Image is everything health is nothing: The health implications of the quest for ideal male body image

Abstract
Body image is an important aspect of sexuality and the ideal body size and shape vary from one culture to another. Regardless of how closely ones actual figure resembles their perception; their body image can affect their self-esteem, their eating and exercise behaviours and their relationships with others. The quest for an ideal body image can lead to serious health repercussions. Most existing literature on body image perception is about women, portraying a false notion that men are not affected bye the quest for an ideal body image. This paper therefore reviews existing literature on ideal body image to bring out the fact that men are also culprits of an ideal body image and many times at the expense of their health. Included in the review are; what constitutes an ideal male body image, factors that influence body image and the health implications of the quest for an ideal male body image. The paper further links these health implications to issues of male reproductive health.