Research Paper

A Study on Effect of Body Image Issue on Resilience among College Students

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ABSTRACT

India exhibits remarkable diversity, and the ability of its inhabitants to embrace this diversity stands out as a celebrated trait. Globally, discussions surrounding body image are widespread, with beauty often being regarded as an advantageous quality. Historically, societal standards emphasised slender, feminine figures for women and muscular, masculine physiques for men, while those who did not conform were marginalised. Although contemporary perspectives on beauty have evolved, the importance of maintaining a desirable body shape remains prevalent, especially in the era of pervasive social media influence. This study aimed to explore the correlation between body image issues and resilience among college students. Utilising the Body Esteem-Scale Revised and the Resilience Scale, the research involved 120 students from various academic disciplines. Statistical analyses, including correlations, t-tests, and analysis of variance, revealed a significant relationship between body image and resilience. Interestingly, no significant differences were observed between male and female participants. Overall, the findings suggest a positive association between resilience and body esteem among college students.

Keywords: *Body Image, Resilience, Young Adults*

In everyone's life, maintaining psychological well-being is crucial for a fulfilling existence. Psychological well-being refers to a person's mental health and happiness, encompassing feelings of achievement and life satisfaction. This aspect should be highlighted without creating a division between psychological well-being and physical health, which includes factors like illness, fitness, and daily functioning. Psychological well-being encompasses various aspects of life, including self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and overall personal wellness, suggesting an interconnectedness with physical well-being. It is preferable to recognise the intrinsic connection between psychological well-being and physical health. Psychological well-being is associated with the cultivation of body esteem and resilience, influencing an individual's mental outlook and ability to cope with challenges. Individuals with higher levels of psychological well-being tend to exhibit greater body esteem and resilience, while those with poor psychological well-being may struggle with these aspects, possibly due to factors like depression or anxiety. Moreover, societal standards of bodily perfection can exacerbate body image issues, leading to social

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discomfort and anxiety, particularly for individuals with visible physical differences. Such struggles can impact various facets of life, including activity levels, emotional well-being, and self-perception. Sociocultural ideals often pressure individuals to equate self-worth with physical appearance, complicating the journey towards body acceptance and adjustment. Even interventions like plastic surgery may not fully resolve these challenges, as individuals may still grapple with aligning their mental self-image with their altered physical appearance. Recent research in this area often focuses on eating disorders and associated body image concerns, reflecting ongoing efforts to understand and address these complex issues.

The study investigates the relationship between body image and resilience among college students, aiming to understand how body image issues impact students' ability to bounce back from challenges. College, a critical developmental stage, presents various stressors including academic pressure and social expectations. Through a quantitative survey approach, data on body esteem, resilience, stress, social support, and coping strategies will be collected and analysed statistically. The findings will inform targeted interventions to promote resilience and well-being in college students, contributing to the broader research on resilience factors in this population.

In life, individuals go through various stages from childhood to old age, experiencing significant transitions between each phase. These transitions often entail heightened stress and anxiety, particularly during periods of physical change, such as adolescence when moving from school to college. Adolescence is a time when individuals become acutely aware of their body's imperfections and may strive to enhance their appearance through exercises targeting specific body parts. This focus on physical appearance often leads to displays of strength or slimness, depending on gender norms, with individuals seeking to address perceived flaws through exercise or, in some cases, plastic surgery. However, not everyone can afford such procedures, leading many to rely on exercise to shape their bodies. Unfortunately, societal pressure and bullying regarding physical imperfections can contribute to body dissatisfaction among individuals, impacting their mental well-being. Body image, reflecting one's perceptions and feelings about their physical attributes, plays a significant role in this dynamic. Positive body image involves accepting and respecting one's body, while negative body image leads to dissatisfaction and a desire for change. Media influence, societal standards, and comparisons with others further shape individuals' perceptions of their bodies. Positive body esteem, or the subjective evaluation of one's physical appearance, is associated with better mental health outcomes, including higher self-esteem and psychological well-being. Conversely, individuals with low body esteem may experience negative emotions and engage in unhealthy behaviours. Enhancing body esteem involves cultivating positive self-talk, challenging negative beliefs, and fostering self-acceptance. Ultimately, promoting a healthy and positive relationship with one's body involves recognising that beauty is multifaceted and extends beyond physical appearance, encompassing internal qualities such as self-worth and acceptance.

Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from life's challenges, maintaining strength and determination after setbacks. Factors like positive attitudes, emotional regulation, and learning from failure contribute to resilience, which can be developed through personal experiences and observing others. Building resilience involves cultivating coping skills, self-care habits, and supportive relationships, alongside engaging in activities promoting well-being, like exercise and mindfulness. Resilience encompasses both internal traits and external factors, such as personality, coping strategies, social support, and access to

resources. Highly resilient individuals exhibit optimism, flexibility, and adaptability, enabling them to manage stress and overcome obstacles effectively. Protective factors like positive relationships and a sense of personal control contribute to resilience. While resilience helps individuals recover from adversity, it also fosters personal growth and mental health. Resilient people often develop new perspectives, prioritise positive relationships, and clarify life goals. Despite facing trauma, resilient individuals embrace challenges, discovering hidden strengths and striving to become better versions of themselves.

Resilience shields against the damaging effects of stress, promoting psychological, emotional, and physical well-being. It involves maintaining flexibility in thoughts, emotions, and behaviours during difficult times, ultimately emerging stronger and wiser. Through resilience, individuals navigate life disruptions and prolonged pressures, finding new stability amid change.

Research suggests resilience's positive impact on various aspects of life, including mental health, physical well-being, relationships, and productivity. Despite the complex interplay between body esteem and resilience, evidence suggests that higher body esteem may enhance resilience, particularly in facing challenges related to physical appearance.

In today's digital age, social media and sedentary lifestyles pose challenges to body image and resilience. Idealised beauty standards on social platforms and increased screen time can negatively influence body image and self-esteem. However, cultivating resilience and positive body image remains possible through regular exercise, self-care practices, seeking social support, and being mindful of media influences. Professional help, such as therapy, can also address underlying mental health issues affecting body image and resilience.

Scope and Significance of the Study

Understanding diversity is a personal necessity while learning to live with the diversity is a necessity for the betterment of the society. In today's society the view of people towards what is beauty has changed a lot and most of them have accepted the way they are. The influence of media has influenced a lot on this generation and has put an effect on their views about their body-esteem and in what all ways they can change the shape of the body part they don't like. The scope of the study on the effect of body image issues on resilience among college students is to examine the relationship between body image issues and resilience, including the factors that contribute to body esteem and resilience among college students. The study aims to collect data from a sample of college students through a survey and analyse the data to examine the relationship between body image issues and resilience.

The significance of the study is that it can contribute to the growing body of research on resilience and body image issues among college students. The study can help to identify the factors that contribute to body esteem and resilience, which can inform interventions aimed at promoting resilience and well-being among college students. Additionally, the study can help to raise awareness about the prevalence of body image issues among college students and the impact these issues can have on their mental health and well-being.

The study's findings can also have practical implications for colleges and universities in developing targeted interventions to address body image issues and promote resilience among students. By understanding the relationship between body image issues and

resilience, colleges and universities can develop programs and resources that support students' mental health and well-being, ultimately improving student retention and academic success.

Overall, the study's scope and significance lie in its potential to contribute to the growing body of research on resilience and body image issues among college students and inform interventions aimed at promoting resilience and well-being among this population.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

The major aim of the present study is to understand the relationship between body image and resilience and to also understand the difference in the views among different gender specially among young adults.

Objectives

- To explore the relationship between body image and resilience among college students.
- To understand the effect of body image issue on resilience among college students.
- To analyse if there is any gender difference in the views about body image.
- To know if there is any gender difference in the views-in development of resilience.

Hypotheses

- There is a significant relationship between body image issue and resilience.
- There is significant difference in attitude towards body image among male and female young adults.
- There is significant difference in resilience image among male and female young adults.

Definition of Key Terms

- **Body Image:** Body image refers to an individual's perception, beliefs, and attitudes towards their own physical appearance, including their body shape, size, and overall physical attributes. Body image is influenced by various factors, including cultural and societal norms, media representations, personal experiences, and interpersonal relationships. It can be positive or negative and can have a significant impact on an individual's self-esteem, self-worth, and mental health.
- **Resilience:** Resilience is the ability to adapt, cope, and recover from adversity, trauma, or stress. It refers to an individual's capacity to bounce back from difficult situations, maintain a sense of well-being, and continue functioning effectively despite challenging circumstances.
- **Young Adults:** Young adulthood is often characterised by exploration, experimentation, and identity formation. During this period, individuals may experience significant challenges and stressors, such as financial instability, career uncertainty, and social pressures. However, it is also a time of great opportunity for personal growth, self-discovery, and independence.

Sample

The population taken for understanding the relationship between body esteem and resilience is among the college students who belong to the age group of 18-24. For this study all type of students can be taken into consideration those who are aged between 18-24 years.

Convenience sampling method was used to collect the sample for the study and the sample included students from all the streams the study included 120 samples to statistically test the samples. The data included total number of males and females being 60 each.

Tools
The present study used self-report questionnaires to collect the necessary data from the participants. A personal data sheet was used to collect the demographic details of the participants along with the Body Esteem Scale-Revised and the Brief Resilience Scale to measure the significant variables of the concern.

Personal Data Sheet
The personal data sheet is prepared by the researcher in to collect the basic required socio-demographic details of the participants of the study. The sheet included some questions regarding their Name, Age, Gender and Educational Qualification of the participant.

Body Esteem Scale-Revised
The Body-Esteem Scale – Revised developed by Frost, Franzoi, Oswald and Shields (2017) was used to understand the concerns related to the specific body parts in young adults. It is a 28-item gender-specific multidimensional measure of body esteem that rate specific body parts and functions using a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5 ("strong negative feelings" to "strong positive feelings"). Alpha coefficients for women's subscales are .72(sexual attractiveness), .89(weight concern) and .81(physical condition) and for men's subscales are .80(sexual attractiveness), .88(upper body strength) and .90(physical condition). The scale also shows good convergent and discriminant validity.

Brief resilience Scale
The Brief Resilience Scale developed by Smith, B.W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P. and Bernard, J. (2008) is a simple self-assessment that individuals can complete to assess their resilience. It consists of six statements for individuals to agree or disagree with. Add the value (1-5) of your responses for all six items, creating a range from 6-30. Divide the sum by the total number of questions answered (6) for your final score. Items 2, 4 and 6 are reversely scored. When completed it generates a resilience score of between 6 and 30. BRS has good internal consistency and test-retest reliability.

Administration
In present days to make the work easy google forms were used in order to collect data from the participants of the study. The google form had a brief explanation regarding the study for the participants to be informed about the objective of the study. The ethical guidelines were strictly followed during the test.It was informed to the participants through the introduction of the questionnaire that the information provided by the participant will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. No individual data report will be shared except the final results based on the entire set of data collected for the study. It was also informed that the collected data will remain anonymous and the participant will have full freedom to back-out from the procedure at any moment before submitting the report even without giving any reason. The consent of the participant was mandatorily collected before answering of the questionnaire in the google form whereby the participant accepted that they have read all the information about the study, have been notified that all information provided will be confidential and anonymous, the information collected might be used for publications or reports in an anonymised form, have the right to voluntary withdraw at any time before submission of the survey form and that they are voluntarily giving consent to

participate in the study. The questionnaires along with the instructions, consent and ethical guidelines were formed using the google form and the link was shared with the participants. Good rapport formation was done through phone calls or video calls as feasible and then the google form was asked to be filled according to the guidelines given. It was instructed to the participants to sit comfortably in a possibly silent and calm environment with a free mind before answering the questions. Any doubts were clarified on spot by being with them virtually. All the questions in the demographic sheet were asked to be filled compulsorily and then the two questionnaire tools for checking the effect of body image on resilience. The participant was instructed properly before each questionnaire as follows: The Body Esteem-Scale contains 28 questions in which opinion about your different body parts are asked in which all questions have to be answered compulsorily. After reading each question carefully, select either of the responses between 1-5 / 1-5 which best describes you. The Brief Resilience Scale contains 6 statements in which it is asked about how much a person has the ability to bounce back or recover from any stress. All questions have to be answered compulsorily. After reading each question carefully, select either of the responses between 1-5 which best suits for you. If two choices seem to apply well, choose the best one which describes the way you have been for most of the time in the past month/year. There are no right or wrong answers as it describes your subjective reality. Finally, the process of filling the google form gets completed when the participant answers every item and submits their responses.

Statistical Analysis
Statistical data analysis is a procedure of performing various statistical operations which helps to give meaning to the meaningless numbers, there by breathing life into lifeless data. The statistical techniques used for testing the hypotheses of the present study are correlational analysis and independent sample t-test.

Correlational Analysis
Correlation analysis is a statistical method for determining the strength of a relationship between two numerically measured continuous variables. Karl Pearson' s correlation is a popular method for determining the relationship between two variables, and it is used in the current study. The correlation coefficient is a mathematical value that indicates the strength of a linear relationship between variables and it varies between -1 and +1. Correlations between variables can be positive, negative, or zero. A positive correlation exists when one variable increase or decreases concurrently with the other, while a negative correlation exists when one variable decrease when the other increases. A zero correlation indicates that the two variables are unrelated to one another. The strongest positive correlation is indicated by +1, and the strongest negative correlation is indicated by -1. As a result, the closer the coefficient is to either of these figures, the stronger the correlation of the data it represents.

Independent sample t-test
Independent sample t-test is a parametric statistical test used to compare the means of two independent groups of data in order to understand if there exists any statistical evidence that the concerned population means are significantly different. The test is commonly used to understand the statistical differences between the means of two groups or between the means of two interventions or two change scores. The major requirement for conducting an independent sample t-test is that the dependent variable should be continuous and the independent variable be categorical. The cases in which more than two groups are to be compared t-tests will not be used.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present study is aimed at understanding the relationship and to see the effect of body image issue on resilience among college students, and to also see whether there is any gender-based difference in the effect of body image issue on resilience among young adults. The results of the correlation and t-test conducted in order to test the hypotheses are mentioned below.

Table 4.1 Demographic details of the variables Body Esteem Scale-Revised and Brief Resilience Scale

Variables	N	Mean	SD
Body Esteem Scale-Revised	120	103.69	20.17
Brief Resilience Scale	120	18.75	3.26

The data included a total of 120 participants of college who belonged to the age group 18-25 years. The overall mean score for the entire college students who took part in the study reveals to be given in table 1. The mean and standard deviation of the scores obtained for body esteem scale is 103.69 and 20.17 respectively. Similarly, the mean and standard deviation scores for the brief resilience scale comes up as 18.75 and 3.26 respectively.

Table 4.2 Correlation between Body esteem scale and Resilience among college going students.

Variables		Body Esteem Scale-Revised	Brief Resilience Scale
Body Esteem Scale-Revised	Pearson Correlation	1	.252**
	Sig(2-tailed)	.00	0.006
	N	120	120
Brief Resilience Scale	Pearson Correlation	.252**	1
	Sig(2-tailed)	0.006	.00
	N	120	120

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

The correlation between the body esteem scale and brief resilience scale shows that there is significant relationship between the variables considered by taking into consideration that the results are significant with the positive correlation (r = 0.252, sig = 0.006). The result brings in the evidence that there is influence on the effect of body image on resilience among college students. The result can be interpreted that students who have high self-esteem will have good resilience. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4.3 Descriptive and t-test result of body esteem scale among-the boys and girls of the college students.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Sig (p)
BESR	Male	60	105.0667	21.73404	0.745	0.815
	Female	60	102.3167	18.57782	0.745	

The t-test compares the mean and also compares the mean total competency scores obtained for the variable body esteem scale between males and females of the college students.

The result of the t-test revel that there is no significant difference between body esteem in males and body esteem in females. It is evident from the table that mean of body esteem scale is slightly higher for males than females. The mean score of males for body esteem scale is 105.0667 (SD = 21.73404) and for females is 102.3167 (SD = 18.57782) and it is found that the result has no significance with the significant value 0.81. Equal variance assumed and equal variance not assumed are available that is obtained by using Levine's test for equality of variance. This test determines that the variance of scores is similar between the two groups, basically that the shape of the distribution of the competency score for males are similar to females. Here, we obtain a null hypothesis h0 and an alternative hypothesis h1, since the significant value is greater than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis that there is no difference between males and can drive to a conclusion that significant difference does not exist.

Table 4.4 Descriptive and t-test result of brief resilience scale among the boys and girls of the college students.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Sig (p)
BESR	Male	60	19.2	3.20910	1.778	0.281
	Female	60	18.15	3.26162	1.778	

The t-test compares the mean and also compares the mean total competency scores obtained for the variable brief resilience scale between males and females of the college students.

The result of the t-test revel that there is no significant difference between resilience in males and resilience in females. It is evident from the table that mean of body esteem scale is slightly higher for males than females. The mean score of male's resilience is 19.2 (SD = 3.20910) and for females is 18.15 (SD = 3.26162) and it is found that the result has no significance with the significant value 0.281. Equal variance assumed and equal variance not assumed are available that is obtained by using Levine's test for equality of variance. This test determines that the variance of scores is similar between the two groups, basically that the shape of the distribution of the competency score for males are similar to females. Here, we obtain a null hypothesis h1 and an alternative hypothesis h2, since the significant value is greater than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis that there is no difference between males and females that can drive to a conclusion that significant difference does not exist.

In a research article published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence, investigators explored the variations in resilience between genders among adolescents. Their findings revealed that although there were no substantial differences in overall resilience, females demonstrated higher levels of emotional self-regulation, while males exhibited greater tendencies towards seeking social support.

Another study, featured in the Journal of Adolescence, investigated gender variations in resilience among African American and Hispanic/Latino youth. Results indicated that despite no notable differences in overall resilience, males displayed higher levels of self-efficacy, whereas females showed a preference for seeking social support.

CONCLUSION

Although research on the link between positive body image and resilience in college students is limited, promoting self-esteem and body positivity is widely recognised as crucial for mental well-being. Strategies such as embracing diversity, challenging beauty norms, and prioritising healthy behaviours are key in fostering positive body image. This study, involving 120 students of both genders, explores how a positive body image correlates with resilience in young adults. Utilising tools like The Body Esteem Scale-Revised and The Brief Resilience Scale, the quantitative analysis indicates a significant relationship between body image and resilience among college students. Additionally, gender comparison reveals no significant differences in the variables examined, concluding the research.

Limitations of the study

The major limitation of the present study is that the sample size is small and similarly uneven with respect to the different demographic variables of concern. The researcher has a feministic lens of reviewing the data and thereby will contain the bias of positionality which is being admitted with this report to make it authentic and significant. Another major limitation of the study is the use of the Body Esteem Scale as that focused only on the satisfaction and dissatisfaction towards each body parts in which the proper view of body image cannot be understood. Also, another limitation that can bring an affect in the result of this study is that the samples collected were through the online platform due to which we cannot check the sincerity in the answers of the participants therefore the results might have varied with respect to the way the samples were collected.

Scope for further research

There is immense possibility for further research in the area of body image and resilience among people belonging to different groups of the society and even among people of differing age groups. On the basis of the results of the present study, there is an open possibility to take forward the concept of the content to which what people think and believe about their body image and the resilience they develop due to that in young adults. Taking into consideration the factor of the difference in the view point between the genders would also be helpful to explore further. There is immense possibility of replicating the study with better tools and better research design including qualitative analysis for better understanding of the concept of attitude towards body image. Developing interventions or even modules for educating people about a positive viewpoint on the topic body image and how to develop resilience can be a great initiative to bring about possible changes in the society and the psyche of the common people to a possible extent.

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