

## Relationship Between Body Image Satisfaction, Psychological Well-Being and Resilience in Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

Body Image Satisfaction has been associated with improved mental health, specifically resilience and wellbeing. This study aims to study the relationship between body image satisfaction, resilience and wellbeing in young adults aged 18-27 from India. Additionally, it also aims to pinpoint gender differences in the sample. For data collection, standardized scales were used namely the Body Image Satisfaction Rating Scale (Koleck et al., 2002), Brief Resilience Scale (Smith et al., 2008) and Psychological Well Being Scale (Ryff et al., 2007). To statistically analyze for correlations, Jamovi software was used. The result depicted a positive correlation between Body Image Satisfaction and the two factors Resilience  $r(150) = .241, p < .01$  and Well-being  $r(204) = .392, p < .001$ . It is also apparent that Resilience and Wellbeing  $r(150) = .204, p < .05$  were similarly, positively correlated with each other. Significant gender differences were also found.

**Keywords:** *Body Image Satisfaction, Resilience, Psychological Well-Being, Young Adults, Body Image Dissatisfaction*

There seems to be an everlasting quest in the human experience to keep away from adversity. We continue to indulge into those practices which we hope would avoid negative outcomes, and assume that it would result in happiness and satisfaction by default. However, we fail to realize that simply avoiding negativity does not always promise positivity.

Body image is defined as: The mental image of our bodies that we create, or how we see our bodies (Grogan, 2016). People's perceptions of their bodies have the potential to consume them in the process of determining their own value (Choate, 2005). This evaluation could include both positive and negative aspects of body image (Grogan, 2016). Due to the influence of their immediate surroundings and the beliefs they have been trained to hold, many women are unhappy with the way they feel about their bodies. (Healey, 2014). This also applies to guys, although it is less common to see this occurrence in men than in women (Choate, 2005; Demarest & Allen, 2000; Johnson & Petrie, 1995). For example, males may be unhappy with their body image, but it usually does not have a significant impact on their

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self-esteem. In contrast, females are more likely to develop an eating disorder or low self-esteem as a result of negative body image (Choate, 2005).

Examining the degree of accuracy in estimating body size in relation to actual size is often how perceptual body image is determined. Measures of four components are used to assess attitudes toward body image: affect (emotions related to the body); cognitions (beliefs about the body, investment in appearance); and behaviors (e.g., avoiding situations where the body will be exposed). According to Thompson et al. (2012), psychological assessments of body image often evaluate one or more of these elements or evaluate satisfaction or dissatisfaction on a global or site-specific level. Both body and appearance are viewed from affective, behavioral, and cognitive perspectives known as body image attitudes. We tend to evaluate our bodies either as positive or negative and that leads to satisfaction or dissatisfaction, referred to as body image evaluations (Shahi et al., 2023). Body dissatisfaction pertains to negative evaluations of one's weight, muscularity/tone, size, shape, and generally entails a perceived disparity between one's own assessment of one's own body and one's ideal body (Grogan, 2016). Dissatisfaction with some or the other aspect of one's physical appearance is common, particularly in women (Ferguson, 2013; Grogan, 2016).

### ***Resilience***

The word 'Resilience' has originated from the Latin verb 'resilire' which means "to leap back" Soanes & Stevenson, (2006) defined resilience as the ability to withstand or recover faster from undesirable situations. Whenever a person faces traumatic events there are mainly two types of outcomes, some individuals become overwhelmed by these events whereas others react positively to the situations which are most testing and difficult to endure (Bonanno, 2004).

It is a psychological entity as it is a perception of one's internal strength that takes into consideration the physical implication of that strength, i.e., the quick and efficient recovery from the events which are adverse in nature and return to functioning levels as or better than that of before encountering the event (Carver, 1998). People who are highly resilient show immense adapting abilities and frequently convert stressors and challenges into chances for learning and development of their personality. In a study conducted on college students, Campbell-Sills et al. (2006), observed that resilience was positively linked with coping mechanisms which were task oriented, or problem-focused to effectively deal with stressors (Kariv & Heiman, 2005). Likewise, Clifton and colleagues (1997) observed that, of several demographic and environmental factors, the adapting techniques which were problem-focused had the most effect on academic performances. Resilience comprises all the protective factors which change, improve or adjust an individual's reaction to some environmental dangers which are prone to a maladaptive result as an outcome (Rutter, 1987). The process of or the capacity of a person to successfully adapt regardless of testing or compromising conditions which are undesirable in nature (Masten et al., 1990). It can be also defined as a major process that consists of positive transformation in adverse situations (Luthar et al., 2000).

### ***Psychological well-being***

Bradburn's (1969) earliest attempt to define well-being started with a classic research on how psychological well-being (he also referred to as 'happiness') stands out as being a primary important variable. Bradburn linked wellbeing with Aristotle's idea of Eudaimonia which is commonly translated as wellbeing (Bradburn, 1969). Aristotle believed that

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Eudaimonia is an overarching goal of all human actions. Bradburn's model suggested that: An individual will be high in psychological well-being only when he has an excess of positive over negative affect and will be low in well-being only when negative affect predominates over positive. Keeping positive and negative affect as the central idea for defining the basic structure of psychological well-being, Diener & Suh (1997) believed that: Subjective well-being mainly consists of three components that are life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant affect which are interrelated. Affect means pleasant and unpleasant moods and emotions, and life satisfaction means to have a cognitive sense of satisfaction with life. (Diener & Suh, 1997). Early findings of Ryff's (1989a) identified aspects like autonomy, wellbeing, environmental mastery; positive relationships with others; realization of potential; purpose in life and self-acceptance. Shin and Johnson (1978) defined well-being as a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his/her own chosen criteria. Well-being is more than just happiness. Seligman (2011) outlines his new dynamic concept of wellbeing which is not just purely based on happiness. He considers wellbeing to be made up of five measurable elements: PERMA i.e. Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishments (Seligman., 2011).

### **METHODOLOGY**

This section gives an outline of aim, objective and hypotheses that were followed in the study. It provides information on the sample, tools and methodology of data collection and interpretation.

#### *Aim and Objectives*

The aim of this proposed study would be to assess the relationship between Body Image Satisfaction, Psychological Wellbeing and Resilience among young adults.

#### *Additional Objectives include:*

- To assess the level of Body Image Satisfaction, Psychological wellbeing and Resilience in young adults.
- To investigate the relationship between Body Image Satisfaction and Psychological wellbeing in Young adults.
- To investigate the relationship between Body Image Satisfaction and Resilience in Young adults.
- To investigate the relationship between Psychological wellbeing and Resilience in Young adults.
- To investigate gender differences in the relationship between Body Image Satisfaction, Psychological wellbeing and Resilience.

#### *Hypotheses*

- H0: There will be no significant correlation between Body Image Satisfaction, Psychological well-being and resilience.
- H1:1 : High Body Image Satisfaction will be associated with higher levels of well-being
- H2:1 : High Body Image Satisfaction will be associated with high resilience.
- H3:1 : High resilience will be associated with higher levels of well-being.

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### ***Sample***

The proposed study included a sample of Indian English-speaking young adults. The age range for the sample was between 18 and 27 years. The methods chosen for the collection of data were convenience sampling and snowball sampling. People from both urban and rural areas were included in the sample.

### ***Variables***

The three variables explored in this study are body image satisfaction, resilience and psychological well-being. The independent variable in this study is body image satisfaction and the dependent variables are resilience and psychological well-being. Certain extraneous variables like socioeconomic status, location, educational background and cultural differences were taken into account in this particular study.

### ***Tools***

The scale that was used to measure body image satisfaction was Body Image Satisfaction Rating Scale (Koleck et al., 2002). The BISRS is a 18 item likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). This scale is Adopted from Body Image Questionnaire BIQ- an extension. The internal consistency of the Body Satisfaction Scale on the whole group had been found to be suitable ( $\alpha = .33$ ). The test-retest reliability of the Body Satisfaction Scale, calculated was 0.86. To measure resilience, the Brief Resilience Scale was used (Smith et al., 2008). The BRS is a 6 item likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The possible score range on the BRS is from 1 (low resilience) to 5 (high resilience).

To measure psychological well-being, the Psychological Well Being (PWB) scale was used (Ryff et al., 2007; adapted from Ryff, 1989). This scale is an 18 item likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly agree) to 7 (Strongly disagree). The PWB Scale measures 33 aspects of wellbeing and happiness: Autonomy; Environmental Mastery; Positive Relations with Others; Personal Growth; Purpose in Life; and Self-acceptance. Higher scores indicate greater wellbeing. The test-retest reliability coefficient of RPWBS was 0.82.

### ***Data Collection and Statistical Analysis***

The participants were asked to fill out a consent form to permit the researchers to use the results for research purposes. Participants were informed that the test results would be kept confidential and anonymous. The instructions to fill the questionnaire were clearly explained to the participants in a google form which was virtually distributed. The first part of the form consisted of their demographic details and then the questionnaires to assess body-image satisfaction, resilience and wellbeing respectively. After the data collection, the questionnaire scoring was done according to the scoring norms provided by the scale authors. The data was stored in an excel sheet and statistically analyzed for correlations using Jamovi software. Appropriate statistical techniques were applied to test the hypotheses

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### RESULTS

Data collection was stopped after collecting data from 150 participants. The data then was analyzed to assess the characteristics of the data like normality, Skewness, and Kurtosis and the Shapiro Wilk test revealed that the data was normally distributed.

*Table 1- Descriptives*

	Body image Satisfaction	Resilience	Psychological Well Being
<b>N</b>	150	150	150
<b>Missing</b>	853	852	852
<b>Mean</b>	48.3	20.0	53.1
<b>Median</b>	48	20.0	53.0
<b>Standard deviation</b>	4.53	4.67	7.74
<b>Variance</b>	20.5	21.8	59.9
<b>Range</b>	24	23	38
<b>Minimum</b>	35	7	33
<b>Maximum</b>	59	30	71
<b>Skewness</b>	-0.0309	-0.0433	-0.00764
<b>Std. error skewness</b>	0.199	0.198	0.198
<b>Kurtosis</b>	0.207	-0.178	-0.353
<b>Std. error kurtosis</b>	0.395	0.394	0.394
<b>Shapiro-Wilk W</b>	0.985	0.987	0.993
<b>Shapiro-Wilk p</b>	0.120	0.171	0.625

The p-value for psychological wellbeing is 0.020,  $p < 0.05$ . This means that the difference in psychological wellbeing between the two groups is statistically significant.

The p-values for body image satisfaction (0.234) and resilience (0.304) are both greater than 0.05, which means that the data does not differ significantly from that which is normally distributed. The data is normally distributed. The sample were 150 Indian young adults from the age range of 18 to 27, out of which 50% (n=75) were female and 50% (n=75) were male. The mean age of the sample was 22.45. The socioeconomic status of the sample was divided into 3 subparts - not enough to satisfy needs (n=24), enough to satisfy needs (n=92), and more than enough to satisfy needs (n=34). Geographical location of participants was divided into urban (n=119) and rural (n=31). The participants had varied educational backgrounds including high school graduation (n=33), undergraduate degree (n=56) and graduate degree (n=61).

### *Correlation Analyses*

The relation between Body Image Satisfaction, Resilience and Psychological Wellbeing was analyzed with the help of the Pearson correlation technique. To judge the significance of the relationship, the significant value of the relationship was referred to. The result for Pearson Correlation for all the variables is given below (see table 2).

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**Table 2-Correlation Matrix**

		<b>Body image Satisfaction</b>	<b>Resilience</b>	<b>Psychological Well Being</b>
<b>Body image Satisfaction</b>	Pearson's r	—		
	df	—		
	p-value	—		
	N	—		
<b>Resilience</b>	Pearson's r	0.241**	—	
	df	148	—	
	p-value	0.003	—	
	N	150	—	
<b>Psychological Well Being</b>	Pearson's r	0.392***	0.204*	—
	df	148	148	—
	p-value	< .001	0.012	—
	N	150	150	—

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

The above table displays the correlations between the three variables. There was a positive correlation between Body Image Satisfaction and the two factors Resilience  $r(150) = .241$ ,  $p < .01$  and Well-being  $r(204) = .392$ ,  $p < .001$ . It is also apparent that Resilience and Wellbeing  $r(150) = .204$ ,  $p < .05$  were similarly, positively correlated with each other.

The table 3 shows that there is a significant positive correlation between Body Image Satisfaction and (i) Autonomy  $r(150) = 0.186$ ,  $p < .05$ , (ii) Environmental Mastery  $r(150) = .084$ ,  $p < .01$ , (iii) Personal Growth  $r(150) = .306$ ,  $p < .001$ , (iv) Positive Relations  $r(150) = .208$ ,  $p < .05$ , (v) Purpose In Life  $r(150) = .230$ ,  $p < .01$  and (vi) Self-Acceptance  $r(150) = .295$ ,  $p < .001$ . The subdomain of Environmental Mastery is not significantly correlated with Body Image Satisfaction. There is no significant correlation between resilience and the sub domains of Psychological Well Being.

**Table 3- Correlational Analysis for Body Image Satisfaction and Domains of Well-being:**

Correlation Matrix		Body image Satisfaction	Autonomy	Environmental Mastery	Personal Growth	Purpose in life	Positive Relations with Others
Body image Satisfaction	Pearson's r	—					
	df	—					
	p-value	—					
	N	—					
Autonomy	Pearson's r	0.186*	—				
	df	148	—				
	p-value	0.023	—				
	N	150	—				
Environmental Mastery	Pearson's r	0.084	0.231**	—			
	df	148	148	—			
	p-value	0.305	0.005	—			
	N	150	150	—			
Personal Growth	Pearson's r	0.306***	0.256**	0.369***	—		
	df	148	148	148	—		
	p-value	< .001	0.002	< .001	—		
	N	150	150	150	—		
Purpose in life	Pearson's r	0.230**	0.062	0.118	0.177*	—	
	df	148	148	148	148	—	
	p-value	0.005	0.454	0.150	0.030	—	
	N	150	150	150	150	—	
Positive Relations with Others	Pearson's r	0.208*	0.003	0.118	0.262**	0.135	—
	df	148	148	148	148	148	—
	p-value	0.011	0.968	0.152	0.001	0.099	—
	N	150	150	150	150	150	—
Self acceptance	Pearson's r	0.295***	0.164*	0.229**	0.382***	0.127	0.301***
	df	148	148	148	148	148	148
	p-value	< .001	0.045	0.005	< .001	0.123	< .001
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

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Body Image Satisfaction levels in more than half of the sample (38%) were observed to be moderate. High level of Body Image Satisfaction was observed in 30% of the sample, and a low level of body image satisfaction was observed in 32% of the sample. Moreover, the majority (67.9%) of the participants reported moderate levels of resilience. High level of resilience was only observed in 3.8% participants; and 28.1% participants reported low levels of resilience. Lastly, the level of psychological well-being was observed to be majorly (49%) medium in the participants; high level of well-being was observed in 23.7% participants and low level of well-being was observed in 26.6% participants. To sum, the data analysis produced favorable results in terms of correlation between the variables. The sample reported a high level of psychological well-being, moderate level of Body image satisfaction and low levels of resilience. The mean score for psychological wellbeing was found out to be higher in the male group (54.6) than in the female group (51.7). The mean score for body image satisfaction was found out to be higher in the male group (48.7) than in the female group (47.9). The mean score for psychological wellbeing was found out to be lower in the male group (19.6) than in the female group (20.4).

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to explore the links between body image satisfaction, resilience and psychological well-being. This study examined the unique effects of body image satisfaction on resilience and psychological well-being in a sample of young adults. The mean age of the sample of 22.87 years indicates the sample being representative of Indian young adults, most of which were living in urban areas. Most of the participants of this study reported moderate levels of body image satisfaction, high level of psychological well-being and low levels of resilience and resided majorly in urban areas. However, people living in rural areas were found to be more satisfied with their body image as compared to urban areas. This is in line with the study conducted by Sihag et al., (2017) where girls belonging to rural areas had significantly lower body image dissatisfaction as compared to girls from urban areas. This could be due to Less exposure to media promoting the "thin ideal"(Luo et al., 2006) and emphasis on health and functionality over appearance in rural communities. People living in urban areas were found to be more resilient than people living in rural areas. This can be due to the potential benefits of access to services that urban settings offer while rural communities might face limitations in access to mental health resources although they might enjoy potential benefits like social support more than urban areas (Liu et al., 2017). This study revealed that people living in rural areas exhibit higher psychological well-being than their urban counterparts. This is supported by a study done on females which reported rural womens showing greater degree of psychological well-being than their counterpart urban womens(Mishra & Tripathi, 2020).

The current findings of the study clearly support the hypothesis that body image satisfaction is positively associated with resilience and wellbeing. McGrath et al. (2019) found that there is significant positive correlation between body image satisfaction and resilience. The study's findings support the hypothesis that resilience, which helps people deal with external demands about their appearance and self-image, plays a major role in alleviating the harmful effects of having a poor body image.(Shahi et al., 2023).Numerous studies have established a significant positive correlation between PWB and Body Image Satisfaction (Cash et al., 2015; keery et al., 2013; Dotse et al., 2014).Alternatively, negative body image is often linked to lower Psychological well-being, including symptoms of depression, anxiety, and eating disorders (Stice et al., 2012).Resilience and Wellbeing were found to be similarly positively correlated with each other. This supports the consistent theme across studies i.e.

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positive correlation between PWB and resilience (Masten., 2001; Luthar et al., 2000). However, there is no significant positive correlation between Resilience and components of well-being: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations, and Self-Acceptance. It was also found out that body image satisfaction is more closely related to psychological well-being than resilience.

In the current study body image satisfaction was found to be a significant predictor of all components of well-being. Examining the components of well-being, body image satisfaction is not significantly correlated with only Environmental Mastery. There is a positive correlation between body image satisfaction, Autonomy, Personal Growth, Purpose In Life, Positive Relations And Self-Acceptance. Personal Growth and Self-Acceptance showed the strongest positive effect on body image satisfaction among all domains of well-being. Another interesting study done on patients with an intestinal stoma found that low scores on body image reflected low scores on the subjective well-being components indicating that these patients were unhappy and dissatisfied with their lives(Costa et al., 2014).Research suggests that women may be more susceptible to the negative effects of body image dissatisfaction on Psychological Well-being as compared to men (Tiggemann et al., 2001).The study found that there are significant gender differences between the participants' level of body image satisfaction, resilience and wellbeing which is in line with the existing literature. The current study reported that males exhibit higher levels of resilience and body image satisfaction as compared to their female counterparts. In terms of gender differences, previous research has suggested that males exhibit higher levels of resilience than females in the general population (Arslan, 2017). The current study has also highlighted that females exhibit greater psychological well-being than males. Other findings have proved that there are statistically significant differences between men and women in some psychological well-being dimensions with women scoring higher than men in personal growth and positive relations with others (Matud et al., 2019).The key limitations of the study are as follows. First, the selected sample was limited to 18-27 years of age that may lack generalisability of the results to the whole Indian population. Given the nature of the survey sample used in this study, the findings cannot be generalized to all college students. Additionally, the sample size did not allow comparisons among subgroups to be made with any confidence, comparisons that may also have aided in the interpretability of results. Furthermore, all the scales used to collect data were based on subjective self-reports. However, as with most self-report questionnaires, the current responses may reflect social desirability of the participant and make the result biased.

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to study the effect of body image satisfaction on resilience and well-being in Indian young adults. The results showed a significant correlation between the three variables. Significant gender differences were also observed in the participants of this study. This study lacks generalisability as it mainly revolves around a small urban population. By promoting positive body image and fostering resilience, one can empower individuals to navigate societal pressures and cultivate a healthy sense of self. These findings pave the way for future research to explore interventions that promote body image acceptance and psychological well-being, particularly for young women in urban settings. Additionally, investigating the factors contributing to higher resilience in urban environments and well-being in rural areas can offer valuable insights.



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### ***Conflict of Interest***

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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