

BODY SHAPE CONCERNS AND LOCUS OF CONTROL

AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

Sushobhit Yadav¹

Ms. Kiran Srivastava²

ABSTRACT

Individuals with excessive body shape concerns are more likely to be depressed, anxious, and suicidal than those without intense dissatisfaction over their appearance, even when compared to adolescents with other psychiatric illnesses. As excessive body shape concerns is considered to be associated with the low self-esteem, higher number of depressive, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive syndromes, body dysmorphic disorder and eating disorders. Prevention programs could benefit from including attempts to improve emotional abilities like intrapersonal, interpersonal abilities and adaptability in order to prevent these disorders.

Aim: The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between body image concerns and locus of control in young adults.

Method: A sample of 60 individuals with high body shape concerns was taken by using screening test (Body Shape Questionnaire) from Amity University Lucknow. The sample was selected using purposive sampling technique and ex-post facto research design was used. The tools used were Body Shape Questionnaire (Cooper, P.J., M.J. Taylor, Z. Cooper & C.G.

¹M.Phil. Clinical Psychology, Dept. of Clinical Psychology, Amity Institute of Behavioural and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Lucknow.

²Assistant Professor, Dept. of Clinical Psychology, Amity Institute of Behavioural and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Lucknow.

Fairburn, 1986), Rotter's Locus of Control Scale (Indian Adaptation by Dr. Anand Kumar and Dr. Satyendra Nath Srivastava, 1895). The data was analyzed using parametric statistics-Pearson correlation Method.

Results: The results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between body shape concerns and locus of control at 0.01 level.

Conclusion: On the basis of the statistical analysis i.e., Pearson correlation it was concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between body shape concern and locus of control i.e., Individuals with high body shape concerns show external locus of control.

Keywords: Body Shape Concerns, Locus of Control, Young Adults

INTRODUCTION

BODY IMAGE

The psychological phenomenon of body image was first set forth in 1935 by a German writer named Paul Schilder. According to him body image means the image that we have of our own body in our mind. Peter Slade (1988) further expanded on the concept of body image by defining it as a mental image that we have keeping in mind the size, shape and contour of our own bodies along with our thoughts and feelings that we associate with these various parameters that constitute our bodies. An individual's body image might not necessarily bear any resemblance to reality. Body image consist of 4 elements – how one sees their body, feels about their body, think about their body and what does one do as a result of all the above (National Eating Disorder association). An individual's body image can be either positive or negative depending on 4 elements associated with body image An individual with a positive body image is said to be comfortable in his or her body and they while they may not necessarily consider themselves to be having a perfect body they do accept their body as it is and take care of it. Where as an individual with a negative body image is not comfortable in his own body no matter how perfect or imperfect it may be.

Body shape or weight concerns or dissatisfactions are considered to be very alarming phenomena among the young generation. Despite being healthy and within the normal weight range a girl

overly concerned about her body shape and weight. As the symbol of physical beauty and attractiveness Western societies have introduced “slim and slender body” for the young girls. This concept of “slim and slender body” has developed discontentment among young adults specially girls regarding their shape and weight. Girls develop serious concerns regarding weight and eating issues due to preoccupation with slimness. Mass media plays a major role in promotion of a “Perfect model like figure”. Due to media’s massive coverage of a “perfect figure, it has become almost impossible to not have a model like figure. Perfect figure has become a yardstick and those who do not conform to this ideal image are looked down upon and even considered absurd. Television and motion pictures are also further enhancing this concept along with body shaming. Unfortunately, in movies and television shows fat, old and ugly characters are employed for entertainment purpose. Additionally, mother’s encouragement towards girl’s weight loss attitudes & mother’s own eating practices become the major forces of motivation for adopting weight reducing eating habits and among girls.

LOCUS OF CONTROL

In 1954, Julian Rotter introduced the principle of Locus of Control. He defined Locus of Control as the degree to which people explain the outcome of events internally or externally. He explained LOC as a belief about cause and effect relationship between actions and the outcome of events that have been taught through the social learning mechanisms. LOC is considered as an important factor of individual differences and as a stable personality trait.

Internal locus of control

It the extent to which an individual believes that the reinforcement or outcome of a likely behavior is dependent upon his or her own behavior or characteristics. In this an individual believes that the events happening in his or her life are dependent upon his or her own behavior.

External locus of control

It is the extent to which an individual believes that the reinforcement or outcome that he or she is likely to get is because of chance, luck and faith or is unpredictable. People with external locus of control believe that their life events are dependent on external factors like luck, fate, chance etc. rather than their own capabilities and behavior.

In the context of body image concern and the attempts to change one's body image, an individual's perceived locus of control could play an important role to know the relative importance of personal attitudes towards losing weight and social pressures, who values health and who values physical appearance highly in predicting the sort of behavior likely to be employed, perception of worth and success etc. The body shape dissatisfaction has a consistent relationship with externality, depression etc. As there is limited amount of literature available in this field so it is essential to examine whether the person who is highly concerned for his/her body shape shows internal locus of control or external locus of control.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

E Fppa, A Gkza, E. Carfopoulou et.al (2015) aimed to investigate the effect of locus of control in weight loss maintenance and explore potential associations with lifestyle factors. A significant interaction was found between locus of control and weight loss maintenance status with internals being more likely to be maintainers.

Ruisoto, Cacho, Lopez-Goni et.al (2015) conducted a study analyzed Eating disorders in a non-clinical population by examining gender differences with respect to the following risk factors: body mass index (BMI), body dissatisfaction, perceived social pressure to be thin, body-thin internalization, and dieting. The results revealed higher body dissatisfaction, perceived pressure to be thin and weight loss-oriented behavior in females than compared in males.

Cobb-Clark, Kassenboehmer & Schurer (2012) examined the relationship between the Locus of Control and the decision to regularly exercise, eat well, drink moderately, and avoid the use of tobacco. The results of the study revealed that this can be done effectively with people having internal locus of control.

Mark G, Lodyga (2009) analyzed the relationship between media's influence and body image importance. They found that males with external locus of control place more importance on their body, weight, muscle size and strength than do adolescents with internal locus of control.

Kotanski M. and Gullone E. (1998) analyzed the relationships between anxiety, depression and self-esteem in adolescents of 12 to 18 years. There was a significant relationship between actual body mass, psychological well-being and perceived body mass dissatisfaction. Besides PBID arises from a complex interplay of factors, including gender, self-esteem, and actual body mass.

Garner (1997) examined the issue of body dissatisfaction in males and females and found that it's not limited to females. Results showed that dissatisfaction among adolescent males and young adult males to be 41% and 38% respectively. He also found that from 159 underweight adolescents 40% wanted to lose more weight and become slimmer.

Adame, Radell, Johnson et.al (1991) examined the relationship among measures of physical fitness, body image and locus of control in college freshman women dancers and non-dancers. Analysis showed dancers were more physically fit, scored more positively on the BSRQ physical fitness and health domains, and were more internal in their locus of control than the non-dancers.

Adame, Johnson and Cole (1989) examined the relations among physical fitness, body image, and locus of control. Men and women scoring in the internal direction viewed the physical fitness domain of their body image positively. Unlike men, internally oriented women had more positive perceptions of the health aspect of their body image. Physically fit men differed from physically fit women in that men were more internal and held more positive attitudes toward the physical health dimension of their body images.

Daniel D. Adame (1989) examined association between physical fitness, body image and locus of control. 243 college going students participated in the study. The results revealed that physically fit men had an internal locus of control and held positive attitude towards physical health dimension of their body images.

METHODS

Aim: A study to examine body shape concerns in relation to locus of control in young adults.

Variables

- Body shape concerns
- Locus of control

Objectives

To explore the relationship between body shape concern and locus of control in young adults.

Hypotheses

- Individuals with high body shape concerns will show internal locus of control
- Individuals with high body shape concerns will show external locus of control

Research Design

Ex-post facto Design with correlation orientation

Sample

Sample will consist of total 60 individuals (highly concerned with body shape).

Sampling Method

Purposive sampling

Tools Used

1. Body Shape Questionnaire

Body Shape Questionnaire is a self-report measure of the body shape preoccupations typical of bulimia nervosa and anorexia nervosa given by Cooper, P.J., M.J. Taylor, Z. Cooper & C.G. Fairburn (1986). The questionnaire consists of 34 items (6-Point Likert Scale). The test retest Reliability of Body Shape Questionnaire ranges from 0.88 to 0.93.

2. Rotter's Locus of Control Scale (Indian adaptation)

The Rotter's locus of control (Indian Adaptation) is 23 items forced choice questionnaire with 6 filler items given by Dr. Anand Kumar and Dr. Satyendra Nath Srivastava and it was adapted from the 60 item James scale. This is a questionnaire to find out the way in which certain important events in our society affect different people. Reliability of this questionnaire is 0.83 (Cronbach Alpha coefficient).

Statistical Analysis

The obtained data analyzed using parametric statistics.

Procedure

Firstly, informed consent was taken by the participants and socio-demographic details were filled by them and screening tool (Body Shape Questionnaire) was administered on 250 individuals using purposive sampling to screen out the participants having marked concern of body shape. Then, based upon the results of screening tool, 60 participants with marked body shape concerns were selected and the Rotter's Locus of Control Scale was administered on these participants respectively.

Statistical Analysis

For the statistical analysis, SPSS version 20 was used. Pearson Correlation was used to assess the significant relationship among Body Shape Concerns and Locus of Control among Young Adults.

RESULTS

Table 1. Showing frequency and percentage of Locus of Control

	Frequency	Percentage
Internal Locus of Control	29	48.3%
External Locus of Control	31	51.7%

The result table-1 showing the frequency and percentage of individuals having internal locus of control (high body shape concerned) and individuals having external locus of control (high body shape concerned).

Table.2: Showing correlation between body shape concern and locus of control

		Locus of control
Body Shape Concern	Pearson Correlation	.85**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	60

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result table-2 showing the correlation between Body Shape Concern and Locus of control. The result shows that there is a significant correlation between Body Shape Concern and Locus of control.

DISCUSSION

It is widely recognized that body dissatisfaction is a unanimous experience among both the genders, particularly with regard to the desire to be thin. In fact, body dissatisfaction has become so common that it has been described as “normative discontent.” Moreover, body dissatisfaction is considered one of the most robust risk and maintenance factors for clinical eating disorders. Body image and eating disturbances have also been linked to other psychological problems, including depression, low self-esteem as well as anxiety, body dysmorphic disorder, self-harm and childhood sexual abuse, and social phobia. (Mccomb and Stokes 2014)

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between body shape concerns and locus of control among young adults. The research design used was ex-post facto design with correlation orientation. The sample size was 60 individuals with high body shape concerns. The sampling method used was purposive sampling. The sample consists of 7males 53 females which were having marked concern with their body shape. The age range of the sample size ranges from 18 to 35 years. The tools used for screening was Body Shape Questionnaire and Rotter’s Locus of Control Scale (Indian Adaptation). The data was analyzed using Pearson correlation method.

Total number of individuals having internal locus of control was 29 (48.3%) and external locus of control was 31 (51.7%). The results of present study revealed that there is a significant positive correlation between body shape concerns and locus of control i.e., individuals having high body shape concerns show external locus of control. There were similar findings in a study done by Cobb-Clark, Kassenboehmer & Schurer (2012), who examined the relationship between the Locus of Control and the decision to regularly exercise, eat well, drink moderately, and avoid the use of tobacco. The results of their study revealed that this can be done effectively with people having internal locus of control as they are more concerned with health domain.

Another similar study was conducted by E Fppa, A Gkza, E Carfopoulou et.al (2015) aimed to investigate the effect of locus of control in weight loss maintenance for better body shape and explore potential associations with lifestyle factors. A significant interaction was found between locus of control and weight loss maintenance status with internal locus of control being more likely to be maintainers. Another study by Mark G, Lodyga (2009) analyzed the relationship between media's influence on body image concern. They found that adolescents with external locus of control place more importance to media on their body, weight, muscle size and strength than do adolescents with internal locus of control i.e., influenced more by external factors than adolescents with internal factors. It can be said that individuals having external locus of control value physical appearance and want to lose weight due to social pressure while individuals with internal locus of control values health relatively. One other study conducted by Greaves and Furnham (1994) in which he found the relationship between locus of control and body image satisfaction. The results from this study suggest that perceived locus of control beliefs are important predictors of the resulting behaviours and self-perceptions associated with body shape satisfaction and dissatisfaction. i.e. it is important domain for intervention purpose.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the statistical analysis i.e., Pearson correlation it can be concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between body shape concern and locus of control i.e., individuals with high body shape concerns shows external locus of control.

REFERENCES

- Adame, D. D., Johnson, T. C., & Cole, S. P. (1989). Physical fitness, body image, and locus of control in college freshman men and women. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 68(2), 400-402.
- Adame, D. D., Radell, S. A., Johnson, T. C., & Cole, S. P. (1991). Physical fitness, body image, and locus of control in college women dancers and nondancers. *Perceptual and motor skills*, 72(1), 91-95.
- Alberts, H. J., Thewissen, R., & Raes, L. (2012). Dealing with problematic eating behaviour. The effects of a mindfulness-based intervention on eating behaviour, food cravings, dichotomous thinking and body image concern. *Appetite*, 58(3), 847-851.
- Cobb-Clark, D. A., Kassenboehmer, S. C., & Schurer, S. (2014). Healthy habits: The connection between diet, exercise, and locus of control. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 98, 1-28.
- Cruz-Sáez, S., Pascual, A., Salaberria, K., & Echeburúa, E. (2015). Normal-weight and overweight female adolescents with and without extreme weight-control behaviours: Emotional distress and body image concerns. *Journal of health psychology*, 20(6), 730-740.
- Furnham, A., & Greaves, N. (1994). Gender and locus of control correlates of body image dissatisfaction. *European Journal of Personality*, 8(3), 183-200.
- Jhaveri, S. S., & Patki, S. M. (2016). Locus of control, peer influence on dieting, media exposure and body image satisfaction in young adults. *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing*, 7(4), 369.
- Kachani, A. T., Barroso, L. P., Brasiliano, S., Hochgraf, P. B., & Cordás, T. A. (2014). Body checking and obsessive-compulsive symptoms in Brazilian outpatients with eating disorders. *Eating and Weight Disorders-Studies on Anorexia, Bulimia and Obesity*, 19(2), 177-182.

- Kamaria, K., Vikram, M., & Ayiesah, R. (2016). Body image perception, body shape concern and body shape dissatisfaction among undergraduates' students. *Jurnal Teknologi*, 78(6-8).
- Kostanski, M., & Gullone, E. (1998). Adolescent body image dissatisfaction: relationships with self-esteem, anxiety, and depression controlling for body mass. *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines*, 39(2), 255-262.
- Lodyga, M. G. (2009). Locus of control and media influence on body self-satisfaction in late adolescent males (Doctoral dissertation).
- Lowery, S. E., Kurpius, S. E. R., Befort, C., Blanks, E. H., Sollenberger, S., Nicpon, M. F., & Huser, L. (2005). Body image, self-esteem, and health-related behaviors among male and female first year college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(6), 612-623.
- Pokrajac-Bulian, A., & Živčić-Bećirević, I. (2005). Locus of control and self-esteem as correlates of body dissatisfaction in Croatian university students. *European Eating Disorders Review: The Professional Journal of the Eating Disorders Association*, 13(1), 54-60.
- Ravaldi, C., Vannacci, A., Bolognesi, E., Mancini, S., Faravelli, C., & Ricca, V. (2006). Gender role, eating disorder symptoms, and body image concern in ballet dancers. *Journal of psychosomatic research*, 61(4), 529-535.
- Ruisoto, P., Cacho, R., López-Goñi, J. J., Deus, E. R., Vaca, S., & Mayoral, P. (2015). Gender Differences in Risk Factors for Stice's Bulimia in a Non-Clinical Sample. *The Spanish journal of psychology*, 18.
- Ryu, H. K. (1997). A Survey of Adolescents' Concern and Perception about Body Image. *Korean Journal of Community Nutrition*, 2(2), 197-205.
- Soh, N. L., Touyz, S. W., & Surgenor, L. J. (2006). Eating and body image disturbances across cultures: A review. *European Eating Disorders Review: The Professional Journal of the Eating Disorders Association*, 14(1), 54-65.
- Tiggemann, M., & Slater, A. (2013). NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and body image concern in adolescent girls. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 46(6), 630-633.