



Brief research report

## The norms and stability of new measures of the multidimensional body image construct<sup>☆</sup>

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### Abstract

The measurement of the body image construct has become increasingly multidimensional. New assessments are available to measure various facets of body image functioning: The Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire, Appearance Schemas Inventory-Revised, Body Image Coping Strategies Inventory, and Body Image Quality of Life Inventory. The present article reports normative data and acceptable internal reliabilities across seven completed investigations using these measures with female and male college students. Sex differences were examined and found, as expected, for most of the measures. In addition, a study evaluated an undetermined but essential psychometric property of these facets of the construct—their test–retest reliability. In a sample of 107 college students, the 2-week stability of these measures was found to be acceptable. Several directions for future research with these assessments are identified.

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*Keywords:* Body image assessment; Body image disturbance; Body image investment; Body image coping; Body image quality of life; Test–retest reliability

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### Introduction

During the past three decades, research on body image has proliferated (Cash, 2004; Pruzinsky & Cash, 2002; Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). Concurrently, the conceptualization and measurement of body image have become more multi-

dimensional (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002a; Thompson & van den Berg, 2002; Thompson, 2004). For example, Cash's research program recently has produced several self-report assessments of various facets of the construct derived from a cognitive-behavioral model of body image functioning (Cash, 2002c). These include measures of body image disturbance, body image investment (or schematicity), body image coping strategies, and body image quality of life.

The 7-item Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire (BIDQ; Cash, Phillips, Santos, & Hrabosky, 2004) quantifies the extent of body image impairment as a combination of dissatisfaction, distress, and dysfunc-

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<sup>☆</sup> Further information about obtaining the body image assessments used in this research is available at the author's website: [www.body-images.com](http://www.body-images.com).

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tion. The BIDQ was developed to provide a more comprehensive index of “negative body image” than simple measures of body dissatisfaction (Cash, 2002a). The BIDQ possesses validity in its relationships with other pertinent body image measures, with psychosocial functioning (anxiety, depression, and eating disturbance), and its ability to predict eating disturbance above and beyond body dissatisfaction per se as a predictor (Cash, Phillips, et al., 2004).

The 20-item Appearance Schemas Inventory-Revised (ASI-R; Cash, Melnyk, & Hrabosky, 2004) was developed to overcome several conceptual and empirical limitations of the original Appearance Schemas Inventory (Cash & Labarge, 1996). The ASI-R consists of two subscales measuring body image investment. These two facets, derived from principal components analysis, are (1) Self-Evaluative Salience (importance of one’s appearance to one’s sense of self and self-worth) and (2) Motivational Salience (investment in appearance self-management in order to be attractive or look one’s best). Self-Evaluative Salience is regarded as a more dysfunctional type of investment than is Motivational Salience. Several studies’ findings support the validity of the ASI-R scales in their relationships with other measures of body image and with psychosocial functioning (e.g., Cash, Jakatdar, & Williams, 2004; Cash, Melnyk, et al., 2004; Cash, Santos, & Williams, 2005), as well as the ability to predict prospectively the intra-individual level and variability of body image states in everyday life (Melnyk, Cash, & Janda, 2004).

The 29-item Body Image Coping Strategies Inventory (BICSI; Cash, Santos, et al., 2005) measures three ways by which people deal with body image threats or challenges: Avoidance, Appearance Fixing, and Positive Rational Acceptance. These coping strategies were derived from a principal components analysis of the items. The authors report initially favorable evidence of the validity of the BICSI, including predictive validity (Melnyk et al., 2004).

Finally, the Body Image Quality of Life Inventory (BIQLI; Cash & Fleming, 2002; Cash, Jakatdar, et al., 2004) assesses the negative-to-positive impact of one’s body image experiences indexed by a mean score across 19 aspects of life and psychosocial functioning (e.g., confidence, mood, social relations, sexuality, eating behaviors, etc.). Several studies evince the BIQLI’s validity (Cash & Fleming, 2002;

Cash, Jakatdar, et al., 2004; Cash, Santos, et al., 2005). One study has indicated a 2- to-3-week test–retest correlation of 0.79 (Cash & Fleming, 2002).

The purpose of this investigation was twofold: (1) to provide norms and evidence of internal reliabilities of these measures across several studies; (2) to evaluate the psychometric stability of these new assessments over a 2-week period. Although initial publications of these newer measures support their internal consistency and various aspects of their validity, most of these assessments have not been evaluated with respect to temporal stability (i.e., test–retest reliability). This determination is crucial for trait-level measures.

## Methods

### *Normative data studies*

To date, one of more of these four new body image assessments have been included in several of the first author’s recent survey investigations of college-student samples at Old Dominion University (i.e., Cash & Fleming, 2002; Cash, Fleming, Alindogan, Steadman, & Whitehead, 2002; Cash, Grasso, & Goldenberg-Bivens, 2005; Cash, Jakatdar, et al., 2004; Cash, Melnyk, et al., 2004; Cash, Phillips, et al., 2004; Cash, Santos, et al., 2005; Jakatdar & Cash, 2005; Mehlic, Cash, & Dueñas, 2005; Melnyk et al., 2004). Sample sizes ranged from 108 to 603. Across studies, the ethnic composition was 58% Whites, 28% Blacks, 6% Asians, 3% Hispanics, and 5% of other ethnicities. In each study, participants received extra credit in a range of psychology courses for anonymous completion of questionnaires either in a paper-and-pencil or an online (Web-based) format. Each of the four body image assessments was included in two to six of seven separate databases. All studies were approved by an Institutional Review Board.

### *Test–retest reliability study*

The four body image questionnaires were included in an online survey that 242 college students completed anonymously for extra credit in various classes (Cash, Grasso, et al., 2005). A subset of these participants ( $n = 107$ ; 88 women and 19 men) retook

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