

To Study the Relationship Between Body Esteem and Psychological Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between body esteem and psychological well-being in young adults. Researchers employed the established Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being scale to assess these variables in a sample of 113 participants. The findings revealed a positive correlation between body esteem and psychological well-being, suggesting that individuals with higher body esteem tend to report better mental health. This study highlights the importance of considering body esteem in promoting positive mental health among young adults.

Keywords: *Body Esteem, Psychological Well-Being, Adolescents, Mental Health*

The relevance of body esteem and its impact on psychological well-being is now being recognized across a wide range of fields. The extensive effect of media, societal standards, and cultural conventions has increased people's scrutiny of their bodies, influencing their perceptions of self-worth and psychological health. Many studies have focused on the complex interplay between body esteem and psychological well-being to better understand the subtle dynamics that govern human perception and behavior.

Understanding the relationship between psychological well-being and body esteem is critical in psychology because it explains how people perceive and interact with themselves in social contexts. Body esteem plays an important role in shaping one's self-concept and overall psychological functioning. It encompasses ideas, attitudes, and emotions about one's physical appearance. Psychological well-being, which includes emotional stability, self-worth, and life satisfaction, is a measure of a person's total mental health and contentment.

Despite the generally acknowledged importance of body esteem and psychological wellbeing, the specific nature of their relationship remains ambiguous and susceptible to interpretations. While some studies suggest a reciprocal relationship in which physical dissatisfaction leads to psychological distress, others describe a more nuanced interaction influenced by gender, age, cultural background, and socioeconomic status. Furthermore, the rise of social media platforms and digital technologies has expanded the scope of this

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debate, highlighting both positive and negative consequences concerning body esteem and mental health.

The purpose of this study article is to provide a thorough examination of the relationship between body esteem and psychological well-being employing empirical evidence, theoretical frameworks, and contemporary perspectives. This project aims to expand our understanding of the complex interplay between body esteem assessments and psychological functioning by critically assessing existing literature and proposing potential research directions. Finally, these findings have important implications for the development of tailored therapies aimed at improving positive body esteem and psychological resilience in a variety of populations.

This study intends to add to the larger discussion regarding mental health and body esteem by merging various approaches and viewpoints and providing useful information for policymakers, educators, academics, and clinicians. This method aims to further our collective efforts to improve holistic health and well-being in modern society by focusing light on the intricate linkages that exist between psychological well-being and body esteem.

BODY ESTEEM

The American Psychological Association (APA) defines self-esteem as a person's opinion of themselves. It encompasses a wide range of topics, including feelings of competence, sufficiency, and self-acceptance toward various aspects of oneself, such as appearance, abilities, relationships, and accomplishments. Body esteem is a subset of self-esteem that is specifically concerned with how one feels and sees their own body. It communicates people's feelings about their physical appearance—weight, shape, size, and attractiveness—as well as their overall attitude toward it.

One of the most used definitions of body esteem in current literature is attitudes about appearance, feelings, and perceptions of the body, including implications related to size and corporeity (Mountford & Koskina, 2015). Body esteem, which includes an individual's attitudes, evaluations, and emotions about their physical appearance, is the most related aspect of self-concept with weight. Body esteem can have a substantial impact on total self-esteem since people's attitudes toward their bodies frequently influence their sense of esteem and trust in themselves in a variety of areas of life.

According to studies, those with higher body esteem tend to have higher levels of overall self-confidence, whereas those with a lower sense of body esteem may feel insecure about their physical appearance. According to P. O. P. Cristiana (2016), there is a strong negative correlation between body dissatisfaction and self-esteem.

Personal experiences, cultural norms, societal standards, and media portrayals all have an impact on body esteem. High body esteem is often associated with good self-perceptions, self-assurance, and happiness with one's appearance, whereas low body esteem is typically associated with negative self-perceptions, body dissatisfaction, and psychological distress.

Body esteem is important for mental health and well-being since it influences relationships, self-worth, and general quality of life. Building good body image ideas, questioning unattainable beauty standards, supporting self-acceptance, and cultivating body positivity are all common interventions for enhancing self-esteem.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF BODY ESTEEM

Leon Festinger (1954), a social psychologist, developed the Social Comparison Theory, which states that people assess their own social as well as individual worth by comparing themselves to others. According to this theory, people evaluate their body image by comparing it to the bodies of others, whether those bodies are real or have been portrayed in the media (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). The habit of comparison may influence an individual's sense of contentment or displeasure with their physical appearance (Feenberg et al., 2017).

According to the self-objectification theory, which was developed by psychologists Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts in 1997, women internalize the perspective of an observer of their physical appearances in communities that encourage objectification. As a result of this internalization, people view themselves primarily as something to be viewed and evaluated based on their outer appearance (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). According to Calogero et al. (2009), this self-objectification perspective can have major consequences, including the development of a negative body image and a loss of psychological well-being.

Objectification theory, as put out by Susan Bordo (1993), expands the definition of self-objectification theory to include men as well as women. It looks at what happens when someone treats you like an item, no matter what gender you are. According to this idea, objectification can result in several detrimental effects, such as eating disorders, body shame, appearance anxiety, and ultimately a detrimental effect on psychological well-being (Fredrickson & Roberts, 2001).

Cognitive-behavioral theory (CBT) concerning body esteem examines how psychological well-being is influenced by ideas, attitudes, and behaviors associated with body image (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). According to this viewpoint, maladaptive behaviors (like binge eating and body checking) and skewed cognitions (such negative self-talk about looks) are common causes of poor body image. Through behavioral interventions (creating healthier coping mechanisms) and cognitive restructuring (challenging negative thoughts), CBT procedures seek to address these difficulties (Fairburn, 2008).

Sociocultural theory emphasizes how culture and society as a whole influence people's ideas of their physical being and worth (Stice et al., 2001). According to this viewpoint, exposure to media representations of unattainable beauty standards, social pressure to fit into a specific body type, and cultural standards surrounding appearance and weight all contribute to the development of psychological problems and dissatisfaction with one's body, particularly in those who do not meet these standards (Tiggemann & Lynch, 2001).

Ecological systems theory, created by psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979, considers the multiple levels of influence on human development, such as one's own, social (family, peers), belonging, as well as society. When it comes to body esteem, this theory recognizes the influence of peer relationships, cultural contexts, media exposure, familial dynamics, and larger societal trends on the development of psychological well-being and body image.

Body Esteem and Psychological Well-Being

Well-being is defined as a state of fulfillment and joy, with low stress, good physical and mental health, and a positive outlook on life. Psychological well-being is a diverse and complex concept that encompasses factors such as overall happiness, life satisfaction, and mental and emotional health. Low levels of negative emotions, good relationships, autonomy, pleasurable sentiments, a sense of purpose, happiness with one's lot in life, and

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personal progress are all significant components. The World Health Organization defines it as a mental condition that allows one to reach one's full potential, perform well at work, and deal with day-to-day obstacles. Psychological well-being has been linked to improved physical and mental health, as well as increased life expectancy. It is thought to be essential for overall health and happiness.

Esteem for one's body is a crucial aspect of self-worth. Negative body esteem correlates associated lower levels of self-esteem, whereas good body esteem boosts overall self-esteem, particularly in terms of physical self-worth. As a result, the individual experiences psychological anguish since their daily activities are hampered by their poor self-esteem. Joblessness and unemployment can harm an individual's self-esteem. In a 1997 study, Arthur H. Goldsmith et al. looked at the link between self-esteem, psychological well-being, and unemployment. Unemployed people are known to have low self-esteem, which has a direct negative impact on their well-being.

Body dissatisfaction is believed to be produced by a perceived difference between one's expected ideal condition of their bodies and their real physical appearance, or body image.

Stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms are instances of psychological distress linked to low esteem for one's body and dissatisfaction. Persistent self-criticism of a person's appearance can affect one's mental health and lead to the development of psychological disorders.

Body esteem influences how people deal with stress and approach problems. While those with low body esteem may resort to unhealthy coping processes, compromising their mental health, those with high body esteem may be more robust and employ better coping strategies. According to studies, avoidance is the most common coping method used to deal with body esteem difficulties. Among these is the avoidance coping technique, which shows that, while it may bring temporary relief, avoidance does not resolve underlying body esteem issues. This strategy helps to mediate the interaction between teasing and body esteem.

Feeling good about your body (positive body esteem) allows you to connect with people and form stronger relationships. In contrast, low body esteem can cause social discomfort, loneliness, and depression. A study by Kaveh Farsani et al. (2020) discovered that teenagers with positive body image and strong family communication were happier and more confident than those who battled with these issues.

Body esteem has a significant impact on people's quality of life and subjective well-being. Low body esteem reduces people's sense of fulfillment and contentment in life, whereas good body esteem improves life satisfaction, happiness, and overall psychological functioning. Several studies have found a strong link between having a favorable self-image and having a great overall quality of life. According to research published in the *Journal of Health Psychology* (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015), those who reported higher levels of body satisfaction had a higher overall quality of life. This means that having a favorable body image influences one's ability to live a more fulfilling life.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In recent years, scholars from many cultural backgrounds have given closer attention to the effect of various factors on body esteem and psychological well-being. This review looks at

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a wide range of studies on the multifaceted connection between body esteem and psychological well-being in several populations and settings. The research investigates elements that influence this association, such as social media use, sociocultural influences, and self-esteem.

This review delves deeper into the complex relationship between body esteem and psychological well-being. It investigates how weight management strategies (Rawana & Morgan, 2014), the weight itself (Maruf et al., 2014; Yazdani et al., 2018; Waite et al., 2023), and even psychological issues (Scheffers et al., 2017; Waite et al., 2023) can all influence how we perceive ourselves and feel emotionally. By addressing these various facets, this review hopes to provide a full understanding of this complex relationship.

Lee et al. (2014) investigated how social media use affects body image and well-being in the United States and Korea. As a result, both cultures reported lower body satisfaction after using social media for comparisons. Interestingly, in Korea, utilizing social media to display oneself positively was associated with improved body image, emphasizing cultural differences.

Maruf et al. (2014) looked at the relationship between socioeconomic class (SES), body image (BI), and body weight (BW) beliefs in a suburban Nigerian population. They discovered significant disparities in perceived BI and BW across SES categories, with occupation playing an important influence in BI perception even after accounting for confounders. This study emphasizes the influence of socioeconomic status (SES) on body image perception in the population investigated.

Rawana and Morgan (2014) investigated the course of depression from adolescence to young adulthood, considering characteristics such as body mass index (BMI), self-esteem, and food and weight challenges. The findings revealed that depression peaked in the mid-teens, particularly among girls with low self-esteem. Early attempts at weight management have been linked to lower levels of depression.

Gillen (2015) sought to investigate the relationship between good body image and a variety of health outcomes among college students. Their findings revealed that pupils who had a more positive body image enjoyed a variety of benefits. These included less depression, more self-esteem, and healthier lifestyle choices. They followed less dangerous diets, were less concerned with developing excessive muscularity, and stressed sun protection. Surprisingly, the beneficial effect of body image was consistent for both men and women.

Taniguchi and Lee (2015) sought to investigate how body size and social media messages (such as advocating thinness) affect how we view others' self-esteem, well-being, and beauty. The investigation discovered cultural disparities. In the United States, body size has no substantial impact on perception. In Japan, respondents perceived overweight profiles as having lower self-esteem and skinny profiles as more beautiful. Surprisingly, only Japanese participants associated thin-promoting messages with increased well-being for the profile owner.

Quick, McWilliams, and Byrd-Bredbenner (2015) conducted case-control research to compare psychological well-being and weight-teasing history in young individuals with gastrointestinal disorders against those without. Cases reported lower psychological wellbeing, including more psychologically and physically unwell days, depression, anxiety,

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and obsessive-compulsive disorder symptoms. They were also more likely to recall childhood weight-teasing and felt more distressed when insulted about their weight. The study emphasizes the importance of monitoring the psychological well-being of young adults with gastrointestinal disorders and providing coping techniques.

Pacanowski et al. (2015) looked at the relationship between self-weighing and mental health, weight control activities, and body image. The review revealed mixed evidence. Most research found that self-weighing resulted in poor consequences such as reduced mood, self-esteem, and unhealthy eating behaviors. However, for overweight people seeking therapy, self-weighing yielded positive results. This implies that the impact of self-weighing may differ depending on the individual, emphasizing the need for additional research into its psychological impacts.

Sabik (2015) investigated ageism, body image, and mental well-being in middle-aged African American and European American women. Both groups reported worse well-being due to ageism and unfavorable body image. However, among European American women, positive body image mitigated the detrimental consequences of ageism. This implies that ethnicity influences how ageism and body image impact mental health.

Abbasi and Zubair (2015) discovered that college students who practice self-compassion and have a good body image have improved mental health. Self-compassion was particularly essential in shaping the relationship between body image and well-being. Gender did not alter self-compassion or well-being, but it did have an impact on body image. Finally, students with more educated parents performed better in all three categories.

Dotse and Asumeng (2015) sought to explore how body image satisfaction affects mental well-being in Africa, taking into account cultural values. Their research in Ghana and other African countries discovered a correlation between healthy body image and excellent mental health, which is influenced by culture. Men reported higher levels of body satisfaction than women, while education had no meaningful impact. This highlights the role of culture on body image and mental health, particularly in Africa.

Rice et al. (2016) investigated how Barbie exposure influences young girls' desire for slender bodies (thin-ideal conditioning). Seeing Barbie (photos, playing) boosted this desire compared to a control group, although girls did not feel any worse about their overall bodies. This implies that Barbie exposure may alter young girls' body preferences without immediately affecting their body image. Long-term consequences are unclear.

Abdollahi et al. (2016) examined how self-esteem, body image, and social anxiety are linked in teens. They studied whether body image explains the association between self-esteem and anxiety about social situations, taking into account both weight and gender. Teens with low self-esteem and poor body image were more likely to experience social anxiety. Interestingly, body image contributed to the correlation among self-esteem and anxiety. Weight and gender also mitigated these correlations, but no specifics are provided here.

Cohen et al. (2017) looked at how young women's use of social media (SNS) relates to how they feel about their bodies (body image). They discovered that using social media in ways that focus on appearance, such as sharing images on Facebook or following celebrities on Instagram, was associated with seeking an unrealistic body type, feeling more self-conscious about their bodies, and wishing to be very slim. This implies that many aspects of social

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media can influence how young women perceive themselves. It also emphasizes the importance of taking social media into account when developing treatments for concerns with body image and eating disorders.

Luqman and Dixit (2017) investigated the relationships among body image, social anxiety, and psychological discomfort in young adults. Their findings revealed that negative body image was associated with both higher social anxiety and psychological suffering. These findings emphasize the necessity of creating mental health interventions that address body image issues, particularly among young adults who feel social anxiety and psychological distress because of their body image.

Scheffers et al. (2017) investigated body image in patients with mental disorders, comparing their scores to those of the general population and looking for connections with mental health markers. They discovered that patients, particularly those with PTSD, had considerably lower body image scores than healthy controls. Body image differed across diagnostic groups, with eating disorder patients having the lowest body acceptability and PTSD patients having poor sexual fulfillment. Gender differences were evident. The relationship between body image and mental health was moderate to strong, with beneficial results after four months of treatment. The study emphasizes the frequency of poor body image in mental disorders and the significance of diagnosis-specific profiles and treatment-induced modifications.

Soltani et al. (2017) explored the connection between body image and psychological wellbeing among university students. They discovered a strong negative correlation: students with weaker body image reported lower mental well-being. Students who were dissatisfied with their bodies were more likely to have mental health issues. Even when specific characteristics of body image were considered, such as physical pleasure, the unfavorable association remained.

Yazdani et al. (2018) studied how severely obese patients felt about their bodies (body image) and how this related to their mental well-being. They discovered a clear link between bad body image and low mental health in this group, regardless of how obese the patients were. This implies that negative body image can have a considerable influence on mental health in highly obese people. The study emphasizes the necessity of addressing mental health alongside weight management in these people.

Swami et al. (2018) investigated how appreciating your body (body appreciation) influences overall well-being. Even after accounting for age and weight, they discovered a robust correlation between body appreciation and overall well-being. While other positive body image factors predicted well-being, the associations differed between men and women and across different elements of well-being. Interestingly, women reported poorer body image satisfaction than males, and weight was negatively related to all body image variables. This study emphasizes the significance of a healthy body image for overall health.

Sagone, De Caroli, and Indiana (2018) developed a training program to increase the psychological well-being, life skills confidence (self-efficacy), and body image of Italian preadolescents. The program progressed in three stages: 1) Evaluate participants' starting points for life skills, well-being, and body image. 2) Provide life skills training during school hours. 3) Comparing pre- and post-training data to determine the program's success. The initial phase, which included 49 participants aged 12 to 14, indicated good connections.

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Those who were more confident in their life skills (self-efficacy) reported higher levels of psychological well-being and a better body image. This shows that life skills training may serve as a link (mediator) between general well-being and self-esteem in preadolescents.

Dorit Olenik-Shemesh et al. (2018) investigated the factors that influence well-being in emerging adults, including the impact of career ambitions, body image, self-esteem, and gender. The study's findings revealed positive correlations between well-being, self-esteem, and body esteem. Surprisingly, men reported a lower body image than women. However, further research revealed that employment goals only predicted well-being in men, whereas body-esteem alone predicted well-being in women. Regression research found that self-worth and body esteem were important predictors of well-being for all genders.

Allen and Celestino (2018) studied how personality effects mental and physical health, using body image as a potential bridge. They discovered that persons with high neuroticism (prone to worry and negativity) had a poorer body image, which was linked to lower mental and physical health. People who scored higher in other personality qualities (presumably more positive ones) had better mental health and body image. Interestingly, the intensity of the link between personality and mental health varied according to how people regarded their bodies; those with greater disparities between their ideal and perceived appearance were more vulnerable.

Nelson et al. (2018) studied over 1,000 adults (aged 10 to 24) to examine how body image and identity develop together. They discovered diverse groups with varying body image modifications and identity issues. This shows that social and personal experiences influence how body image shapes identity.

This study by Ahadzadeh et al. (2018) looked at how weight (BMI), body image, fear of being judged (FNE), and self-esteem are connected. They discovered that persons who were overweight had a poorer body image, but weight had no direct impact on fear of judgment. Surprisingly, the relationship between weight and body image was higher for persons with low self-esteem. Similarly, only those with low self-esteem demonstrated a relationship between weight and a greater fear of judgment. Overall, the findings indicate that self-esteem influences how weight impacts both body image and fear of criticism.

In a study by Sherlock and Wagstaff (2019), researchers examined how young women's mental health and self-image are affected by how much they use Instagram. They discovered that young women who spent a lot of time on Instagram were more likely to suffer from sadness, anxiety, and negative thoughts about their bodies and self-esteem. This showed revealed to be related to how frequently individuals compared themselves to others on the platform (social comparison). Furthermore, simply viewing all the beauty and fitness photos on Instagram made women feel less attractive and had poorer mental health. The study emphasizes the importance of programs and education to assist people recognize the consequences of spending too much time on Instagram.

Wang et al. (2020) investigated how publishing selfies affects self-esteem in young Chinese women. They discovered a positive correlation: the more selfies' women posted, the higher their self-esteem. Surprisingly, obtaining favorable feedback on selfies had a role in explaining the self-esteem rise. This suggests that selfies provide social approbation and help people feel better about themselves. Furthermore, the study discovered a chain reaction: selfies elicited positive feedback, which enhanced body satisfaction, eventually leading to

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higher self-esteem. These findings provide new insights into the complex relationship between selfies and self-esteem in young women.

This study by Kaveh Farsani et al. (2020) focused on overweight and obese teenage girls. They looked at how communication within the family, family function, and the girls' feelings about their bodies (body image) affected their mental health. The researchers discovered that effective family communication and healthy family function had a direct impact on the girls' mental health. These variables, together with the girls' satisfaction with their bodies, had an indirect impact on their mental health. This indirect effect influenced the girls' self-esteem and feelings of melancholy. Overall, the study found that a variety of factors, including family life and body image, influence how overweight and obese teenage females feel psychologically.

Marsh et al. (2021) investigated how body image and societal pressures influence the mental health of young women in the promotional sector. While some people may gain from social comparison by achieving beauty standards, the study revealed that focusing too much on looks was associated with increased anxiety, tension, and low self-esteem. This shows that the pressure to maintain a specific body can be harmful to the mental health of women in this sector.

Pop et al. conducted a 2022 study on how medical students use social media and how it affects their mental health. The kids spent more than 3 hours every day on social media, primarily for networking, enjoyment, and studying. Interestingly, Snapchat use was linked to increased self-esteem, whereas TikTok use was linked to weight dissatisfaction. Despite having strong self-esteem overall, the students experienced moderate to severe loneliness. There was also a gender difference, with male students reporting stronger self-esteem and better mental health. This study emphasizes the potential of social media in healthcare and the importance of interventions to address mental health issues among medical students.

Boursier and Gioia (2022) investigated how media messages and men's behaviors influence how they perceive their bodies. Men who felt evaluated for their appearance (body shame) reported poorer self-esteem. Men who focused on self-care activities, such as exercise, felt better about their bodies. This shows that, like women, the media can have a detrimental impact on men's perceptions of their bodies. The study emphasizes the need of acknowledging the media's influence on men's body image issues.

Nasreen and Fareed (2023) set out to investigate how comments regarding looks affect the mental health of young adults (aim). Their findings demonstrated a substantial link between unfavorable comments about physical appearance, self-objectification (excessive concentration on one's appearance), and lower psychological well-being (outcome). This implies that comments on beauty can be harmful, causing young adults to view themselves solely through the prism of their appearance, which has a negative influence on their mental health.

Waite et al. (2023) explored body image concerns in patients with present persecutory delusions and their relationship to symptoms and psychological correlates. They discovered that patients had considerably lower levels of body image than non-clinical controls, with body esteem being lower in women and those with overweight or obese BMI categories. Body image issues were linked to increased levels of depression, negative self-beliefs, paranoia, and hallucinations, as well as worse levels of psychological well-being, positive

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self-beliefs, quality of life, and overall health. According to the findings, enhancing body image in psychotic patients could be a beneficial intervention target, with the potential for a variety of benefits.

This review investigated the complicated relationships between body esteem, mental health, and other factors. Social media use, family interactions, and cultural variations all have an impact (Abbasi et al., 2015; Marsh et al., 2021). Personality, financial level, and individual experiences are all significant influences (Ahadzadeh et al., 2018; Sagone et al., 2018). This knowledge is critical for creating interventions and fostering general well-being for all.

Rationale of the Study

This study explores how young adults feel about their bodies (body esteem) and how it's connected to their mental well-being. The researchers are particularly interested in whether these two factors influence one another. Understanding this relationship can help us comprehend the big picture of how body esteem interacts with other mental health issues. This information could be valuable in designing therapies and services for young adults.

Previous research has consistently demonstrated that when people are satisfied with their bodies, they have greater mental health [insert citation here]. This shows that feeling good about your body is crucial for mental well-being and that persons with higher body esteem may have better general mental health.

However, there has been little research into the mechanisms driving this connection. While the association has been shown, we still do not fully understand how body esteem influences psychological well-being and vice versa. Furthermore, existing research frequently focuses on broader populations, thus a more nuanced understanding of this link in the context of young adults is needed. Young adults may experience special issues with body esteem and social comparison because of social media use and peer pressure.

This study intends to delve deeper into the relationship between body esteem and psychological well-being because it appears to be significant. We can build better solutions by understanding how these two factors interact, particularly with young adults. These therapies would aim to improve young people's body esteem as well as their mental health.

Even more significantly, determining what enhances or weakens this link (moderation) and what explains it (mediation) would enable us to tailor these treatments to specific needs and situations. Finally, this study aims to contribute to the developing understanding of body esteem and mental health. This knowledge can then be utilized to create better tools and support systems for young people across the world, boosting their mental health and resilience.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Aim

This study aims to investigate the association between body esteem and psychological well-being in young adults.

Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

- To examine the correlation between body esteem and psychological well-being in young adults.

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Hypothesis

H₀ There is no significant correlation between body esteem and psychological well-being in young adults.

H₁ There is a significant positive correlation between body esteem and psychological well-being in young adults.

Sample

In this research, a convenience sample of 113 adults aged 18 to 25 years was recruited. Convenience sampling is a non-probabilistic strategy in which persons who are easily accessible are chosen (for example, pupils in a classroom). While this strategy saves time and money, it may add bias because the sample does not exactly represent the target population. The sample included 70 females and 43 males. Following informed consent, participants filled out a questionnaire assessing their physical perception and psychological well-being.

Research Design

This study uses a quantitative method, namely a correlational design (Singh, 1998), to investigate the relationship between body esteem and mental well-being in young people.

Correlational designs, as defined by Mcburney and White (2007), include collecting data on numerous variables from the same people. This enables researchers to find probable correlations between variables, though not always cause-and-effect. These relationships can be beneficial, harmful, or have no link at all.

Correlational research is an effective approach for gathering preliminary data in natural settings, especially when examining connections without assuming causation (McBurney & White, 2007). For example, investigating the association between family size and political affiliation does not necessarily mean that having more children causes someone to vote in a particular way. Instead, both variables may be influenced by underlying characteristics such as socioeconomic position, age, religion, or ideology. However, discovering a substantial correlation may aid in forecasting voting trends.

Tools

This study utilized two instruments to assess the participants: the Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BESAA) and Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-being (PWB).

Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BESAA):

Measures body esteem through three subscales: appearance, weight, and attribution of attractiveness by others.

Uses a 5-point Likert scale (0 = never, 4 = always).

Includes 23 items, with nine reverse-scored for accurate interpretation.

Demonstrates good internal consistency (subscale items are well-correlated) with Cronbach's alpha exceeding 0.70.

Shows evidence of:

Face validity: Items directly measure body esteem based on content.

Construct validity: Correlates positively with other body image measures.

o Convergent validity: Correlates with measures of psychological well-being.

Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-being (PWB):

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The assessment measures psychological well-being across six components: self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relationships, purpose in life, personal progress, and autonomy.

Employs a 7-point Likert scale for each of its 18 items.

Exhibits good internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha exceeding 0.70 for the total scale and most subscales (although autonomy may have slightly lower values in some studies).

Supports:

Face validity: Items directly measure the six well-being dimensions.

Construct validity: Correlates well with longer versions of the PWB.

Convergent validity: Correlates positively with mental health and well-being, and negatively with distress and depression.

RESULTS

Participant Flow and Missing Data

The study initially recruited 117 participants through an online survey. However, 4 individuals did not meet the age range requirement (18-25 years old) and were excluded from the analysis. This resulted in a final sample of 113 participants.

Statistics

Table 1: Correlation between Body Esteem and Psychological Well-Being

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Body esteem</i>	<i>Psychological well-Being</i>
<i>Body Esteem</i>	1	
<i>Psychological Well-Being</i>	.470**	1

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

To see if body esteem is linked to mental well-being, the researchers looked at the total scores from both self-report surveys. They then calculated a correlation between each participant's combined body esteem score and their combined psychological well-being score.

The researchers examined the relationship between body esteem and mental health using a statistical method known as Pearson correlation analysis. The results indicated a statistically significant positive association. This suggests that higher body esteem ratings were associated with better scores on the psychological well-being scale. This relationship's strength was revealed by a correlation coefficient (r) of .470, with a p -value less than 001. A p -value this low indicates that the observed link is highly unlikely to be attributable to chance (see Table 1).

As with any correlational study, researchers cannot assume that having high body esteem directly leads to improved mental health. Future research is needed to investigate the potential cause-and-effect pathways as well as the underlying elements that could explain this link.

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Results of Exploratory Studies

Table 2: Frequency of situations affecting Body esteem (N=113)

When does your body esteem usually get a boost? Select the most fitting option:		
	N	%
Accomplishing a proud task	21	18.6%
Achieving a fitness goal	18	15.9%
Supportive friends/family	6	5.3%
Compliments on appearance	16	14.2%
Confident outfit choice	34	30.1%
Physical activities/exercise	17	15.0%
All the above	1	0.9%

Table 3: Frequency of situations affecting Body Esteem (N=113)

When do you find your body esteem might face challenges? Choose the most applicable option:		
	N	%
Facing difficulties or setbacks	14	12.4%
Falling short of a fitness goal	10	8.8%
Feeling insecure in your outfit	22	19.5%
Lack of physical activities/exercise	26	23.0%
Negative comments on appearance	29	25.7%
Unsupportive friends/family	12	10.6%

In addition to the correlation analysis, participants were asked to select the most common situation that boosts their body esteem and the most common situation that challenges their body esteem (see Table 2&3). The most frequent endorsement for situations that boost body esteem was 'confident outfit choice' (30.1%), followed by 'accomplishing a proud task' (18.6%) and achieving a fitness goal (15.9%). The most common challenges to body esteem were 'negative comments on appearance' (25.7%), followed by 'lack of physical activities/exercise (23.0%).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to better understand how young adults' feelings about their bodies (body esteem) relate to their mental health. The researchers concentrated on two key aspects: Body Esteem was assessed using the Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults. Psychological Well-Being: This was measured using Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale. The study looked at these two variables to see how body esteem affects total mental well-being in young adults.

Body esteem, which refers to how people see and value their bodies, is closely related to psychological well-being (Cash & Hughes, 2003; Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2006). According to research, those with better body esteem have higher levels of self-acceptance, self-worth, and confidence. This corresponds to lower levels of anxiety and despair, as well as potentially healthier lifestyle choices that improve overall well-being. However, the relationship is not one-way, as social and cultural factors can affect both body image and psychological well-being (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1998). Understanding this complex interplay is crucial for promoting better mental health and developing solutions to body esteem issues. The current study aims to examine the relationship between body esteem and mental health. As expected, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between

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body esteem total scores and psychological well-being total scores. Furthermore, participants identified a few situations that either improved or challenged their body image, with social perception (confident clothing selection) and self-efficacy having a major impact.

Of the 117 participants who responded to the online survey, 4 were disqualified because they did not qualify for the age criteria of the research study. As a result, there were ultimately 113 participants.

The study validated the researchers' expectations by finding a positive link between body esteem and psychological well-being in young adults (correlation coefficient = .470, p -value < .001). This link is deemed moderate, implying that while those with higher body esteem tend to report better mental health, it is not the sole factor at play. The moderate strength shows that factors other than body esteem have a significant impact on mental health.

Previous research repeatedly demonstrates a link between feeling good about your body (body esteem) and overall mental health (Tiggemann & Lacy-Moriarty, 2016; Stice et al., 2017). People with higher body esteem are more content with their lives, have a stronger sense of self-worth, and experience more positive feelings.

However, the question of which comes first—body esteem or mental well-being—is more difficult. Some research suggests that feeling good about your body might lead to improved mental health (Cash & Przybylski, 2016). Other studies, however, suggest that mental health practices, such as mindfulness, can contribute to a more positive body image (Tylka et al., 2017).

The rise of social media has emerged as a significant influence on body esteem, particularly among younger generations. According to research, being exposed to excessive beauty standards on social media can harm body image and contribute to anxiety and despair.

The study's analysis found an intriguing trend about what enhances and hinders body esteem in this population. Although compliments on looks were valued (14.5%), a substantially bigger proportion of individuals (30.1%) reported receiving a stronger boost to their body esteem when they wore a confident ensemble. Similarly, completing a personal goal (18.6%) had a higher influence on body esteem than praise. Notably, unfavorable comments about appearance were the most frequent obstacle to body esteem (25.7%).

This shows that internal validation, such as personal accomplishments and self-expression through clothes, is more important for body esteem in this population than outward validation based merely on looks. It's worth noting that this same demographic may be engaged on social media, where attractiveness frequently takes center stage. This demonstrates the complicated interplay of internal and external forces, especially during a life period when social and personal identities are developing.

Body neutrality is becoming increasingly important in body esteem studies. This viewpoint stresses accepting one's body without necessarily striving for favorable thoughts about beauty. According to research, body neutrality, rather than high body esteem, can lead to increased well-being.

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Interventions that enhance good body esteem and boost psychological well-being are still being researched. These include cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) for body esteem issues (Calado & Grilo, 2016), mindfulness-based therapies (Tylka et al., 2017), and media literacy programs that encourage critical thinking regarding social media depictions (Frahm et al., 2017).

This study examined the link between body esteem and mental well-being in young adults. To assess these elements, researchers employed well-established questionnaires designed for teenagers and adults. Furthermore, two multiple-choice questions investigated characteristics that participants said enhanced or harmed their body esteem.

While this approach revealed useful information about potential influencing factors (moderator variables), the study was constrained by a small sample size. Because of this constraint, the results may not apply to a larger group of young adults.

These findings imply that interventions encouraging positive body esteem and self-efficacy may help to improve psychological well-being. Future studies with bigger, more diverse samples could look into causal linkages and potential mediators of the link between body esteem and well-being.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the link between feeling good about your body (body esteem) and mental well-being in young adults. The findings verified what a previous study has found: a favorable relationship between the two (Tiggemann & Lacy-Moriarty, 2016).

Interestingly, the study discovered that internal validation, such as attaining goals and expressing oneself, had a greater impact on body esteem than external validation, such as comments on beauty. However, the issues individuals encountered with body esteem appeared to be external.

This study contributes to a growing body of research demonstrating a link between feeling good about your body (body esteem) and general mental health. The study's shortcomings, particularly the small sample size, may prevent the findings from being applied to a larger population.

Future research could explore this relationship in larger, more diverse samples, and investigate the potential moderating role of factors like social media use. Additionally, research on interventions that promote positive body esteem and self-efficacy could have significant applications for improving psychological well-being, particularly in adolescents and young adults.

This study emphasizes the importance of knowing the relationship between body esteem and mental health. By promoting positive esteem and self-acceptance, we can help people improve their mental health and overall well-being.

Limitations

1. The sample size of the study (n=113) may not provide enough statistical power to yield reliable and valid results as it is difficult to ensure that the sample is representative of the broader population. A larger sample size would be able to

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generate more accurate and consistent results along with a higher level of generalizability.

2. The data collected may be prone to self-report bias, which occurs when people respond in a socially desirable way, rather than providing honest responses. This could lead to a lack of reliability of the results.
3. The data was collected solely from participants residing in India. Given the potential for cultural factors, the results might not apply to other nationalities or cultural populations.
4. Due to the limited time duration, long-term effects or how the relationship between the two variables might change over time could also not be studied.
5. Future research could address the limitations by employing a more robust sampling method like random sampling to achieve a more generalizable outcome.

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Conflict of Interest

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