Body image refers to the similarity between actual and perceived ideal body shape. Everyone has a body image and it has strong emotional overtones based on his experience in life. Body image is a multidimensional self-attitude toward one’s body, particularly its size, shape and aesthetics. It refers to persons’ evaluations and affective experiences regarding their physical attributes, as well as their investments in appearance as a domain for self-evaluation. Body-image evaluations and emotions derive in part from self-perceived discrepancies from internalized physical ideals. Body image investment includes the extent of attentional self focus on one’s appearance, its importance or schematicity vis-à-vis one’s sense of self and behaviors for the management or enhancement of appearance. Concerns about weight and shape are conventionally associated with women. Fallon and Rozin (1985) reported that women wanted to be thinner than they thought they were. Tiggmann and Pennington (1990) also reported body dissatisfaction in women. In contrast man’s body satisfaction appears to be high but they also show body dissatisfaction (Cash & Winstead, 1986; Ridgeway & Tylka, 2005).

Dissatisfaction with one’s body image may result in depression. The term ‘depression’ covers a variety of negative moods and behavior changes. Some are normal mood fluctuations and other meet the definition of clinical problems. The mood change may be temporary or long lasting. It may range, from a relatively minor feeling of melancholy to a deeply negative view of the world and an inability to function effectively (Sarason & Sarason, 2002). Depression is high in females than in males (Carson, Butcher & Mineka...
The increasing incidence of depression may have a possible relation between body image and depression. Hence, an attempt has been made to study educational and gender differences in body image and depression among students.

**Method**

**Sample**

The total sample comprised 100 students. Out of these 50 were school students and 50 were college students. These two groups were further divided according to gender, i.e., thus each group consisted of 25 males and 25 females. The age for school students ranged from 13 to 16 years and for college students ranged from 18 to 21 years. Participants were taken from different schools and colleges of Delhi.

Design: 2x2 factorial design was used.

**Tools**

The body image was measured by Body Esteem Scale (Franzoi & Shield, 1984). The Scale consists of 35 items, each has substantial loading in at least one of the three factors for women and men. It has five response categories ranging from strong negative feelings to strong positive feelings with score from 1 to 5.

Reliability was measured by computing alpha coefficient. For males, this measure of internal consistency in alpha coefficients of .78 for the attractiveness factor, .85 for the upper body strength factor and .86 for the general physical condition factor. For females, alpha coefficients were .78 for attractiveness factor, .87 for the weight concern factor and .82 for the general physical condition factor. The discriminant validity for males and females for various dimensions were calculated. It was reasonably good.

Depression was measured by Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987). It is one of the most widely used inventories for depression. There are total 21 group of statement

**Results**

Mean scores of body image and depression of different groups were calculated and F ratio and correlation were used for analyzing the results. Results are given in different tables. When ANOVA was calculated for body image only gender emerged as significant \( F = 5.18, <.05 \). In other comparisons, significant difference was not found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Mean of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Body Image</td>
<td>114.24</td>
<td>111.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>13.04</td>
<td>10.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Body Image</td>
<td>104.36</td>
<td>106.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>10.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean of Means</td>
<td>Body Image</td>
<td>109.3</td>
<td>108.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>12.02</td>
<td>10.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Correlation coefficient between body image and depression of school and college, male and female students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>School Students</th>
<th>College Students</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>-0.356*</td>
<td>-0.413**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at .05 level; ** Significant at .01 level

Table-2 shows a negative correlation coefficient between body image and depression for male (-0.356) and female students (-0.413) which is significant at .05 and .01 level of confidence respectively. However, coefficients of correlation between other two variables of school and college students were not significant.

Discussion

The aim of the study is to examine educational and gender differences in body image and depression among students. Results indicate that main effect for level of education was not significant. It means that school and college students did not differ on body image. Body image being particularly related with the body appearance has more to do with the physiological factors than any other factors. It seems that whatever the image an individual has developed early and the life was purely in the physiological ways and has nothing to do with the later age or education.

Results reveal that F-ratio of gender related to body image was found to be significant at .05 level of significance. It means that male and female students differ significantly on body image. It may be observed from table-1 that male students have obtained 112.70 mean body image score and female students obtained 105.36 mean body image score. Since F-ratio for gender came to be significant, we can say that males have significantly more positive body image than females. It is interesting to note that same results have been obtained in American culture (Cash & Winstead, 1986; Davis & Katzman, 1996). Though it seems that Indian culture differs from American culture in a number of ways, but perhaps the explanation given by above mentioned researchers in terms of social construction seem to be equally true for the Indian culture also. To them an understanding of the differing social construction of female and male within the U.S. culture seems to be responsible for the gender differences in body image. Moreover, some feminine theorists have also written that “feminine body is constructed as an object to be looked at”. It means that body image of a women is more important to be looked at by others than by herself.

The interactional effect of level of education and gender was found to be non-significant. It means that body image has in no way to do with the level of education.

There were non-significant F-ratios for educational level, gender and interaction of the two variables on depression. The sources related to depression are perhaps more related with the family, neighborhood, peer group, rearing style etc., hence the seeds of depression which work as precipitating factor for depression are sown in the personality of the individual to the sources other than the education and gender. So non-significant differences between the depression of male and female, school and college students seem to be obvious. Though study conducted by Diane et al. (2002) shows that boys though present a similar rate of depressive symptoms than girls prior to adolescence, girls become more depressive than boys after adolescent period. But samples of the two studies were different. Perhaps belonging to the same
socio-economic background, cultural background and residential background did not exhibit differences in depression.

Results show non-significant relationship between body image and depression of school and college students which means that there is no significant relationship between body image and depression of school and college students. However, a significant but negative relationship was found between body image and depression of male and female students.

The negative correlation was obtained more for females than males. Many feminist scholars have argued that cultural norms and expectations encourage girls and women to be attentive to and psychologically invested in their physical appearance, which can undermine their well-being and contribute to eating deregulation, depression, and other psychological difficulties (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990).

Allgood (1990) found the significant relationship between body image and depression for both sexes. They found that females reported more depressive symptoms and negative body image than males. Shin and Paik (2003) also obtained significant negative correlation between body image and depression.

This is further confirmed from the non-significant difference between the correlation of body image and depression of school and college students, and significant difference between male and female students.

References


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This book is unique as it is the real life experiences of an applied psychologist. I intimately know the author as a student, colleague and a true friend. He is definitely a ‘human’ with higher values and a laudable professional with scholarship based on analytical thinking and high cognitive abilities.

The prologue puts the reader in curiosity as youngman (25 years old) approaches the clinical Psychological saying “Sir, my ambition is to become a clinical psychologist like you, further he insists on reading his essay, to explain why he wants to become a psychologist”.

The book / essay contains the case presentation: a) under early childhood, he gives vivid narration of his superstitions like witchcraft, evil eyes and profession by spirits; religious teaching like sex is sinful; sexual episodes, etc., On the whole the parent’s superstitions, his living with aunt’s family (separation from parents) for studies and society particularly the religious beliefs have made the young boy to suffer with high anxiety and guilt.

In the second part of the book the youngman describes his breakdown with lot of irrational fears. He writes that he has gradually become an obsessive compulsive. He further writes that “I was a schizophrenic... made me depressed”. At the same time he struggled with various methods in reducing his irrational fears and guilt by visiting witch crafter, reading lot of Psychology books and praying in Church but in vain. In addition, he believed that he is destined to lead his country to greatness and glory. Besides, he had a vague or discure feeling the the spirits of Washington, Lenin, Gandhi, Hitler and Napolean were with him. He even thought of suicide but “if we commit suicide, it would man succumbing to our difficulties, without knowing what has happened to us”. “Thus, I began the long and arduous task of finding the cause of my problem” (p. 33).

The section on interpretation reveals the depth of knowledge on theories of Fraud, Piagat, Laing Rogars and behaviourists. Some deficits were also identified and the youngman could even give his theory. At this points the reviewer wonders whether the youngman need any study in Psychology?

The reviewer was spell bound to read the last sentences that Thomas Ninan the clinical psychologist is the youngman- the narrator! Oh! What a narration! Thomas Ninan had the guts to write a book on his own mental illness and his infomitable human spirit made him to come out of sufferings and achieve true happiness’. I admire the author for giving the following golden rules towards remedying the human sufferings.

1. “If at all Witchcraft had any effect, it was due to belief in it, rather than anything else”.
2. “I now realized that my greatest enemy lay within me and not outside”.
3. “The objective of my work is to rekindle that indomitable human spirit in zone, so that it may lead you through your illness to happiness, maturity, self-respect and understanding”.

All human, especially all Psychologists should read this book and practice.

K.V. Kaliappan
Books received for review

Narendra Kumar Mani (2006) *Indigenous Psychology: The Indian Context*, Department of Psychology, DDU Gorakhpur University, Gorakpur pp. viii+152. (This is a publication of UGC ASIHSS programme)

Ashok Kumar Saxena (2006) *Arjuna’s depression: A cognitive analysis*, Department of Psychology, DDU Gorakhpur University, Gorakpur pp. vii+117+xxxix. (This is a publication of UGC ASIHSS programme)


Gyanchandra (2006) *Perfect of time in neo yogah*, Sri Aravind Chetana Samaj, 6562/1, Chamelian Road, Delhi - 110 006. pp 200, Rs.235


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