

## Celebrity Culture and Body Image Issues in Teenage Girls

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### ABSTRACT

Fame isn't just for adults anymore it sticks close to teens now, mainly because phones light up with stars every day. Screens glow with faces shaped by cameras, clothes picked by stylists, lives edited before they're seen. Girls in their mid-teens often absorb these looks like sponges, mistaking fiction for goals worth chasing. Too thin is praised too loud; clear skin feels mandatory softness turned into performance. Feeling bad about mirrors becomes common self-worth dips when images repeat without pause. When bodies feel judged first, confidence tends to shrink instead of grow. One idea says being watched changes how you see yourself from inside out. Another argues people measure themselves against others, pixel by pixel, feature by feature. Followings built around stars can act like emotional attachments, blurring real from fantasy. The more time spent staring at perfected photos, the stronger the pull toward imitation grows. Wanting cheekbones like a singer or waistlines like influencers shows where attention lands. Studies point here: deep obsession with famous figures links closely to unease in one's own skin. Often, what shows up on screens looks nothing like real life airbrushed, tweaked, shaped by tools. Because of this, young minds start measuring themselves against something that cannot be reached. When someone tends toward worry, feels unsure about their value, or constantly sizes themselves up next to others, the impact hits harder. Friend approval matters more at certain ages, growing sense of self ties closely to online presence, time spent scrolling feeds adds pressure without saying a word. Missing pieces stand out when looking at studies done so far - especially those ignoring how things play out in India's unique mix of traditions and modern shifts. Solutions must fit the culture they aim to help, teach people how to question what they see, strengthen inner confidence early. Seeing clearly how fame-driven images shape teen years opens paths to better views of self, stops deeper emotional harm before it takes root.

**Keywords:** *Body dissatisfaction, Celebrity culture, Celebrity worship, Media influence, Teenage girls*

Growing up means trying on different versions of yourself, feeling every glance like it matters. For many young women, how they look ties closely to who they feel they are. These days, famous faces set the standard what counts as beautiful, feminine, worthy of attention. Screens at home, online spaces, glossy pages they're filled with images that seem perfect. Pop stars, actors, influencers appear as if they've got it all figured out.

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Thin, fit, young figures show up again and again in ads and magazines as what women should look like (Kalender, 2018). Seeing these images over time leads many girls to measure their own looks against them. When people lack clear ways to judge themselves, they tend to size things up by looking at others - this idea comes from Festinger's work in 1954. Celebrities become the go-to example for teens trying to figure out where they stand.

Objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) further explains that constant exposure to sexualized and appearance focused portrayals leads girls to internalize an observer's perspective of their own bodies. They begin to monitor their appearance critically, resulting in body shame and anxiety. Research shows that even brief exposure to thin-ideal images can significantly reduce body satisfaction (Hawkins et al., 2004).

they scroll, tap, copy. Because apps show constant updates, famous faces feel closer than ever. Following someone can slowly shape how a person sees themselves. Likes and shared posts build silent pressure to look or act a certain way. Over time, mimicry slips into daily choices without notice.

### ***Significance of the Study***

A closer look at today's teens shows rising struggles with how they see their bodies, especially for young women. Because of constant images showing only one narrow type of thin beauty, many start seeing themselves differently than they really are. When that happens, it often leads to serious issues like extreme dieting, deep sadness, or ongoing worry. Some even face dangerous habits around food, including illnesses like anorexia or bulimia. Research from 2018 by Kalender points straight to media influence as a key driver behind these harmful patterns.

Folks aren't just casually watching stars anymore - there's data now showing it's something deeper. When teens fixate hard on famous people, those feelings often shape how they see themselves, especially looks. Instead of just liking someone on screen, they start measuring their own bodies against them. Turns out, idolizing isn't harmless fun - it quietly shifts thoughts and moods in noticeable ways.

Picture this: the teen years shape who you become. At this age, fitting in feels like everything. Pop culture links being slim and looking good to getting noticed and admired - like how you look decides your place in the group. Over time, those messages stick.

Now picture India, where global trends meet homegrown looks thanks to screens and borders fading. Yet not many studies zoom in on how teen girls there are actually affected. Seeing these shifts up close might shape smarter ways to support them - rooted in real life, not assumptions.

### ***Objectives***

- To examine the relationship between celebrity culture and body image dissatisfaction among teenage girls.
- To explore psychological mechanisms (social comparison, objectification, celebrity worship) that mediate this relationship.
- To identify gaps in existing literature and suggest culturally relevant interventions.

### *Rationale*

Body image worries and eating issues are growing more common in teen girls, which brings attention to outside pressures like famous people. Though genes and personal thoughts matter too, what shows up on screens often sets strict looks rules everyone sees. Looking through past studies helps see how stars quietly shift how young females view themselves. Ideas about beauty pushed by fame can wear down confidence in unpredictable ways. What gets shared by well-known figures may sneak into private beliefs without notice. Seeing thinness praised everywhere might make normal changes feel wrong. Feelings of not being enough sometimes grow where spotlight stays longest. Even casual posts might carry weight heavier than intended. A smile on a magazine cover could echo louder than words spoken at home. Pressures form slowly when flawless images repeat day after day.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### *Overview of Literature Review*

A look at recent writings shows a pattern forming around how young women in India see themselves when faced with famous figures. Though not always obvious, feelings about appearance often shift after repeated exposure to media stars. Instead of admiration staying harmless, it sometimes turns into deeper unease about one's own body. What begins as interest can grow into comparison, then self-doubt. Attention has started turning toward why that happens inside the mind. One idea gaining ground involves emotional imitation - copying what celebrities express without realizing it. Another angle explores how daily habits shape thoughts over time through small unseen changes. The connection between idolizing public personalities and discomfort with looks is becoming clearer. Not every teenager reacts the same way, yet trends suggest many follow similar paths. Inside this space, certain mental routines appear again and again. Seeing fame too closely tied to beauty might quietly reshape personal standards. Even brief moments spent viewing images add up across weeks. Awareness grows slowly, built from scattered observations rather than sudden insight.

On screens big and small, teens see famous faces nonstop - particularly young women scrolling past stars on phones each day. Flickering across apps like Instagram or YouTube, these figures glow with polished looks that seem flawless up close. Beauty standards shift when magazine covers spotlight slim waistlines beside viral TikTok dancers doing the same. Magazine ads whisper unspoken rules while movie leads strut in outfits meant to dazzle eyes. Social media feeds flood with filtered smiles, shaping how some girls view their own reflection. Actors on TV shows wear confidence like clothing, stitched tightly into storylines where appearance matters most. Online videos parade perfect skin tones, airbrushed cheeks glowing under studio lights. These images pile up quietly, building a narrow idea of what it means to look right. Celebrities beam from billboards with bodies shaped by stylists, trainers, and editing tools unseen. What gets shown again and again begins to feel normal, even if it isn't real.

Nowadays, social media keeps young people constantly near famous faces and flawless looks. Because teenage girls are still figuring out who they are, those images can stick deep. Looking back at older research shows how liking a star slowly grows into obsession. That shift shapes how girls see their bodies, sometimes tipping mental health off balance.

### *Variables of the Present Study*

The present study includes the following variables:

### **Independent Variable: Celebrity Worship**

Celebrity worship refers to excessive admiration, emotional attachment, and obsessive interest in celebrities. It goes beyond normal admiration and may influence an individual's thoughts, emotions, and behavior (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002).

### **Dependent Variable: Body Image Issues**

Body image issues include negative perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about one's physical appearance. These issues may involve body dissatisfaction, appearance anxiety, low self-esteem, and constant concern about body shape, weight, and facial features (Cash, 2004).

The study aims to examine how celebrity worship contributes to the development of body image issues among teenage girls in India.

### **Celebrity Worship Explained**

Some people feel deep connections to stars, drawn in by their public images. Moving beyond casual interest, certain fans start building emotional ties that shape how they see themselves. One study found these feelings exist along a spectrum - starting with light curiosity about movie figures or musicians. Sometimes conversations about fame shift into something deeper, turning admiration into reliance on distant icons. At its most extreme point, fixation emerges, blurring lines between fantasy and daily life. Obsessive patterns can take hold, where thoughts of a celebrity dominate routines without real interaction ever taking place.

Looking up to famous people comes naturally for teens chasing ideals of looks, fame, or how life should be lived. Girls during teenage years feel a stronger pull toward those who match society's narrow image of attractiveness. Over time, that respect can deepen into something more intense - almost like devotion - when young minds begin measuring themselves against these stars. Copying outfits, makeup, even mannerisms creeps in once comparisons take root.

Starting off, (Maltby 2005) noticed something clear when people fixated on celebrities too much, their emotional state often suffered - nervousness crept in, confidence dipped, plus they felt let down by how things turned out in daily living. Because of patterns like these, it looks less surprising that teens caught up in constant idolizing might face tougher times inside their own minds.

### **How Body Image Forms in Teen Years**

How people see themselves shapes how they relate to their own bodies. (Cash 2004) that view isn't just visual - it includes thoughts, emotions, and actions too. Feeling okay in your skin often means being at peace with how you look. On the flip side, struggling with appearance can bring ongoing discomfort and self-doubt.

Body image takes shape strongly in teenage years because of fast physical shifts tied to growing up. During this time, young females tend to notice their bodies more, reacting closely to what others say about looks - comments from friends, parents, or images seen online and on screens.

Fragile views of one's appearance often tie into struggles like poor confidence, sadness, constant worry, disordered eating, or pulling away from others. Because of this, spotting what shapes how teens see their bodies matters deeply.

### **Celebrity Worship and Body Image Connection**

Beyond a few research efforts, connections emerged linking obsession with famous figures to unease about one's look. Maltby (2005) team noticed people fixated on celebrities often felt worse about how they appeared. Teenagers showed this pattern more sharply than others.

A study by (Tiggemann and Slater 2014) looked at how seeing celebrities on social platforms affects teens. Teenage girls who kept up with famous people online often felt worse about their looks. Following these figures tied strongly to worries about appearance. Instead of feeling inspired, many compared themselves and ended up uneasy. That sense of measuring up played a big role in shaping those negative feelings.

Young women who embrace celebrity looks tend to feel worse about their bodies, according to Swami and team in 2011. Because of this link, admiration for stars might quietly shift how teens see themselves physically.

### **Social Media Shapes How Celebrities Affect Public Opinion**

Now picture this: celebrities seem closer than ever because social media never stops showing polished snapshots of their lives. With apps such as Instagram putting pictures first, people find themselves measuring looks far more often - almost without noticing.

Fardouly et al. (2015) and her team noticed something scrolling through looks-heavy posts often left young women feeling worse about their bodies. When teens spend time staring at famous faces online, they tend to measure up against ideals that aren't real, which quietly chips away at how they see themselves.

A growing number of teens in India now carry smartphones, which ties their daily habits more closely to celebrity culture. Because of this shift, time spent online quietly shapes how they see themselves physically social platforms aren't just apps, they're mirrors slowly changing perception.

### **Theoretical Framework (Festinger, 1954)**

Social comparison theory people evaluate themselves by comparing to others

When kids hit their teenage years, they start measuring their worth against people around them. Instead of looking at peers, many fixate on stars glowing in perfect light on screens. A theory about how humans judge themselves kicks in hard here. Those glossy images shape what teens think is beautiful. Growing up means constantly sizing yourself next to someone else - often someone unreachable.

Most teenage girls measure themselves against famous people, looking at things like face shape or skin color. Because of this habit, they might start feeling bad about how they look. Watching stars too closely plays a role here - comparison creeps in without notice. That ongoing mental match-up shifts how a girl sees herself over time.

### **Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997)**

Objectification Theory explains how women are socialized to view their bodies from an external observer's perspective. Media representations of celebrities often focus on physical appearance, encouraging girls to self-objectify.

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Teenage girls may begin to monitor their appearance excessively, leading to body shame and anxiety. Celebrity worship reinforces this process by promoting the idea that physical attractiveness determines social value.

### **Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 1998)**

Cultivation Theory proposes that long-term exposure to media content shapes individuals' perceptions of reality. Continuous exposure to idealized celebrity images cultivates unrealistic beauty standards.

For teenage girls, repeated exposure may lead to the belief that such appearances are normal and achievable, resulting in dissatisfaction when personal appearance does not match these standards.

### **Tripartite Influence Model (Thompson et al., 1999)**

The Tripartite Influence Model suggests that **media, peers, and parents** influence body image through social comparison and internalization of beauty ideals.

Celebrities act as powerful media figures who promote thinness and attractiveness as desirable traits. Teenage girls internalize these ideals, leading to increased body dissatisfaction.

### **Celebrity culture and body image in India**

Beauty ideals in India often come from movie stars, especially those in Bollywood. Films there usually highlight light skin, thin figures, and certain looks as best. As global trends spread through online platforms, young people in India are also being shaped by outside norms. Social media growth has brought more exposure to styles rooted elsewhere.

Most city teens in India feel unhappy with how they look, research shows. Not just magazines but online posts now push narrow ideas about beauty. Filtered photos spread fast, making stars seem flawless. Instead of real skin tones, ads sell lightening products heavily. Fame plus glossy campaigns set tough standards to match.

Truth is, Indian teens see very few faces like theirs on screens. While real life shows many shapes, colors, sizes TV and ads stick to one mold. That gap? It tugs at how some girls view themselves. Feelings of not fitting in creep in quietly. Curiously, not much has been dug into about fame obsession and self-image here. Especially for young Indians. So, looking closer feels less like choice, more like catching up.

Young women in India often feel caught between old customs and new ideas about how they should look. Pushed by famous faces on screens, many start feeling uneasy about their bodies. Not every mind sees things the same way, yet few studies have looked into how deeply these icons affect teens' self-view. This gap shows why a closer look becomes necessary now.

### **Research Gaps**

Even though lots of research ties media use to feeling bad about your body, not many look closely at how fame itself plays a role apart from broader media effects. What people call star obsession, one-sided fan bonds, or following online personalities shows new patterns worth exploring more fully.

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Focusing elsewhere, much of the research centers on Western societies. Little data exists about Indian adolescents even though platforms spread worldwide fame more now. Depending on local norms and parental guidance, reactions might shift in different settings. Few studies follow people over time. Since most work captures just a single moment, drawing cause-and-effect conclusions gets tricky. Seeing how steady contact with famous figures plays out across years might finally make things clearer.

Last thing first - media smarts, how parents guide kids online, plus campaigns that celebrate real bodies need deeper study. Most studies zoom in on dangers while skipping what helps people bounce back. These examples? Mainly city folks, heavy on India's largest hubs.

Even though global research has looked closely at how fame obsession affects views of physical appearance, there is little data from India, especially about young females in their teens. In addition, scarce attention has been paid to the mental processes linking idol admiration to self-perception of one's shape or size. This work seeks to fill those missing pieces.

### *Eating Disorders Linked to Media Beauty Ideals*

Young people in India often face shifting expectations about how bodies should look. Images from Korean pop culture, American stars, online personalities swirl together on screens every day. These pictures tend to highlight slim frames, perfect skin, uniform shapes - over and over again. As girls grow through adolescence, their bodies change naturally, yet what they see online rarely reflects such reality. Seeing these repeated messages may twist how some view themselves. Meals might start feeling like tests instead of nourishment. Reflections in mirrors carry heavier weight than before. Pressures build quietly, without clear warning signs. Unbalanced eating habits sometimes follow. Not every teen reacts the same way - but many feel the pull.

Famous singers and actors from Korea catch attention just as much for their skills as they do for how thin they appear, with rigid meal plans spread across the internet like quiet rules everyone should follow. Behind these images lies a quiet pressure - hunger framed as discipline, restraint turned into virtue. To fit in, some young girls in India start seeing regular meals as too much, even risky. Breakfast gets skipped. Fruits or bread might vanish from plates. Quick fixes, copied from stars, replace real nourishment without anyone naming what's lost. Thin frames become proof of worth, silently whispering: if you want to matter, shrink.

Looking at others online makes things worse. Staring at perfect-looking celebrities - often changed by filters - leaves people unhappy with how they look. Teenage girls who think they fall short might turn to food as a way to take charge of their bodies. Over time, that mix of frustration and desire to control can twist eating habits. What someone eats shifts away from hunger or well-being, shaped instead by worry, shame, and fear.

Too much pressure to look a certain way can spark serious eating problems. When young girls become terrified of putting on weight, they might eat very little yet still see fat in the mirror - even if they are already thin. Praise in ads or shows for being ultra-slim makes that mindset stronger. Some start bingeing then undoing it - forcing sickness, skipping meals, moving nonstop - caught in a loop driven by hunger and dread. This pattern often grows when wanting food feels wrong but starving feels worse. Food sometimes becomes a way to handle tough feelings when diets fail again and again, leading to cycles of overeating then

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deep regret. What begins as care about health may twist into something stricter, driven by images online showing perfect meals. Rules around eating grow tighter until breaking them feels like failure. Fear slips in each time a person eats outside their strict plan, even if the meal seems normal to others. This need for purity in what they eat starts quietly but takes up more space over time.

Inside, such conditions grow stronger when images from magazines or screens shape what feels beautiful. Thinness, once seen as success, turns into a scorecard teens use to judge themselves. Missing that mark brings constant disappointment about how they look. For some young people, deciding exactly what to eat slowly acts like an answer - to school demands, tough emotions, or just feeling not enough. Platforms online pour fuel on this pattern - praise, hearts, upbeat notes follow shrinking bodies, linking slimness tightly to being noticed.

Across India, culture quietly shapes how people see themselves. Old ways of eating meet outside pressures in uneasy ways. Bodies that differ from worldwide trends sometimes face unfair judgments. Fuller figures or deeper skin shades might draw criticism without warning. Shame about meals and looks grows when local habits clash with faraway images. Teenage girls feel pressure where traditions meet screens. Eating troubles rise when familiar foods seem less valuable than foreign ones.

When teens see only one narrow type of beauty on screen - often too thin, always polished - it quietly warps how they view themselves. From K-pop idols to global fashion trends, the message slips in: eat less, be smaller, change your shape. These images aren't harmless entertainment. They feed silent comparisons, day after day. Over time, that pressure can twist meals into battles and mirrors into enemies. Not every girl reacts the same way. Still, many begin skipping food or obsessing over weight without realizing why. What helps isn't more rules about eating. It's learning to question what media sells as "normal." Schools might open talks, parents might listen closer, counselors could step in before pain turns inward. Real progress means seeing worth beyond waistlines - and showing it, again and again, in stories, homes, classrooms. Healing starts when being healthy matters more than looking perfect.

### **DISCUSSION**

When teens look at famous people, they sometimes measure themselves by those images. Upward glances toward polished stars tend to stir unease. Seeing flawless looks day after day chips away at self-view. What feels normal shifts when perfection dominates screens. Comparing oneself to unreachable ideals often ends in disappointment. Rarely do real bodies match airbrushed versions on display.

When girls see lots of media, they start seeing themselves through someone else's eyes. That outside look turns into constant self-checking. Shame often follows close behind.

Admiring a famous person too much can blur the line between fan and self. Once feelings get involved, wanting to look like them grows stronger. Sometimes that leads to skipping meals, working out nonstop, trying strange beauty fixes, or changing how the body looks in extreme ways.

Scrolling online puts polished star photos just a tap away, feeding endless comparison. Real talk with famous faces happens now, not later, making one-sided bonds feel stronger. What

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shows up next leans on what you saw before, looping back to flawless looks again. Over time, the feed narrows without warning - same glow, same shape, same shine.

Still, new efforts that celebrate diverse bodies seem to shift how people see beauty. While some question lasting change, projects such as Dove's "Real Beauty Campaign" aim at broadening what is considered attractive. Their true effect over time? Unclear.

### *Key Findings*

Seeing perfect-looking celebrities again and again tends to make teen girls feel worse about their own bodies.

When people fixate heavily on celebrities, their view of their own body often worsens. A strong obsession tends to go hand in hand with wanting to be thinner. With deep admiration for famous figures comes less satisfaction in one's appearance. Greater fixation links to increased pressure felt about slimness. Seeing stars as ideals can dim how someone sees their physical self. The more intense the fan behavior, the stronger the wish to lose weight appears.

Folks start sizing themselves up when fame puts looks on display. What shows up in magazines shapes how people see their own reflection. Seeing stars everywhere twists personal views of beauty. Public images turn private thoughts into a contest. When glamour becomes routine, bodies become scores. Media spotlight shifts self-worth toward appearance. Being watched feels normal only after constant exposure. Worth gets tied to shape because screens say so.

Personality traits such as neuroticism increase vulnerability.

Few studies have looked at India through real-world observation. A lack of local data still slows progress.

### *Future Implications*

- Implementation of media literacy programs in schools.
- Development of culturally sensitive body image interventions in India.
- Longitudinal research on celebrity worship and adolescent mental health.
- Promotion of diverse and realistic body representation in media.

## **CONCLUSION**

Seeing celebrities shapes how teen girls see their bodies. Because they compare themselves, many feel they fall short. When looks are treated like performance, self-worth often drops. Some connect emotionally to stars, which deepens the effect. Images aren't the only cause - timing matters too. Who a girl is inside changes how she reacts. Growing up brings sensitivities that make certain messages stick.

Starting with teachers and moms alike, tackling how teens see their bodies needs many hands on deck. When kids learn to question what they watch and scroll through, room opens up for more kinds of beauty to matter. Outlets that shape trends hold weight, true, but change grows where people challenge narrow images. Seeing stars as flawless does damage, yet communities pushing back help soften the blow. Growth during youth thrives when worth isn't tied to looks dished out by glossy feeds.

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