

44th APS Annual Conference DARWIN



MEDIA RELEASE

30 September – 4 October 2009

Darwin Convention Centre, Northern Territory

28 September 2009

Three in four Aussie women want to be slimmer

Three in four Australian women want to be slimmer, according to a psychological study into body image.

“Most women in the study felt their bodies were larger than their ideal size, and larger than what men find attractive,” said psychology researchers Patricia Rodwell and Dr Nerina Caltabiano, who will present their findings at the Australian Psychological Society’s 44th Annual Conference in Darwin this week.

The study of 152 women investigated how Gen Y, Gen X and Baby Boomers perceive their bodies.

“We found Aussie women view their bodies differently over time,” said Ms Rodwell. “As women age and their figures change, so do their feelings about their bodies.”

“In particular, we found what women define as ‘attractive’ in relation to size and body shape differs across the generations, with older women reporting a slightly larger figure as attractive in both men and women.”

A quarter of the women wanted an ideal figure that was smaller than the figure they thought men would find attractive.

The study found women aged 70 to 92 were most dissatisfied with their weight, while women aged 50 to 59 were most satisfied with their figures.

“We tend to focus on body image in younger women, but it’s clearly just as important to investigate how older women perceive themselves and how this impacts their self-esteem,” said Ms Rodwell.

“We know that many women rarely feel that they have the ‘ideal’ body shape. A negative body image can impact on a person’s quality of life and feeling of self-worth, which can have serious implications.

“Women should try to focus on their strengths and appreciate their differences, as well as think more positively about their figures.”

Over 150 women aged 18 to 92 participated in the study into perception of body image and its impact on self-esteem and quality of life across different age groups.

To find out more information on the 44th APS Annual Conference visit:
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To coordinate an interview with Patricia Rodwell or Dr Nerina Caltabiano, contact: Elaine Grant on 0412 683 068 or Ellise McLoughlan on 0428 445 097.

About the 44th APS Annual Conference:

This year's Conference will be held at the Darwin Convention Centre from 30 September to 4 October 2009. The Conference will bring together prominent psychologists, practitioners and researchers to explore topical issues including: psychological responses to disaster, emotional intelligence, Indigenous mental health and wellbeing, women in management, body image and youth substance abuse issues.

About Australian Psychological Society:

The Australian Psychological Society (APS) is the peak professional body for Australian psychologists. With more than 17,500 members and 40 branches across the country, the APS is the largest of all non-medical health professionals' associations in Australia.

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