



## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED PARENTAL SUPPORT AND BODY DISSATISFACTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

Since time immemorial, beauty has been a part of society, and body dissatisfaction - a state of mind that causes the individual to feel negative about their physical appearance-has affected a majority of people in society. This condition is prevalent among college students due to various factors like the increasing use of social media usage that provide platforms for interactions between students. This study examines the causes of body dissatisfaction and the association of parental support with body dissatisfaction. The study is vital since it will provide data on the causes of depression, improper feeding regimes, and causes of some health disorders in students. The study will also inform us of the importance of parental support to college students. The study involved surveying interviews. Where there were randomly chosen participants were chosen for the interview, and their responses were recorded. The study used two scales: Body Area Satisfaction Scale (BASS) and Perceived parental autonomy scale. The results showed higher perceived parental support lowered body dissatisfaction and lower parental support caused higher body dissatisfaction levels. A conclusion that indeed perceived parental support to students plays a big role in lowering body dissatisfaction levels.

**KEYWORDS:** perceived parental support, body dissatisfaction, body image.

### INTRODUCTION

Body dissatisfaction is a mental condition that makes one have negative feelings and thoughts on how their appearance is concerning how society perceives them. Body dissatisfaction comes about when individuals feel or think that the way they appear does not fit into the beauty standards that society embraces or encourages. Throughout history, beauty has been a part of us, and society has always found a way to infer certain people as more beautiful than others. A better body makes people believe they will get better treatment from their peers, entitlement to more things like food. Furthermore, better relations with people of high social status and even being considered important parts of society (miss world) result from a person's beauty.

Levels of body dissatisfaction have led to the creation of techniques that raise a person's appearance to fit in a society-created class of individuals referred to as beautiful. Women in these societies are mostly affected as they represent the home. Hence the more beautiful she is, the family is beautiful. Society may embrace skin tone where dark and light skin tones are the most praised. This would lead the people in the mid-range or opposite skin tone to affect their skin color to fit into this class. Other communities use neck rings, tattoos, and smaller

waists to show the beauty in women. On the other hand, men show strength and success, and how tall and muscular they are, the more attractive they become. Some societies encourage pot bellies as they indicate success by the male.

Body dissatisfaction in colleges is a big problem that has made the students feel uncomfortable in their bodies. Colleges are grounds for many students who can access products that make them more beautiful than others (Holsen 206). The college grounds are filled with students who manage to keep themselves in desirable bodies than most students. A majority of them undergo body dissatisfaction as they need to cope with the set standards of beauty upheld by the students. Recent studies have shown that levels of dissatisfaction are higher in ladies than in gents since society has made it necessary for females to be much better in terms of appearance (Gondoli et al. 243). The levels of body dissatisfaction have been made worse via social media platforms that enable them to post their bodies online for reviews by their peers. Some provide the standards of an individual's appearance where better appearance means more views of their platforms, and thus many people copy them, creating trends. Those who try these platforms and fail to reach the levels of body appearance

are often with low views, and their comment sections may be subject to harsh insults to the parts of them that they can't change, that is, physical appearance.

Students are likely to start weight loss regimes to obtain the beauty shapes coveted by others in an attempt to fit in. They may even start changing diets from what an average person should consume in a day to lower amounts that may cause low blood pressure, and they are often affected by short breathes and the inability to do tedious works. Some may be encouraged to gain weight to get the desired body shape that would show beauty n women and more strength in men. Some may go further to changing how they appear and expose themselves to cosmetics that change their skin tone (bleaching) that could be hazardous to the student as chemicals interact with their bodies. Some are likely to start crimes to accommodate these unhealthy lifestyles. Using fees to buy cosmetics, makeup, and high-end devices, for example, cameras and smartphones, to improve how they appear.

The majority of the students who can't access these techniques are left to feel left out and always unsatisfied about how their bodies appear to society. Levels of depression are high among these students since they feel they are indeed left out of everything. These students believe that only when they become "beautiful" will they feel satisfied and happy with themselves. Without proper observations, suicide attempts may occur since they do not find meaning in themselves. Some of the students are introverts believing that they do not belong to the students' social classes.

### Parental support

Parents or guardians play a huge role in encouraging their children to assume what life expects from an individual. Proper support encourages the student to appropriately carry themselves according to how they appear, constantly encouraging them that beauty is only a factor of perspective (Harter et al 67). That not everyone will perceive you as beautiful, but always someone will that the body is just an illusion that will fade away as one gets older and beauty is just an artificial construct by society.

However, this is not the case since most parents do not offer this advice to the students before joining colleges. Parents advise you only on staying safe, avoiding bad companies, and informing you to study hard and smart. They leave out the most important sections of advice that be yourself and accommodate those who appreciate you. College is a society for various people who don't necessarily have to play a part in your life. That being different is not a problem but a quality of life that isn't an issue to most people. This study focused on understanding the causes of body dissatisfaction and the importance of perceived parental support.

### OBJECTIVE

This study is aimed at.

- The importance of perceived parental support to college students.
- The causes of body dissatisfaction among college students.
- To understand the relationship between perceived parental support and levels of body dissatisfaction among college students.

### METHODOLOGY

The study involved several participants, including 100 self-volunteers. They were mostly college students who were interested in the topic of study. Overall, more than 100 students were willing to participate in the study, but it could not accommodate all of them. A few were chosen according to the scope of the study's data.

### Pearson's Correlation

It is a test statistic method that measures the statistical relationship between two continuous variables. This method provides information on the correlation magnitude between two variables. Also, it provides the direction of the relationship between the associated variables. The method is applicable in many studies, especially where data is collected through surveys. In fact, this method is among the best methods of measuring the correlation between variables based on the method of covariance. It was used to find the influence perceived parental support has on the student's body dissatisfaction in the present study.

### Method of obtaining data

Survey was the main data collection method in this study. The survey involves the process of examining or questioning a certain group of individuals to obtain data about a particular product, service, or a certain process. This method involves collecting information from people to acquire through their opinions, knowledge, or behaviour (Gill et al 290). Two types of surveys were employed for this study. The two studies involved were interviews and questionnaires. The method involved several steps that are followed appropriately to give relevant feedback. The first step was to ensure that clear research questions were formulated that defined the research problem. The research questions' development was based on the target population, who are the college students in the present study. The second step involves determining the appropriate type of survey. As stated earlier, there are two types of surveys, the questionnaire type, and the interview type. The questionnaire type is where a list of questions is made based on the research and distributed either by mails, person, or online (Gill et al 290). The participant does fill it by themselves willingly. The interview type is where the responses are recorded. The researcher mostly asks a set of questions either through a phone or person to person .the type of survey use depends on various factors such as the location of the research and the sample size to use. The third step involves designing the survey questions. This

is deciding which questions to ask and the appropriate way to ask them. It is always important to consider the type of questions. one may choose either to use open-ended questions or closed-ended questions. The present study was mainly based on survey questionnaires, which were prepared and given to the sample population. They were required to fill in with genuine answers, and they were allowed to leave any question unanswered if it felt too personal. Also, they were assured of the confidentiality of their identities and information. During the study, some participants were asked questions directly and were required to give immediate answers. Care was taken when posing the questions to ensure participants' comfort and also avoid annoying them. To do this, appropriate language was used to make sure the questions were clear to all participants. Also, attention was given to the content and layout of the research questions. This is a requirement for an effective survey questionnaire. The questions to be asked were arranged in a systematic order such that the easiest questions started, which encouraged the respondents to continue with other questions. They were also not too sensitive to respondents. Most of them were yes or no questions, which saves the respondent's time and promotes encouragement.

The questions were focused with enough context so that the respondent can be able to answer the questions accurately. The research participants were taken under random sampling. The survey was conducted in person, and the participants were given no time limit to respond.

The survey method of data collection was employed for this study because it was a cheaper method of data collection than another method of data collection such as data and record collection. It was also easier to administer because no procedures and preparations were needed to be effective. It could have been done remotely through online or mobile phones, thus preventing geographical dependence. It was also capable of collecting more information from a large group of people, and also a broad range of data could have been obtained from the survey method because one came face to face with the target group.

#### Scales used

##### **Body Area Satisfaction Scale -BASS( Cash, Winstead, Janda 1985)**

BAAS is an often-used standard evaluation test of the body image. BASS is a sub- scale of MBSRQ (Multidimensional Body Self Relation Questioner). The MBSRQ is a 69- item self-report questioner that

measures aspects of body image construct. The BASS is the fourth and last section of the MBSRQ. The BASS taps satisfaction related to one's specific body parts. It also highly corresponds to body dissatisfaction. The low scorers in BASS are highly dissatisfied with their body parts. The BASS is a nine-item scale. All the scale items are answered using a five-point system that ranges from definitely disagree to definitely agree. Its internal consistency ranged from .76 to .86, and its test-retest reliability ranged from .75 to .93.

##### **Perceived parental autonomy support scale (Bureau and Mageau 2014)**

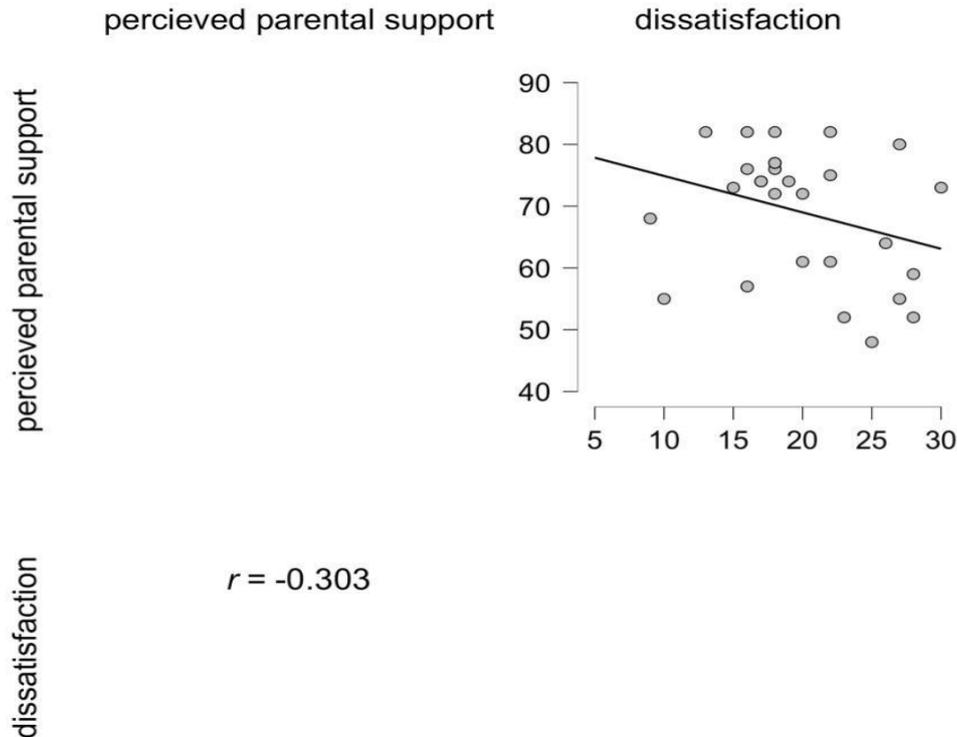
Studies over time about positive parenting have focused on three main dimensions.

These dimensions are autonomy support versus parental control, provision of structure versus permissiveness, and acceptance versus rejection. Autonomous supportive-based parents show much lower considerations to their children. This allows them to handle and solve problems on their own and encourages them to be autonomous. In recent research, autonomy support has been able to operate due to certain strategies. First, the ability to recognize and understand the child's perspective .second, providing a particular rationale method that would be used to regulate the child's rules and demands, offering choices or opportunities whenever possible, and finally opening up exchanges from children to avoid the act of language control. Studies showed that more parental control and less support for autonomy could lead to children falling into depressions, poor performance in their academic sector, reduced self- esteem, or anxiety. Therefore, both the perception of parental autonomy support and the perception of parent control can greatly influence children's social adjustment in various ways.

This scale, however, was limited to the fact that not all who were exposed to autonomous parental support will not necessarily make them better at how they handle situations. According to the test taker, the perceived parental autonomy support scale was a twenty-four items scale that measured parental support. It had two parts; one measured autonomy or support, and the other measured psychological control. The variables were measured using the first part of the scale. The autonomy part of the scale had 12 items. All items in the scale were answered using a 7-point system ranging from " do not agree " to very strongly agree. The parts of the scale had an internal consistency above .89. This scale showed high divergent validity while predicting young adult's adjustments.

Pearson's Correlations			
Variable	perceived parental support	dissatisfaction	
1. perceived parental support	Pearson's r	—	
	p-value	—	
2. dissatisfaction	Pearson's r	-0.303	—
	p-value	0.117	—

## Correlation plot

**RESULTS**

The study aims to determine if perceived parental support is associated with body dissatisfaction among college students. It was hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between perceived parental support and body dissatisfaction among college students. The data were analyzed using Pearson *r* correlation. The result reveals that perceived parental support has a moderate negative correlation with body dissatisfaction ( $r = -0.303$ ). The findings suggest that parental support plays a vital role in determining a person's body image. Students who have parental support have low body dissatisfaction than those who do not. In other words, students are more satisfied with their body if they have a higher perceived parental support than those who do not have it.

**DISCUSSION**

Because body dissatisfaction and other image-related problems are a pervasive and problematic issue from childhood to adulthood, understanding how body dissatisfaction is socialized is critical for prevention efforts. The current study examined the mechanisms by which parental nurturing and support are associated with body image discrepancy among young adults, specifically by examining the role of physical self-worth in relation to less perceived parental support. In general, we discovered that maternal and paternal nurture, as well as peer factors, are associated with body image discrepancy indirectly via their associations with college students' physical self-beliefs. The findings support the assertion that certain sociocultural, biological, and interpersonal factors increase the risk of body dissatisfaction, but the effects are gender specific. Other

established risk factors for body dissatisfaction received little support from the findings.

**CONCLUSION**

Body dissatisfaction is an issue among many college students. The main sources of this state of mind are frequent comparisons with one's body appearance with others. This state of mind is achieved when the student fails to appreciate their body appearance. Factors such as social media have mitigated this feeling of dissatisfaction.

Perceived parental support, on the other hand, has played a key role in this by reducing the act and level of dissatisfaction. This is because parents offer advice to children on the appropriate ways to appreciate themselves regardless of their physical appearance. However, too much parent control and restrictions can lead to negative impacts, including body dissatisfaction according to the perceived parental autonomy scale.

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