

ASSOCIATION OF BODY IMAGE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: Body image represents how one perceives their body and acts as the most important part of an individual's image of self. An individual's physical appearance is the first feature that is judged by people when they encounter each other. On the other hand, a notable measure of mental health is one's satisfaction with his or her body image and positive attitude towards the body. Adolescence is the period of transformation of not only the physical aspects but also the psychological aspects, that occurs between puberty and adulthood. Hence, this study intends to examine the relationship between body image and psychological health of adolescents. The data was collected from 200 college-going students aged between 18 to 21 using convenience sampling. The standard questionnaire on body image and mental health were used. The mean score for body image was 59.90, which indicates moderate body image satisfaction and the mental health mean score revealed moderate depression with a mean score of 11.60. The collected data was analyzed using Pearson r ($r(199) = -.424, p < .01$). The result indicates a significantly negative correlation between body image and mental health among adolescents. Thus, the study concludes that body image and mental health have an inverse relationship.

Keywords: Adolescence, mental health, Body image.

I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a time of greater self-reflection, including an assessment of one's physique and looks. Elizabeth B. Hurlock (1950) defines "Adolescence is the age during which the individual becomes integrated into the society of adults, the age when the individual no longer feels he is below the level of his elders but equal, at least in rights". Adolescence is not a time period that can be fully defined in terms of stages, trends, or structures, just like childhood or old age. (Penner, W., 1971

AND Hurlock, Elizabeth. B., 1967). The age range between childhood and adulthood is known as adolescence, and its definition has long been controversial. At a time when unheard-of social influences, such as marketing and digital media, are affecting health and welfare throughout these years, the transitional phase from childhood to adulthood today makes up a larger share of the life course than it ever has. (Sawyer, S. M., Azzopardi, P. S., Wickremarathne, D., & Patton, G. C., 2018). Adolescence is the time when a person is typically most focused on their home. A person makes the transition from childhood to adulthood during adolescence. During this time around, the majority of individuals experience physical, mental, and emotional growth. The development that occurs during adolescence is crucial in preparing for adulthood. (Blakemore, S. J., 2019). Adolescents' negative body esteem, body image, and eating habits were connected to low self-esteem and social support, weight-related taunting, and increased pressure to reduce weight. (Ata, R. N., Ludden, A. B., & Lally, M. M., 2007). Adolescents are prone to have extremely dynamic impressions of their bodies since puberty causes considerable physical changes in their bodies. Self-esteem and self-assessment have a greater impact on body image than external judgment by others. However, cultural messaging and societal expectations of beauty and attractiveness can have a significant impact on it. (Croll, J., 2005).

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as, "Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community." (2022). The majority of mental health issues that are identified in adults start during adolescence. By the age of 14, half of all mental health disorders with a lifetime diagnosis are present; by the age of 24, this proportion rises to three quarters. (Knopf, D., Park, M. J., & Mulye, T. P. 2008). Due to intense pressure to seek aesthetic ideals, body image issues are prevalent all over the world. These issues may differ depending on the cultural setting, but their prevalence and link to poor mental and physical health are universal. (Rodgers, R. F., Laveway, K., Campos, P., & de Carvalho, P. H. B., 2023). Adolescence has reportedly been linked to an increase in

the occurrence of mental health conditions. Up to 20% of children and adolescents worldwide are estimated to have mental health issues, which accounts for a significant amount of the disease's global burden.(Belfer, M. L.,2008).The literature has also suggested a strong connection between poor family functioning and poor adolescent mental health. (Kuhn, E. S., & Laird, R. D. ,2014). Adolescents' mental health issues have a significant impact on many facets of their lives, including their capacity to participate in school, maintain positive family connections, establish and keep friends, and develop self-dependence. Therefore, the essential components of the services to be offered to this young demographic are identification, treatment, and support.(Hagell, A., Coleman, J., & Brooks, F. ,2013).The latter is crucial in order to establish a context for comprehending the scope of this clinical issue, which would then make it possible to spot any gaps in services for child and adolescent mental health, quantify child and adolescent mental disorders, estimate the financial costs of impairment, or calculate the potential that has been lost for an individual or society.(Belfer, M. L.,2008).

Body image is an important component of our self-concept since it involves how we see, think about, and behave towards our bodies. Body image is fluid and varies over the course of a person's life. While body dissatisfaction can occur at any age, adolescence is a significant transitional time marked by numerous body-related changes. Adolescents are more likely to develop negative body image during this phase of transition.(Voelker, D. K., Reel, J. J., & Greenleaf, C.,2015).Body image and self-esteem have long been related, and they are important challenges for young people, especially during adolescence and puberty. People are affected by these challenges throughout their lives, from childhood to old age. Previous study has primarily focused on body image and self-esteem in children and adolescents. Recently, research in this area has begun to focus on the elderly. In early teens, body image problems are connected with overall negative self-concept, including poor physical, social, and academic self-concepts as well as low overall self-esteem(O'Dea, J. A.,(2012).

II. METHODS

Participants

A convenient sample of 200 college going students between the age group of 17-19 (M= 18.14, SD= .498) was selected to participate in this study. The participants were selected from different parts of Tamil Nadu

Procedure:

The participants were requested to take part in the study, and their informed consent was obtained before any data were gathered from those who showed a desire to participate. They received guarantees of privacy and confidentiality and information about their rights to disagree or withdraw. The purpose of this research is to find the correlation between the body image and mental health of adolescents. Correlational research cannot establish cause-and-effect connections. In other words, it is to find the relationship without manipulating or controlling the variables.The quantitative data were collected using online surveys in which the questionnaires are shared with the sample. Our study involves a sample of adolescents to collect the data. The survey links were shared with 220 people out of which 205 were responded and the corresponding response rate is 93.18 percent. Excluding the outliers, we have selected our sample size as 200 adolescents which includes 86 males and 114 females.

Measures:

THE BODY-IMAGE QUESTIONNAIRE (BIQ): AN EXTENSION(MICHELE KOLECK, MARILOU BRUCHON-SCHWEITZER, FLORENCE COUSSON-GÉLIE and BRUNO QUINTARD ,1987) is a unidimensional construct, and its goal is to investigate the aspects of attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors exhibited towards the body. It is a 19- item questionnaire with Likert scaling of 5- point scale, ranging from 1 (very much, often) to 5 (very much, often). A high score on the scale indicates body satisfaction and the low score indicates body dissatisfaction. The current sample's scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .527.

PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE -9 (PHQ-9)(Drs. Robert L. Spitzer, Janet W.B. Williams and Kurt Kroenke, 1999) is a bidimensional structure that includes cognitive- affective and somatic dimension. The PHQ-9 modified version for adolescents is simple but requires examining various distinct aspects of depression from minimal or no depression to serve depression. It examined the two dimensional structure contains somatic dimension such as sleeping difficulties, fatigability, appetite concerns, and psychomotor retardation and a cognitive-affective dimension such as inability to engage, depressed mood, negative thoughts about oneself, concentration problems, and suicidal ideation).It is a Likert - type scale in which the items are scored on 4- point scale, ranging from 0 which represents not at all to 3 which represents nearly every day.The high score on the scale means high depression and the total score range from 0 to 27.The Cronbach's alpha of the scale on the present sample is .760

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:

The quantitative data were analyzed by mean SD, and Pearson 'r' statistical techniques using the IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software.

III. RESULTS

Table1:

Summary of mean and standard deviation of body image and mental health

	n	Mean	SD
Body image	200	59.90	6.843
Mental health	200	11.60	5.047

The above table shows the sample number, mean and standard deviation of body image and mental health.

Table2:

Showing the Correlation between body image and mental health

Variable	n	1	2
Body image	200	1	-.424**
Mental health	200	-.424**	1

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlational analyses were carried out to find the relationship between the body image and mental health. The result indicates significantly negative correlation between the body image and mental health among adolescents and it was analyzed using Pearson r ($r(199) = -.424, p < .01$).

IV. DISCUSSION

In the current study, the association between body image and mental health in adolescents was studied. The degree to which people are unhappy with their physical appearance is body dissatisfaction and it is the difference between a person's ideal body and how they perceive their actual physical appearance. Body dissatisfaction is strongly tied to bad mental health. Young people who are depressed are more likely to concentrate on negative feelings and compare their bodies to what they believe to be "perfect" bodies. Examining the findings, the current investigation produced some intriguing outcomes. Quantitative research is used in our study in which the numerical data are gathered and examined. Using sampling techniques and the distribution of online questionnaires, quantitative data is collected. It is mostly used in natural and social sciences. The collection of measurable data and the application of statistical research is applied here. The mean score for mental health revealed moderate depression with a mean score of 11.60, whereas the mean score for body image revealed moderate body image satisfaction with a mean score of 59.90. The standard deviation for mental health is 5.047 and the standard deviation for body image is 6.843. Correlational analysis was done to identify

the relationship between body image and mental health using the Pearson Product- Moment Correlation Coefficient. The data analyzed using Pearson 'r' ($r(199) = -.424, p < 01$). The findings show an inverse relationship between adolescent mental health and body image. This study also supported that body image was inversely correlated with psychological well-being.(KavehFarsani, Z., Kelishadi, R., & Beshlideh, K., 2020). Also, the findings in this study supported that body image dissatisfaction is associated with the symptoms of depression in. adolescents. (LC Soares Filho, RFL Batista, VC Cardoso, VMF Simões, AM Santos, SJDDAC Coelho, AAM Silva, 2020).

V. CONCLUSION

The current findings suggest that the mental health of adolescents is associated with body image, and it clearly shows that there is an inverse relationship between them. Also, it suggests that the mean score for mental health revealed moderate depression and the mean score for body image revealed moderate body satisfaction.

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