



Looking Muscular is Important. I Don't Look Muscular Enough. Therefore, I am Unimportant.

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INTRODUCTION

Previous research has found internalizing body image ideals to be associated with increased body dissatisfaction and decreased self-esteem in females. The interrelations of these variables in men has been less well studied.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to investigate the psychological implications of endorsing a muscular ideal in men.

METHODS

Participants

Undergraduate males ($N=50$) from a northeastern university participated in this study for credit toward a course requirement.

Measures

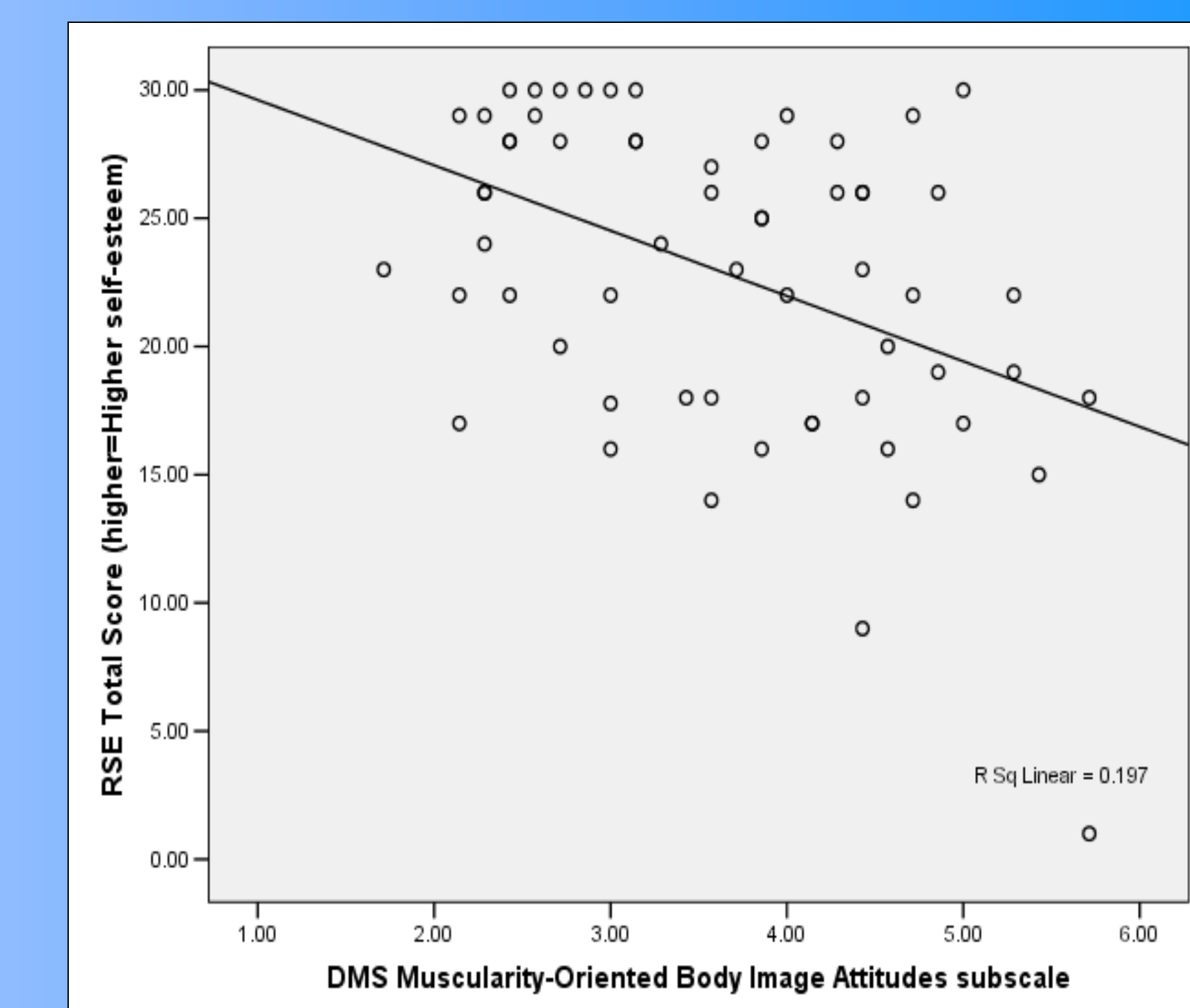
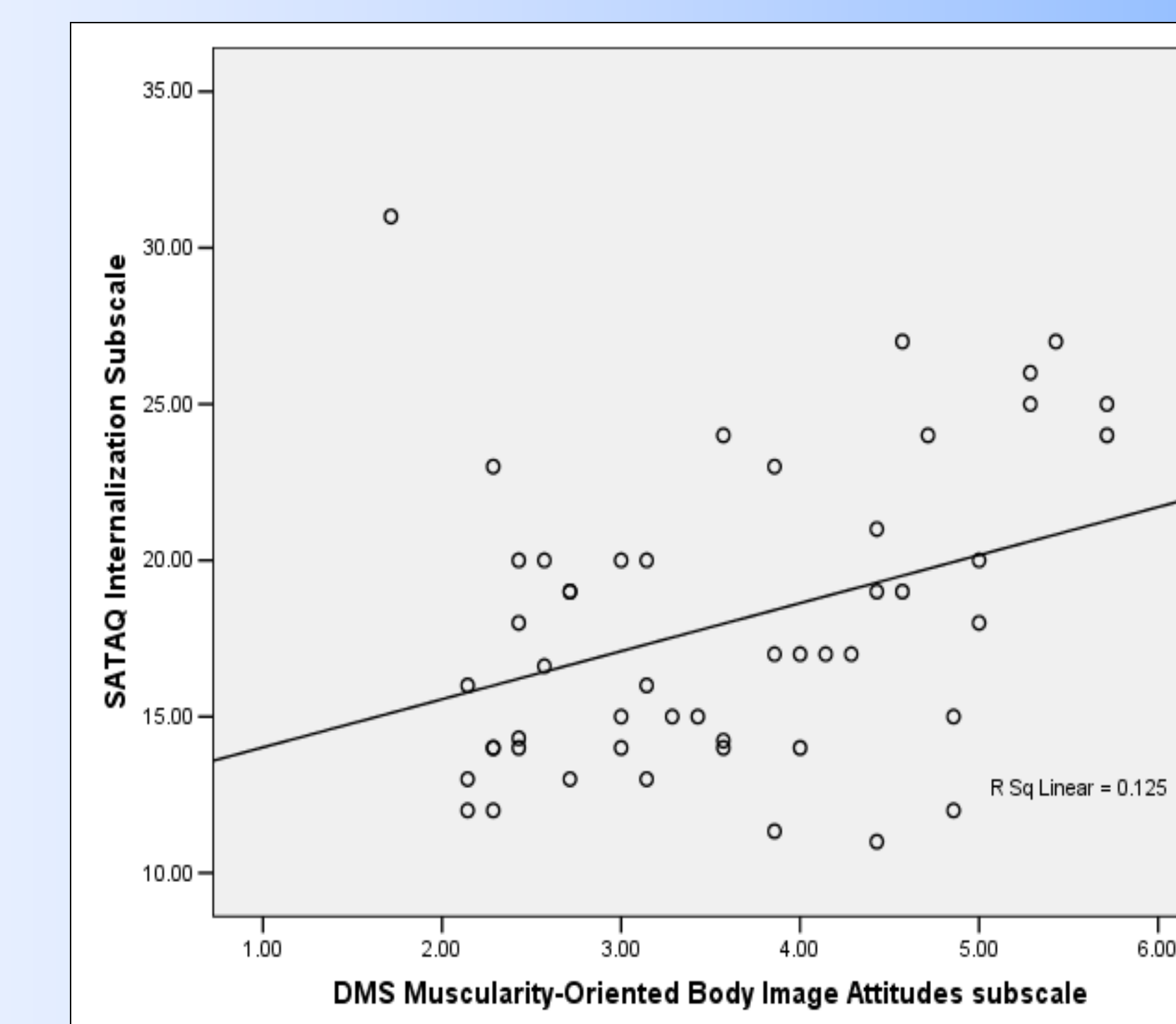
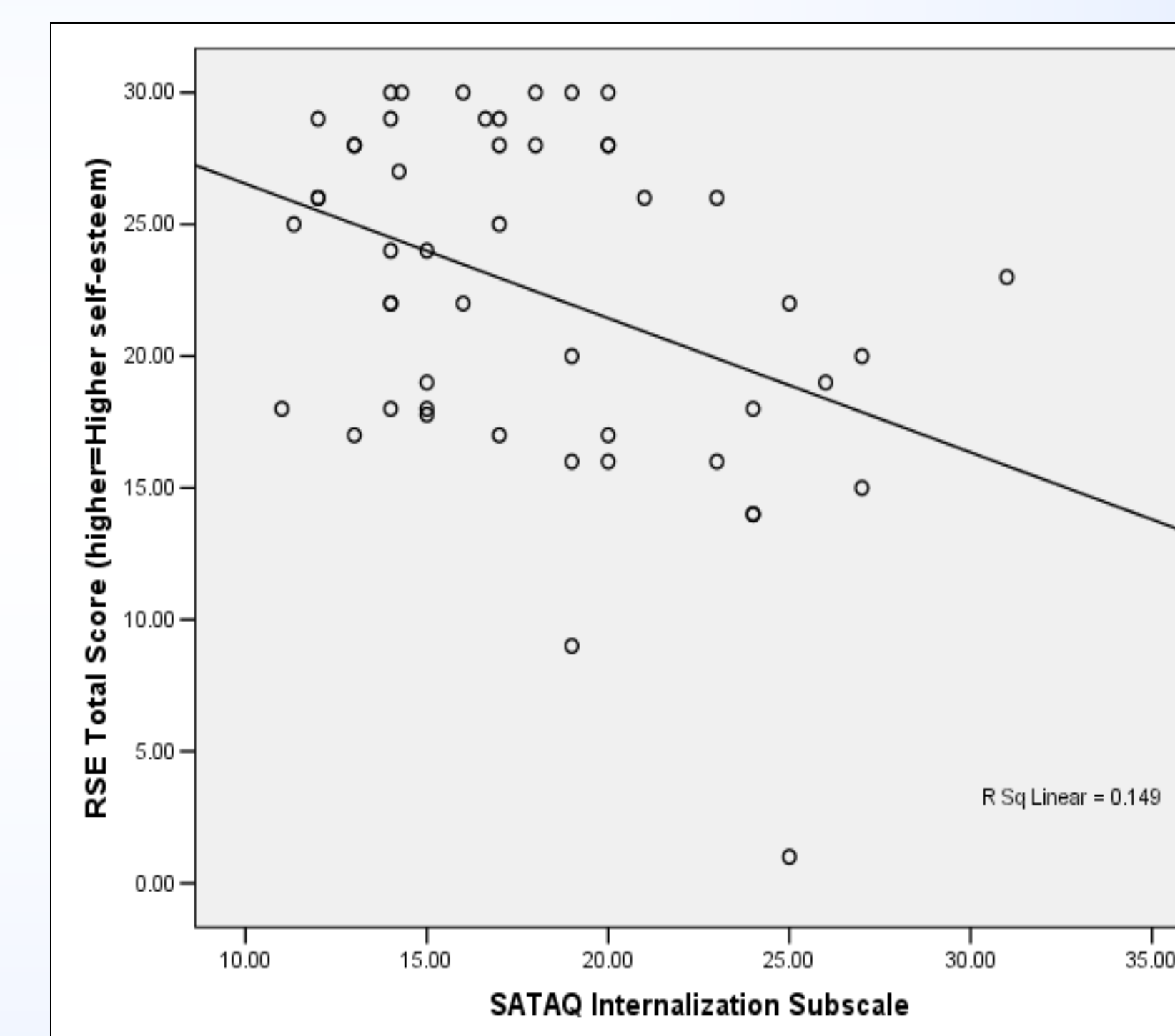
As part of a study investigating the nature of male body image, participants completed an assortment of questionnaires including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE), the Drive for Muscularity Scale (DMS), and a modified version of the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ) that assesses attitudes toward a muscular ideal.

Data Analysis

Barron and Kenny's (1986) model of mediation was used to determine whether dissatisfaction with one's current muscularity mediated the relationship between self-esteem and endorsement of a muscular ideal.

RESULTS

Internalization of the muscular ideal as measured by the SATAQ was found to be significantly negatively correlated with self-esteem as measured by the RSE ($r = -.386$, $p < .05$) indicating that higher levels of endorsement of the muscular ideal were associated with lower levels of self-esteem. The DMS Muscularity-Oriented Body Image Attitudes scale, a measure of satisfaction with current muscularity (or conversely of desire to increase muscularity), was found to partially mediate this relationship ($\Delta R^2 = .150$, $F_{(1, 47)} = 10.05$, $p < .05$).



Dependent Variable: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale							
Model		Beta	t	p	R	R ²	F
1	(Constant)		9.67	<.01	.386	.149	8.386
	SATAQ Internalization Subscale	-.386	-2.90	<.01			
2	(Constant)		10.81	<.01	.546	.299	10.007
	SATAQ Internalization Subscale	-.239	-1.83	.07			
	DMS Muscularity-Oriented Body Image Attitudes	-.414	-3.17	<.01			

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study suggest that the association between valuing the muscular ideal and having low self-esteem is due to the discrepancy between ideal and perceived current muscularity. This parallels findings in body image research in women indicating the importance of self-ideal discrepancies and further demonstrating that this phenomenon occurs across genders.