

## **A Comparative Study of Body Image and Self Esteem**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The review of present research on the relationship between body image and self esteem among adolescence boys and girls. The study was carried out in the schools of Chandigarh on a sample of 100 adolescents (50 Males + 50 Females) from Schools were randomly selected. The tools used in the investigation were the socio-personal profile developed by the investigator, The Body Image Satisfaction and Roosenberg Self Esteem scale. The finding revealed irrespective of caste and religion. Girls were found to have more body image satisfaction as compare to where as a highly significant positive correlation between body image and self esteem of boys and girls.

**Key Words :** Body image, Self esteem

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Body image:**

Body image is a person's perception of the aesthetics or sexual attractiveness of their own body. The phrase body image was first coined by the Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst. Human society has at all times placed great value on beauty of the human body, but a person's perception of their own body may not correspond to society's standards. It is a multidimensional construct consisting of perceptual, cognitive, affective, and behavioural elements (Wertheim and Paxton, 2011). Muth and Cash (1997) conceptualized body image in two self-evaluative ways including satisfaction or dissatisfaction with one's physical attributes and experience of discrete emotions. The concept of body image as a psychological phenomenon was initially established in 1935, by the Austrian psychiatrist Paul Ferdinand Schilder (1886-1940), who said that the mental images that individuals have of their own bodies explain the way their bodies are introduced to them. Body image can have a wide range of psychological effects and physical effects. Throughout history, it has been extremely difficult for people to live up to the standards of society and what they believe the ideal body is. There are many factors that lead to a

person's body image, some of these include: family dynamics, mental illness, biological predispositions and environmental causes for obesity or malnutrition, and cultural expectations (e.g., media and politics). People who are both underweight and overweight can have poor body image. However, because people are constantly told and shown the cosmetic appeal of weight loss and are warned about the risks of obesity, those who are normal or overweight on the BMI scale have higher risks of poor body image. This is something that can lead to a change in a person's body image. Often, people who have a low body image will try to alter their bodies in some way, such as by dieting or undergoing cosmetic surgery. Hatami (2015), body image perception plays an important role in managing of body weight among adolescents and also mentioned that body image perception is influenced by peers, parents, media, socioeconomic status, and sex and body weight. Body image perceptions related to the cultural aspects of a society.

#### **Body image can be of 2 types:**

##### ***Positive body image:***

A positive body image feeling happy and satisfied about your body, as well as accepting the way you look. It involves understanding that healthy bodies come in many

shapes and sizes and that physical appearance don't say anything about your character.

### **Negative body image:**

A negative body image is being unhappy with the way you look .it is associated with wanting to change your body size. People with negative body image tend to feel that their size /shape is a sign of personal failure.

### **Self esteem:**

Rosenberg (Owens *et al.*, 2001), conceptualizes self esteem towards the positive dimension. According to him, those individuals who have high self- esteem are keen for personal growth and physical development. They try to enhance personal growth by using their capabilities. During adolescence self-perception about their appearance is important to the development of self-esteem. Physical changes during puberty may cause them to have both positive and negative feelings towards their body which in turn affects their self esteem.

The concept of self-esteem is the realm of emotions as a socially built emotion representing perceptions and feelings about individuals' various self-images and self concepts which are based upon the psychosomatic need for the aspiration of authentic and efficacious functioning, belonging and acceptance within one's social group, achievement and competence in contrast to other members of individuals' group (Bruno and Njoku, 2014). The low self-esteem signs include: feeling incompetent, worthless, exaggerated perfectionism and unrealistic about our abilities, being overwhelmed with fear and negative thoughts, feeling unloved, fear of change, being unrealistic about. Adolescence is an important period for forming views about oneself and socio-cultural ideals. Poor self-esteem may cause eating disorders and finally lead to body image dissatisfaction (Lawrence and Thelen, 1995).

The individuals who report higher degree of body dissatisfaction and dieting also showed inferior self-esteem (Lawrence *et al.*, 2005).

According to Erickson's theory, issues of self worth become prominent in adolescence when The major developmental task is to establish identity and coherent sense of self (Seligman, 2006). The self image perception among the adolescent girls and the aim is to see the physical activity status of adolescent girls and to know their body image perception.

### **Objectives:**

- 1) To find the difference in body image satisfaction among male and female adolescents.
- 2) To find the difference in level of self-esteem among male and female adolescents.
- 3) To study the inter-correlation among different variables.

### **Significance of the study:**

Physical development during adolescence plays a role in the emotional and social development of an adolescent and has an effect on their body image satisfaction. Girls are usually encouraged to look pretty at a very early age to enhance their self-worth and boys on the other hand are encouraged to be strong. Body image dissatisfaction is associated with poor self-esteem, eating disorders, obsessive thinking about ones weight and appearance, onset of poor life style such as smoking and drinking and many more social problems.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A comprehensive study was conducted in the selected Private School of Chandigarh (UT). A list of all Schools of Chandigarh was obtained. From this list, 1 School was selected randomly. From school, 50 Males and 50 Females were selected randomly irrespective of their caste, creed, economic status and ordinal position.

### **Psychological tool used:**

#### ***Body image satisfaction scale:***

A newly developed 17-item Likert scale with items based on a four-point scale ranging from never (0 point) to always (3 points) and took about ten minutes to complete it. This scale was developed by the school committee and some questions in this scale looked like; "I am proud of my body", "My weight makes me feel unhappy", and "I feel ashamed of how I look".

#### ***Rosenberg self-esteem scale:***

Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES), developed by sociologist. Dr. Morris Rosenberg is a self-esteem measure widely used in social-science research.

The RSES is designed similar to social-survey questionnaires. It is a en-item Likert type scale with items answered on a four-point scale—from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Five of the items have positively worded statements and five have negatively worded ones. The scale measures state self-esteem by asking the

respondents to reflect on their current feelings.

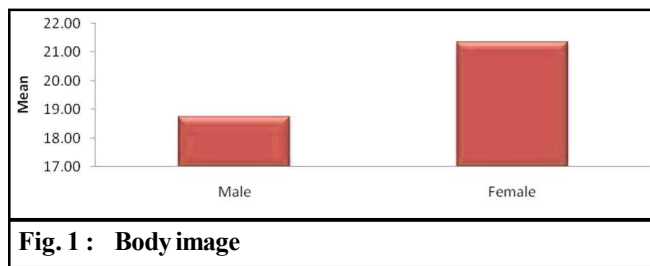
**Statistical analysis:**

The data was analyzed. To find out the difference in mean scores of various variables in males and females, t-test was used. Karl Pearson’s Coefficient of Correlation was applied to find out inter correlation among various variables of the study.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

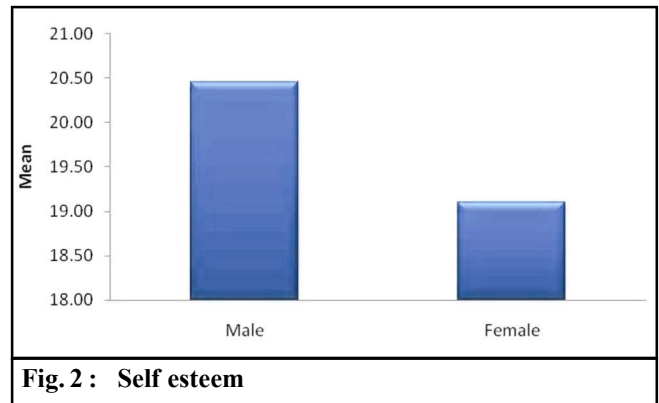
**Difference in various variables of the study:**

In order to find out the difference between Males and Females with regard to scores of various variables of the study- Body Image and Self Esteem of class 10<sup>th</sup> students, t- test was applied. Mean, standard deviation and t- values were calculated and data have been incorporated in Table 1 and Fig. 1.



Significant difference existed between the mean scores of Males and Females seemed to have more satisfaction in body image (Table 2 and Fig. 2).

No significant differences existed between the mean scores of Males and Females.



**Inter correlation among different variables:**

It is clear from Table 3 that there existed a highly significant positive correlation between body image and self esteem ( $r=.368^{**}$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). It states that when the scores of body image increase if scores of self esteem also increases

Body satisfaction is positively correlated with selfesteem among boys (Cohane and Pope, 2000). Body image dissatisfaction is also associated with negative or low self esteem (Fabian and Thompson, 1989; Lawrence and Thelen, 1995; Clay *et al.*, 2005; and Folk, Pedersen, and Cullari, 1993). Harter (1999) found that adolescents’ global self-esteem correlated most highly with physical appearance, followed by scholastic competence, social competence, behavioral conduct, and athletic competence. Moreover in today’s generation people who are satisfied with their body image seems to be more confident.

It was hypothesized that there will be difference in

Table 1 : Significance of mean difference between scores of males and females of body image (N=100, 50 Males/ 50 Females)						
Sex		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Body Image	Males	50	18.76	5.42	2.488	.015*
	Females	50	21.36	5.02		

Table 2 : Significance of mean difference between scores of males and females self esteem (N=100, 50 Males/ 50 Females)						
Sex		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Self Esteem	Male	50	20.46	4.20	1.682	.096
	Female	50	19.10	3.88		

Table 3 : Inter - correlations among various variables (N=100, 50 Males/ 50 Females)		
Variables	Body Image	Self Esteem
Body Image	1	.368**
Self Esteem		1

self esteem among males and Females in the current study, females have greater body image satisfaction and self esteem than males however the mean difference is not significant. Research conducted by the Maggie A. Brennan, Christopher E. Lalonde and Jody L. Bain. Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research, 2010 supports the findings that there is an existence of gender differences in body image satisfaction and self esteem.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations:**

The findings of the present study indicate that body image satisfaction and self-esteem.

- Conducting awareness program to promote positive body image and self esteem among adolescents.
- Counseling can help to facilitate information sessions with regards to the Physiological changes that occur with the onset of puberty and to feel good about themselves about their body.
- The researcher would suggest to increase the sample size of the study.
- A case study on self-esteem and body image can also be done in order to have an in-depth understanding of the effect of body image on self esteem.
- Research explores only link between body image and self esteem where as other aspects of body image

can be studied.

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