

## Family Dynamics' Role in Body Shaming and Body Image Development in Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates how young adults' body image including body shaming are influenced by family dynamics. Using a narrative analysis, interviews were conducted with a sample of thirty respondents (15 men & 15 women). Three factors are examined in this study: family dynamics, body image development, and body shaming. Examining how parents' remarks affect how people perceive their bodies, investigating how siblings could oppose or promote body shaming, and comprehending how cultural beliefs shape family dynamics surrounding body image were the three main goals or objectives that were covered. Four hypotheses were supported by the analysis: negative family interactions result in poor body image, families that emphasize physical characteristics lead to body shaming, sibling as well as family comparisons affect body image, and strong parental support promotes a better body image. The study recommends more investigation into the psychological effects of young individuals' body image problems.

**Keywords:** *Young Adults, Family Dynamics, Influence, Body Image Development, Body Shaming, Culture*

A person's self-image, which is influenced by their social, cultural, and personal experiences, is a crucial component of their self-concept (Forste & Moore, 2022). Body image issues are becoming more prevalent in today's beauty-obsessed society, particularly among young people. Early experiences—such as interactions and messages received as a child—have a significant impact on how people view their bodies and their value, and these effects last as they get older.

### 1.1 Body Image

The term "body image" describes how people feel, think, and view their physical attributes. It includes opinions about bodily shape, size, and how one thinks other people see them. Body image is influenced by psychological, cultural, social, and physical elements. It can be either good, characterized by self-acceptance and wellbeing, or negative, resulting in low self-esteem, unhappiness, and mental health problems like depression or eating disorders. Media, peer comparisons, familial relationships, and cultural beauty standards all influence this fundamental component of self-concept (Abadi, 2023).

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### 1.1.1 Body Image and Psychological Well-Being

Body image and mental health are tightly related, impacting daily functioning, confidence, and self-worth. While a poor body image can result in anxiety, self-blame, and mental health problems including eating disorders, body dysmorphia, or PTSD, a positive body image promotes emotional stability and self-acceptance. Body dissatisfaction is widespread and can negatively impact one's quality of life in a culture that upholds unattainable beauty standards. People who have a positive body image are more likely to emphasize their own development and strengths than their looks.

### 1.1.2 Positive Body Image VS Negative Body Image

**Positive Body Image:** Regardless of conventional beauty standards, a positive image of oneself is accepting and valuing one's physical appearance. It encourages improved mental health, self-confidence, & self-esteem by emphasizing the body's durability and functionality rather than its beauty. Dissatisfaction with one's looks is the root cause of negative body image, which is frequently stoked by criticism, the media, or cultural standards. It can result in negative behaviors including severe dieting or disordered eating, as well as low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.

## 1.2 Body Shaming

The process of humiliating, criticizing, or derogatorily commenting on another's body is called body shaming. It may be directed against oneself or others, and it often arises from cultural standards of beauty that promote a restricted definition of beauty (Syeda et al. 2023). An individual can be exposed to overt verbal put-downs, implicit comments, comparisons, or even self-blame in the form of body shaming. It can have a significant impact on the mental health, body sense, and overall self-worth of an individual. It tends to lead to anxiety, depression, as well as disordered eating habits.

### 1.2.1 Influence of Culture and Society on Body Shaming

Through the promotion of limited beauty standards, social and cultural expectations have a significant impact on body shaming. Although cultural norms differ, many place an emphasis on impractical characteristics, such as being skinny in the West, which puts pressure on people to fit in. Self-criticism and body dissatisfaction result from this. Through altered photos and celebrity trends, the media and social media reinforce these standards, and sectors such as fashion and advertising contribute to the overvaluation of particular body types.

### 1.2.2 Body Shaming and Its Psychological Effects on Young Adults

The self-esteem, psychological health, and overall well-being of young adults can all be undermined by body shaming. Negative self-image and physical discontent can be caused by repeated exposure to criticism, unrealistic beauty ideals, including social comparison. Young adults exposed to body shaming—whether from peers, family, or social media—often develop anxiety, low self-esteem, and self-consciousness, all of which can influence confidence and interpersonal relationships. The link between body shaming and mental illnesses such as eating disorders, anxiety, and depression is one of its most significant impacts.

## 1.3 Family Dynamics' Role in Forming Body Image

Family has a significant influence on body image from an early age since children pick up attitudes and actions about beauty from their parents. In contrast to harsh remarks or an

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emphasis on looks, supportive, accepting families promote self-esteem and a healthy body image. Children can develop healthy self-perceptions when their parents demonstrate self-care and body positivity, but exposure to dieting and body pessimism can also lead to comparable anxieties. Young people's mental health depends on having a loving, judgment-free family (Khalid et al., 2024).

### **1.3.1 Parents and Siblings influence on Body Image**

Young adults' perceptions of their bodies and sense of self are still influenced by their families. Sibling comparisons can result in self-doubt and undesirable habits, particularly if one sibling gets more praise for beauty. Long-term body image can be impacted by sibling taunting and parental remarks about appearance or comparisons, which can serve to reinforce the notion that value is determined by physical appearance.

### **1.3.2 Impact of Family Communication**

According to Yang et al. (2023), family communication is essential in forming young people's body-related self-esteem. Young adults can develop confidence and fend off social pressures by having candid, encouraging discussions that address fears, prevent body criticism, and encourage self-acceptance. On the other hand, remarks that are disparaging or appearance-focused, such teasing, comparisons, or a focus on weight, can cause self-doubt and body dissatisfaction. People's perceptions of their bodies are greatly influenced by both spoken words and behavior models in the family.

### **1.3.3 Impact of Parental Approaches**

People's self-perception, confidence, and body image are greatly influenced by their parental upbringing. Self-worth and resilience are fostered by authoritative parenting, which strikes a balance between warmth and structure. On the other hand, poor self-esteem & body dissatisfaction can result from authoritarian parenting, which is characterized by control and criticism. Neglectful parenting frequently leaves young people feeling invisible and inadequate, suffering with self-esteem and identity, whereas permissive parenting, which is warm but lacks structure, can lead to poor self-regulation and sensitivity to beauty expectations.

### **1.4 Consequences of Body Shaming**

A number of negative outcomes, such as low self-esteem, anxiety, social disengagement, and eating disorders like bulimia or anorexia, can result from body shaming. Additionally, it can result in harmful coping strategies including severe calorie restriction, substance abuse, or self-harm, as well as body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), a condition in which people obsess about perceived faults. Severe instances of body shaming can lead to self-destructive actions and suicide thoughts.

### **1.5 Encouraging Positive Body Image**

People should cultivate positive self-talk, educate oneself about the unattainable beauty standards promoted by the media, and emphasize loving the way they look for their abilities and skills in order to build a good body image. Better self-esteem can be supported by changing the emphasis from looks to general health and wellness, practicing thankfulness for the body's talents, and getting expert assistance when necessary. Families may foster a supportive atmosphere by promoting candid conversations and self-acceptance.

### *1.6 Rationale of Study*

In this study, the effects of family dynamics on young adults' body image development and body shaming are examined. It looks at how familial relationships (an independent variable) affect how people feel about their bodies (a dependent variable). Understanding how family dynamics—both positive and negative—affect body image and fuel body shaming is the aim. Finding maladaptive family dynamics that contribute to the development of an unhealthy body image is another goal of the study. Data was gathered via semi structured interviews, and analysis was done using a narrative research approach. Due to the paucity of research on this subject in India, this study is especially valuable.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Aim*

- To examine the role of family dynamics in body shaming and body image development in young adults.

### *Objective*

- To study how the young adults' perceptions of their bodies are influenced by their parents' interactions and comments.
- To explore the contribution of siblings in promotion or prevention of body shaming.
- To find the effect of cultural values and beliefs on family dynamics towards body image.

### *Hypothesis*

- Negative comments and interactions will lead to unhealthy body image development in young adults.
- Comparisons between siblings and relatives will have a significant impact on young adults' self-perception.
- Young adults with families who give importance to physical appearance more than intrinsic qualities are more likely to experience body shaming and body image concerns.
- Parents with positive and supportive approach foster healthier body image in young adults.

### *Sample*

Description of sample: For the purpose of this study, people who are between the age range of 18 to 25 years as this study particularly focuses on young adults. Narrative research design has been considered for the analysis of the data; hence, small sample size of 30 people was included where equal distribution of females and males participated, 15 each.

Selection of sample: To ensure that everyone had an equal chance to participate, a random sampling approach was employed. The study focused on young adults by selecting participants who were between the ages of 18 and 25 (including those who were getting close to 26) based on resources such as the Journal of Adolescent Health, Research Gate, and MIT Human Resources. Participants received complete information about the study, were asked for consent, and were given the choice to cancel their participation at any moment before any data was collected.

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### Inclusion criterion:

- Participants who are between the age range of 18-25 years.
- Participants who are comfortable and willing to talk about their family dynamics.
- Participants who are from India.

### Exclusion criterion:

- Participants who are not between the age range of 18-25 years.
- Participants who are not comfortable and willing to talk about their family dynamics.
- Participants who are not from India.

### **Variables**

- Independent Variable: Family Dynamics
- Dependent Variable: Body Shaming and Body Image Development

### ***Research design***

This study examines how family dynamics affect young adults' body-shaming behaviors & body image development using a narrative research approach. Because it provides in-depth understanding of people's experiences and works well with small sample sizes, narrative research is useful for evaluating qualitative studies and facilitating the development of clear conclusions.

### ***Instrument used***

With advice from faculty members at Amity University in Noida, a questionnaire for interview was created for the purpose of gathering data. It focused on body shaming, body image development, and family dynamics. Participants were able to openly discuss their experiences due to the semi-structured design. Twelve open-ended questions made up the questionnaire, which was intended to help people between the ages of 18 and 25 learn more about the research issue.

### ***Procedure***

Open-ended, semi-structured interview questions were used to gather data, enabling participants to talk in-depth about their experiences. Professors from Amity University in Noida were consulted when developing the questions, and in order to maintain confidentiality, answers were recorded. Both digital and printed versions of the questionnaire were used to record the data. Participants were told that no evaluations would be given and that there was no expectation of right or wrong answers. Following the interview, those who took part were thanked, and discussion and conclusion were formed by interpreting the data using a narrative research approach.

## **RESULT**

Below are the question-wise responses of the participants recorded during the interview with the goal of interpretation for each of the questions. Additionally, the responses given for each question are derived from the majority of responses that are largely similar to one another:

**1. How would you reflect on the general environment of your family when you were growing up?**

**Goal:** This inquiry investigates the dynamics of the family as a whole and offers background information for comprehending the participant's childhood. It provides a starting point for examining how family relationships affect the formation of body image.

- *“Growing up in the environment my family provided .IT was strict as far I can remember. It got better as we were growing. Support and love were still in the mix depended on if wasn't being mischievous for so I will get a punishment.”*
- *“My family was really supportive towards my likes and dislikes while also were strict enough to keep me on track and make a good routine which has helped me in the long run.”*
- *“Pretty weird since we lived in a joint family, too many people and too many opinions.”*
- *“Very strict environment with a lot of discipline. Always wanted me to be particular about everything I do.”*

**2. Which approaches to communication are most common in your family?**

**Goal:** how people communicate can show whether family conversations are neutral, critical, or supportive, which is crucial for comprehending how they affect body image and vulnerability to body shaming.

- *“I've always been a person who has always tried to keep things to myself rather than communicating but whenever I've tried to communicate with my parents, they've always kept my problems at the priority and shown the utmost support I could've ever asked for.”*
- *“Communication is different for every member, as a whole i'd say it is quite neutral, but i feel that beyond that we don't communicate about problems, its either silent treatment or letting enough time pass by to forget it.”*
- *“Critical from my papa and supportive from my mom. My brother is always neutral. I believe that is why I stay closer to my mom.”*
- *“State to be supportive but are critical and defence. Generally, to show the outside world.”*
- *“Critical mostly. They are very particular and strict so hardly any supportiveness from their side leading to negative communication.”*

**3. During your early years, do you remember any particular family conversations or comments regarding physical appearance?**

**Goal:** This inquiry seeks to pinpoint specific familial influences—such as remarks or actions—that might have influenced the participant's opinions about their body.

- *“Yeah, there were a lot, I significantly gained weight when I was 12-13 years old. It was due to the fact that I stopped going outside once we shifted to a new place and my parents started commenting how I am ruining my childhood by sitting at home being lazy and fat.”*
- *“Yes, I had gained a lot of weight when I was around 10-14 years of age n then around 15-16 I drastically lost it because of panic attacks and everyone told me its cause I'm anorexic. Can't believe my own family.”*
- *“Never. Even when outsiders comment on any of our members we always take stand for them.”*
- *“Yes, when comparing it to my mother or my father's side. So basically, comparison has always been there in my family.”*

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- *“Yeah, I used to be bullied for being overweight. It’s still there though and that honestly, sort of impacted me over the period of time.”*
- *“Yes. A lot on my body hair, crooked teeth and pimples. That too they know that its hormonal and due to stress but still don’t get it.”*

### **4. If you ever had any concerns about your body image, how did the family members react?**

**Goal:** Identifying if family attitudes to body image issues were critical, dismissive, or supportive and how they influenced the formation of body image is made easier with an understanding of these reactions.

- *“Uhm, dad usually started to give solution straightaway, and mom didn't had much to say and usually these conversations were ignored but my elder brother used to call me names and tease me for being fat and even commented on my skin colour being dark since I was tanned.”*
- *“I was always under confident about my appearance, and they never really understood why. For them it was more like if you don't like something change it, but it's not that easy.”*
- *“Growing up, I was very petite and tall. People around me were quite short and it made me feel weird, but my family always made me confident about my appearance whenever I felt low.”*
- *“Personally, now I don't discuss about my body image or appearance to anyone. Because when I tried, they started making fun of me and didn’t take me seriously.”*
- *“That it’s silly and that I probably got influenced by social media and people around me so I should focus on studies. I don’t know how to feel then because I don’t feel heard.”*

### **5. Were any physical appearance-based comparisons made between siblings or relatives?**

**Goal:** Family comparisons frequently lead to sentiments of competitiveness or inadequacy, which can harm one's body image and encourage body shaming. These dynamics are examined in this question.

- *“Yes, they didn't used to say that directly, but they always used to find a way to make me feel insecure about my tanned dark complexion and used to compare it with my brother because he was fair.”*
- *“Yeah, as I told you I was skinny and short so most of the time my mother and father compared me to my relatives.”*
- *“Yes, there were comparison between me and my sister because she used to be leaner than me.”*
- *“Yeah, like how my sister is shorter than me and I am more handsome than my brother. So, it impacted my siblings really badly but never communicated about the same.”*
- *“Only with my own sister for crooked teeth and nose.”*
- *“No. They are really sweet and supportive. Always uplift my self-confidence.”*
- *“Not really. Only when it’s needed, and I don’t have any problem because its for my good only.”*

### **6. How did the values or beliefs of your family affect the way you felt about your body?**

**Goal:** This inquiry explores how attitudes about body norms and self-perception are influenced by cultural or moral ideals within the family.

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- *“It made me more conscious of the world out there. While it may not be a concern at the family level, stepping out makes you feel insecure because, just as my family has opinions about others, other families may have opinions about my looks.”*
- *“If I talk about just my family’s values and beliefs then it has somewhere made me become a secured and appreciative individual when it comes to my body or physical features. Also, helped me built confidence over time with my shape and size.”*
- *“There was a time when I started feeling insecure in my own body, I felt overwhelmed that I am not good. Not anymore though. Now I have established my own values and beliefs haha.”*
- *“Felt “not understood”, no one asked why I was losing weight just kept asking what i was doing.”*
- *“I used to have a very negative self-image and even developed an eating disorder because of their ideas on body image and also felt shameful about myself.”*

### **7. Have you ever been the victim of body shaming by family members or close relatives? How did it impact you, if at all?**

The **goal** of this inquiry is to directly connect the dynamics of family to the psychological and emotional effects of body shaming by addressing individual experiences of this behavior inside the family.

- *“Very fortunately I haven't been a victim of it as such. There have been times when some relatives did point out that I have gained more weight. During those times I remember feeling bad about myself and tried to control my eating habits or tried to exercise more. Even little comments about physical appearance really impact one in a huge way.”*
- *“Yes, my relatives would always say that I am too short, and I look like a 5th class child it would make me feel bad because I am so much more than just that, being at the age of 21-22 when I have important career decisions to make it felt really agonizing.”*
- *“Yes, especially my relatives, I struggle to eat when we're at a family gathering thinking that they'll taunt me for it.”*
- *“Yes. It made me self-conscious even though growing up I was neutral about my body.”*

### **8. How does self-esteem in relation to body image get affected by family support or criticism, in your opinion?**

The **goal** of this question is to assess the overall impact of family on one's sense of self-worth and body image by examining its dual position as an expression of encouragement as well as criticism.

- *“It made me feel like nothing about me matters because of my weight. Now that I have become 'thin,' my neglectful family comes to talk to me but only about my weight. They all comment on how thin I am. Even now, my weight overshadows all my achievements.”*
- *“Family support has a significant impact on self-esteem since it shapes your body image and has a significant impact on mental health when family supports you on your body related journey.”*
- *“The kids become very insecure and blind when even the people at their safe place start to criticize them about something they can't control.”*
- *“When your family says stuff about your body image or appearance, it lowers self-esteem. You get anxious about the way you look.”*

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- *“I think family being a safe space can lead to a healthier, more realistic body image.”*
- *“Inversely affected. The more they comment on my body the lesser my self-esteem goes.”*

### 9. Was there any discussion in your family about cultural or the societal pressures related to body standards?

**Goal:** Families frequently serve as a channel for social pressures. This inquiry looks at the internalization and transmission of cultural or societal norms inside the family.

- *“Indeed, there have been conversations about it. I recall hearing that the social norm is that women should be gentle and fair-spoken, while men should be tall, dark, and attractive. I've heard that a man my age needs to be slender and have some muscles.”*
- *“There hasn't been much conversation in my family concerning the cultural and societal pressures surrounding body ideals. The emphasis has primarily been on general health and wellbeing as opposed to meeting social norms.”*
- *“No there is no discussion in my family about cultural or societal pressure. They are very mature in that sense.”*
- *“Yeah. About how girls are supposed to look a certain way, and I don't. felt really bad at times.”*
- *“Yes, with the saying, “Patla nahi hoga toh koi shaadi bhi nahi karegi”.”*
- *“Yes, that it might be a problem for me when I get married.”*
- *“Yeah, they thought “everyone will think im disturbed” because of the way I look.”*

### 10. In what ways do you think your family's dynamics have shaped the way you perceive yourself now?

The **goal** of this reflection question is to get participants to relate their current self-perception and body image to their family experiences.

- *“It hasn't had a significant effect because I've only had a few instances where my family has criticized my body image. I now have a bad body image, although this is more a result of other people on my social circle than anything else. Naturally, family has been playing a part since I have felt horrible when my body has been criticized, making me feel like I am unfit for anything.”*
- *“It used to be really low (my perception about myself) typically because of my family dynamics, now, however I've built it back up with a positive narrative over the years.”*
- *“I was often ignored (not because of my weight). I grew up lonely and isolated. I have poor social skills and low self-worth.”*
- *“Their neutral/teasing standing on my weight makes it more comfortable for me to stand up to them and retaliate regardless of how much all of it hurts.”*
- *“I don't care about their opinion now, earlier it made me feel very sad and under confident.”*

### 11. Do you believe that certain family traditions or behaviors encourage a positive versus a negative body image?

**Goal:** This inquiry aims to pinpoint certain family customs (such as eating patterns, relations between family members, holiday festivities, and exercise regimens) that may favorably or unfavorably reinforce body image perspectives.

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- *“Yes I do believe that certain family traditions or behaviors encourage a negative body image. This is especially true for women I feel. I have seen women being criticised by the whole family for being overweight or having dark skin. I feel Indian families are more understanding of men's body image struggles than of women. A typical Indian family behavior is comparison with other family members or with the friends of the child or neighbour's child of the same age. I have seen family members use subtle comments to criticize one's body or appearance which leaves a huge negative impact on one's body image.”*
- *“I don't know about traditions per say, but the habit of always having to make comments on everyone's looks leads to negative body image even if those comments are good.”*
- *“Yeah, if a family calls their children names that would lead to body issues or eating disorders later in the children's lives.*
- *“Yes definitely, I've seen that some family traditions that promote healthy habits encourage positive body image. Also, same is followed in my family luckily.”*

### **12. In your opinion, how can open communication in families benefit addressing concerns related to body shaming or body image?**

**Goal:** By inviting participants to offer remedies or interventions, this question offers insightful information for dealing with issues related to body image that arise in families leading to healthy or unhealthy body image development.

- *“People's body image issues can be addressed with the support of open conversation in families. It also raises awareness of the various family members' sensitivities about their body image, enables them to be sensitively addressed, and fosters a strong, dependable relationship.”*
- *“Families ought to be more sympathetic to people who battle with body image, in my opinion. Parents should encourage their children and denounce such behavior instead of engaging in it, particularly when they witness others in the family body shaming their children. When a parent observes their child having difficulties with body image, they should help them and show them that they are loved.”*
- *“I believe holding these conversations allows us to challenge negative beauty standards/norms. We can also make the other member understand how our words affect the other member and their self-esteem (i.e., the long-term impact).”*
- *“Supportive and open conversations make it easier for the person being shamed to accept themselves if they can explain to the people they love and have the reassurance that they have someone who accepts them for who they are. Luckily, I find this pattern in my family.”*
- *“Considering the Indian landscape and family dynamics and the societal overview, body image issues and body shaming issues cannot be fixed by communication in families. People could express if a certain comment made a member was hurtful. Sometimes it can help educate the members who are not aware of the negatives of body shaming.”*

## **DISCUSSION**

Aim of this study is to investigate how young adults' body image development and body shaming are influenced by family dynamics. One essential component of self-concept that affects how people view themselves and engage with the outside world is their image. It is a dynamic and multifaceted idea that has been influenced by numerous social, cultural, and individual experiences.

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The word "body image" refers to the way one feels, sees, and thinks about one's own bodily features. Body shaming is the practice of mocking, criticizing, or making negative remarks about another's body. Social norms and body image attitudes are first learned by children within the family environment. Explicit comments, comparisons, and behaviors by siblings, parents, and other relatives shape one's own sense of self. Confidence grows in supportive homes that promote healthy behaviors and self-acceptance, as opposed to judgmental or appearance-relevant settings that lead to body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem (Syeda et al. 2023).

Individuals between the ages of 18 and 25 are part of this study since it focuses on young adults. The data were analysed through a narrative research approach, hence the comparatively small number of 30 individuals, with 15 males and 15 females participating equally. Following are the objectives of the study:

- To study how the young adults' perceptions of their bodies are influenced by their parents' interactions and comments.

It is obvious that our parents contribute greatly to our growth and development. Hence, our body image development along with our overall development also gets influenced by them. Similarly, it was seen in one of the findings done by Barbeau et al. (2022) indicated that perceived negative body talk was associated with more negative self-talk due to fear of negative evaluation and less self-compassion. Additionally, when participants were asked *"During your early years, do you remember any particular family conversations or comments regarding physical appearance?"* while interviewing, most of them answered yes to this particular question and added how it has negatively impacted them over the years. One instance of it is *"Yeah, there were a lot, I significantly gained weight when I was 12-13 years old. It was due to the fact that I stopped going outside once we shifted to a new place and my parents started commenting how I am ruining my childhood by sitting at home being lazy and fat."*

- To explore the contribution of siblings in promotion or prevention of body shaming. When considering family dynamics then the role of siblings is very essential to interpret. According to Deek et al. (2023), the participants indicated that their mothers discussed overweight more than their sisters and felt more pressure to appear good than their sisters which shows that the mother contributed more to promotion of body shaming than prevention. Moreover, majorly participants responded that in their family dynamics, parents are seen promoting body shaming, but their siblings didn't really contribute to it. Taking one of the many responses when asked about the communication approach adding to body shaming, *"Critical from my papa and supportive from my mom. My brother is always neutral. I believe that is why I stay closer to my mom."*

- To find the effect of cultural values and beliefs on family dynamics towards body image.

Social and cultural values and beliefs are crucial in body shaming because they influence how people view physical attributes and other aspects of beauty. Different cultures have different ideas on what constitutes beauty, and they frequently promote limited and unattainable ideals of beauty. One of the findings where Deviantony et al. (2024) found that peers, family members, the media, societal demands and personal insecurities were the major sources of body shaming. There was also a strong correlation between stress and body shaming leading to negative body image. Finally, when asked from the interviewees, most

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of them agreed that their family dynamics are influenced because of general cultural values and beliefs. For example, one participant said, *“Indeed, there have been conversations about it. I recall hearing that the social norm is that women should be gentle and fair-spoken, while men should be tall, dark, and attractive. I've heard that a man my age needs to be slender and have some muscles.”*

Based on the understanding of the statements and findings mentioned above, the objectives of the study have been successfully met.

In this particular study, there are four hypothesis that were being studied which are as follows: -

- Negative comments and interactions will lead to unhealthy body image development in young adults.

Family communication is needed to form body-related self-esteem. Perceptions of the own body may be influenced in great part by the conversation's family members have regarding beauty, weight, and worth. Positive communication is believed to increase body positivity, while negative communication is believed to increase negative body image development. Following finding and statement supported the same. Day et al. (2022) found that young adults who are teased or abused are more likely than those who are not abused to have a negative body image and disordered eating. Moreover, respondents answer to the following question – “During your early years, do you remember any particular family conversations or comments regarding physical appearance?” in the same way as, *“Yes, there were times when my mother used to say things to me regarding my weight as well as my skin colour. Although it was long time ago, but I don't know why it still affects me.”*

- Comparisons between siblings and relatives will have a significant impact on young adults' self-perception.

One's self-perception gets highly impacted when it is being compared to one another. This can be seen based on the following outcomes. Deek et al. (2023) examined that young women's appearance comparisons & thin-ideal internalization—both of which were associated with body dissatisfaction and ultimately disordered eating symptomatology. Additionally, some of the responses were also addressed, *“Yes, they didn't used to say that directly, but they always used to find a way to make me feel insecure about my tanned dark complexion and used to compare it with my brother because he was fair.” “Yeah, like how my sister is shorter than me and I am more handsome than my brother. So, it impacted my siblings really badly but never communicated about the same.”*

- Young adults with families who give importance to physical appearance more than intrinsic qualities are more likely to experience body shaming and body image concerns.

Always being criticized for physical features and appearance will definitely lead to body image issues at some point, supported by the next few lines. In one of the review of literature by Abadi et al. (2023) which highlights the significance of supportive family environments in the encouragement of positive perception of the body and the significant role of family dynamics in body image satisfaction. Also, the respondents also agreed that giving importance to physical appearance more will not be healthy. Some statements are, *“I never had any concerns I did some exercise concerning my height as my parents are short, they provided me with a place to exercise and be fortunate for what I have.” “It doesn't matter if your body is this and that as I said my family never really body shamed me in my*

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*opinion just work hard nobody can say anything to you if you are comfortable and surrounded with good people.” “My mother made sure that my sister and I remain grateful that we are blessed with a healthy body and should thank Allah the way he has created us.” “I used to have a very negative self-image and even developed an eating disorder because of their ideas on body image and also felt shameful about myself.”*

- Parents with positive and supportive approach foster healthier body image in young adults.

Family where parents are supportive and understanding cultivates healthy environment leading to overall positivity and related to body image development as well. Yousefi et al. (2023) stated that families and school counsellors to promote self-compassion, family cohesion, and well-being while reducing stress levels and increasing adolescent girls' satisfaction with their bodies. Similarly, some statements by the participants supported the above hypothesis which are, *“I’ve always been a person who has always tried to keep things to myself rather than communicating but whenever I’ve tried to communicate with my parents, they’ve always kept my problems at the priority and shown the utmost support I could’ve ever asked for.” “Supportive and open conversations make it easier for the person being shamed to accept themselves if they can explain to the people they love and have the reassurance that they have someone who accepts them for who they are. Luckily, I find this pattern in my family.”* Thereby, these findings and statements justifies this particular hypothesis.

Following are some of the findings from the review of literature which supports the objectives as well as hypothesis that are included in the study: -

- Singh (2024) carried out this research which indicated a positive correlation between life orientation, emotion control, and body image. Specifically, individuals who were satisfied with their bodies had improved emotional control and a positive life attitude.
- Syeda et al. (2023) investigated the emphasis on the adverse implications of body shaming on young people's self-esteem as well as on their emotional well-being highlight the consequential outcome of their failure to receive proper mental health care as well as intervention programs in the Malakand region.
- Forste and Moore (2022) found that judgments of body weight are more highly linked with lower life satisfaction among girls than boys, yet that there is little to no gender difference in the connection between body weight & judgments of oneself, peers, parents, and school.
- Rivero et al. (2022) examined how Latinas' body image shame was positively and significantly associated with negative food and weight messages from mothers, fathers, and with sibling negativity.
- Sadli et al. (2022) conducted the study and findings were then analyzed. All of the victims of body shaming realized that the act is humiliating to their bodies as a consequence of this research. They require the moral support of their parents, friends, and experts in order to recover from this.
- Goel et al. (2021) studied how women explained how they were stigmatized regarding their weight by a variety of sources, particularly older women (e.g., moms, aunts, relatives), and cultural stressors related to living in the US. Furthermore, participants were pressured to meet competing appearance and body standards (i.e., "healthy" and "thin"). They also explained that they were pressured to have dark

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black hair, light skin, little body hair, and to marry early, and that these pressures negatively affected their body image.

- Jones and Young (2021) results revealed that daughters' body dissatisfaction as well as weight loss motivation are both strongly determined by how they view their mother's excessive fat talk (words) combined with her excessive weight-loss practices (actions).
- Rodgers et al. (2021) findings support the long-term effects of family-based weight bullying on negative body image and risk of unhealthy weight-control behaviours.

Lastly, no differences were observed based on participants' demographic details namely, gender, location and age. Additionally, it was noticed that mothers and relatives promote unhealthy body image development more than fathers and siblings. Also, majority of the participants reported body image concerns related to weight. Moreover, it has been observed based on previous researches that very less research has been done on the young adults' population when it comes to body shaming and body image development. Hence, this study focused particularly on young adults where most of the respondents supported in addressing all the hypothesis with the similar viewpoints. Finally, objectives were also addressed.

### CONCLUSION

The study aims to explore the ways in which family dynamics impact the development of young adults' body image and body shaming. Those who fall within the 18–25 age group are the focus of this study because it specifically targets young adults. The data was analysed using a narrative research approach, which is why a relatively small number of 30 individuals was included, with 15 males and 15 females participating equally. Three variables are investigated in this study: body shaming, body image development, and family dynamics. Relationships and behaviors are influenced by family dynamics, which are molded by cultural values and experiences. Body image growth shows how a person perceives their body over time, whereas body shaming entails judgment based on looks. The study investigates how family dynamics influence young people' development of body image and body shaming as an independent variable.

In total, three objectives were addressed in this study. First, to investigate how the interactions and remarks of their parents affect the young people' views of their bodies. Second, to investigate the role siblings play in encouraging or discouraging body shaming and lastly, determine how family dynamics about body image are impacted by cultural values and beliefs. Additionally, four hypotheses were explored, young adults have an unhealthy body image as a result of negative remarks and interactions, young adults' perceptions of themselves are greatly impacted by comparisons among siblings and relatives, young adults are more inclined to suffer from body shaming as well as body image issues if their families place a higher value on outward appearance than on inborn traits and finally, young adults who have supportive and optimistic parents have better body image perceptions.

#### *Future implications:*

- Studies should also focus on young adults' population when it comes to body image development as it's a crucial point in life to develop perceptions about oneself.
- Interview processing can be more fruitful if taken in a more formal and quite setting.
- More studies should be done based on Indian population as family dynamics can differ accordingly.

### **Limitations:**

- It was difficult finding researches which focused on particularly young adults' population.
- Interview process was hindered many times because of noise and crowd.
- Hardly found any Indian population-based researches.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

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