



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Psychology**

**BINGE EATING BEHAVIOR, BODY IMAGE AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG ADOLESCENTS**

**KEY WORDS:** binge eating behavior, body image, life satisfaction, adolescents

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Binge Eating Behavior, Body Image and Life Satisfaction among Adolescents. A non-experimental correlational research design was adopted in the study. The data was collected from 300 adolescents from 13 to 19 years. Non-probability convenience sampling was used to gather the data. The data was statistically analyzed using the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to find the correlation between groups and Independent Sample t-test was also used to measure the significant difference between groups. Results indicated that there was a positive relationship between Binge Eating Behavior and Body Image among Adolescents. It was observed that there was a significant relationship between Binge Eating Behavior and Life Satisfaction among adolescents. Similarly, significant relationship between Body Image and Life Satisfaction was also observed. It was also being concluded that gender plays an important role in differences for Body Image and Life Satisfaction where females have reported higher levels than males. However, it was found that there was no significant difference in the scores of Binge Eating Behavior based on gender.

**INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is a transitional phase of life that indicates rapid growth, development and maturation of the body. It is the period of human development that starts with puberty and ends with physiological maturity, although the exact age span varies across individuals. Adolescent years are a time of tremendous change. Puberty, which is characterized by a surge in hormonal activity and rapid physiological growth, significantly crystallizes this transformation (Susman, 2003). Adolescents must create their own identity apart from their parents in the years after puberty, which can be challenging (Kroger, 2007). Development of ego, conflict with parents' ideals, adoption of new lifestyle, the relation with peers, and concerns over body image are the common events occurred during adolescence.

Adolescence represents a vital stage in the development of positive or negative body image. Unhealthy body image is related with obesity and physical inactivity and often plays an important role in the development of eating disorders during adolescence. It represents a critical period for healthy body image development due to the type and magnitude of age-related transitions occurring during this time.

Body image is a multidimensional construct broadly describing internal, subjective representations of physical appearances and bodily experiences. How people perceive and feel about their own bodies is referred to as body image. It is based on how someone perceives, feels, and thinks about their body. Typically, this is conceived as including body size estimation, assessment of body attractiveness, and feelings related to body shape and size (Grogan, 1999). It is an integral part of how we understand ourselves and encompasses how we perceive, think and act of our bodies.

Due to the physical, social, and psychological changes that adolescents go through, they are especially susceptible to body dissatisfaction (Clay, 2005). During and after puberty, adolescent girls experience a variety of physical and social changes that can have a significant impact on their body image and become more prominent by late adolescence (Littleton, 2003). A negative body image may reflect a conflict between perception and reality. Dissatisfaction with weight is strongly associated with an increased prevalence of obesity. Body satisfaction is an important aspect of body image related attitudes which refers to the evaluative beliefs about one's appearance (Cash, 2012).

The Body dissatisfaction has been associated with a low

quality of life. A general cognitive and moral evaluation of a person's quality of life in accordance with standards they have chosen for themselves is known as life satisfaction (Diener, 1985). According to the DSM-5 criteria, Binge eating disorder is defined by episodes of binge eating, consuming large amounts of food over a period of time. At the same time, the person loses control over the quantity and quality of food and is unable to stop binge-eating episodes. Other criteria include fast eating, eating until feeling uncomfortably full, eating alone, disgust or guilt toward oneself and one's body, embarrassment and eating without starvation.

**METHODS**

**Research design –**

The study uses a Non-Experimental Correlational Research Design. Sample size was 300 adolescents (150 males and 150 females) from Karnataka. The data was collected from age group 13 to 19 years. Non-probability convenience sampling was used to gather the data.

**Objectives of the study –**

To assess the relationship between binge eating behavior and body image.

To access the relationship between binge eating behavior and life satisfaction.

To access the relationship between body image and life satisfaction among adolescents.

To find out the gender difference in binge eating behavior among adolescents.

To find out the gender difference in body image among adolescents.

To find out the gender difference in life satisfaction among adolescents.

**Hypotheses-**

H01: There is no significant relationship between binge eating behavior and body image among adolescents.

H02: There is no significant relationship between binge eating behavior and life satisfaction among adolescents.

H03: There is no significant relationship between body image and life satisfaction among adolescents.

H04: There is no significant difference in binge eating behavior among adolescents based on gender.

H05: There is no significant difference in body image among adolescents based on gender.

H06: There is no significant difference in life satisfaction among adolescents based on gender.

**Instruments-**

Binge Eating Scale (BES) - a self-administered questionnaire composed of 16 items.

The Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ) - a self-report each item is scored 1 to 6 with "Never" = 1 and "Always" = 6 and the overall score is the total across the 8 items.

The Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) - a 40-item likert-type scale which may be administered in groups or individually.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data was collected and analyzed using SPSS. The results are presented for each of the hypotheses.

H01: There is no significant relationship between binge eating behavior and body image among adolescents.

**Table No.1 Correlation between Binge Eating Behavior and Body Image**

	N	M	SD	R	P
Binge Eating Behavior	300	13.98	7.74	.564**	.001
Body Image		24.69	9.87		

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

Table 1 showing the correlation coefficient results that there was a significant positive correlation between Binge Eating Behavior and Body Image ( $r = .564, p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H01) was rejected.

Holmes, et al. 2015, did a study on the link between body image and binge eating, which predicted that there is a relationship between body dissatisfaction and binge eating.

H02: There is no significant relationship between binge eating behavior and life satisfaction among adolescents.

**Table No. 2 Correlation between Binge Eating Behavior and Life Satisfaction**

	N	M	SD	R	P
Binge Eating Behavior	300	13.98	7.74	-.380**	.001
Life Satisfaction		60.11	13.60		

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

Table 2 showing the correlation between binge eating behavior and life satisfaction. The correlation coefficient results showed that there was a significantly weak negative correlation between Binge Eating Behavior and Life Satisfaction ( $r = -.380, p < 0.01$ ), that is, as binge eating behavior increases life satisfaction decreases. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H02) was rejected.

In a study conducted by Claydon, (2020) it was found that individuals who have had eating disorders scored lower on life satisfaction than the general population.

**H03: There is no significant relationship between body image and life satisfaction among adolescents.**

**Table No.3 Correlation between Body Image and Life Satisfaction**

	N	M	SD	R	P
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Binge Eating Behavior	300	24.69	9.87	-.383**	.00
Life Satisfaction		60.11	13.60		

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

Table 3 showing the correlation coefficient results that there was a significantly weak negative correlation between Body Image and Life Satisfaction ( $r = -.383, p < 0.01$ ), that is, as body image increases life satisfaction decreases. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H03) was rejected.

In a study conducted by Yarmohammadi (2020), it was found that Quality of life was significantly correlated with body image perception. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between body image perception and quality of life (life satisfaction). In another study conducted by Nayir (2016) suggested that greater attention should be given to body image as a strong predictor of Quality of life and life satisfaction.

**H04: There is no significant difference in binge eating behavior among adolescents based on gender.**

**Table No. 4 Independent Sample t test for Binge Eating Behavior based on Gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SE	T	P
Binge Eating	Male	150	13.49	7.81	.638	1.097	.273
	Female	150	14.47	7.66	.625		

Table 4 showing Independent Sample t-test conducted to compare the differences in gender in binge eating. The results showed the value ( $t = 1.097, p > 0.05$ ) which revealed that there was no significant difference in the scores of binge eating behavior based on gender. Therefore the null hypothesis (H04) was accepted.

The frequency of binge-eating episodes, perceived binge-eating episodes, and overeating episodes did not differ substantially by sex in a study by Lydecker and Grilo (2018). Girls are more likely than boys to report being unsatisfied with their weight, dieting to lose weight, and using purging, but they are either equally or less likely to report binge eating and using excessive activity to lose weight (Anderson, 2004).

**H05: There is no significant difference in body image among adolescents based on gender.**

**Table No.5 Independent Sample t test for Body Image based on Gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SE	T	P
Body Image	Male	150	22.96	9.06	.739	3.072	.002
	Female	150	26.41	10.37	.847		

Table 5 showing Independent Sample t-test conducted to compare the differences in gender in Body Image. The results showed the value ( $t = 3.072, p < 0.05$ ) which means that there is a significant difference in the scores of body image based on gender. It appears that females have a higher level of body image concerns ( $M = 26.41, SD = 10.37$ ) than males ( $M = 22.96, SD = 9.06$ ). Therefore the null hypothesis (H05) was rejected.

In a study conducted by Ansari, et al. (2014), it was discovered that there is a considerable gender difference in body image, with more females than males reporting being moderately or very preoccupied about their appearance. Another study conducted by Kumar and Shaheen (2016) revealed significant gender disparities in body image, which is consistent with the findings of the current study.

H06: There is no significant difference in life satisfaction among adolescents based on gender.

**Table No.6 Independent Sample t test for Life Satisfaction based on Gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SE	T	P
Life Satisfaction	Male	150	164.21	22.07	1.80	2.581	.010
	Female	150	171.77	28.32	2.31		

Table 6 showing Independent Sample t-test conducted to compare the differences in gender for Life Satisfaction. The results showed the value ( $t = 2.581, p < 0.05$ ) which means that there is a significant difference in the scores of life satisfaction based on gender. It appears that females have a higher level of life satisfaction ( $M = 171.77, SD = 28.32$ ) than males ( $M = 164.21, SD = 22.07$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected.

Gender disparities in life satisfaction were found to be substantial but tiny in a study by Joshanloo and Jovanovic (2020) to examine the relationship between gender and life satisfaction. Compared to men, women expressed higher levels of life satisfaction. And it backs up the current study. However, a study on life satisfaction depending on gender revealed that there is no difference in life satisfaction among men and women (Daly, 2020).

**Implications**

The study will be helpful in identifying how to structure counseling and guidance services for adolescents. The findings of the present study can be used to develop interventions for adolescents with body image concerns. The findings will also help school counselors and other educational professionals to pay more attention to adolescents and their mental health. It will also help parents and teachers to bring light about the issues faced by adolescents and to take care of individual needs during this very crucial developmental age of adolescence.

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