

BSP191026

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

January, 2023

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PHYSICAL APPEARANCE SOCIAL COMPARISON AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG YOUNG ADULTS



by

Afia Nazar
Reg. No. BSP191026

A Research Thesis submitted to the
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN PSYCHOLOGY

Faculty of Management and Social Sciences
Capital University of Science & Technology,
Islamabad
January, 2023

**ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PHYSICAL
APPEARANCE SOCIAL COMPARISON AND
SELF-ESTEEM AMONG YOUNG ADULTS**



By

Afia Nazar

Reg No. BSP191026

**A Research Thesis submitted to the DEPARTMENT OF
PSYCHOLOGY**

**In the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
BACHELORS OF SCIENCE IN PSYCHOLOGY**

**Faculty of Management and Social Sciences
Capital University of Science and Technology,**


Islamabad

January, 2023

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

It is certified that the Research Thesis titled “Association between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults” carried out by Afia Nazar, Reg. No. BSP191026, under the supervision of Ms. Rabia Batool, Capital University of Science & Technology, Islamabad, is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a Research Thesis for the degree of BS Psychology.

Supervisor:



Ms. Rabia Batool

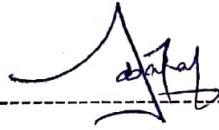
Lecturer

Department of Psychology

Faculty of Management and Social Sciences

Capital University of Science & Technology, Islamabad

HoD:



Dr. Sabahat Haqqani

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology

Faculty of Management and Social Sciences

Capital University of Science & Technology, Islamabad

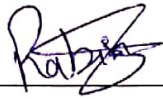
**Association between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among
young adults**

By

Afia Nazar

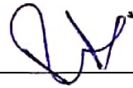
Registration # BSP191026

Approved By



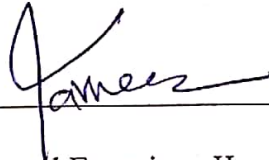
Supervisor

Ms. Rabia Batool



Internal Examiner-I

Ms. Rabia Umar



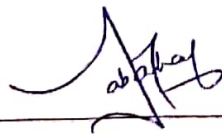
Internal Examiner-II

Ms. Parveen Akhtar



Thesis Coordinator

Ms. Irum Noureen



Head of Department

Dr. Sabahat Haqqani

DECLARATION

I Afia Nazar, certify that this is an original piece of my own work except and acknowledged in text and references. This work has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution for tertiary education and shall not be submitted by me in future for obtaining any degree from this or any other university or institution.



Afia Nazar

BSP191026

January, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I am immensely grateful to Allah Almighty for his assistance throughout this expedition. It was his mercy that made it possible for me to complete this work in the first place. I would like to thank my supervisor Ms. Rabia Batool for the guidance, immense support and direction but more importantly for giving the motivation to work hard.

I'm thankful to my family for their love, support and care towards me. Their support gave me the courage and motivation to persist and do my best during research.

Last but not the least; I dedicate this dissertation to my best friend Saman Khalid for always listening to me, appreciating me and encouraging me to do best in life and moreover to my class mates Maryam Dawood and Mahnoor Ahmed for helping me a lot during research.

Abstract

Physical appearance comparison is increasing day by day among individuals. Now a days this comparison is increasing more and more, people are competing with each other on the basis of their of their body shape, size and weight. Individuals. People are competing with those individuals who have good dressing sense and had well overall physical appearance tends to question their own self and as a result of which they have damaged self-esteem. This study aimed at (1) Exploring the relationship among physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults (2) Exploring the gender differences on physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults. Data was conducted from willing participants and they were given informed consent. The study was correlational in which 400 individuals were added age ranging from 18-25 years. Data was collected from different colleges and universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. There are two scales that were used for our variables i.e., Rosenberg self-esteem scale and Physical appearance comparison scale (revised). Results showed that there is a negative correlation between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults esteem ($r = -.092$ $N=400$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, mann whitney u test showed that there was a non-significant gender differences on physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults.

Keywords: *Physical appearance social comparison, self-esteem, University students*

Table of Contents

DEDICATION	ii
DECLARATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Literature review	3
Theoretical framework	7
Rationale.....	7
Objectives	8
Hypothesis	8
Chapter 2: Methodology	9
Research design	9
Sample.....	9
<i>Inclusion criteria</i>	9
<i>Exclusion criteria</i>	9
Instruments	9
<i>Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale</i>	9
<i>Physical Appearance Comparison Scale-Revised</i>	10
Procedure.....	10
Ethical considerations	10
Analysis.....	11
Chapter 3: Results	12
Table-1	13
Table 2.....	17
Table 3.....	18
Table 4.....	19
Chapter 4: Discussion	20
Conclusion.....	22
Limitations.....	22
Future implication	22
References	23
APPENDICES	27

Appendix A 28
Appendix B..... 29
Appendix C..... 30
Appendix D 31

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Histogram distribution of age demographic	25
Figure 2	Histogram distribution of gender demographic	25
Figure 3	Histogram distribution of education demographic	25
Figure 4	Histogram distribution of religion demographic	25
Figure 5	Histogram distribution of occupation demographic	26
Figure 6	Histogram distribution of Father's education demographic	26
Figure 7	Histogram distribution of mother's occupation demographic	26
Figure 8	Histogram distribution of socioeconomic status demographic	26
Figure 9	Histogram distribution of family system demographic	26
Figure10	Histogram distribution of descriptive statistics of physical appearance social comparison scale	28
Figure11	Histogram distribution of descriptive statistics of Rosenberg self-esteem scale	29

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Descriptive characteristics of demographic variables of the study participants	13
Table 2	Reliability Analysis of the Instruments	17
Table 3	Correlational analysis for scales	18
Table 4	Mann Whitney U-test	19

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Informed consent	28
Appendix B	Demographic information	29
Appendix C	Rosenberg self-esteem scale	30
Appendix D	Physical appearance social comparison scale-revised	31

Chapter 1: Introduction

Social comparison has become an interesting topic now a days because of the different mindsets of people who always compare themselves with others. Social comparison is done to identify where an individual is standing on a particular attribute (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison can be of anything like emotions, appearance, status, luxuries etc. When we compare ourselves with those people who are not better than us, then this is downward social comparison. Likewise, if we compare ourselves with those people who are better than us then this type of comparison is called upward social comparison.

Physical appearance is common among individuals who interact with each other in universities, social gatherings, streets etc. Comparison of appearance is common and part of daily routine in females (Leahey, Crowther, & Mickelson, 2007). Studies claimed that appearance comparison tend to be upward comparison, this means that comparison is done with the people who are believed to be better (Leahey et al., 2007). Upward comparison can effect an individual's wellbeing and results in negative emotions (Tesser, Millar, & Moore, 1988)

Comparison targets can be drawn from both the distant world of the media and everyday life. Adolescents' life are fundamentally shaped by their peers, who are more and more important in forming identity, defining social norms, and assessing oneself (Brown, Mory, & Kinney, 1994).

One of the primary concerns for individuals is that they wanted them to be accepted and supported by friends and classmates (Bukowski, Hoza, & Boivin, 1993). Additionally,

research shows that students are aware of this connection from an early age, understanding that acceptance among classmates is correlated with conforming to aesthetic expectations (Oliver & Thelen, 1996). Social comparison becomes a useful tool for learning about the appearance-related social expectations among peers and for evaluating oneself in relation to those standards because appearance is one of the possible paths to acceptance and popularity. However it is not figured out in the literature that peers are the target of comparison

Studies have established a connection between the desire for a slender body and eating symptoms and physical appearance social comparisons (Morrison et al., 2004; Myers & Crowther, 2009). Most women compare their bodies to those of others, however not all women let comparisons affect them negatively (Pinkasavage, Arigo, & Schumacher, 2015). According to social comparison theorists, people who experience a conflict between their own identity and the comparison target may try to participate in specific actions to close this gap (Festinger, 1954).

Comparing one's appearance to others has been associated with behaviours like working out and following unhealthful eating patterns (Schaefer & Thompson, 2014). Studies have shown that across different cultures women are unhappy with their bodies than men (Feingold & Mazella, 1998; Garner & Kearney–Cooke, 1996; Lucas, & Hoek, 1998). This dissatisfaction has shown a remarkable increase over the last 25 years (Feingold & Mazella, 1998; Garner, 1997). Studies claimed that social comparison is an important determinant of body image. An article on social comparison has supported the ideas that people compare themselves others on the basis of different dimensions including physical attractiveness (Wheeler & Miyake, 1992), people compare with others who have

high standard i.e. upward comparison as well as those of lower standards i.e. downward comparison and social comparisons involves shaping of self-evaluations (Wood, 1989). In addition to comparing with individuals, people are exposed to social comparison through mass media such as posters in magazines and on television.

Social comparison experts hypothesized that one factor influencing the comparisons of appearances could be people's assessments of whether they will succeed in obtaining a goal (Lockwood, Major, Testa, & Blysmas, 1991). Women who aspire to have the perfect figure can be motivated by upward comparisons, and as a result, they are successful in eliciting favorable affective reactions. Likewise, upward comparisons can have a dangerous and disastrous negative impact when women begin to believe that they have little or no control over reaching their desired appearance.

According to self-concept theories, a person's sense of self is established through interaction with and feedback from important people (James, 1890; Shotter & Gergen, 1989). In truth, empirical investigations have demonstrated that beliefs in one's own value come from a feeling of social acceptability (Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989; Hogan, Jones, & Cheek, 1985; Leary et al., 1995). The degree to which each person views acceptance as conditional versus unconditional varies (Rogers, 1959). Maintaining these standards becomes crucial to a person's sense of self if they believe that acceptability is predicated on accomplishment, whether that success takes the form of making good grades, dominating video games, or adhering to beauty standards.

Literature review

People frequently evaluate their own abilities, popularity, popularity among peers, and social skills (Feinstein et al. 2013). Social comparison is the human tendency to

measure one's own judgement and aptitude against that of others in order to forge a unique identity (Festinger, 1954). Comparing oneself to others is typically done to determine how well one has accomplished. Research findings states that physical appearance and attractiveness of women is more likely to be important for men than physical appearance and attractiveness of men is to female (Mazur, 1986). Traditional gender role type stereotypes judge women by her physical appearance and attractiveness.

Appearance with social pressure is more among women. Therefore, women have more chances to engage in comparisons with people by judging their weight and body shape. In western countries, slim female figure is considered as desirable. Therefore, many females are engaged in activities because they feel pressurized to lose their weight and achieve a better figure, weight and shape of their body as compare to the peers and other role models.

Research shows that women with thin body shape is showed and emphasized in media (Morris, Cooper, & Cooper, 1989). Media channels with high and top profile models show women looks better in its thin body shape and thus forces women to have the obsession to look thin (Mazur, 1986). Retaining, advertising, fashion industry and entertainment industry pressurize women to look good and meet the standards of ideal body image (Mazur, 1986)

Men may also place a little more value on how well their bodies work than women do, especially in terms of athletics and fitness (Grogan & Richards, 2002). Males are much more likely to grow in size, especially in terms of muscle mass, while females often prefer to look thin in order to conform to the culturally prescribed body ideals.

Studies conducted by (McCreary et al. 2004) have shown that support for masculine attitudes and actions is associated with higher levels of drive for muscularity in men in their college years. Additionally, according to qualitative studies, even young boys exhibit gendered patterns of body image, indicating that gender roles may play a role in determining body dissatisfaction. The influence of gender on the desire for muscle has not been studied. It's likely that there is only a direct correlation, meaning that the desire for muscle mass is positively connected with investment in masculinity (McCreary & Sasse, 2000). Numerous investigations have discovered that traits like internalizing media ideals, self-esteem, or social comparison partially mediate or reduce the impact of sociocultural factors on adolescent boys' adoption of muscle-building practices or body dissatisfaction (Smolak, Murnen, & Thompson, 2005)

Studies showed that body comparison leads to greater body dissatisfaction, he did not take into account the distinction between upward and downward comparison. A variety of psychological disorders, such as eating disorders, body dissatisfaction, and negative affect, are linked to upward comparison (Cherry, 2020). However, no research have examined downward comparison in isolation, In two experimental trials, upward comparison increased feelings of guilt, negative affect, and dissatisfaction with one's body, whereas downward comparison had the opposite effect on all three. According to a correlational study, women who engaged in comparison were more likely to exhibit behaviors associated with the drive for thinness and to feel unsatisfied with their bodies. Both uphill and downward comparisons produced the same result, but the association was stronger with an upward comparison.

There may be variations in how each woman responds to social situations. When compared to a woman who is more attractive than they are, for instance, some women can be inspired to work toward a goal relating to their physical fitness or weight, but others might feel degraded (Taylor, Bunk, & Aspinwall, 1990; Wood, 1989). They hypothesized that these individual variations in responses to appearance-related social comparisons are primarily a result of two individual variations: how dependent on outside variables one's self-esteem is, and how attractive they consider themselves to be.

Self-esteem is comparatively more persistent, and these comparisons could serve as a reminder of the criteria they don't fulfil. Additionally, the perception of one's own position and the perceived standing of the comparison target determine whether a specific comparison is regarded as moving one up or down (Stice & Shaw, 1994). When everything else is equal, women who think they are less beautiful are more prone to compare their appearances higher. However, the degree to which one's self-worth is normally dependent will determine the emotional impact of the disparity between one's own and another's evaluated attractiveness.

People who think their worth is based on appearance often feel worse about themselves, have lower self-esteem, and feel unhappy than those who do not (Harter, 2007). Women begin to believe that being slim equates to being desirable as a result of the media's presentation of the slender ideal. According to additional study in the body esteem literature (Stice & Shaw, 1994). These women may start to believe in their own value and self-worth as a result of their physical appearance, especially if they achieve an ideal body shape and receive good feedback (Littrell, Damhorst, & Littrell, 1990).

According to studies, self-esteem can range from real self-esteem to accidental self-esteem. (Deci & Ryan, 1995). The result of consistent behavior towards one's core self rather than being imposed from the outside or based on the inside requirements. Contingent self-esteem is a type of self-esteem based meeting specific criteria or achieve specific goals. Individuals with high contingent self-esteem can form their foundation good grades, social status, physical self-esteem appearance or other evaluation criteria.

Theoretical framework

Social comparison theory was proposed by Leon Festinger in 1954. Festinger suggested that social comparison is motivated by three drives i.e. self-evaluation, self enhancement and self-improvement. Hypothesis which is widely cited is the similarity hypothesis in which people compare himself with the similar ones. People develop recognition and understanding of self and make social choices on the basis of comparison with others (Festinger, 1954). This theory is useful in terms of associating the individual's physical self with a social ideal of physical appearance influenced by mass media (Thompson & Heinberg, 1999)

Rationale

There are very few studies that were conducted on physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem but other variables were also included with them and there sample were either male or female so in this study both males and females were also included. Moreover, people associate physical appearance social comparison with females only but this study will also provide the data that whether physical appearance is present in males or not.

Objectives

The aim of this study was to

- Explore the relationship between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults.
- Explore the gender differences on physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults

Hypothesis

H1. There would be a negative correlation between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults

H2. There would be a significant gender differences on physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Research design

It was a correlational study which was followed by survey method to gather information from our participants. In this study two different questionnaires were used to measure our variables i.e. Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale and Physical appearance comparison scale-revised.

Sample

A sample of 400 participants were taken in this study which include both males and females age ranging from 18 to 25 years. Participants were taken from different colleges and universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Inclusion criteria

- Both male and female participants were included in this study.
- Participants from different colleges and universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad were included

Exclusion criteria

Participants who could not understand English were excluded from the study.

Instruments

Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

This scale is developed by Morris Rosenberg (1965). It is a Likert type scale consists 10 items answered on a four-point scale. There are five items in this scale which will be reverse scored. The score of this scale ranges from 0-30. Scores between 15 and 25

are within normal range; scores below 15 suggest low self-esteem. The scale generally has high reliability: test-retest correlations are typically in the range of .82 to .88, and Cronbach's alpha for various samples are $\alpha = 0.77-0.88$. The reliability of the Urdu Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (URSES) was determined by Cronbach's Alpha, which is 0.773, and a correlation coefficient of 0.808 for a 4-week test-retest period.

Physical Appearance Comparison Scale-Revised

It was developed by Thomson, Heinberg and Tantleff in 1991. It is 11 item scale answered on a 5 point likert type scale i.e. Never to always. Cronbach's Alpha proved to have good internal constancy ($\alpha = 0.84-0.93$).

Procedure

The sample was selected from the different colleges and universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The permission to use the scales was taken from the respected authors. Moreover, approval from the Capital University of Science and Technology was obtained and after that participants were explained about the purpose of the study. Informed consent was signed by participants and they were told that their information will be kept confidential. A demographic sheet was attached with the questionnaires to obtain relevant data. Participants who were willing to participate were given two questionnaires including Rosenberg self-esteem scale and Physical appearance social comparison scale-revised.

Ethical considerations

Consent taking and debriefing was done and after that participants were given demographic sheet and study questionnaires. Participants were told that their information will be kept confidential. It was guaranteed that participants have the freedom to leave the study at any time.

Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM-SPSS-21) was used for the statistical analysis of the present study. After the data collection, data was entered; cleaned and descriptive statistics were analyzed.

In descriptive statistics, Mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis were calculated through descriptive analysis. Demographics among the targeted sample were age, gender, education, socioeconomic status and family system. The frequencies of these demographics were computed.

The reliability of the Rosenberg Self-esteem scale and Physical Appearance Social Comparison Scale-revised was examined through Cronbach's Alpha in inferential statistics. The relationship between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem was investigated by using Spearman's correlation because the data was not normally distributed. Independent t-test was also computed to check the gender differences in physical appearance comparison.

Chapter 3: Results

The results of the study are represented in the form of tables. The data was collected through questionnaires filled out by every participant. The frequencies and percentages were computed while skewness, kurtosis, mean, standard deviation and range were calculated for using descriptive statistics. The reliabilities of the scales and the subscales were calculated which include Cronbach's alpha, mean and their ranges. Correlation was carried to see the relationship of our scales and independent sample t test was carried out to see the gender differences in physical appearance comparison.

Table-1*Descriptive characteristics of demographic variables of the study participants (N=400)*

<i>Demographic characteristics</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Age	18	21	5.3
	19	60	15.0
	20	79	19.8
	21	113	28.3
	22	67	16.8
	23	35	8.8
	24	12	3.0
	25	13	3.3
Gender	Male	127	68.3
	Female	273	31.8
Education	Intermediate	29	7.3
	BS	344	86.0
	MS	25	6.3
Religion	Islam	387	96.8
	Christian	13	3.3
Occupation	Government	13	3.3

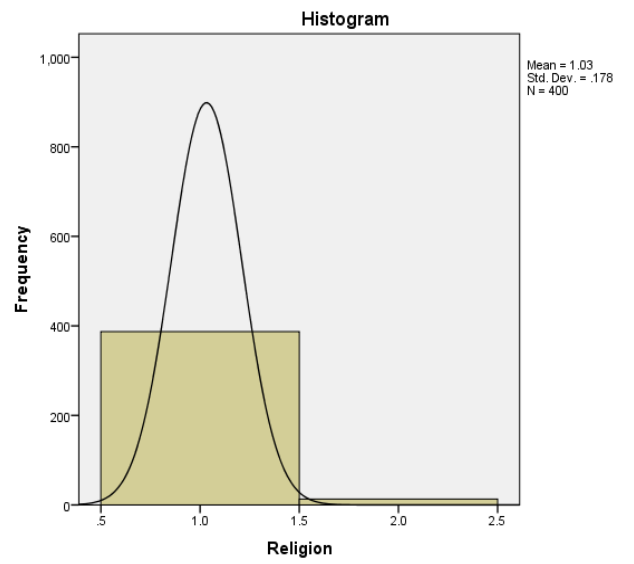
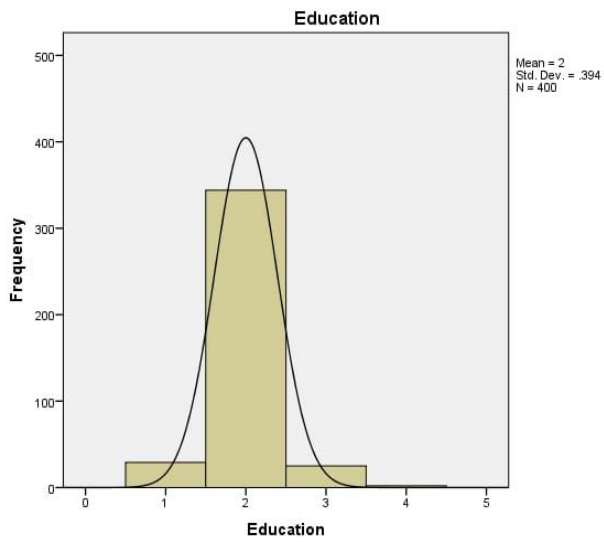
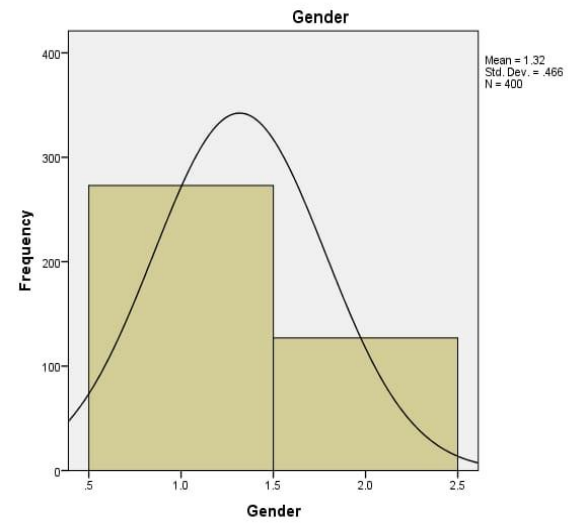
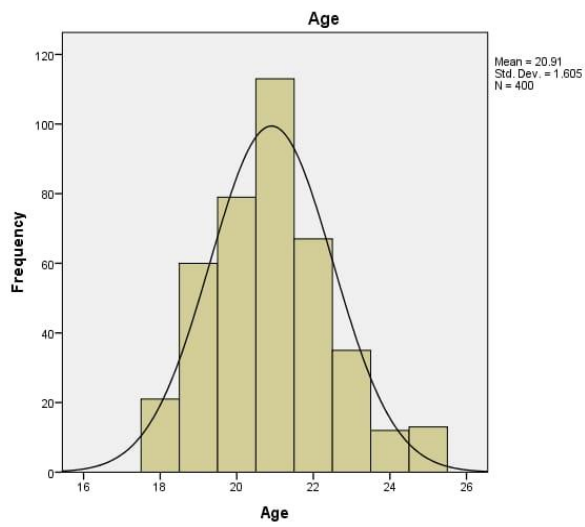
	Private	28	7.0
	Free lancing	9	2.3
	Not working	350	87.5
Father occupation	Government	118	29.5
	Private	253	63.3
	Not working	29	7.3
Mother occupation	Government	38	9.5
	Private	43	10.8
	Not working	319	79.8
Family system	Joint family	132	33.0
	Nuclear family	268	67.0
Socioeconomic status	Upper class	20	5.0
	Middle class	375	93.8
	Lower class	5	1.3

Note: f = frequency,

%=percentage

Table 1 demonstrates the frequency and the percentages of the demographic variables. The table shows that females were more than males for N=400. Majority of the sample were Muslims. Participants with bachelor's degree were high in number as compared to masters and intermediate level. Most of the participant's father were doing government job and out of 400, 319 mothers were not working. Family system were joint and most of the participants lied in the middle-class category.

Graphs



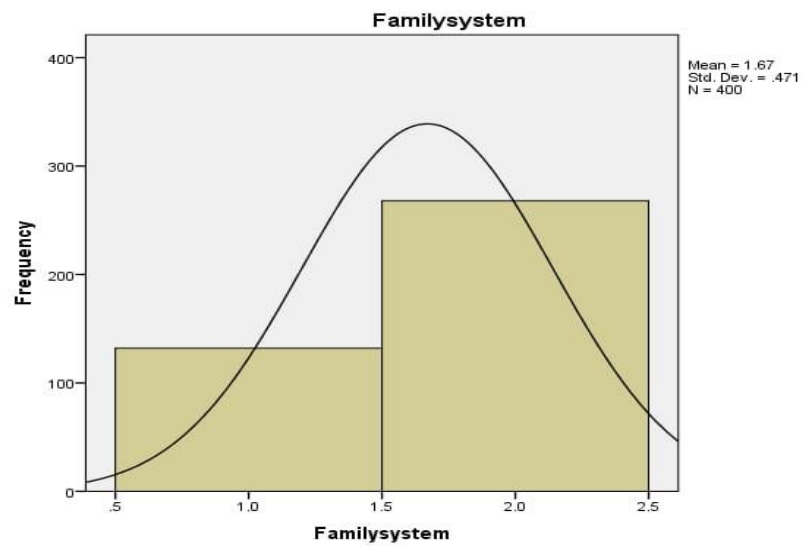
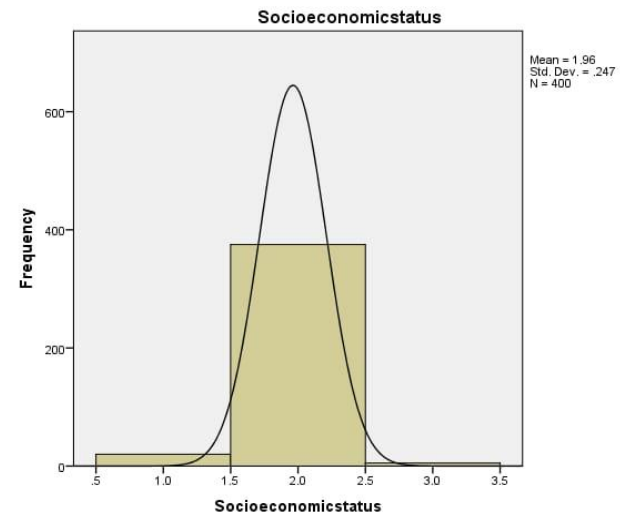
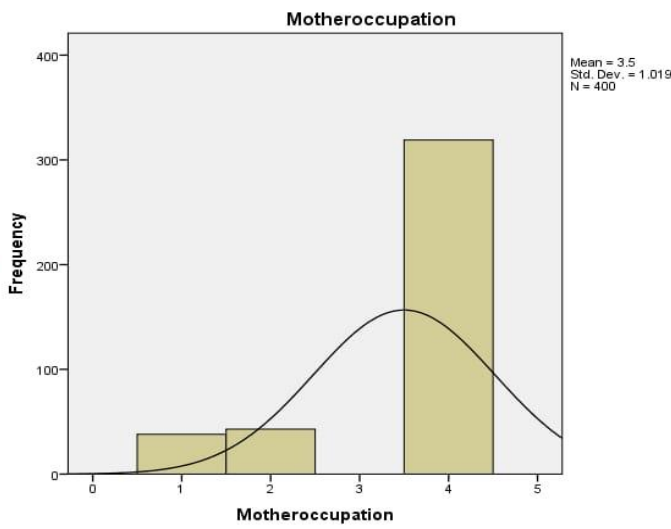
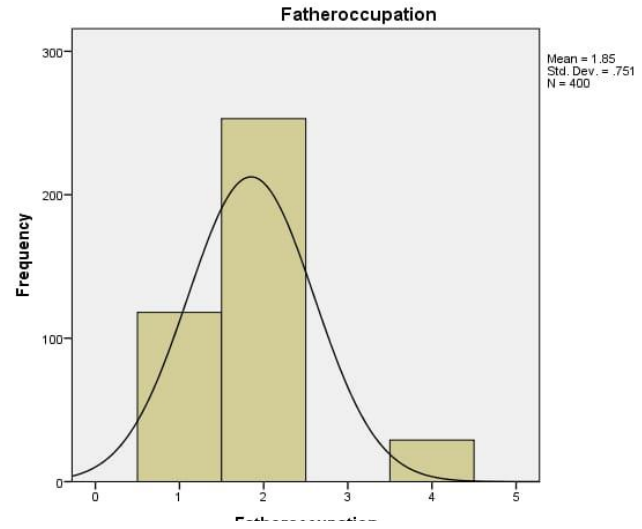
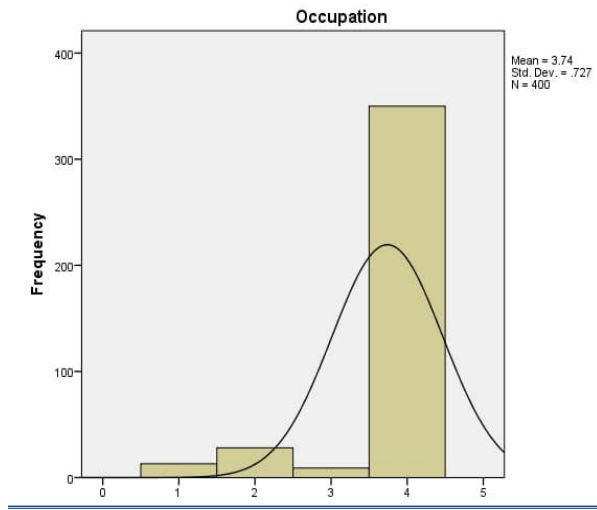


Table 2**Reliability Analysis of the Instruments (N=400)**

Scales	Items	M	SD	α	Skewness	Kurtosis
RSS	10	21.28	4.44	.735	.355	.617
PASC	11	34.28	6.84	.764	-.760	.338

Note: RSS=Rosenberg self-esteem scale, PASC=Physical appearance scale-revised, α =

Cronbach's Alpha reliability, SD= Standard deviation, M=Mean

Table 2 shows the descriptive of the questionnaires used in the research. Reliability of the scale and the subscales used in the data was calculated through Cronbach's alpha reliability. The reliability of Rosenberg self-esteem scale was .735 and the reliability of Physical appearance social comparison was .764.

Table 3**Correlational analysis for scales (N=400)**

Sr. #	Scales	1	2
1.	RSS	–	
2.	PASC	-.092*	–

Note: SMASSF= Social media addiction scale student form, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, (1-tailed)

Table 3 indicates Spearman correlations between measures of Rosenberg self-esteem scale and Physical appearance social comparison scale-revised (N=400). Physical appearance social comparison has significant and moderate negative significant correlation with self-esteem ($r = -.092$ N=400, $p < 0.01$). This entails that the increase in physical appearance comparison will lead to decrease in the level of self-esteem.

Table 4**Mann Whitney U-test (N=400)**

Scale	Male		Female		U	Z	(P)
	N	M	N	M			
PASC	127	204.13	273	198.81	16874.0	-.430	(.667)
RSS	127	212.63	273	194.86	15795.5	-1.43	(.151)

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation, U=Mann whitney, P=Significance value

Mann whitney test was conducted to assess the gender differences in the level of physical appearance social comparison. Results showed that there is a non-significant gender differences on physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults.

Chapter 4: Discussion

The aim of this current study was to explore the relationship between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults. Moreover, this study was being conducted to see gender differences on physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem.

Physical appearance social comparison was assessed by using PASC revised. Cronbach alpha has a good internal constancy ranging from 0.84-0.93. The reliability in this study was good i.e. 0.764. Self-esteem was assessed by RSS, the Cronbach alpha reliability is 0.77-0.88. Reliability in this study was 0.735 which is quite good.

Based on previous literature it was hypothesized that (1) There will be a negative correlation between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults. (2) Physical appearance social comparison is high in females as compared to males.

There were 127 males and 273 females were included in this study (see Table 1). The demographics were included which consists of age, gender, education, religion, occupation, father's education, mother's occupation, family system and socioeconomic status (see Table 1). Age range of 18-25 years were included which consists of both male and female young adults.

Spearman correlation was carried to see the relationship between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults (see Table 5). Results showed that there was a negative correlation between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem ($r = -.092$ $N=400$, $p < 0.01$) (see Table 5)

Hypothesis 1

It was hypothesized that there will be a negative correlation between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults and our results showed that there was a negative correlation between our variables (see Table 5). The results are consistent with the existing literature which stated that individuals who are more prone to social comparison have adverse effect on their self-esteem (Jang et. Al. 2016). This is because there is so much competition going on in the society related to one's appearance, money and his lifestyle. People are going crazy to look good and therefore they go for upward social comparison. When they do not meet the standards of people superior than them, they get upset and as a result of which their self-esteem gets low. Another study conducted by D. Dagnan & S. Sandhu (1999) showed that there is no statistically significant differences on any questionnaire scores for groups based on gender.

Hypothesis 2

Mann whitney u-test was carried out to explore the gender differences in the level of physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem. The results showed that there is a slight difference in means of both males and females however the results are not significant. The results are consistent with the study conducted by Walker & Yakushko in 2007 in which they studied the gender differences among physical appearance comparison and self-esteem, the results are non-significant on both physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem (Heatheron & Polivy, 1991)

Conclusion

This study analyzed that physical appearance has a negative effect on self-esteem among young adults. It was concluded that there is a negative correlation between both of our variables this means that self-esteem is negatively affected with the increase in physical appearance comparison.

Limitations

- First limitation of this study is that data was collected only from the universities located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad so the results cannot be generalized.
- Secondly the sample size is small.
- Thirdly young adults from age 18-25 were included but people above age 25 can also be included.

Future implication

There are many aspects of physical appearance but this study only consider the physical appearance as a whole e.g. body size, image, shape but in future research the more deeper aspects can be covered like outer bodily functions, how an individual's body is behaving, acting etc. This study only focuses on the self-esteem aspect but in future research many more aspects can be studied along with self-esteem like body dissatisfaction, self-worth, self-compassion etc. Lastly, future studies can use this study to identify a measure that can cover both of the comparisons i.e. upward and downward comparison.

References

- Alodia, A., & Suryadi, D. (2021, August 8). The relationship between social comparison and self-esteem among late adolescent Instagram users. *The Relationship between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem among Late Adolescent Instagram Users* | Atlantis Press. Retrieved June 4, 2022, from <https://www.atlantispress.com/proceedings/icebsh-21/125959492>
- American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Apa PsycNet. American Psychological Association. Retrieved January 11, 2023, from <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2007-10888-003>
- Aronson, E., Wilson, T., & Akert, R. (2010). *Social psychology*. (7 ed., pp. 137-139). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Attitudes toward social comparison as a function ... - wiley online library. (n.d.). Retrieved June 24, 2022, from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1077727X99274001>
- Bergagna, E., & Tartaglia, S. (2018, November 30). Self-esteem, social comparison, and Facebook use. *Europe's journal of psychology*. Retrieved June 4, 2022, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6266525/>
- Cherry, K. (2020, September 20). How social comparison theory influences our views on ourselves. *Verywell Mind*. Retrieved June 4, 2022, from <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-social-comparison-process-2795872>

- CR., P. H. N. C. K. (n.d.). Appearance-related social comparisons: The role of contingent self-esteem and self-perceptions of attractiveness. *Personality & social psychology bulletin*. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15070478/>
- Cramer, E. M., Song, H., & Drent, A. M. (2016, August 4). Social comparison on Facebook: Motivation, affective consequences, self-esteem, and Facebook fatigue. *Computers in Human Behavior*. Retrieved June 4, 2022, from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0747563216305398>
- Effects of physical appearance social ... - wiley online library. (n.d.). Retrieved June 24, 2022, from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jpr.12264>
- Festinger, L. (1954). A Theory of Social Comparison Processes. *Human Relations*, vol. 7, issue 2, pp. 117–140.
- Gibbons, F. X. and Buunk, B. P. (1999). Individual Differences in Social Comparison: Development of a Scale of Social Comparison Orientation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 76, issue 1, p. 129.
- How does social comparison affect self-esteem in the ... - rowan university? (n.d.). Retrieved June 4, 2022, from <https://rdw.rowan.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1563&context=etd>
- Hub: Low self-esteem is related to aggression, antisocial behavior, and delinquency: 10.1111/j.0956-7976.2005.01535.X. *Sci.* (n.d.). Retrieved June 4, 2022, from <https://sci-hub.hkvisa.net/10.1111/j.0956-7976.2005.01535.x>

Hub: Social comparison and negative self-evaluations: An application to depression: 10.1016/0272-7358(88)90049-9. Sci. (n.d.). Retrieved June 5, 2022, from [https://sci-hub.hkvisa.net/10.1016/0272-7358\(88\)90049-9](https://sci-hub.hkvisa.net/10.1016/0272-7358(88)90049-9)

Hub: The effect of social comparison of appearance on compensatory buying and symbolic consumption: The mediating role of body esteem: 10.1080/20932685.2011.10593085. Sci. (n.d.). Retrieved June 24, 2022, from <https://sci-hub.hkvisa.net/10.1080/20932685.2011.10593085>

Laker, V., & Waller, G. (2021, April 26). Does comparison of self with others influence body image among adult women? An experimental study in naturalistic settings - eating and weight disorders - studies on anorexia, bulimia and obesity. SpringerLink. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40519-021-01196-3>

Operational definition of self-esteem" essays and research papers. Studymode. (n.d.). Retrieved June 5, 2022, from <https://www.studymode.com/subjects/operational-definition-of-self-esteem-page1.html>

Prediction of body image dissatisfaction from self-esteem ... - IJTMGH. (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2022,

Rosenberg self-Esteem Scale (RSES). NovoPsych. (2021, July 4). Retrieved June 6, 2022, from <https://novopsych.com.au/assessments/well-being/rosenberg-self-esteem-scale-rses/>

The effects of Instagram use, social comparison, and ... - sage journals. (n.d.). Retrieved

June 4, 2022, from

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305120912488>

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed consent

I am a BS Psychology student from Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamabad. I am conducting a research study and the purpose of my study is to distinguish the relationship between physical appearance social comparison and self-esteem among young adults. If you want to volunteer in this study, you are most welcome. After you volunteer into this study, you will be given consent and demographic form and two study questionnaires. Your identity will be kept confidential and the data will only be used for research purpose only. You can withdraw at any time if you feel you cannot continue further. If you have any queries regarding this study you can contact me at afianazar17@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Participant's signature

Appendix B

Demographic form

Age: _____ **Gender:** _____

Education: _____ **Religion:** _____

Occupation: _____

Government

Private

Free lancing

Not working

Father's occupation: _____

Mother's occupation: _____

Family system: _____

Joint family

Nuclear family

Socioeconomic status: _____

Upper class

Middle class

Lower class

Appendix C

Rosenberg self-esteem scale

Please record the appropriate answer for each item, depending on whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4
At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4
I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4
I feel that I'm a person of worth.	1	2	3	4
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4
All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4

Appendix D

Physical Appearance Social Comparison-Revised

People sometimes compare their physical appearance to the physical appearance of others. This can be a comparison of their weight, body size, body shape, body fat or overall appearance. Thinking about how you generally compare yourself to others, please use the following scale to rate how often you make these kinds of comparisons.

Statements	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. When I'm out in public, I compare my physical appearance to the appearance of others.	0	1	2	3	4
2. When I meet a new person (same sex), I compare my body size to his/her body size.	0	1	2	3	4
3. When I'm at work or school, I compare my body shape to the body shape of others.	0	1	2	3	4
4. When I'm out in public, I compare my body fat to the body fat of others.	0	1	2	3	4
5. When I'm shopping for clothes, I compare my weight to the weight of others.	0	1	2	3	4
6. When I'm at a party, I compare my body shape to the body shape of others.	0	1	2	3	4
7. When I'm with a group of friends, I compare my weight to the weight of others.	0	1	2	3	4
8. When I'm out in public, I compare my body size to the body size of others.	0	1	2	3	4
9. When I'm with a group of friends, I compare my body size to the body size of others.	0	1	2	3	4
10. When I'm eating at a restaurant, I compare my body fat to the body fat of others.	0	1	2	3	4
11. When I'm at the gym, I compare my physical appearance to the appearance of others.	0	1	2	3	4

Report

ORIGINALITY REPORT

17%

SIMILARITY INDEX

11%

INTERNET SOURCES

10%

PUBLICATIONS

8%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	faculty.washington.edu Internet Source	2%
2	www.researchgate.net Internet Source	1%
3	academicworks.cuny.edu Internet Source	1%
4	Victoria Laker, Glenn Waller. "Does comparison of self with others influence body image among adult women? An experimental study in naturalistic settings", Eating and Weight Disorders - Studies on Anorexia, Bulimia and Obesity, 2021 Publication	1%
5	www.tandfonline.com Internet Source	1%
6	assets.researchsquare.com Internet Source	1%
7	Submitted to Nottingham Trent University Student Paper	1%
