



IS YOUR REFLECTION TRAUMATIZING YOU?

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ABSTRACT: -

Purpose: *You look into the mirror and do not like the way your skin looks. You see your photograph and immediately notice the bulge in the tummy. You enter Facebook just to realize that someone has tagged you in a picture where you feel you aren't well dressed as your other friends. Do all these thoughts cross your mind when you look at your reflection. Does looking into the mirrors make you feel dissatisfied, bad, depressing, self-neglected, aged, unfit, ugly? Do you perceive yourself as inferior to others? Do you tend to compare yourself to the body statistics and parameters of beauty depicted by celebrities or media?*

With the rise in social media influencers, users, followers during the Covid lockdown as people got locked inside the house and found out new ways to entertain themselves, body image issues have become a major concern. No more do we have to ration the photographs to be clicked as in the era before the smartphones. The pictures can be endless in number and the beautification software is at our fingertips. Still if one is dissatisfied with the photograph, it is easy to delete it, edit it further, and look as one wants to look, hiding the wrinkles, freckles, dark circles, double chin, etc. Somewhere down the line, we are trying to counter or want to change the normal body. The natural changes of the body as one age or due to lifestyle is no more acceptable.

Objective: *This research was done to study the extent to which the people, who are active on social media are conscious about their appearance, and are influenced by the social pressure of appearing a certain way.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *Quantitative analysis with a pre-established tool of BICI (body image concern inventory).*

Findings/Results: *The results derived depicted that the majority of the subjects have at some point of time felt discontent towards certain aspects of their body influenced by the social media trend of pictures, celebrity body type, and fashion, and wanted to present better photographs on social media. A few of them also wanted to change attributes if given a choice. The female was more influenced by the celebrity than the males. The samples in the bracket of 20-40 yrs. had more body image issues than the others. The females were more concerned about their bodies and looks than the males.*

Originality/Value: *The study points out how analytical we become of our body and how it affects our mindset and social behaviors.*

Paper type: *Quantitative Analysis*

Keywords: - body image, selfies, media influence, body dysmorphic disorder, body shaming, BICI.

INTRODUCTION: -

The recent trend and advancements on the internet and the social media communication have made it extremely easy for individuals to stay in touch with friends, family, and work during Covid lockdown. Since every outdoor entertainment has stopped, we are mostly spending our time over the gadgets seeing the world with the eyes of the lenses. This has bought another big issue, most of the gadgets now have a high-end camera which can easily hide the natural flaws in skin, hair, shape, etc and make one look extremely and unnaturally perfect.

The internet-based smartphones and other devices have also bought us extremely close to a celebrity's personal life. No more do we have to wait for the monthly film magazines, to read and see more about the celebrities. Their social media handles and their PR companies make sure to serve our brains with a lot more inside information of their life than we need to know, making

sure it's served to us in the most unnaturally perfect looks. Not only do we get their personal pictures apart from the shoot, but also their workout routine, skincare, and hair care routine. Not only do we get to see their designer wardrobe, footwear but also their nightdress. We see them all prim and perfect even if it's straight out of bed. This has somewhere down the line bought a lot of influence to the normal public and especially youngsters.

The strategic depiction of the glamour industry of only the best, beautiful and perfect pictures does not show the vast amount of money that goes behind them. An army of staff to dress them, do the perfect makeup to hide the flaws of each and every visible part with the help of concealers and making them sharp with contouring and highlighting the assets with the highlighter. Then the top-notch photographer clicks those perfect shots only to later give it to the editing team to edit the pics and the video clips and add that extra wow effects. Not to be said, what they have behind the screen; a big team taking care of their so-called perfectly fit and slender body, an army of chefs to make a meal with exactly the number of calories needed as prescribed by their high-end celebrity dietician and the most expensive celebrity trainer helping them burn the exact calories. Yes, they do put in a lot of hard work but that comes with a cost and luxury which a normal person can't even dream of.

A layman only looks at the beauty and glamour standards depicted on the screen and doesn't know what goes behind the stage, thus we start idolizing the depicted truth about the body image, thus social media has put on us a, predefined body image of a perfect body. They give us the statistics to fit in if one has to look attractive, thus increasing the subclinical symptoms of body dysmorphic disorder in a person without him or her being aware of it. The study aims to do a pilot project on how we can use the BICI tool to understand the Body dysmorphic disorder present in the population that is active on social media across all ages.

1. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.1 Body dysmorphic disorder: -

Body Dysmorphic disorder is a psychological health condition where one is obsessed about the minor issues in their looks which may or may not be visible to others. It is also referred to as dysmorphophobia. The person with BDD often perceives themselves as ugly, fat, or a certain body part of them needing correction like a crooked nose, lips, teeth, etc. This is so strongly inbuilt that the person wouldn't want to look at the mirror or his or her pictures at all or spend hours looking at the mirror and feel anxious, depressed, and sad. It also causes an individual to waste time and money in trying to rectify these minor flaws that others might not even notice. It may make one socially repulsive and just shut the world out. Trying to avoid getting clicked, being away from the social gathering, and spending time in a state of utter turmoil. [1]

Body Dysmorphic statistics in 2021: - Dr. Jake compiled the statistics from worldwide on body image concern among men, women, teenagers, and children in an article published on March 1st that stated as follows [2]

Males: -

Children and Teenagers

1. As per the studies in U.S. 25% of the male children and teenagers desired to have a toned, muscular body along with leanness.
2. Researches done in Australia showed 17% were not satisfied with their body size and shape.
3. Multiracial and African American boys were twice more likely to try weight gain for aesthetic purposes than Caucasian teenage boys
4. 20% of German child/adolescent boys felt they were fat, 15% dreaded gaining weight, and 25% informed regularly feeling anxious about weight or shape.
5. In a study in the U.S. out of 4,701 adolescent boys, 23% reported using unhealthy muscle building behaviour and this figure increased to 30% at a 7-year follow-up

Adult Men

1. Approximately 15% of Australian men reported an overvaluation of weight and shape.
2. In a study among US adult men, 9% reported recurrent body checking and 5% informed body image avoidance.
3. In a sample of French university students, more than 85% of the male samples were dissatisfied with their muscular built.
4. 2% of the German male population met diagnostic criteria for body dysmorphic disorder, and more than 2.5% exhibited clinically significant levels of muscle dysphoria.
5. Nearly 22% of young men reported engaging in muscle-bulking habits like eating more or differently (17%), using supplements (7%), and using androgenic-anabolic steroids (3%).
6. It was found that in around 50,000 adults, 11% thought that they were unattractive, 16% were uncomfortable in a swimsuit and 41% of men were self-conscious about their weight and thought of themselves to be too heavy.

Females:-**Children and Teenagers**

1. Studies done in the U.K. show that around 50% of 13-year-old American girls were unhappy with their body and the number steadily grew to nearly 80% by the time girls reached 17 years of age.
2. Nearly 80% of young teenage girls report fears of becoming fat.
3. A study conducted in Germany reported as one-third of the German Adolescent girls, perceived a BMI of less than 18 to be the ideal female body size. 36% of them felt they were fat, 22% were constantly scared of gaining weight and 36% were constantly anxious and upset about their weight and shape.
4. nearly 50% of 657 Spanish girls expressed a desire for being thin despite being of normal body weight. 90% of the overweight girls wanted to drop the weight and become thin while only 11% wanted their body to stay the same.

Adult Women

1. In a study done on 1000 adult women (aged 30-74 years) in Switzerland 70% of the women wanted to be thinner despite falling into the normal weight range.
2. Around 60% of elderly women (aged 60-70 years) in Austria are dissatisfied with their body and more than half reported restricting their eating as a means to prevent weight gain
3. In the U.S. 23% of adult women informed frequent body checking and 11% stated body image avoidance.
4. A cohort study reported similar patterns in rates of body dissatisfaction between Caucasian and African-American adult women, 50% of the women from each group reported body dissatisfaction.
5. 23% of Australian women reported an overbotheration of weight and shape.
6. Approximately 70% of adult women report withdrawing from social activities due to their body image
7. Among 50,000 women, 20% thought that they were not attractive, 30% were uncomfortable in a swimsuit, 60% thought they were obese.
8. In a study done on 160 African American adult women, 11% felt that they were unattractive, 47% were not happy with their body, and 75% were distressed with their weight.

1.2 Influence of media and body dysmorphic disorder: -

In the current trends of social media, a lot goes into how to present oneself over the virtual platform. A lot of comparison on how one is dressed and looks is a common norm on social media. Celebrity trends and fashion are something everyone wants to imitate. It's not only how others look at us, but also how a person perceives him or herself too that is causing a major body discontentment. While others might find you beautiful/handsome/gorgeous/graceful you might just feel that your face is too long, bad skin, imperfect height, and over or underweight. [3]

Mainstream media mostly promote the idea of thinness, being beautiful, fair to be equated with numerous positive outcomes. A research study done in 2004 studied the top 25 children's videos and found that more than two-thirds of them associated being thin and being physically attractive with positive personality traits (e.g., caring, kindness) while 75% of the videos linked obesity with traits of bad taste. [4]

In 2010, 180 cartoon programs were analysed and it was shocking to see that 87% of female lead cast were depicted as underweight [5]

In another study of popular children's cartoons, females depicted as stressing about words like dieting, bothering about weight and were portrayed as underweight as compared to their male counterparts, and those characters who were unintelligent, unhappy, grumpy, mean, and selfish were often portrayed as overweight or obese. [6]

Some evident data shows the specific impact the media has on people's body image concerns.

1. In a study done on young girls aged between 13-17 years, 50% of the samples informed a desire to be as thin as the models in the fashion magazines and stated that these magazines gave them an aim to strive for such a lean body.
2. Another study depicted that simply viewing a Barbie doll tends to reduce body esteem and increase a yearning for thinness in girls aged 5-8 years [7]
3. A survey done on 548 adolescent girls found that 47% wanted to lose weight after seeing the images of skinny models 69% accepted that these images influenced their conception of the ideal body weight. [8]
4. Another research study depicted that the Girls who read glamour magazines related to weight loss were six times more likely to engage in extreme unhealthy weight loss behaviour (e.g., taking diet pills, using laxatives, vomiting) as compared to the girls who do not read such magazines [9]
5. A study found that using social media for as little as 30 minutes a day can change the perception of young women towards their own bodies in a negative way. [10]

1.3 BISI Tool: -

The Body Image Concern Inventory (BICI) was developed by Littleton et al. as a 19-item questionnaire (possible score 19 to 95) to be used as a measure of dysmorphic body disorder. The reason for developing Body Image Concern Inventory (BICI) was to assess dysmorphic appearance concern and it has been found to be a reliable and valid instrument in many studies. [11]

The BICI demonstrated 96 % sensitivity and 67 % specificity in distinguishing clinical disorders from subclinical symptoms in 40 undergraduate students who were diagnosed with body dysmorphic disorder and eating disorders [12].

In another study, The BICI was administered to 117 samples who were seeking cosmetic rhinoplasty they were also interviewed by a psychiatrist to evaluate for a diagnosis of body dysmorphic disorder. It detected the disorder with 93.5 % sensitivity, 80.8 % specificity, 63.4 % positive predictive value, and 96.5 % negative predictive value at a cut-off score of 42 [13].

Two studies were carried out by Wang et.al to examine the psychometric properties of the BICI, the Chinese version of BICI in English and Mandarin was administered to 1,231 Chinese young adults. Test-retest reliability of 0.73 over a 6-month interval was observed for the total scale. Confirmatory factor analysis supported a 3-factor model for the BICI: avoidant behaviours (AB), safety behaviours against perceived flaws (SB), and negative appearance evaluation (NE). [14]

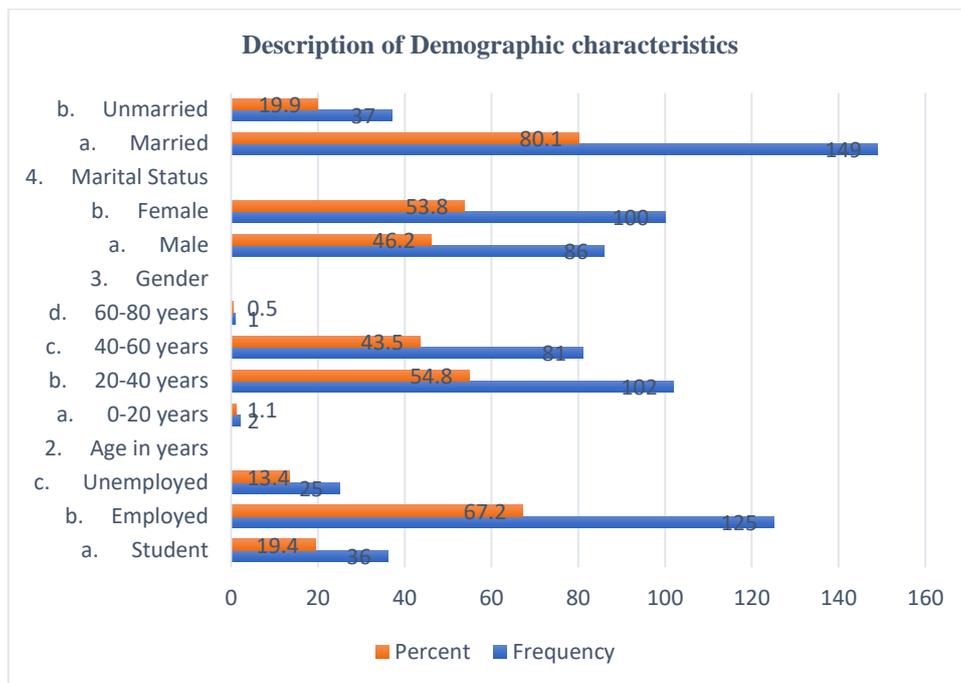
In another study, the avoidant behaviours best differentiated eating disorder patients and matched controls in a study done on 47 female patients with eating disorders and 56 matched control groups. Safety behaviours against perceived flaws best differentiated between the non-clinical and clinical groups (Cohen's $d = 0.75$); negative appearance evaluation was most closely associated with a level of negative affect and subjective well-being (inverse relationship) in both clinical and non-clinical groups. Eating Disorder patients scored significantly higher on the BICI total and three subscale scores than controls. [14]

- 2. OBJECTIVE:** This pilot study aims to identify the body dysmorphic disorder present in the users of social networking sites and how social media affects them. The primary objective is to use the BICI scale to understand the BDD present, the effect of social media, and the coping mechanism on social networking sites. The secondary aim is to also understand if it makes them extremely conscious about their looks and avoid socialisations.
- 3. METHOD:** The study is a quantitative analysis using a pre-established tool on the BISI. The tool was shared to 100 male and 100 female samples randomly who were active social media users directly or indirectly. Aging 18yrs and above. 86 males and 100 females replied back to the questionnaire. SPSS 20 software was used for statistical analysis.

INCLUSION CRITERIA: Random sampling method was used and samples were selected from Active users of Instagram and Facebook. Individuals above 18yrs were selected

EXCLUSION CRITERIA: - Those who didn't return the google form in the given time period.

4. RESULTS



Graph I: Description of Demographic characteristics

Total sample size comprised of 100 females and 87 males, out of which 149 were married and 37 singles. Maximum participants were employed and between 20-40yrs of age.

Table I: Percentage distribution of subjects according to an item ‘Do you feel influenced with the celebrity body styles and fashion’

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Never	F	44	40	84
	%	51.2%	40.0%	45.2%
Rarely	F	12	17	29
	%	14.0%	17.0%	15.6%
1 Sometimes	F	20	35	55
	%	23.3%	35.0%	29.6%
Often	F	7	5	12
	%	8.1%	5.0%	6.5%
Always	F	3	3	6
	%	3.5%	3.0%	3.2%
	F	86	100	186
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

While 51.2% of the males said they never got affected by celebrity body style and fashion, 40% of females said they never got affected with the celebrity body style and fashion. 14% males and 17% females rarely got affected but 35% females said they

sometimes got affected by the celebrity body style and fashion. 3% of both the genders felt always influenced by the celebrity style and fashion.

Table II: - Frequency distribution of items in the BICI scale

Sl no	Items	No	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1.	I am dissatisfied with some aspects of my appearance	F	55	41	57	21	12
		%	29.6	22	30.6	11.3	6.5
2.	I spend a significant amount of time checking my appearance in the mirror	F	86	61	27	8	4
		%	46.2	32.8	14.5	4.3	2.2
3.	I feel others are speaking negatively of my appearance	F	95	42	38	6	5
		%	51.1	22.6	20.4	3.2	2.7
4.	I am reluctant to engage in social activities when my appearance does not meet my satisfaction.	F	94	41	34	11	6
		%	50.5	22	18.3	5.9	3.2
5.	I feel there are certain aspects of my appearance that are extremely unattractive	F	90	33	41	12	10
		%	48.4	17.7	22	6.5	5.4
6.	I buy cosmetic products to try to improve my appearance	F	106	43	21	11	5
		%	57	23.1	11.3	5.9	2.7
7.	I seek reassurance from others about my appearance	F	88	48	35	7	8
		%	47.3	25.8	18.8	3.8	4.3
8.	I feel there are certain aspects of my appearance I would like to change	F	51	42	52	22	19
		%	27.4	22.6	28	11.8	10.2
9.	I am ashamed of some part of my body	F	109	20	35	16	6
		%	58.6	10.8	18.8	8.6	3.2
10.	I compare my appearance to that of fashion models or others	F	131	25	18	4	8
		%	70.4	13.4	9.7	2.2	4.3
11.	I try to camouflage certain flaws in my appearance	F	109	28	33	6	10
		%	58.6	15.1	17.7	3.2	5.4
12.	I examine flaws in my appearance	F	70	51	46	8	11
		%	37.6	27.4	24.7	4.3	5.9
13.	I have bought clothing to hide a certain aspect of my appearance	F	105	28	25	18	10
		%	56.5	15.1	13.4	9.7	5.4
14.	I feel others are more physically attractive than me	F	70	29	47	25	15
		%	37.6	15.6	25.3	13.4	8.1
15.	I have considered consulting/consulted some sort of medical expert regarding flaws in my appearance	F	142	20	15	4	5
		%	76.3	10.8	8.1	2.2	2.7
16.	I have been embarrassed to leave the house because of my appearance	F	148	14	15	3	6
		%	79.6	7.5	8.1	1.6	3.2
17.	I fear that others will discover my flaws in appearance	F	122	29	20	8	7
		%	65.6	15.6	10.8	4.3	3.8
18.	I have missed social activities because of my appearance	F	136	23	16	6	5
		%	73.1	12.4	8.6	3.2	2.7
19.	I have avoided looking at my appearance in the mirror	F	139	17	19	5	6
		%	74.7	9.1	10.2	2.7	3.2

61.3% of samples didn't allow pictures to be taken when they didn't look a certain way. 43.5% use filters while taking pictures to look beautiful. 53.2% modify the pictures before posting them on social media. 53.2% compare themselves with others on social networking platforms. 54.8% of people feel influenced by celebrity style and fashion.

Table III: - Analysis of various aspects of Socio personal factors and BICI scores

N=186

Parameters	No of items	Max Score	Mean	Mean %	SD
Socio personal factors	8	40	16.7	41.75	5.206
BICI Scale					
Negative Evaluation items	5	25	10.02	40.08	4.267
SB Perceived flaws	8	40	15.52	38.8	7.138
Avoidant Behaviours	6	30	9.9	33.0	5.007
Total BICI Scores	19	95	35.44	37.3	15.030

Mean% of socio-personal factors is 41.75%. In the BICI scale 40.08% of people had a temperament of doing Negative evaluations about themselves. 38.8% of people involved in safety behaviours against perceived flaws. 33% involved in avoidant behaviours to avoid social appearance. The total compiled BICI score is 37.3%.

Table IV: - Analysis of various aspects of Socio personal factors and BICI scores with respect to gender

N=186

Parameters	No of items	Max Score	Male			Female		
			Mean	Mean %	SD	Mean	Mean %	SD
Socio personal factors	8	40	15.26	38.15	5.595	17.94	44.85	0.452
BICI Scale								
Negative Evaluation items	5	25	8.81	35.24	4.261	11.06	44.24	4.010
SB Perceived flaws	8	40	12.92	32.3	6.417	17.76	44.4	6.994
Avoidant Behaviours	6	30	8.85	29.5	4.732	10.8	36.0	5.083
Total BICI Scores	19	95	30.58	32.18	14.036	39.62	41.7	1.466

The results indicated that females were more inclined towards the symptoms of body dysmorphic disorder against males.

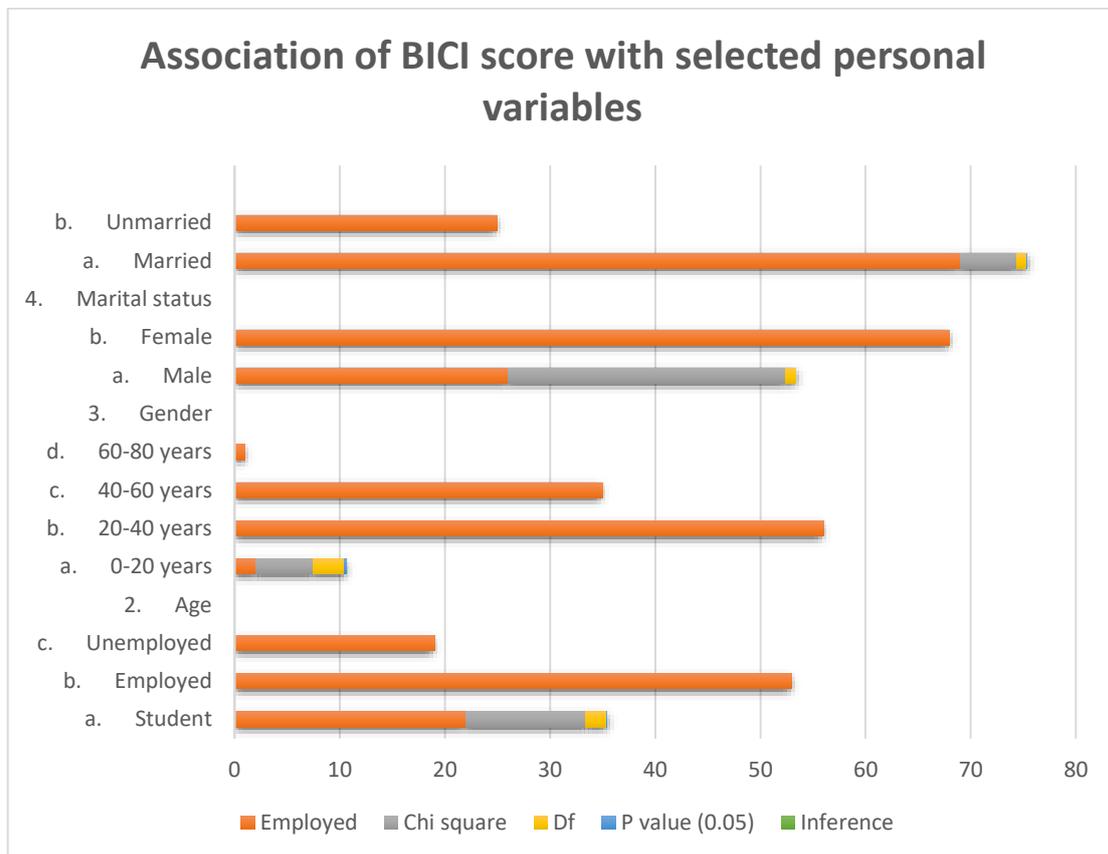
Table V: - Correlation between socio personal factors scores and BICI scores

N=186

	Mean	SD	r value	P value	Remarks
Socio personal factors	16.7	5.206	0.625	0.00	Significant positive correlation

There was a significant positive correlation between socio personal factor and BICI scores.

N=186



Graph II: - Association of BICI score with selected personal variables

Results indicated that there was a significant co relation between all personal variables except age to the BICI scores.

5. DISCUSSION: -

The study explored how critically we analyse our bodies and the role played by the media and celebrities. Obtained data, revealed that both males and females were equally bothered about their physical features, the gender difference concerning body image was significant. While 45% of the sample said they didn't feel the influence of celebrity's body and fashion styles the others said they feel influenced. Others said they are influenced sometimes while 3% said they always felt the pressure of celebrity body shape and fashion style. And in this case, the females were more influenced by celebrities compared to males. Females being 60% and males being 56%. The results were similar to the majority of the studies that revealed that females suffer more from body image issues.

The results indicated that only 29.6% of samples were content with their appearance. Others had some element of dissatisfaction about their appearance. 54% of the sample size spent a significant amount of time checking their appearance in the mirror. 49% of the samples avoided social gatherings when they felt their appearance was not satisfying. 52% found that certain aspect of their appearance was extremely unattractive. 53% depended on other's reassurance about their looks. 62% examine the flaws in their appearance while only 42% tried to camouflage the perceived flaws in their appearance. But the surprise element was that unlike the researcher's expectation 70% of people said they don't compare themselves with fashion models.

Confirmatory factor analysis supported three 3-factor models in this study as well just like the previous studies were done with 40.08 % samples depicting negative appearance evaluation (NE item 1-5) out of which 35.24% were male and 44.24% were female, 38.8% used safety behaviours against perceived flaws (SB item 6-13) out of which 32.3% were male and 44.4% were females, 33.0 % depicted avoidant behaviours (AB items 14-19) out of which 29.5% were males and 36.0% were females. This depicted that female had more incidence of body dysmorphic concerns.

Socio-personal factors had a significant positive co-relation with the BICI scores. BICI scores were also significantly related to employment status, gender, and marital status. Also, 60% of females were influenced by celebrity body style and fashion. To conclude it was proved that BICI is a reliable and valid tool for evaluating dysmorphic appearance concern.

6. CONCLUSION

This study results depict that most respondents were dissatisfied with some aspects of their body at times or most of the time and have body image issues. They have experienced a state where the reassurance from others worked or they avoided social gatherings irrespective of gender. The study also shows how females are slightly more inclined towards celebrity styling. The researcher further aims to do research on celebrity influence and find its impact on this body image discontentment in the general public on larger sample size.

Various studies have also shown that media plays a major role in establishing pre-defined ideal body type and a major part of this is strategically placed by the models and celebrities. People want to look like a certain actor/ actress and go to far ends in their given range to achieve those physical attributes. Be it a workout, extreme diet, supplements, cosmetic surgery, or makeup. The unrealistic and unhealthy ways have been causing a lot of physical and emotional distress in the common person.

A little more mindfulness and responsible approach by all these so-called influencers in the way they depict themselves on the screen, lyrics of the songs, etc would help to raise a healthy, self-accepted, more confident in their natural skin generation. It is suggested that the glamour industry and society should understand that we all come with flaws, no one is perfect and it's OK to accept oneself as they are. A certain skin colour, skin texture, hair kind, body shape or type doesn't define a person.

The industry that shoes us to stay slim and trim and exercise also shoes us that most of the celebrities are addicted to smoking, alcohol, and drugs which is extremely contradictory. Let's be honest to the public, and give more emphasis on physical and mental health than just the physical attribute.

7. SCALE USED

7.1 BISI

Body Image Concern Inventory in English

Please respond to each item by circling how often you experience the described feelings or How often do you perform the described behaviours.

(1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=always)

1. I am dissatisfied with some aspects of my appearance
2. I spend a significant amount of time checking my appearance in the mirror
3. I feel others are speaking negatively of my appearance
4. I am reluctant to engage in social activities when my appearance does not meet my satisfaction
5. I feel there are certain aspects of my appearance that are extremely unattractive
6. I buy cosmetic products to try to improve my appearance
7. I seek reassurance from others about my appearance
8. I feel there are certain aspects of my appearance I would like to change
9. I am ashamed of some part of my body
10. I compare my appearance to that of fashion models or others
11. I try to camouflage certain flaws in my appearance
12. I examine flaws in my appearance
13. I have bought clothing to hide a certain aspect of my appearance
14. I feel others are more physically attractive than me
15. I have considered consulting/consulted some sort of medical expert regarding flaws in my appearance
16. I have been embarrassed to leave the house because of my appearance
17. I fear that others will discover my flaws in appearance
18. I have missed social activities because of my appearance
19. I have avoided looking at my appearance in the mirror

The above items classification as 3-factor model.

- i. negative appearance evaluation (NE). item 1-5
- ii. safety behaviours against perceived flaws (SB) item 6-13
- iii. avoidant behaviours (AB) 14-19

Along with it, baseline information was also collected from the samples about

7.2 Baseline data

- Name
- Age
- Sex
- Employment status
- Phone number
- Email ID
- Marital status

7.3 Socio personal aspects

- 1) I don't allow my pictures to be taken because I don't like the way I look
- 2) I use filters while taking pictures to look beautiful.
- 3) I modify my pictures before posting on social media
- 4) I feel internally pressured to look acceptable on social media
- 5) I have faced body shaming.
- 6) Do you compare yourself with others when you are on a social networking platform?
- 7) Do you work out regularly?
- 8) Do you feel influenced with the celebrity body styles and fashion?

Options given were Never, rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always

Consent form: - voluntarily responding to the study which is a part of the research and this research will be kept confidential except for the scientific reason and publication and will be kept confidential.

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