and contributed to form the sample size and finally a convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample size. Therefore, the sample size used for this study was 150 females of child-bearing age (15-45).

The study used a self-structured instrument titled, Questionnaire for Female Perception of Spouse Selection (QFPSS) to obtain data for the study. The research instrument (QFPSS) was divided into three sections which comprised of A, B and C. Section A was structured to derive demographic data of the respondents which include the age, body weight, body height, location and educational level. Section B consisted of items to measure level of female interest in males' body image and size while section C was made up of items structured in the Likert scale format, the 5-point Scale- Strongly (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Statements were worded to obtain response from respondents on their perceived reasons for spouse selection.

To achieve validation of the instrument the research instrument was subjected to both face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was done by adopting a test re-test method of reliability coefficient determination. The data from the two administrations were collated and analyzed with Pearson correlation statistics which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.75, which was high enough to consider the instrument reliable.

To maintain ethical standard of the research, permission was granted from the Department of Research and Manpower Development in Bayelsa State College of Health Technology and thereafter, the community chairman of Patani was approached and purpose was explained. Based on the permission the chairman went ahead to make announcement through their public addressing system

and inform the females about the exercise and solicited for their cooperation hence the research was done successfully. Bar chart and Pie charts were used to present demographic information of respondents while mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions. For the null hypothesis, it was tested at 0.05 level of probability with a correlation statistics. A prism graph pad version 5 and Microsoft Excel were used to analyze the data.

RESULTS/DISCUSSION

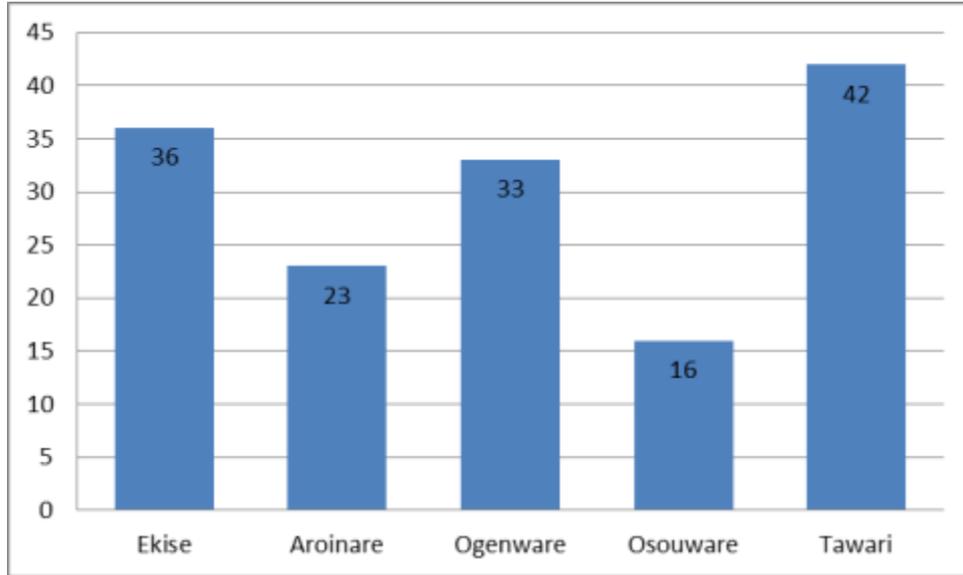


Figure 1: Bar chart showing Distribution of Respondents by compounds

Figure 1 above indicated the distribution of respondents by compounds in Patani Community. Out of the 150 respondents, 42 (28%) respondents were sampled from Tawari compound, 36 (24%) were selected from Ekise compound, 33 (22%) were Ogenware compound, 23 (15%) came from Aroinare while 16 (11%) were selected from Osouware. This relates that majority of the respondents were from Tawari Compound.

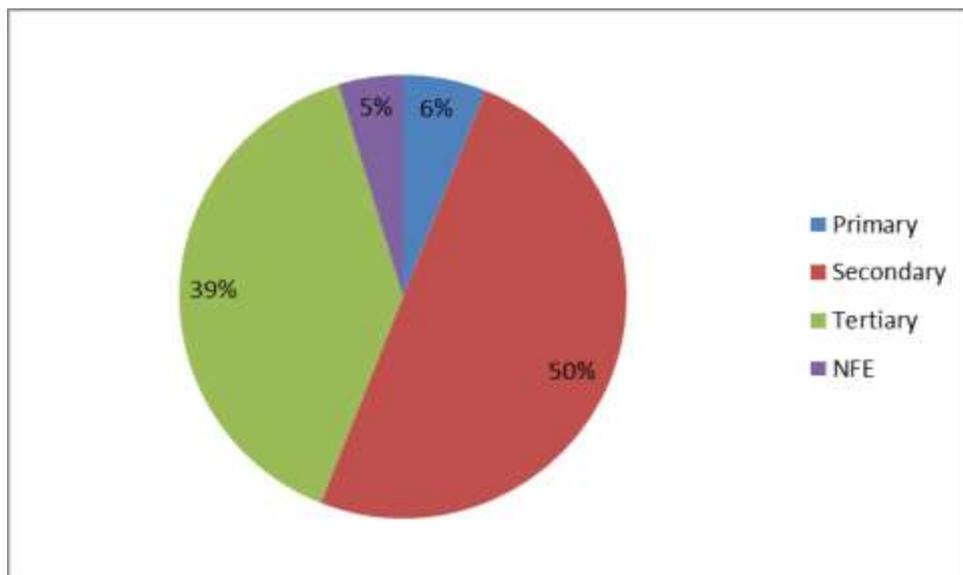


Figure 2: A Pie chart showing distribution of respondents by Educational Level

Figure 2 above showed that 50% of the respondents have attained secondary level, 39% had acquired tertiary education while 6% and 5% were respondents who had primary education and no formal education respectively. This denotes that majority of the respondents (95%) were literate.

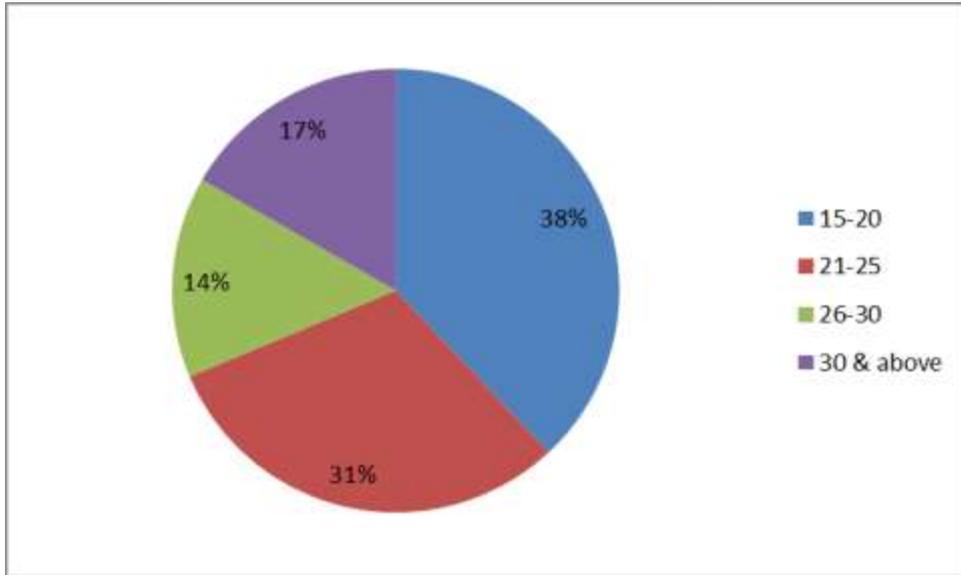


Figure 3: Pie chart showing Distribution of Respondents by Age group

The above figure 3 showed that 38% of the respondents fall within age bracket 15-20 while 31% falls within 21-25 of age. Meanwhile, age bracket 26-30 and 30 & above covered 14% and 17% respectively. This implies that the study was mostly concentrated within the adolescent period of the female gender.

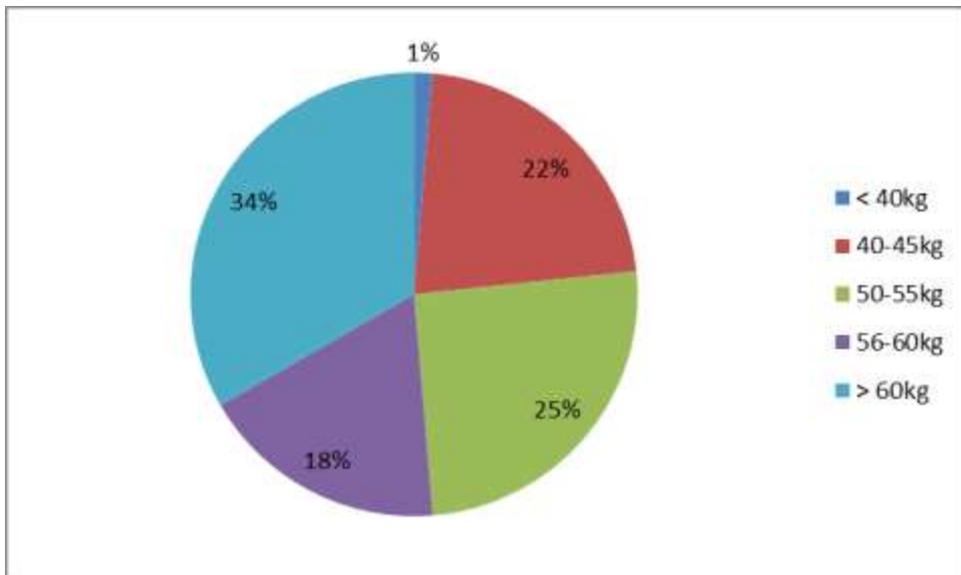


Figure 4: Showed Distribution of Respondents by weight (kg)

Figure 5 above presented respondents' weight distribution. It showed that 34% of respondents weighed above 60kg, 25% weighed between 50-55kg, 22% weighed 40-45kg, 18% weighed 56-60kg while only 1% weighed less than 40kg. This reveals that females' weight range was majorly above 50kg.

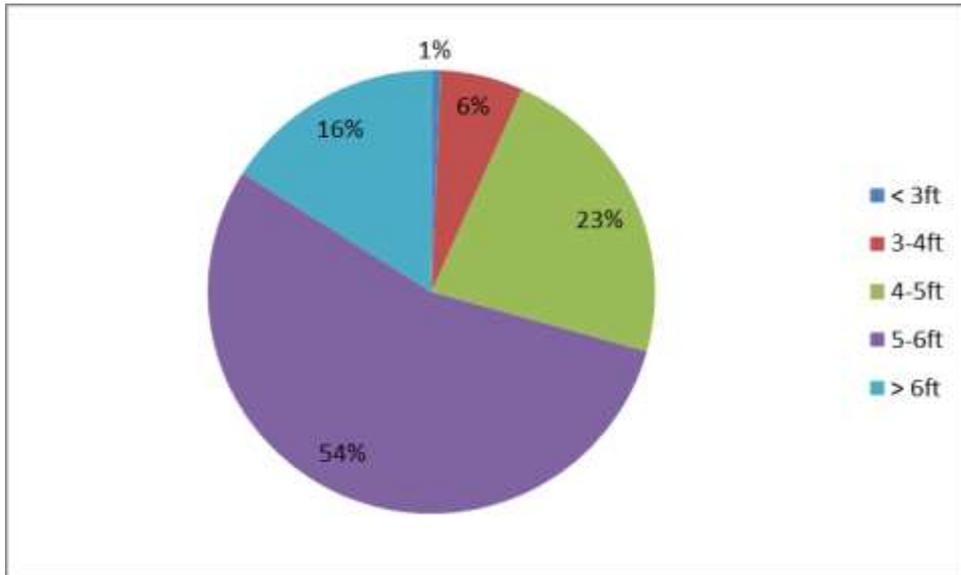


Figure 6: Pie chart showing Distribution of Respondents by height (ft.)

Figure 6 above revealed the height distribution of females in Patani. The chart showed that 54% of the respondents were within the height of 5-6ft, 23% was 4-5ft, while only 1% was recorded as less than 3ft. The study reveals that females in Patani were of average height.

Research Question 1: *To what extent do females show level of interest on male body image and size?*

Table 1: Summary of Descriptive statistics

s/no	Interest of male body image and size	N	Mean	SD	Criterion mean
1	Body image I want my spouse look like	150	1.71	0.99	
2	Body image I don't like	150	3.19	1.01	2.5
3	Body image I like to be	150	1.41	0.96	

Table 1 above showed extent of respondents' interest on male body image and size. The table revealed that for body image and size I want my spouse look like had 1.71 ± 0.99 mean and standard deviation, Body image I don't like was 3.19 ± 1.01 and 1.41 ± 0.96 for Body image I like to be. Meanwhile the criterion mean is 2.5, indicating that respondents like thin body image and size of male for spouse selection as well as liking to have a thin body image and size. Respondents do not like muscular and fat body image and size.

Research Question 2: Which are the body mass indexes of females in Patani?

S/No	Category of BMI	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Underweight	22	16.14	1.20
2	Normal	120	21.18	2.21
3	Overweight	6	26.15	1.18
4	Obesity	2	30.66	0.83

Table 2 above showed body mass indexes of respondents which reveals that respondents have a 16.14 ± 1.20 mean and standard deviation for underweight, normal BMI was 21.18 ± 2.21 , overweight BMI 26.15 ± 1.18 and those who were obese had 30.66 ± 0.83 . This implies that majority of females had normal body mass index.

Research Question 3: Which are the perceived reasons for spouse selection?

Table 3: Summary of Descriptive Analysis

S/No	Reasons for spouse selection	N	Mean	SD	CM
9	Thin guys are more romantic	150	2.63	0.98	
10	Muscular guys are more attractive	150	3.11	1.04	
11	Fat guys are likely lazy at work	150	3.05	1.05	
12	Fat guys are likely more fearful	150	2.85	0.95	
13	Fat guys are likely to have body odor	150	2.45	1.02	
14	Tall guys are most likely to have more friends	150	3.19	0.89	
15	Short guys does not attract friends	150	2.3	1.00	
16	Tall guys feels better of themselves	150	3.19	1.03	
17	Thin guys are mostly handsome	150	2.95	1.07	2.50
18	Muscular guys are mostly at work	150	3.19	0.93	
19	Thin guys have good facial looks	150	2.69	0.98	
20	Fat guys are likely to have big stomach	150	2.97	0.98	
21	Fat guys looks handsome	150	2.61	0.87	
22	Fat guys are likely to have big stomach	150	3.04	1.04	
23	Muscular guy shows more concern about things around	150	2.83	1.04	

CM* means criterion mean

Table 3 above gave an insight on respondents’ reasons for selecting a spouse of their choice as regards male body image and size. Looking at the table item 13 and 15 showed mean values of 2.45±1.02 and 2.3±1.00 respectively which are less than the criterion mean (2.50), thereby indicating that such reasons were not positively agreed by respondents. That is, the reasons of fat guys are likely to have body odor and short guys does not attract friends were rejected while other reasons were accepted as reasons for the selection of a spouse.

Research hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between respondents’ choice of male body image and body image they like to be.

Table 4: Summary of correlation statistics

Paired variables	N	R	R Squared	Cal. P value	P<.05?	Decision
Spouse Body Image vs Body Image I like be	150	0.68	0.47	0.000	Yes	Significant

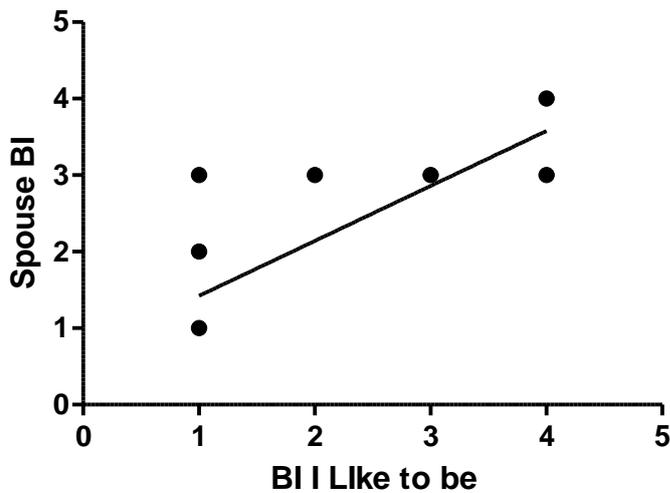


Figure 5: A correlation graph of spouse BI and BI I like to be

Table 4 showed a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.68, R square of 0.47 and a calculated P value of 0.000 which is $P < 0.05$. This implies that there was a statistically significant relationship between respondents' choice of male body image and body image they like to be. It suggests that respondents select spouse based on body image they like to be. Figure 5 also confirms the relationship between spouse body image and size with body image respondents desired to be.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This current study aimed at determining the perception of females towards male physique for spouse selection. The study worked on a stratified sample of 150 females cutting across the four compounds in Patani. The study explored that most of the respondents had at least past through secondary level of education. Meanwhile demographic data of weight and height of respondent indicated that 34% of respondents were weighing 60kg while only 1% weighed less than 40kg. On the other hand, 54% was recorded as 5-6 feet of height while only 1% was less than 3 feet.

Research on physical attractiveness has been one of the central topics in current etiological, behavioral and medical as it might have significant impact on one's reproductive success (Trebicky, et al., 2013). This study determined the perception of females towards male physique for spouse selection. This study identified that female perceived having interest on a male that have thin body. That is thin body image and size of males attracts female for mate selection. This findings is in agreement with (Tovee & Cornelissen, 2001) that reported there is no difference in the perception of female attractiveness between images seen in front-view and profile.

Again, this study investigated that female BMI was normal and their selection of mate was based on their interest having towards male physique that they themselves want to be like. This suggest that respondents do not want obese or muscular men for spouse selection. (Jumah & Duda, 2007) in their work identified similar findings that most women selected ideal body image of men to be thin to normal range.

This study investigated some reasons influencing women for their mate selection. Some of these reasons that most women subscribed to were: thin guys looks more romantic, muscular guys are more attractive, fat guys are likely lazy at work, tall guys are most likely to have more friends, thin guys are mostly handsome, muscular guys are mostly strong at work, thin guys have good facial looks, fat guys are likely to have big stomach fat guys look handsome, etc. however the reasons most of the respondents never subscribed to were that fat guys are likely to have body odour and short guys does not attract friends. (Malaki, 2009) is in line with this study findings that there many factors affecting spouse selection and whatever an individual perceive affects his/her decision.

More so, Table 4 showed a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.68, R square of 0.47 and a calculated P value of 0.000 which is $P < 0.05$. This implies that there was a statistically significant relationship between respondents' choice of male body image and body image they like to be. It suggests that respondents select spouse based on body image they like to be. Figure 5 also confirms the relationship between spouse body image and size with body image respondents desired to be. These findings are in agreement with (Honekopp, Rudolph, Beier, Leibert, & Muller, 2007) and, (Schooler & Ward, 2006).

CONCLUSION

This study can say that females' perception of male physique for spouse selection is proportional to what they like to be. This is to say that male body image and size is dependent on the perception of female for mate selection. The study concludes that women in Patani have an ideal body image and size therefore wishes their partners to be of similar body size.

Educational Implications and Recommendation

This study is implicated to many facets of life which include the female, male, social workers, community health practitioners, social organization and government. The study's findings have much significance in Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counseling. Measurement and evaluation experts will use the finding helpful in assessing females' perception towards male physique in spouse selection in higher institutions. Counselors will use such findings to counsel their clients in and outside the educational environment. Based on the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were proffered:

- Social counselors should carry out routine educational enlightenment and advocacy among females for spouse selection.

- Social workers in ministry of education, health and social welfare should be ready to help female folks through counseling and guidance with available empirical facts.
- Social organizations such as churches, mosque, etc. should base their marriage counseling on revealed facts other than spiritual.

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