

Examining The Influence of Social Physique Anxiety on Self Efficacy and Life Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

The current research endeavours to examine the impact of social physique anxiety on young adults' life satisfaction and self-efficacy. The worry of having one's physical appearance poorly viewed by others is known as social physique anxiety. The sample comprises of 200 participants aged 18-25 years. (Male=100, Female=100). Results revealed no gender disparity, also an inverse relationship was found of social physique anxiety with belief in one self and fulfilment with life. Additionally, it was noted that social physique anxiety has moderate ability to predict self-efficacy and life satisfaction. The results emphasise the need for interventions that address social physique anxiety and aim to promote general well-being, irrespective of gender differences.

Keywords: *Social Physique Anxiety, Self Efficacy, Life Satisfaction*

Young adults, also known as emerging adulthood is a developmental phase between adolescence and adulthood, and is marked by distinct characteristics that makes this group different from other age groups (Arnett, 2000). This phase includes late teens to mid 20s and individuals in this phase go through shifts in their social and living situations, when they move towards independent living situations and romantic relationships. (Arnett, 2000; Kuang J., 2023) These changes can be deep and may require assistance to navigate successfully. Some of the characteristics that are identified are identity exploration, self-focus, instability and autonomy and possibility. (Arnett, 2000) These characteristics reflect the process of self-discovery and decision making that are prevalent in this stage of life.

Emerging adults have been found to be more susceptible to social physique anxiety because body image is the main issue for this age group. Researches show that portrayal of ideal body images in the mass media can lead to higher social physique anxiety among young adults. Moreover, women who use social media more frequently have higher levels of social anxiety related to their bodies.

Young adults typically experience more social anxiety related to their bodies as they explore their identities, they are faced with complex choices across various areas of life which includes education, career, relationships and personal values. This can induce a sense of

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instability as such circumstances are shifting in nature. In this age they are more focused towards self in their choices, this is because when compared to adolescents, they are less influenced by authority figures. Young adults' attitudes and impressions about their bodies are a major source of concern for them, and SPA is linked to body anxiety. At this point, romantic, sexual, and peer interactions are also shaped by interpersonal traits. (Sabiston, Pila, Pinsonnault-Bilodeau, & Cox, 2014).

Self-efficacy is a notion that is closely associated with Social Physical Anxiety. According to a hypothesis developed by Albert Bandura, people are more likely to engage in activities that boost their sense of competence and self-worth, such as healthy lifestyle choices. People tend to stay away from anxious situations because they are unsure of their ability to cope or their skill level; on the other hand, where individuals feel that they can rely on their skills decreases their negative emotions. Those with poor self-efficacy are more inclined to avoid specific situations, such as workout settings, due to a lack of perceived capacity when anxious. One's comfort level with showing off their body in specific situations is closely correlated with feelings of efficacy.

Low self-efficacy has been linked to emotions such as worry, despair, and helplessness. Such persons have low self-esteem and adverse ideas about their achievements and personal development. A high level of competency increases cognitive processes and academic success. People with a higher sense of efficacy execute more difficult activities. They aim higher and are less prone to give up. (Latham & Locke, 1990). People's actions are predetermined by their thoughts, and their self-efficacy determines whether they expect positive or bad outcomes. Individuals who have self-confidence are more likely to continue and put in more effort than those who don't. Furthermore, when confronted with barriers, those with strong self-efficacy recover faster than those with low self-efficacy.

A person's assessment of their life's quality is known as life satisfaction. It is a significant sign of a person's wellbeing and not only the result of good events. (Huebner, Suldo, & Gilman, 2006) It conveys a feeling of fulfilment and consistency between goals and demands. and it is different from positive and negative feelings which makes it unique. As an indicator of well-being it can be measured in terms of mood, contentment with relationships and goals that the person has achieved, and the ability to cope up with stressors of life. Life satisfaction of young people is an important area of research because in their transition to adulthood they may face certain adjustment and developmental issues in all the areas including their family, school as well with themselves (Hampel & Petermann, 2006; Lerner & Galambos, 1998)

Factors affecting life satisfaction:

Personal Factors Personal elements encompass three sorts of needs: physiological, psychological, and social. Physiological demands include food, shelter, and sex. Self-esteem, mental health, anxiety, and so on are examples of psychological needs, whereas social needs include familial support, relationships, social support, skills and opportunities.

Environmental Factors: This category encompasses everything around us. Both our psychological characteristics and our social behaviour are influenced by our environment. A quiet and tranquil setting promotes a balanced lifestyle. Positive surroundings generate positive relationships with neighbours, which contribute to the formation of a supportive social network.

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In order to investigate social body anxiety, the need to exercise, and exercise preferences among college students, Bushman (2010) conducted a study. This study included 337 individuals, 200 of them were women and 137 were men. The study revealed that while anxiety related to physical appearance was similar in both sexes and unrelated to the need to exercise, women appeared to suffer anxiety at higher levels than males. The impression of body image, social anxiety related to physical appearance, self-esteem, and body fat among teenage girls who exercise and those who do not was examined in a different study conducted by James, J. (2018). The study's sample included 1115 females: 676 were non-exercisers, 439 were exercisers, and these were further classified into semi-exercisers (272) and regular exercisers (167). The study's findings revealed that women who exercised had improved body acceptance and self-esteem, as well as reduced levels of social anxiety related to their appearance and body fat. Martin (2006) conducted a study with an aim to examine how cognitions and muscularity perceptions influence social physique anxiety among male college students. The sample consisted of 98 male students ranging from 18 to 40 years. The outcome of the study demonstrated an association between social anxiety about one's body and appearance perception, and that men who felt more strongly about their muscularity also experienced more social physique anxiety than men who had a less positive view of their muscularity. Sabiston (2007) investigated social physique anxiety and coping mechanisms in female adolescents. The sample comprised of 31 females aged 13 to 18 years. In order to learn about the experiences of social body anxiety, the strategy comprised semi-structured interviews. According to the study's findings, females experiencing SPA adopt a variety of coping techniques, with 107 coping strategies identified and classified into ten subthemes. The key ones were avoidance, comparison with others, and diet, physical exercise, substance abuse, and social support. In order to investigate the connection between age, body dissatisfaction, social physique anxiety, and teenage obsession with weight and form, Thompson, A.M., & Chad, K.E. (2002) conducted a study. There were 77 female participants in the sample who were not overweight. Both height and weight have to be measured during the operation. The findings revealed that SPA was moderately linked with body image dissatisfaction, as well as concerns about body shape and weight. Female teenagers who were more nervous expressed more concern about their body form and weight, preferring a smaller body shape. Atalay, A. A., and Gençöz, T. (2008) examined how exercise and a positive body image affected female students' social anxiety related to their physical appearance. The sample comprised of 118 females, 58 of whom exercised frequently. It was discovered that people with higher degrees of social body anxiety also felt less satisfied with their bodies and exercised less consistently. Furthermore, research revealed that half of the women use at least one inefficient weight-control strategy. Hurst (2000) investigated exercise reliance, social support, and social physique anxiety among experienced and beginner bodybuilders and weight lifters. The sample included 35 professional body builders (aged 20-47), 31 inexperienced body builders. aged 16-45, and 23 weightlifters. The findings indicated that compared to less experienced bodybuilders, experienced bodybuilders depend more on their workouts. The study also found that males start bodybuilding to minimize their feelings of bad body image, and that experienced bodybuilders and weightlifters had lower SPA than inexperienced ones. Sicilia (2014) investigated the association between exercise desire and social anxiety about one's physique in adolescents. The sample comprised 398 students aged 12 to 19. The study's findings show that the demand for competence is adversely connected with SPA, whereas gender and BMI also predict SPA. The study discovered that introjected regulation, a sort of motivation in which someone acts when they feel internal pressure or guilt, is positively related.

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The link between self-efficacy and social physique anxiety has been documented in numerous studies. Thakur, M.B., and Joshi.N. (2016) did a study to examine the relationship between women who exercise and women who lead sedentary lifestyles and don't engage in any exercise-related activities in terms of self-efficacy and social anxiety connected to physical appearance. The sample consisted of 60 volunteers (30 who engaged in physical activity and 30 who had sedentary lifestyles) aged 24-35. The results showed that women who exercise in some capacity have higher levels of self-efficacy., whereas women who lead sedentary lifestyles have a lower feeling of self-efficacy and have high social body anxiety. Rothberger (2015) carried out research on the connection between college students' self-efficacy, gender, and social body anxiety. There were 237 students in the sample (99 males and 139 females) who engaged in physical exercise. In this study, the physical self-efficacy and social physique anxiety scores were employed. The study's conclusions showed a negative correlation between self-efficacy and SPA, with students who had higher levels of SPA having lower levels of the former. To examine resilience and life satisfaction as indicators of self-efficacy and assess the correlation between self-efficacy resilience and life satisfaction, Tagay et al. (2016) discovered a relationship between self-efficacy and life satisfaction. The sample includes 310 middle-aged adults, with 195 females and 115 males. The results of the study showed a favourable correlation between resilience, self-belief, and general life satisfaction. Additionally, a strong relationship was found between resilience, life satisfaction, and general self-efficacy. Çakar, F.M (2012) examined the link between life fulfilment and self-worth in young adults. The sample size was 405 young adults (224 females and 181 males). The outcomes of the study showed that raising young people's self-efficacy can significantly affect their happiness with life and general well-being.

METHODOLOGY

Aim: To study the impact of social physique anxiety on self-efficacy and life satisfaction among young adults.

Objectives:

- The purpose of the study is to explore the gender differences in social physique anxiety, self-efficacy and life satisfaction among young adults.
- The purpose of the study is to find relationship between social physique anxiety and self-efficacy.
- The purpose of the study is to find the relationship between social physique anxiety and life satisfaction.
- The purpose of the study is to assess the impact of social physique anxiety on self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

Hypotheses:

- **H1-** There will be significant gender difference in social physique anxiety, self-efficacy and life satisfaction.
- **H2-** There will be relationship between social physique anxiety and self-efficacy among young adults.
- **H3-** There will be relationship between social physique anxiety and life satisfaction among young adults.
- **H4-** Social physique anxiety will be a predictor of self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

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Sample

For the study, 200 young adults were chosen as a sample. Out of 200 participants, 50% were male and 50% were female, with the age range of 18 to 25 making up the majority of each gender.

Tools Description:

- Social Physique Anxiety Scale:** The tool used is a 12-item questionnaire that was created in 1989 by Hart, Leary, and Rejaski to assess social physique anxiety, or the worry that one's physical appearance will be negatively evaluated. A five-point scale was used by participants to indicate their answers. Reverse score has been applied to the positively worded items in the questionnaire due to its negative phrasing. (1, 2, 5, 8, 11). Higher scores correspond to higher levels of SPA; the score range is of 12-60. It has a high internal and test-retest reliability.
- Generalized Self Efficacy Scale:** This is ten-item measure gauges a person's belief in their own capacity to respond appropriately to novel or difficult circumstances and to overcome any hurdles or disappointments that may occur. Each item on the self-administered questionnaire has four possible answers, ranging from "not at all true" (score 1) to "exactly true" (score 4). The individual scores are then added to generate a total score. The scale's internal consistency is demonstrated by its Cronbach alpha values, which range from .76 to .90.
- Satisfaction with life scale:** A five-item survey, in 1985 to gauge respondents' overall cognitive assessments of life satisfaction. Participants were asked to rate their answers on a scale based on seven points, where 7 signifies great agreement and 1 represents significant disagreement. Higher numbers on the overall score, which ranges from 5 to 35, indicate greater life satisfaction. Cronbach alpha yielded a reliability value of .84 for the scale.

RESULT ANALYSIS

Table 1

Group Statistics										
Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean						
SPA	Male	100	34.750	11.4101	1.1410					
	Female	100	36.860	9.2037	.9204					
SE	Male	100	29.720	7.2126	.7213					
	Female	100	29.240	6.8137	.6814					
LS	Male	100	21.550	7.0070	.7007					
	Female	100	22.660	6.6214	.6621					

Independent Samples Test										
		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
SPA	Equal variances assumed	7.694	.006	-1.439	198	.152	-2.1100	1.4659	-5.0009	.7809
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.439	189.511	.152	-2.1100	1.4659	-5.0016	.7816
SE	Equal variances assumed	.441	.507	.484	198	.629	.4800	.9922	-1.4767	2.4367
	Equal variances not assumed			.484	197.363	.629	.4800	.9922	-1.4767	2.4367
LS	Equal variances assumed	.283	.595	-1.151	198	.251	-1.1100	.9641	-3.0111	.7911
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.151	197.369	.251	-1.1100	.9641	-3.0112	.7912

In the Levene's tests, the F value (7.694) is more than the significance value (0.006), showing uneven variances. The calculated t-value (-1.439) with a p-value of 0.152 indicates

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no significant gender differences. For self-efficacy, Levene's test yields a F value (0.441) less than the significance value (0.507), showing equal variances. The t value (.484) and p value (.629) indicate no significant gender difference. In the case of life satisfaction, the F value (.283) in Levene's test is lower than the significance value (.595), showing equal variances. The t-value (-1.151) and p-value (.251) indicate no significant gender difference.

Table 2

Dependent Variable	Social Physique Anxiety	N
Pearson's correlation with Self Efficacy	-0.648	200
Pearson's Correlation with Life satisfaction	-0.505	200

This represents correlation of social physique anxiety with self-efficacy. The findings show that there is significant negative correlation between social physique anxiety and self-efficacy among young adults. ($r = -.648$), which means our hypothesis 2 is accepted. The second findings show a significant negative relationship between social physique anxiety and life satisfaction. ($r = -0.505$). This means our third hypothesis is also accepted.

Table 3

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.648 ^a	.420	.417	5.3481

a. Predictors: (Constant), SPA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4094.783	1	4094.783	143.166	.000 ^b
	Residual	5663.137	198	28.602		
	Total	9757.920	199			

a. Dependent Variable: SE
b. Predictors: (Constant), SPA

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	45.107	1.360		33.175	.000
	SPA	-.436	.036	-.648	-11.965	.000

a. Dependent Variable: SE

The other objective of the study is to find out if social physique anxiety predicts self-efficacy and life satisfaction, independent variable social physique anxiety and life satisfaction. The model approximated for 42% variability which is denoted by (R square=.420). This signifies that SPA contributes in explaining the variability of dependent variable, indicating the importance of SPA as a predictor. In this table, we can see that the F value is 143.166, which reveals that SPA contributes in explaining the variable self-efficacy. Here the constant value is of self-efficacy. If social physique anxiety score increases by one score then the score of self-efficacy will decrease by .436.

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Table 4

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.505 ^a	.255	.251	5.9047	

a. Predictors: (Constant), SPA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2359.427	1	2359.427	67.672	.000 ^b
	Residual	6903.368	198	34.865		
	Total	9262.795	199			

a. Dependent Variable: LS
b. Predictors: (Constant), SPA

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	33.967	1.501		22.627	.000
	SPA	-.331	.040	-.505	-8.226	.000

The objective also states that social physique anxiety will be able to predict life satisfaction as well, the above table reveals the R square value of .255 which means that SPA approximately predicts 25.5% variability. This suggests a moderate level of predictability. The f value was of 67.672, indicating that variable SPA, predicts the dependent variable LS. Here the constant value is of life satisfaction. If the social physique anxiety increases by one unit, then life satisfaction decreases by .331. This means hypothesis 4 is also accepted.

DISCUSSION

Given the increased pressures placed on physical appearance in today's world, especially due to the influence of social media, SPA is important. The perception of beauty standards is greatly influenced by social media and societal norms, which may have an impact on an individual's efficacy and level of satisfaction with their life and self.

Prior research has also examined the connection between self-efficacy and social anxiety related to physical appearance (Thakur, M.B & Joshi, 2016). Examining the impact of social anxiety about their bodies on young adults' self-efficacy and life satisfaction was the aim of this study. Each variable was carefully evaluated in order to study the link. A sample of 200 young adults, ages 18 to 25, was selected for this study. Questionnaires that were selected for the particular study were three standardised test which were as follows, for measuring social physique anxiety, social physique anxiety scale by Heart, Leary and Rejaski was chosen, for measuring self-efficacy, general self-efficacy scale was chosen and for measuring fulfilment with life, satisfaction with life scale was chosen.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to interpret the study's results. The effect of gender variations on life satisfaction, self-efficacy, and social anxiety regarding one's body was examined using a T test. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to look at the relationship between social body anxiety, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy in young people. The data was then subjected to multiple regression analysis to ascertain the extent to which social physique anxiety in young people predicts their level of life contentment and self-efficacy.

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Our research produced a number of insights. Firstly, the t-value of -1.439 ($p = 0.152$) indicates that there were no gender differences in SPA that were statistically significant. Similarly, self-efficacy showed no significant gender differences (t-value = 0.484, $p = 0.629$). Furthermore, a t-value of -1.151 ($p = 0.251$) indicated that there were no statistically significant gender differences in life satisfaction. These results suggest that among the young adults in our sample, gender has no effect on the variables of SPA, self-efficacy, and life satisfaction. Additionally, the findings demonstrated a significant inverse relationship between SPA and life satisfaction ($r = -0.648$, $p < 0.01$) and between SPA and self-efficacy ($r = -0.505$, $p < 0.01$). These findings imply that among young individuals, higher levels of SPA are linked to decreased life satisfaction and lower levels of self-efficacy. Moreover, our study showed that among young individuals, SPA is a predictor of life satisfaction and self-efficacy. More precisely, it was discovered that greater SPA levels were associated with decreased life satisfaction ($\beta = -0.331$, $p < 0.001$) and lower levels of self-efficacy ($\beta = -0.436$, $p < 0.001$). These results highlight the negative effects of SPA on young adults' psychological health and stress the significance of focused therapies meant to treat SPA in order to improve self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

The lack of substantial gender differences in social physique anxiety (SPA), self-efficacy, and life satisfaction highlights the universal nature of psychological variables among young people, according to these studies. A study by Rotherberger, 2015 has also showed lack of statistical differences in males and females. This highlights the significance of tackling these problems comprehensively in mental health therapies, irrespective of a person's gender. Moreover, the noteworthy negative associations observed between self-efficacy and life satisfaction, this was also observed in other researchers such as a study by Koparan, 2010 highlighted negative association between SPA and self-efficacy. This highlights the detrimental impact of SPA on the psychological health of young adults. This highlights the necessity of focused therapies meant to reduce SPA and foster a healthy body image and sense of self-worth. All things considered, these results highlight how crucial it is to treat social body anxiety in order to support young adults' general psychological health as they face the difficulties of transitioning into adulthood.

CONCLUSION

This study offers insight on the complex relationships between social physique anxiety (SPA), self-efficacy, and life satisfaction in young adults. The absence of significant gender variations in life satisfaction, self-efficacy, and SPA emphasises how gender-neutral these psychological constructs are in this age range. Furthermore, the strong negative associations found between SPA and life satisfaction and self-efficacy highlight the adverse effects of SPA on the psychological health of young adults. The significance of focused interventions meant to address SPA-related issues and promote positive body image and self-esteem is highlighted by the finding that SPA is a predictor of both self-efficacy and life satisfaction. Going forward, it is critical to provide top priority to therapies that successfully address SPA in order to improve young people' self-efficacy and life satisfaction. Interventions can support young people' resilience and general health during this critical developmental stage by addressing SPA and fostering positive psychological well-being.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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