

A Study on the Influence of Body Image on Early Adults

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ABSTRACT

Body image is what an individual perceives of his or her body and the mental schemas that one forms with respect to their body and may or may not bear resemblance to reality. The four elements to a body image are how you see your body, how you feel about your body, how think about your body and what you do as a result of all of the above. It may be positive or negative. Body image in young adult women means how women between the ages of 18-25 years perceive their body and what factors influence the body image of women in that age. Body image has implications on mental health such as self-esteem, anxiety, depression and self-confidence and eating disorders. Physical illnesses such as cancer, obesity, rheumatoid arthritis also play a role in body image. Literature done in other countries suggests that a majority of women have body image issues. Therefore this concept has to be studied in the Indian context too. This study focuses on that (53.3%) of the respondents are moderate level of body image on early adults, (30%) of the respondents are high level of body image on early adults and (16.7%) of the respondents are low level of body image on early adults.

KEYWORDS: *Negative Body Image, Positive Body Image, Early Adult (Women), Mental Health, Physical Illness, Psychological Effects*

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are in the process of identifying and understanding themselves and the world around them. They are also in the process of creating an identity for themselves and understanding their changing bodies. There are several factors that influence how an adolescent regards his or her body: family environment, television and movies, advertising and existing fashion trends are some of them. Today, social media also plays a critical role with adolescents seeking validation from their friends through 'likes' for their photos. Some experiences that can lead to an adolescent developing a negative body image include:

Teasing and negative comments from family members about their body,

Having a body that is different from the 'ideal' body that they see in the media

Having a perfectionist attitude Having low self-esteem or self-confidence Peer group dynamics and peer pressure to look perfect and 'fit-in' Adolescents

with poor body image may become very moody and avoid social situations because they assume that they are not 'fit' to appear in public. Prolonged thoughts about poor body image can adversely affect a person's daily life and lead to mental health issues such as depression or anxiety, or in extreme cases, eating disorders or body dysmorphic disorder.

DEFINITION

Body image is a multifaceted experience that includes the following aspects And components: "First, a social or external cognitive component; Second, an internal Self-evaluative component; Third, an emotional component; Fourth, a behavioural Component; Last, a physiological component" (Gilbert 201 1). Body image is Complex and includes feelings, cognitions and actions, tendencies with complexions that vary from person to person.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The formation of self-image and how we feel about our bodies starts at an early age, as outside influences

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shape our initial views of ourselves. The role of the body in self-image plays a significant factor in establishing self-confidence, which can impact how emerging adults mature into adulthood. A negative body image can develop from many different influences, including family, peer group, media and social pressures. A positive body image can improve self-esteem, self-acceptance, and a healthy relationship with food and physical activity. Unhealthy body image affects lifestyle choices and negatively affects mental and physical health, and social functioning. It can lead to unhealthy dieting, eating disorders, excessive exercise or under-exercise, substance use, and the desire for unnecessary surgical intervention. The life stage called early adulthood defines individuals between the ages of 20 and 35, who are typically vibrant, active and healthy, and are focused on friendships, romance, child bearing and careers. Yet serious conditions, such as violent events, depression and eating disorders, can negatively impact young adults.

Scope of the Study:

The study has covered Poor body image is most often associated with girls, but boys suffer from it, too. They can feel as though they don't have enough muscles or six-pack abs, or that they aren't tall enough. One research study found that underweight boys are more likely to suffer from depression than are overweight girls. Having good-very good health perception, having higher income than expenses, making regular exercises were predictors in enhancing the quality of life in certain aspects, however having a good body image came out as a predictor enhancing the quality of life in all sub-domains. Body image is important because the way we see ourselves influences every aspect of our lives: our mental health, our physical health, how we take care of ourselves, how we interact with and relate to other people. A person with a healthy body image has an objective, undistorted view of their body and appearance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **GILBERT 1994** ; One's anxiety, anger or sexual feelings); behaviours (e.g., things one has done in the Past); perceived personality traits (e.g., laziness or carelessness) or even states of Mind (e.g., mental illness)

Shame is rooted deep within society. Often it is accompanied by the following

Characteristics: competition for attractiveness, social attractiveness

- **GILBERT 1995**; Mechanisms/behaviours, attention mechanisms, threats, submissive

behaviour, and the Desire to feel safe. Shame is routed in our evolved strategies to be attractive while we engage others in relationships that are beneficial to our Reproductive interests. Shame can be characterized as a defensive response or pattern of responses to threats and losses of social attractiveness.

- **BURNETT 1995**; Humiliation and embarrassment about one's appearance often accompanies Feelings of shame and feel as if they have failed to meet societal standards and Expectations Ruminant and other.
- **ECO 1997**; Beauty Modification throughout History Body image is not a new topic. For many centuries, society concerned itself with image standards. Beauty Modification began as early times.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study about the demographic profile of respondent
2. To Study about the concept of body image in early adults
3. To Study about the factors associated with body image dissatisfaction
4. To Study about the impact of medias on body image
5. To Study about the psychological problems faced by early adults related with body image issues

Research design: The researcher followed descriptive research design for the study.

Universe of the study: Early adults with the age group of 18-25 from Nehru Arts and Science College, Coimbatore & Hindusthan college of Arts and Science, Coimbatore are selected for this study.

Sampling: 60 Respondents were selected for data collection the sampling method adopted for the present study is non-probability sampling. For the present study the researcher use **purposive sampling method** to collect data from parents.

Tools for data collection: psychological problems faced by early adults related with body image issues Description Questionnaire by Motilal Sharma (1978) was used to measure. It consists of 24 statements for true items, strongly disagree-1, disagree-2, undecided-3, agree-4, strongly agree-5 and for false keyed items, the reverse of the true keyed items are used. The scale was found to have a reliability ranging from .34 to .81 and a validity of scale is 63.

The data were analyzed using various statistical tools like simple percentage, independent t-test, and ANOVA.

Finds of the Study

Factors	MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Age	18-20	34	56%
Educational Qualification	UG Degree	46	76%
Family status	Middle Class	42	70%
Marital status	Single	54	90%
Self Conscious	No	29	70%
Self Esteem	Agree	47	78%

Simple Percentage Analysis

- More than half (56%) of the respondents is in the age group between 18-20 years.
- Majority (76%) of the respondents are UG Degree of educational qualification.
- Majority (70%) of the respondents are middle class of family status.
- Majority (90%) of the respondents are marital status of single.
- Majority (70%) of the respondents are self conscious of No.
- Majority (78%) of the respondents are self esteem of agree.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY LEVEL OF INFLUENCE OF BODY IMAGE ON EARLY ADULTS

S. No	Body image on Early Adults	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	High	18	30.0
2	Moderate	32	53.3
3	Low	10	16.7
TOTAL		60	100

INTERPRETATION

The above table depicts that (53.3%) of the respondents are moderate level of body image on early adults, (30%) of the respondents are high level of body image on early adults and (16.7%) of the respondents are low level of body image on early adults.

Influence of Socio Economic Factors and Influence of Body Image on Early Adults

Variables	Statistical tool	Value	Result
Age and Body image on Early Adults	ANOVA	F= .040 T<0.05	Significant
Educational Qualification and Body image on Early Adults	t-test	t = 1.051 p>0.05	Not-Significant
Family status and Body image on Early Adults	ANOVA	F= .000 T<0.05	Significant
Marital status and Body image on Early Adults	t-test	t = .050 p<0.05	Significant
Self Conscious and Body image on Early Adults	ANOVA	F= .353 P>0.05	Not-Significant
Self Esteem and Body image on Early Adults	ANOVA	F= .943 P>0.05	Not-Significant

- There is significant difference in the age and Body image on Early Adults of the respondents.
- There is no significant difference in the educational qualification and Body image on Early Adults of the respondents.
- There is significant difference in the family status and Body image on Early Adults of the respondents.
- There is significant difference in the marital status and Body image on Early Adults of the respondents.
- There is no significant difference in the Self Conscious and Body image on Early Adults of the respondents.
- There is no significant difference in the Self Esteem and Body image on Early Adults of the respondents.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Awareness should be given to adults about body image
2. Family support and cohesion including good communication
3. General life satisfaction self-esteem sense of purpose
4. Awareness should be given to early adults about self-love
5. Keep to a healthy weight .being a healthy weight is good for body image
6. General awareness program should be lunched in the society especially in colleges
7. Befriend your body
8. Appreciating your own body for what it can do not just how looks being proud of things in yourself that aren't related to appearance
9. Appreciate all that your body can do
10. Look at yourself as a person
11. Shutdown negative voices in your heart
12. Conduct awareness campaigns like (love your body)

CONCLUSION

Each person has their own different definition of body image that define as beautiful or in certain cases, what the media defines as beautiful, meaning to be skinny. Even with the media constantly making advertisements that catches our attention does not mean we have to follow what they represent. Body image isn't about being skinny, having a good skin tone, beautiful smooth hair, etc, but to be comfortable in our own skin just the way we please. Same goes for men, although women have bigger concern on their looks and shape than men. My point to this argument is that, no matter what the media or any other people define the real beautiful body image, just simply show them your body. In our life stage, adolescents are the one who come across these insecurities and low self-esteem towards their body and to themselves.

As for my research I found in my interview with Ms. Jacquelyn Jones, she shared her experience about her eating disorder and how it affected her daily routine in her life. She elaborates and provides solid answers so we can understand what she had to go through as someone who suffers an eating disorder. Even with an eating disorder, she still does not let it affect her point of view of life. She continues to live her life as it is and try to make every day the best. Her interview relates to the main idea because having a negative view of our body image can lead to low self-esteem

and by having an eating disorder makes it worse than it already it. This study conclude that that (53.3%) of the respondents are moderate level of body image on early adults, (30%) of the respondents are high level of body image on early adults and (16.7%) of the respondents are low level of body image on early adults.

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