

The Relationship Between Body Image and Resilience Among College Students – A Correlational Study

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ABSTRACT

Resilience in women has been linked to body image, in many pieces of research. However, in men, not much is known about this. The present study's objective is to investigate the link between resilience and body image in both men and women. 120 students (60 male and 60 female) from Amity University, Noida participated in this study, and the tools used in the present study are Body Image Questionnaire (BIQ) and Brief Resilience Scale (BRS). Correlational analysis and t-test were used for statistical analysis. The results that came out were that there is no significant relationship between Body Image and Resilience and there is a gender difference in both body image and resilience among males as well as females.

Keywords: *Body image, Resilience and College students*

Everybody has an opinion of their own body or body image, and these statements about themselves, such as "I am taller" or "I have a round face," reveal that opinion. Body image implies to an individual's image of their own body, their understanding and subjective interpretation of their physical features. Gillen & Markey (2016) describe your body image as your opinions, emotional state, and actions that are connected to your physical appearance. Body image has several dimensions, which include looks, body shape, overall fitness, and well-being (Wang et al., 2017).

Body image has four components, according to the National Eating Disorders Collaboration (2021). Your perception of your outside body is known as *perceptual body image*. Our perceptions of ourselves are not always correct. First impressions, social connections, and other parts of one's life are greatly impacted by one's body looks (Cash, 2004), so, the discrepancy between our ideal and actual selves can become problematic. The way you feel about how you look on the outside is known as your *affective body image*. Happiness or disgust are examples of feelings. According to Wu and Zhang (2003), 54% of college students are dissatisfied with their weight and level of physical fitness. Your interpretation of your own body looks is called the *cognitive body image*. Some women even though they have normal weight may feel they are fat after seeing some models and this could lead to a preoccupation with weight and appearance. The actions you take due to your body image symbolizes your *behavioral body image*. Some people with body dissatisfaction have bad

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Received: October 23, 2023; Revision Received: March 28, 2024; Accepted: March 31, 2024

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eating habits leading to an eating disorder. More self-image inadequacy was seen in binge eaters than in individuals without the disorder (Nicoli & Junior, 2011).

According to Tylka and Wood-Barcalow (2015), there are two types of body image: positive and negative. These include feelings of being disappointed or frustrated with your body image and admiration of one's body. The trait of a person with positive body image are they perceive their body for what it is, recognize that an individual appearance says nothing about who they are and what they stand for, that they feel at ease and confident in their bodies, and that their appearance has no bearing on their actions or behaviors. Beyond the physical size of the body, positive body image has significant impacts on the bodily and mental health of an individual. (Gillen, 2015). whereas traits of an individual having a negative body image are they have a distorted image, worrying about their body size, being uncomfortable in their body, and having low self-esteem. According to Cash & Flemming (2002), having a poor body image affects our self-esteem, ability to build connections, and social anxiety.

Childhood is when body image formation starts, and it is influenced by both recent and past experiences that can have both good and negative effects on how we perceive our bodies. Factors that affect our body image are:-

Culture. Since ancient times beauty was given importance, different cultures had different opinions about what ideal beauty was some cultures considered a slender body and pale skin as ideal while in some cultures being fat was considered good as it was related to being rich. For instance, Perez & Joiner (2003) found that Black American girls reported higher levels of body satisfaction than White American girls and generally supported a bigger body ideal.

Physical changes. As children develop into adults, they must learn to adapt to a new physical form that may simultaneously seem appealing, weird, and uncomfortable to them. The degree and impact of these physical alterations' effects vary concerning other factors but it is still seen as an important factor in causing body dissatisfaction. For example, girls gain weight during puberty and the most accurate predictor of body dissatisfaction is frequently considered to be weight level (McCabe and Ricciardelli 2003). In the case of boys' research says Boys' desire to be bigger (i.e., more developed) and more muscular than they feel themselves to be during the puberty transition may make puberty a risk factor for their body image (Yuan 2007) and the pubertal stage of males and their attempts to alter their bodies through weightlifting, nutritional supplements, or even steroid use has been connected (Ricciardelli and McCabe 2003)

Social media. According to Tiggemann and Slater (2013), the cyber space is a significant and powerful socio-cultural agent that is connected to adolescent girls' body image. Exposure to images of the thin-ideal body in the media has been linked to issues with body image in women (Grabe, Ward & Hyde, 2008). Social platforms stimulate user comparisons, which magnify thoughts about the body of young adults who try to adjust their looks to represent a perceived idealized version, both boys and girls experience negative body image consequences as a result of social comparison which influences their body image and nutritional adoptions to seek validation from external sources such as social media (Jones, 2001; Rounsefell et al., 2019).

Family and Peer. How we view our bodies is greatly influenced by both our family and friends. If our parents are encouraging us to lose weight, we are more likely to listen to their

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advice and do so ourselves (McCabe and Ricciardelli 2005). According to research by Eriksen et al. (2003) and McCabe and Ricciardelli (2005), fathers' influences on boys' and mothers' influences on girls' body image development are more significant. Sometimes parents indirectly teach body dissatisfaction through their behavior influencing the eating habits of their children. Adolescents try to get validation from their peer and negative comments from the peer is destructive to body image (Davison and Birch 2002). According to Jones (2004), Girls seem to be slightly more likely than boys to evaluate their appearance by comparing it to both their same-sex peers and other models leading to a negative body image.

Due to the substantial life changes and difficulties that late adolescents face as they enter the college setting, the college years may be an especially suitable time to study. College students' life satisfaction, according to Zhang (2007), is influenced by both their physical and academic self-perceptions. According to research, females frequently report higher rates of body dissatisfaction than males do (Thompson et al., 1999). However, Boys may experience more body image issues during adolescence, according to McCabe and Ricciardelli (2004), because they show more interest in modelling male body ideals. Boys' body dissatisfaction rises through adolescence and into the transition to adulthood, just like it does for girls (Bucchianeri et al., 2016). According to Smolak (2004), during adolescence boys develop concerns about both their body size and muscularity, which leads to levels of body dissatisfaction comparable to those experienced by adolescent girls. Boys of all ages revealed dissatisfaction with their bodies, which is frequently directly related to lower self-esteem, even though they generally showed fewer overall body issues than girls (Cohane & Pope, 2001). Boys can experience body-related stress, and it can manifest differently in boys than it does in girls e.g., through attempts to bulk up (Weisman et al., 2014).

Resilience is the capability to recover or get well from stress. Researchers are investigating resilience in a range of disciplines, such as psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and more recently biological disciplines including genetics, epigenetics, endocrinology, and neuroscience. There is not, however, a one-fit definition for all. According to Herrman et al. (2011) Resilience is often regarded as having the ability to maintain or regain mental health despite facing challenges. A resilient person can effectively handle stress, adapt to change, and deal with challenging circumstances, such as traumatic life events, socioeconomic deprivation, and mental and physical illness. Resilience is a personal skill but that may be gained because of the interplay of several circumstances if one encounters difficulties. Positive emotions, subjective well-being, and life satisfaction are all positively correlated with resilience, while negative correlations exist between resilience and anxiety and depression, and other negative feelings (Hu et al., 2015), and positive emotions, according to Tugade et al. (2005), are crucial for resilient people to be able to recover from stressful situations. According to Mcgrath et al. (2009) more resilient college-age women was seen having an abundant optimistic body image. So, to improve self-confidence and body satisfaction one must improve resilience. Choate (2005) created a protective five-factor model for body image resilience that takes family of origin support, gender norms satisfaction, a good perception of one's physical appearance, effective strategies to cope, and a sense of overall wellness and balance into account. However, there is still a lack of study-based evidence that inspects the resilience effect on body image, especially in men.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mohammad et. al. (2023). This study investigated how a spiritual care program (SCP) affected Iranian second-degree burns patient's perceptions of their bodies and resilience. At the Tehran Mottahari Burns Hospital, 60 second-degree burns patients were selected for this semi-experimental study. Through random allocation, these patients were split into two control group and experiment group. Beforehand, right away, and three months after the program, the patients in both groups completed the Self-Esteem Scale called BSCT by Becks and the CD-RISC resilience scale by Connor-Davidson. SCP was used in the experiment group for eight sessions spread out over 2 weeks. Initially, researcher inspected the Spiritual Health and Well-Being 4D model. Next, each patient had two one-hour sessions around each dimension, making a total of eight sessions for all four dimensions. The outcome demonstrates that there is similar body image and resilience scores between the control and experiment groups before the intervention. The control group, however, displayed improved body image and resilience after SCP interventions. suggesting that medical professionals should use SCPs to speed up burn patients' recovery, minimize complications, and lower treatment costs.

Hsing et. al. (2022). In this study, the resilience, illness perception, and body image of a breast cancer survivor (5 years or more) were examined to know about the correlations and explore the relationships. 106 breast cancer patients who were able to understand Chinese and were older than 20 years old were recruited using convenient sampling; women with mental health conditions were not included in the study. The members finished questionnaires regarding their demographics, revised illness perception (IPQ-R), body image scale (BIS), Eysenck personality questionnaire (EPQ), and resilience scale (RS). The findings revealed that illness perception is a strong predictor of better resilience as influenced by body image. If given enough information, women with breast cancer may view the condition more favourably improving their chances of surviving as a result.

The goal of Muhammad Rafiq's study from the year 2021 was to examine the relationship between psychological resilience and body image in a sample of obese upper primary school kids in the Jerash governorate. Upper primary school pupils in grades 8, 9, and 10 were selected as the sample population. The results of the study showed low body image and moderate psychological resilience. Body image and psychological mental strength showed a statistically significant correlation. The results showed that there were no differences in psychological strength and body image between overweight male and female students.

Dinur, Jedidiah & Guy (2020). While cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is effective, it is not always available. To address this issue, researchers examined the efficacy of a CBT-based mobile app designed to lessen BID symptoms and increase resilience to body image triggers. 90 women were divided into two groups at random: those who used the smartphone app for roughly 4 minutes of exercise every day for two weeks; and those who did not. To see if using the app was associated with increased resilience to typical BID triggers, participants completed an Insta interaction resilience task after completing body image measurements at the starting point, instantly after two weeks of smartphone app use, and at a one-month follow-up. Comparing those who used the application to those in the control condition, participants who used it showed greater resilience and fewer BID symptoms. Medium-to-large positive changes were made and kept.

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Bernadetta et. al. (2018). The goal of the study is to identify factors that shield breast cancer patient's ability to maintain a positive body image following mastectomies. 120 women who had had a mastectomy within a brief (within 2 years) or extended (more than 2 years) time frame made up the research group. The findings of the research teams demonstrate that in post-mastectomy women, psychological resilience plays a critical protective role for body image, preventing the excessive development of low self-esteem. Female patients should be helped both immediately after the procedure and later when they are less able to handle uncomfortable feelings. It is recommended that psychological interventions be used to greatly boost post-mastectomy breast cancer patients' overall body image resilience to emotional and cognitive distortions.

Daniela et. al. (2018). Assessing resilience, perceived stress, and body image satisfaction in amputee soldiers was the main objective of this study. This quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational study included 22 Colombian soldiers who were victims of the country's internal armed conflict and had experienced some degree of amputation. The MBSRQ, the EEP-14 for perceived stress, and the CD-RISC 10 for Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale were all completed by each soldier. In addition to low levels of stress and strong trends in resilience, the findings show high levels of behavior patterns aimed at maintaining physical fitness, self-assessed physical attractiveness, and physical appearance. Stress and actions taken to maintain physical fitness have a negative relationship as well.

The study “An Investigation of Relationship Satisfaction on Resilience and Body Image” by Peta & Olivia (2015) investigates the link between relationship satisfaction and negative body image and investigated how ethnic diversity affected body image dissatisfaction (BID). There are many pieces of research on the factor of BID however there is an absence of research examining the interrelationships among relationship satisfaction, resilience, and body image. An online survey was filled out by 169 men and women respondents who were identified as being "in a relationship." According to assumptions, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis disclosed that resilience was an indicator of the link between fulfilment and body image. Relationship satisfaction and body image have a bi-directional relationship that is not mediated by resilience as per mediation analysis.

Andrian & Cicilia (2014). This study's goal was to identify issues with body image among female university students in Surabaya. Purposive sampling was used to select 143 female university students between the ages of 18 and 21 as participants. The research tools for this survey were a pictorial scale and a Likert-type scale. The data were examined using descriptive statistics and a cross-tabulation of the demographic questionnaire. The findings demonstrated a discrepancy between the desired and actual perceptions of the body. The predominant behavior was compulsive. Despite having normal body mass measurements, some young women in the general population struggled with body image problems like body dissatisfaction, mental misinterpretation, and body image-related compulsive behavior.

The Journal of Genetic Psychology (2011) published the study Body Image and Psychological Well-Being in Adolescents: The Relationship Between Gender and School Type. The questionnaire regarding subjective well-being, family life, extraversion, and perceived personal appearance and weight was completed at school by 1281 teenagers from state-wide schools. The findings indicated that there is a gender gap in terms of self-esteem and well-being, with girls reporting higher levels of dissatisfaction with their appearance and weight. Self-esteem and dissatisfaction are unaffected by the type of school (same-sex or

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coed). In addition, girls with better psychological adjustment are more extroverted, have more dependable friends, and have a stronger support system from their families.

Robert, Wiggin & Rosemary (2009). In college women, having a damaging body image is connected to depression and low self - confidence, as well as harmful eating patterns and eating disorders. There is little information on preventive factors that might lessen negative body image. This study investigates how college women's body image dissatisfaction and resilience interact. Researchers used approved measures to examine female college freshmen and the findings showed that a better body image is related to stronger resilience.

An-jin, Jum-sug & Jung-min (2005). Researchers aimed to investigate the effects of adolescents' resilience, attachment to parents and peers, and body image on life satisfaction. 1449 adolescents were chosen from six junior high schools to participate in this study. For data analysis, t-test as well as stepwise multiple regression was used. The following were the study's main conclusions 1st Body image, peer attachment, and life satisfaction varied by gender. 2nd Life satisfaction among adolescents was significantly predicted by resilience and body image. 3rd Parental attachment, but not peer attachment, was a major predictor of life satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Research Problem

The aim of this study is to find out the correlation between body image and resilience among college students.

Objective

- To examine the correlation between body image and resilience among college students.
- To examine the gender disparity in body image.
- To examine the gender disparity in resilience,

Hypothesis

- There would be a significant correlation between body image and resilience
- There would be a significant gender disparity in body image
- There would be a significant gender disparity in level of resilience

Research design

Correlational research design is used for this study.

Sample

Random sampling technique was used in this study and the sample comprised of total 120 members (60 - Males and 60- Females) who are the students of Amity university, Noida belonging to age range 18 to 23 years.

Research Tools

- **Body Image Questionnaire (BIQ)** – This test was developed by Nash in 1997 and in this test, there are 12 items, and the total is determined by summing the points. The lowest score that may be achieved is 0, which implies a favourable body image.

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The maximum score is 36, which denotes an unhealthy body image. A score of more than 14 suggests the need to cultivate a healthier body image.

- **Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)** – This Scale was created by Smith et.al. in year 2008. It exhibits great internal consistency and test-retest reliability and have fine criterion validity. It measures resilience in its original and most fundamental sense: the capability to recover or pull through from stress. The scale consists of six items, both equally worded positively and negatively. The BRS has a score range of 1 which is low resilience to 5 which denotes high resilience.

Procedure

The subjects who gave their consent were given the research form. Then, instructions were given to the subjects to answer the questionnaire. Confidentiality was ensured to the participants. The questionnaire had some demographic details in the beginning followed by the questions from the two scales. After the data collection, scoring was done.

Data analysis

A questionnaire was prepared with the help of both scales and was given to the participants. After when the data was collected it was arranged into an Excel sheet in a particular way which was then entered into SPSS a statistical software. Correlation analysis and the independent samples t-test were the statistical techniques employed in this investigation. In addition to this, correlational analysis was done to find out the association between resilience and body image, and a t-test was performed to verify whether there are gender differences in the level of both body image and resilience.

RESULTS

The aim of this current study was to find out the relationship between body image and resilience among college going students. The results came out are as follow.

Table 1: Correlation between Body Image and Resilience

Correlations			
		BIQ	BRS
BIQ	Pearson Correlation	1	-.152
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.098
	N	120	120
BRS	Pearson Correlation	-.152	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.098	
	N	120	120

Table 1 displays that there is no significant correlation amongst body image and resilience since the given value is $p (.098) > .05$.

Table 2: Group statistics of body image and resilience among males and females

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
BIQ	male	60	4.78	3.902	.504
	female	60	6.88	6.463	.834
BRS	male	60	19.58	3.126	.404
	female	60	17.63	3.866	.499

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Table 2 shows the discrepancy in male and female considering body image and resilience.

Table 3: Gender differences in level of body image and resilience among college students Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
BIQ	Equal variances assumed	11.325	.001	-2.155	118	.033	-2.100	.975	-4.030	-.170
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.155	96.966	.034	-2.100	.975	-4.034	-.166
BRS	Equal variances assumed	3.026	.085	3.038	118	.003	1.950	.642	.679	3.221
	Equal variances not assumed			3.038	113.045	.003	1.950	.642	.678	3.222

Table 3 displays that, $t(118) = -2.155$, $p(.033) < .05$ meaning that there is significant disparity stated in the level of body image among men and women. The table also demonstrate that there is a significant disparity stated in the level of resilience among men and women since, $t(118) = 3.038$, $p(.003) < .05$.

DISCUSSION

In 1988 Slade said, "Body image is the images in our heads of the dimensions, shape, and form of our body; and our emotional state about these features and our constituent bodily parts." And there have been many pieces of research that have shown that faulty body image perception leads to many neurological disorders so having high resilience or learning resilience is very important to cope with this negativity and to bounce back.

This current study aimed to find out the association among body image and resilience between both males and females. The first hypothesis was "There would be a significant correlation between body image and resilience" but the results [$P(.098) > 0.05$] that come out did not support the first hypothesis which means that there is not any significant correlation between resilience and body image among college students. This may be because data collected from only well-educated college students living in the city who are much more confident and have stable body image than adolescents.

The second hypothesis of the present study was "There would be a significant gender disparity in body image" and the results [$P(.033) > 0.05$] came in favour of the second hypothesis proving it to be right. According to Brennan, Lalonde, and Bain's 2010 study, women reported having a poor opinion of their bodies in an excessive number of instances than men. Research done by He et.al. in 2020 revealed that men are more likely to think of

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themselves as attractive than women and are more content with their physique and women were more unhappy with their bodies.

The third hypothesis was "There would be a significant gender disparity in the level of resilience" and the results [$P (.003) > 0.05$] supported the third hypothesis as well. Erdogana, Ozdoganb & Erdogan (2015) investigated the gender impact on resilience and males showed higher resilience levels than females. The results of a 2021 research study by Mahon & Hevey revealed that although boys primarily supported functioning goals, girls sought to achieve feminine body ideals. To safeguard their body image, coping strategies guys use are to avoid comparisons with others and seek out media that enhances their self-image.

CONCLUSION

According to the results, it can be concluded, that body image and resilience are not related, and there is a significant gender disparity in both body image and resilience between men and women.

Limitation & Suggestion

There are many limitations in the present study first is that the sample size of the research was small and it only focuses on young adults furthermore the data was taken from students of a single university. The second limitation is that since random sampling was used in this study so there could be some sampling error. Third the study is based on self-report measure which are quite susceptible to bias and social desirability effect. In the end, because of its limitations, this study cannot be generalized. However, there is still a lot of work that can be done on this topic, especially concerning males since less research is done on the body image issues of males and resilience.

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Acknowledgment

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Chauhan, K. (2024). The Relationship Between Body Image and Resilience Among College Students – A Correlational Study. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(1), 2507-2516. DIP:18.01.230.20241201, DOI:10.25215/1201.230