DISCUSSION

5.1 Findings

Out of six Hypothesis, six were supported. Based on the result of hypothesis testing, In hypothesis H₁ among female college students, higher levels of exposure to media will be associated with lower levels of self esteem was statistically significant. It means that female college students who scored high on the media exposure scale would exhibit lower self esteem scores than those who scored low on the scale.

In hypothesis H₂ among female college students higher levels of exposure to media will be associated with body dissatisfaction is statistically significant that means female college students who scored high on the media exposure scale would be more dissatisfied with their bodies and appearance than those who scored low on the scale. Hence, hypothesis H₂ was supported. According to social comparison theory, people compare themselves to others to evaluate the self. Therefore, the theory of social comparison was confirmed by the positive relation between a high level of exposure to media and body dissatisfaction. Exposure to media images portrayed in fashion or beauty magazines may change college women’s comparison standards and result in body dissatisfaction and appearance. Advertising presents pictures of unrealistically thin, idealized models. In addition, it is well known that technology and special effects such as airbrushing, cropping, and lighting effects are used to make media images appear more perfect or ideal than they are otherwise.

As expected in Hypothesis H₃ higher level of exposure to media will be associated with higher risk of eating disorder tendencies was statistically significant. Female college students who read more fashion or beauty magazines exhibited a higher risk of eating
disorder tendencies. The number of diet articles in women’s magazines and the
frequency of advertising messages promoting slimming products focus on slenderness
as important to physical attractiveness.

As expected in Hypothesis H4 self esteem was significantly associated with eating
disorder tendencies, with lower levels of self esteem related to higher risk of eating
disorder tendencies. People who have eating disorders perceive themselves as
unrealistically big or fat and evaluate themselves negatively. Therefore, overall negative
self- evaluations led to a higher risk of eating disorders. The cultural expectations of
thinness diminished women’s self- esteem and this led women to engage in consistent
risky dieting behaviors.

In Hypothesis H5 relationship between self- esteem and body image was found. This
means that body image has a substantial positive influence on self esteem such findings
suggest that the perception of physical characteristics, including thinness and
attractiveness, influences self –esteem of female college students.

In Hypothesis H6 relationship was found between body dissatisfaction and eating
disorder tendencies. Higher levels of body dissatisfaction were significantly related to
higher risk of eating disorder tendencies among college women. It means that women
who are dissatisfied with their bodies and overall appearance have lower self esteem,
which is related to risky eating behaviors. Physical attractiveness is one of the main
concerns of college age women. Women tend to compare themselves on the basis of
physical appearance. Therefore, female college students, who tend to judge others by
appearance, recognize that others also judge them on the same basis. When they
perceive a major discrepancy between their appearance and what they want to look like,
they have a high chance of becoming involved in risky eating behaviors.

The result of this study supported that exposure to unsolicited slimming and fitness advertisement was associated with body dissatisfaction, eating disorder symptomatology and weight loss behaviors for girls media exposure was positively associated with body dissatisfaction, eating attitude test-26 and weight loss behavior. Although the effect sizes were moderate to small. It was noted that the association between media exposure and body dissatisfaction was stronger than the association with the two remaining variables, eating attitude test and weight loss behavior. These results suggested that media exposure to idealized body images trigger certain psychological processes, which contributed to the psychological state of body dissatisfaction, which in turn affect the eating disorder symptomatology and weight loss behaviors. The researcher observed that the BMI of 66% students fell much below the standard BMI of 25 and on a paradox they believed that they were fat and needed to further slim down. Images in the media are more cameras adjusted and improved upon on Photoshop and other software’s. They leave an impact on the minds of young women, who start idealizing and wish to conform to those images as a result those young women are famished, and often fall prey to fertility problems and other long term diseases which are caused due to deficiency of essential amino acids, essential fatty acids and minerals.

Modestly, and at the most apparent level, narrative data reveal a shift in eating trends in young girls A move in aesthetic ideals is notable in and of itself given the numerous social mechanisms that have long supported the inclination for large bodies. Now, there is shift toward the slim and smart bodies, which young girls consider that these can be achieved only by changing in their eating patterns.
Moreover, this change may be the sign of a disturbance of both apparently steady traditional preference for a healthy body image and shape and the traditional lack of concern in reshaping the body. Analysis of respondent’s views regarding impact of media / TV in this study also reflects a multifarious reshaping of personal and cultural identities innate in their actions to reshape their bodies. Traditionally for females, identity had been fixed not so much in the body as in family, society, and relationships with others. In contrast to Western-cultural models that firmly fix identity in the body. Relatively speaking, social identity is influenced and predictable through personal, visual supports in many Western social contexts, while this is less true here in India. Instead, Indian females are devoted in nurturing others that is why one considers them as the person who cares for and feeds. For this reason, identity is characterized, experienced individually and cooperatively through the well-fed bodies of others, not through one’s own body.

Now in India, most of the females like to be slim and smart as they get inspired from different celebrities and referent groups, and involve in activities that are remarkable in reshaping the body through using those methods and techniques which they observed in other social contexts through media vehicles, but those techniques may not be in align with Indian social context. The conversation on reshaping the body is definitely quite unambiguously and reasonably focused on spirited social positioning for both employment opportunities, peer approval and gaining a social respect and importance as well.
5.2 Conclusion

The use of realistic models in the media could reduce perceived pressure to be thin and construct positive attitudes of self and thus, counteract the possible negative influences of idealized media images. From a social responsibility point of view, the concept of feminine beauty in our society is in need of change. Parents, teachers, and college counseling services have a responsibility to help female college students develop individuality and value their personal uniqueness and believe in themselves, rather than seen after false images. Thus avoiding the trap of eating disorders and suffering nutritional deficiency disorders leading to serious health problems.

Media of almost every type not only aware us, what is happening in the world around us, but on the other hand, it is also affecting every person in some way. As we know that excess of everything is bad, same is the case with the TV viewing. Television viewing is not the only factor, which increases weight consciousness, but it also stimulates eating disorder activities among young females. The media, no doubt is creating awareness, changing the lifestyle, attitude, and behavior simultaneously, but on the other hand, it is also creating depression, anxiety and an increase in weight consciousness in adults generally and in young females particularly. As the literature suggest young females are more likely to be affected from pressure due to family, cultural and societal pressure.

Similar significant results can be found in this particular study as young females assume they are being negatively judged, their life lacks fulfillment, and their life might become better if they are thinner or their body structure is similar to the models that appear in TV advertisements / shows.
In order to look like models/actresses in television, the young females develop eating disorder and the media in particularly television is playing a vital role in the development of eating disorder. Considering the findings of this study, the media is not only playing a vital role in the development of eating disorders in young females, it is also causing anxiety and depression in the young females as they try to look thin in order to be accepted in the society, family and friends.

Therefore, TV shows/advertisements should be launched that encourages use of positive eating behaviors rather than spoiling themselves by following any other model or celebrity. Pediatricians, dieticians and other people related to health care fields should put and reinforce messages of not to develop eating disorder, by educating parents and families about eating disorder, taking part in community initiatives and putting local efforts to apply community initiatives into practice so that work should be done not only at the national level but also at society level to reduce TV shows/advertising and marketing programs that stimulates unhealthy dieting practices. In this way, we will not only reduce the risk of eating disorder but also will be able to improve health.
5.3 **Recommendations**

- Discourage dieting that is unhealthy in nature; as a substitute encourage and support the use of positive eating and activities that involve physical activities or exercise. However, all these actions or behaviors should be carried out on an ongoing basis.

- There should be a promotion of a positive body image among all adolescents whether they are males or females specifically using the media, which is popular in that society, and through the culturally specific and respectable ways.

- There should be encouragement related to eating food that is home cooked, that may be healthful plus more enjoyable.

- There should be an environment that encourages families to talk as less as possible about weight, comparing their sons / daughters to the models appearing in the TV shows / advertisement, this not only creates a sense of becoming like those models, but also stimulates in them eating habits that are not useful for them. Instead, more concentration should be given to do more at home to facilitate healthy eating and physical activity.

- It should be assumed that overweight teens have experienced weight mistreatment and they try to tackle this issue with the help of their families.

- Education and awareness level should be increased to familiarize about negative aspects of excessivetelevision viewing.

- There should be a thoughtful viewing, better scheduling of time and choosing programs to view.
- There should be an arrangement that separate television viewing and eating at the same time is not inpractice. Because, television watching and eating at the same time increases obesity level in teens.

- Intervention programmes should be done with women to educate them about body mass index.

- False images of women which have been improved on photoshop and airbrushed should not be always projected on mass media.

- Likewise on the other hand always a fat woman is projected on mass media as being subject to mockery and ridicule which effects all the people and people mostly do not behave well with women who are not of the tailor made proportions as have been set by the mass media, this kind of negative assessment of woman leads them to be less productive at work, lonely, sad and having low self worth. It is seen that they become socially with drawn and find themselves unable to blend with others and work as a team, and hence are not able to give their full output to the world.
5.4 **Direction for future research**

The study of the media effects on eating disorders is difficult to investigate because it does not lend itself well to experimental investigation. Eating disorder are patterns of behavior that develop over time and cannot be induced or terminated by a single media exposure session. As the eating disorder is dependent on time factor, which is reflected in relatively small consequences in short, term but unfavorable effects in long time cross sectional researches done in the past validates it. Still, cross sectional survey research, has provided the richest pool of information available on the media exposure eating disorder relationship, and especially valuable are studies that control for selective exposure to thin-ideal media based on interest in body-improvement media topics. However, causal arguments are and always will be difficult to substantiate in survey research. The bottom line is that this field of study desperately needs longitudinal research examining the impact of early media exposure on endorsement of the thin ideal and the development of eating disorders in their later life. Continued investigation into the media exposure-eating disorder relationship in males is also needed.

This would not only enable researchers to better understand how males respond to the masculine body ideal, but just as importantly, it would also increase understanding of the process underlying the corresponding relationship in females by providing a basis for direct comparison as well. And, because most young people are exposed daily to images of extreme thinness that also stimulates eating disorders, but point is only a small subset develop full blown eating disorders, is also imperative that research identify variables beyond sex and age that moderate or mediate the effects of exposure of thin-ideal media on eating disorders.
5.5 **Summary**

This study examines whether the level of exposure to mass media is related to self-esteem, body image, and eating disorder tendencies in a college girls. A thin body and an attractive face are considered to define the desirable feminine beauty ideal and this narrow concept of beauty has been promoted through mass media. Women often compare themselves with the idealized images in the media and such comparisons may lead to body dissatisfaction and lower self-esteem. The level of attitudes toward social comparison an individual holds may be an important predictor of the negative outcomes of exposure to ideal media images.

Most of the time extremely thin women are advertised through the media by imparting special visual effects. This is done to overtly damage the psyche of the woman. There was once a time when voluptuous and full figures were considered to be the most beautiful features in the women and made them attractive. However, the current trends are quite opposite to it. Ever since the western impact of thinness has travelled across seven seas, the women of this country are baffled in their minds as how to emulate these figures. They hence have developed some peculiar eating habits they are trying to achieve the unachievable figure type of the western origin. The contemporary fashion models perceived to be the representation of female appearance are becoming slimmer and slender, below the suggested average female body size if women in the media become thinner, thinness is linked to attractiveness, whereas larger body size is equivalent to unattractiveness. The media has drastic effects on the lives of the adolescents especially the teenagers. Research shows that media, especially magazines, play a significant part in body image and eating disorder behavior among adolescent girls the mass media shapes and transmits images of the socio-cultural ideal of beauty.
and thinness. For many adolescent females, beauty is just out of reach. The media constantly bombards us with messages about how they can adorn or alter their bodies and thereby enhance the qualities of their lives. The media contributes greatly to this distortion, along with peers, society, and family. In other cases, a distorted body image leads adolescent females to the extremes of eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia.

Research shows that dieting is the main weight regulation used by females. Indeed, large number of girls report more dieting and body dissatisfaction and many normal weight girls also diet and report dissatisfaction. Although body concerns may lead to healthy eating choices and exercise in some girls, many others diet despite already being a healthy body weight or report using unhealthy methods such as fasting or vomiting. The idealized female body images presented by the media represent standards of femininity that are unrealistic for most women to attain. These media images create frustration and disappointment for women. They perpetuate unattainable, ideal body standards that can lead to unhealthy eating behaviors in some women.

Body image and advertising concurs that prevalent marketing strategies present advertisements that enhance product consumption by promoting unrealistic ideals of body image in women. It further states that continuous exposure to these advertisements can have a negative effect on women’s perceptions of their bodies and their evaluations of their physical attractiveness. Mass media such as magazines promote these idealized body images and produce insecurities and body dissatisfaction People are exposed to innumerable mass media images in the form of billboards, television and magazines. Although not all advertising images are idealized and some advertising show relatively
ordinary people in everyday situations, most advertising present on unrealistic or idealized picture of people and their lives. The use of technology and special effects allows for images to be yet more perfect and idealized images play a significant role in facilitating self comparisons among women, resulting in an upward shift of individual personal image expectations. In this way images in the media are problematic for women, especially adolescent and pre-adolescent women viewing thin and beautiful models in advertisements create self doubt and body dissatisfaction among many young women concerning their bodies and faces and can undermine their self-confidence. As a result, they indulge in unhealthy eating disorder (anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge) and also to engage in strategies aimed at modifying the appearance of the body including dietary restraint. Anorexia nervosa can be detected when an individual weighs at least 15% less than what is expected for her age and height, and is scared of gaining weight and becoming fat. Many anorexics count the Calories of everything they eat and weigh their food. Anorexics are generally depressed, irritable, and withdrawn. Bulimia nervosa can be detected when an individual engages in binge eating sessions, followed by extreme methods of weight control such as vomiting, fasting, abuse of enemas, laxatives or diuretics, and/or excessive exercising. Binge eating disorder can be detected when the individual frequently engages in excessive or uncontrollable indulgences of food, consumes food quickly and secretly with unsuccessful diets, tends to be depressed. Individuals with binge eating disorder do not usually vomit, excessively exercise or use laxatives. Magazines targeted at female adolescents are full of images of young, slim, attractive, blemish free females with small waists, large chests and only ever-so-slightly-rounded hips. Adolescents want to look like these models and may try to replicate them in unhealthy ways. The images seen in magazines
are often unrealistic as most are airbrushed and enhanced by the computer. As a result media images can influence unhealthy eating habits among adolescents. Images in the media are more cameras adjusted and improved by Photoshop and other software. They leave an impact on the minds of young women, who start idealizing and wish to conform to those images as a result those young women are famished, and often fall prey to fertility problems and other long term diseases. The average female model is 5’10” and weighs 49 kg the average Indian female is 5.3’ and weighs 63 kg that makes the average model at least 13kg lighter and 7 inches taller than the average female looking at her. Impact of mass media on Adolescents is particularly vulnerable because this is the age when they are more easily influenced by negative aspect of everything. They are now not mature and many times lead a life of fantasy. This is why young adolescents cannot accept the good things presented by mass media tools, rather attracted by illusionary and faulty commercial advertisings, mainly health related aspects.

There are six hypothesis proposed in this study. Out of six Hypothesis, six were supported. Based on the result of hypothesis testing, In hypothesis $H_1$ among female college students, higher levels of exposure to media will be associated with lower levels of self esteem was statistically significant. It means that female college students who scored high on the media exposure scale would exhibit lower self esteem scores than those who scored low on the scale. In hypothesis $H_2$ among female college students higher levels of exposure to media will be associated with body dissatisfaction is statistically significant that means female college students who scored high on the media exposure scale would be more dissatisfied with their bodies and appearance than those who scored low on the scale. Hence, hypothesis $H_2$ was supported. According to
social comparison theory, people compare themselves to others to evaluate the self. Therefore, the theory of social comparison was confirmed by the positive relation between a high level of exposure to media and body dissatisfaction. Exposure to media images portrayed in fashion or beauty magazines may change college women’s comparison standards and result in body dissatisfaction and appearance. Advertising presents pictures of unrealistically thin, idealized models. In addition, it is well known that technology and special effects such as airbrushing, cropping, and lighting effects are used to make media images appear more perfect or ideal than they are otherwise. As expected in Hypothesis H₃ higher level of exposure to media will be associated with higher risk of eating disorder tendencies was statistically significant. Female college students who read more fashion or beauty magazines exhibited a higher risk of eating disorder tendencies. The number of diet articles in women’s magazines and the frequency of advertising messages promoting slimming products focus on slenderness as important to physical attractiveness. As expected in Hypothesis H₄ self esteem was significantly associated with eating disorder tendencies, with lower levels of self esteem related to higher risk of eating disorder tendencies. People who have eating disorders perceive themselves as unrealistically big or fat and evaluate themselves negatively. Therefore, overall negative self-evaluations led to a higher risk of eating disorders. The cultural expectations of thinness diminished women’s self-esteem and this led women to engage in consistent risky dieting behaviors. In Hypothesis H₅ relationship between self-esteem and body image was found. This means that body image has a substantial positive influence on self esteem such findings suggest that the perception of physical characteristics, including thinness and attractiveness, influences self-esteem of female college students. In Hypothesis H₆ relationship was found between body dissatisfaction
and eating disorder tendencies. Higher levels of body dissatisfaction were significantly related to higher risk of eating disorder tendencies among college women. It means that women who are dissatisfied with their bodies and overall appearance have lower self esteem, which is related to risky eating behaviors. Physical attractiveness is one of the main concerns of college age women. Women tend to compare themselves on the basis of physical appearance. Therefore, female college students, who tend to judge others by appearance, recognize that others also judge them on the same basis. When they perceive a major discrepancy between their appearance and what they want to look like, they have a high chance of becoming involved in risky eating behaviors.

The result of this study supported that exposure to unsolicited slimming and fitness advertisement was associated with body dissatisfaction, eating disorder symptomatology and weight loss behaviors for girls media exposure was positively associated with body dissatisfaction, eating attitude test-26 and weight loss behavior. Although the effect sizes were moderate to small. It was noted that the association between media exposure and body dissatisfaction was stronger than the association with the two remaining variables, eating attitude test and weight loss behavior. These results suggested that media exposure to idealized body images trigger certain psychological processes, which contributed to the psychological state of body dissatisfaction, which in turn affect the eating disorder symptomatology and weight loss behaviors.

The researcher investigates that most respondents perceived themselves to be larger than they really were; over 66% girls described themselves as normal or overweight when they were in fact underweight in weight respectively. 52.3% of the respondents had an eat score over 20 which is indicator of disturbed eating behavior but not necessarily have clinical anorexia nervosa or another eating disorder. 38.2. %
respondents had engaged in at least one weight loss behavior and used some kind of laxatives or diet pills and tried to fast and starved themselves. 50.2% of the respondents had an score under 20 which is indicator of average self esteem and 23.05% respondent had a score low self esteem. Therefore the majority were in the average and low self esteem. 45% of respondents had an score under 110 which is indicator of mild dissatisfaction, 29% of respondents had an score under 140 which is indicator of moderate body dissatisfaction, 12% of respondents had a score above 140 which is indicator of severe body dissatisfaction and 14% respondents score under 80 which indicates no concern about body dissatisfaction. Researcher proposes the use of realistic models in the media could reduce perceived pressure to be thin and construct positive attitudes of self and thus, counteract the possible negative influences of idealized media images. From a social responsibility point of view, the concept of feminine beauty in our society is in dire need of change. Parents, teachers, and college counseling services have a responsibility to help female college students develop individuality and value their personal uniqueness and believe in themselves, rather than seen after false images. Thus, the trap of eating disorders and suffering nutritional deficiency disorders leading to serious health problems can be avoided. Considering the findings of this study, the media is not only playing a vital role in the development of eating disorders in young females, it is also causing anxiety and depression in the young females as they try to look thin in order to be accepted in the society, family and friends. Therefore, researcher suggests that TV shows/advertisements should be launched that encourages use of positive eating behaviors rather than spoiling themselves by following any other model or celebrity. Pediatricians, dieticians and other people related to health care fields should put and reinforce messages of not to develop eating disorder, by educating
parents and families about eating disorder, taking part in community initiatives and putting local efforts to apply community initiatives into practice so that work should be done not only at the national level but also at society level to reduce TV shows/advertising and marketing programs that stimulate unhealthy dieting practices.

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