

The Factors and Implications of Body Image Dissatisfaction among Adolescents

Nordiana Terence, Norzihan Ayub, Patricia Kimong

Faculty of Psychology, University Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

Email: dianis.terence@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study conducts a comprehensive analysis of the elements that contribute to body image dissatisfaction among teenagers, along with the resulting consequences. Adolescents often encounter social pressures, media influence, peer comparisons, parental expectations, and personal views that affect their perceptions of their own body image. Adverse impressions of one's body image may result in diminished self-esteem, psychological problems, and a general state of health and happiness. Interventions such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), counselling services, and resilience-building programs are crucial for resolving body image dissatisfaction and fostering a positive self-image among teenagers. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of these elements is crucial for devising specific treatments aimed at assisting teenagers in strengthening their body image and self-esteem, eventually improving their general well-being and quality of life.

Keywords

Body Image Dissatisfaction, Factors, Implication, Teenagers

1. Introduction

According to Newman and Newman (2016), adolescence, a pivotal stage of development, is characterised by significant physical, emotional, and social changes that can profoundly impact individuals' body image perceptions. Adolescent development is widely recognised as a period filled with challenges and complexities. This stage of life is pivotal for the body as it undergoes significant growth and transformation. One of the most conspicuous aspects of this process is the onset of puberty, during which children experience notable changes in their physical appearance, including increases in height, body mass, and overall size. As a result of these rapid physical changes, many adolescents find themselves grappling with

dissatisfaction concerning their body image. This discontentment can give rise to negative emotions and perceptions about their physical selves, as highlighted by research conducted by [Brener et al. \(2004\)](#). This phase of introspection and self-assessment can significantly influence an adolescent's psychological well-being and self-esteem, shaping their perceptions of themselves and their place in the world ([Pfeifer & Berkman, 2018](#)). As adolescents navigate through the complexities of their developing identities, the whole process forms perceptions of themselves and that will shape their interaction with the world. Their values and perceptions are heavily influenced by this phase. Therefore, positive body image perception is essential during this phase. Body image dissatisfaction among adolescents is a prevalent and concerning issue that can have far-reaching implications for their overall well-being ([Markey, 2010](#)). During this critical period, adolescents are particularly susceptible to societal pressures, media influence, peer comparisons, parental expectations, and personal perceptions, all of which contribute to the formation of their body image ideals.

The physical form of a person, often referred to as their physique, stands out as one of the most conspicuous aspects of human existence. It is a universal aspiration for individuals to possess an attractive and appealing figure. According to [Szwedo et al. \(2004\)](#), having an aesthetically pleasing appearance is not only desirable on its own but also serves as a valuable asset in fostering positive social interactions. Consequently, the challenge of adolescents feeling dissatisfied with their bodies may be further intensified by fluctuations in body size and shape during this developmental stage. The desire for a pleasing physical appearance is deeply ingrained in human nature, influencing perceptions of attractiveness and social acceptance. Research suggests that individuals who perceive themselves as having an attractive physique are more likely to experience favourable interactions and social outcomes. A study on dental aesthetics proposed a novel method to evaluate the impact of dental imperfections on physical attractiveness using internet dating sites. Results showed that there was no significant difference in the number of hits on each portrait, but the ratio of contact attempts to hits was 4.8 times greater for the portrait with better dental aesthetics which also means that dental aesthetics significantly influence perceptions of physical attractiveness and the initial success of social interactions ([Lopez et al., 2013](#)). According to [Liu \(2024\)](#), experienced recruiters tend to favor attractive candidates, often making favorable hiring recommendations based on appearance rather than competency. This proves that our society values physical appearance.

As highlighted by [Aparicio-Martinez et al. \(2019\)](#), the pressure to conform to societal standards of beauty and attractiveness can contribute to feelings of discontentment and inadequacy among adolescents. This dissatisfaction may be compounded by the fluctuations in body size and shape that commonly occur during puberty. Thus, the issue of body image dissatisfaction among adolescents is complex and multi-faceted, influenced by both internal and external factors. The prevailing norms of beauty within society, frequently reinforced by mainstream

media and popular culture, construct unattainable standards that adolescents feel pressured to meet. These standards often create unrealistic expectations, fostering feelings of inadequacy and dissatisfaction with their own bodies. The pervasive influence of media imagery portraying idealised physical attributes can instill a sense of discontentment among adolescents as they compare themselves to these unrealistic standards. The perpetual accessibility, permanence, and publicity provided by social media platforms can magnify the psychological and physiological effects of the social experiences that occur within them. It is crucial to comprehend how online social integration might forecast or influence physical health results, especially for youth, who now almost universally use social media (Auxier & Anderson, 2021).

Moreover, the social dynamics within peer groups play a significant role in intensifying these pressures. Adolescents may find themselves scrutinized and evaluated by their peers based on their adherence to these standards, amplifying the desire to conform to certain physical ideals in order to gain acceptance and validation. The fear of being ostracised or marginalised due to perceived physical inadequacies can drive adolescents to engage in behaviours aimed at altering their appearance to fit in with their peer group (Chen et al., 2024). Much of the time, peer relationship dynamics operate outside the view of parents and other significant adults, so it may be difficult for outsiders to fully appreciate the nature of these relationships and to know if they are healthy or problematic. Furthermore, familial influences, particularly parental attitudes towards body image, contribute to adolescents' perceptions of their bodies. Parental expectations regarding appearance and body image can significantly impact how adolescents view themselves, as children often internalise and adopt their parents' attitudes and beliefs. Positive reinforcement and encouragement from parents regarding body acceptance and self-love can mitigate some of the adverse effects of societal pressures on adolescents' body image. The support and guidance from parents can help adolescents navigate challenges and stressful situations, further enhancing their self-control skills and reducing harmful levels of impulsivity (Carvalho et al., 2023).

In essence, the interplay of societal, peer, and familial influences contributes to the complex landscape of adolescents' body image perceptions (Jones & Crawford, 2006). Addressing these influences requires a multi-faceted approach that promotes body positivity, self-acceptance, and critical media literacy among adolescents, empowering them to resist harmful societal norms and embrace their unique selves (Griffin et al., 2022). Empowering adolescents with the tools to critically evaluate media messages and societal norms can help them develop a more realistic and positive body image. The detrimental effects of negative body image perceptions extend beyond mere dissatisfaction with one's appearance, encompassing a spectrum of adverse outcomes that profoundly impact adolescents' well-being. Research has consistently linked negative body image to diminished self-esteem, heightened vulnerability to mental health disorders such as anxiety and

depression, and engagement in unhealthy behaviours such as disordered eating patterns (Stice et al., 2021). The correlation between body image dissatisfaction and psychological distress underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions and support mechanisms tailored to address these concerns among adolescents. Individuals who harbour negative perceptions of their bodies are more susceptible to experiencing feelings of inadequacy and worthlessness, which can erode their self-esteem and resilience. Furthermore, the pervasive influence of societal beauty standards intensifies these pressures, exacerbating the psychological toll on adolescents who struggle to meet unrealistic ideals.

Furthermore, the deleterious effects of body image dissatisfaction extend beyond psychological ramifications, impacting adolescents' overall quality of life and interpersonal relationships. Adolescents who are preoccupied with their appearance may withdraw from social interactions, experiencing feelings of alienation and isolation. Moreover, the adoption of unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as excessive dieting or compulsive exercise, further exacerbates the cycle of negative body image and psychological distress. The study of Duarte et al. (2015) also confirmed that poor body image is associated with a worse quality of life in all of its dimensions: physical, environmental, social relationships, and primarily psychological.

Given the far-reaching implications of body image dissatisfaction, it is imperative to implement comprehensive interventions that address the underlying factors contributing to adolescents' negative perceptions of their bodies. These interventions should encompass education on media literacy, promotion of body positivity, and provision of accessible mental health support services. By fostering a supportive environment that encourages self-acceptance and resilience, we can mitigate the adverse effects of body image dissatisfaction and promote the holistic well-being of adolescents. By gaining a deeper understanding of the factors and causes contributing to body image dissatisfaction among adolescents, researchers and practitioners can develop evidence-based strategies to promote positive body image and self-esteem in young individuals. This systematic literature review seeks to explore these factors comprehensively, with the ultimate goal of informing interventions that empower adolescents to cultivate a healthy body image and enhance their overall well-being during this critical stage of development. Counselling or psychotherapy approaches have been shown to bolster self-confidence and adaptive capacity by alleviating anxiety and improving self-esteem among students (Velayudhan et al., 2010). By integrating these techniques into the intervention module, therapists aim to empower individuals to navigate their body image concerns and foster a positive sense of self.

By delving into the intricate web of factors and underlying causes that contribute to body image dissatisfaction among adolescents, researchers and practitioners can lay the groundwork for developing effective, evidence-based strategies aimed at fostering positive body image and self-esteem in young individuals. This systematic literature review endeavours to comprehensively explore these multi-

faceted factors, with the overarching objective of informing the development of interventions that empower adolescents to nurture a healthy body image and bolster their overall well-being during this pivotal stage of development. Through a meticulous analysis of existing research and empirical evidence, this review aims to elucidate the interplay of various influences on adolescents' body image perceptions, ranging from societal norms and media portrayals to familial dynamics and peer interactions. By synthesising this wealth of information, we seek to identify key determinants and correlates of body image dissatisfaction, shedding light on the complex mechanisms underlying this phenomenon. Moreover, this review endeavours to highlight promising avenues for intervention and support, drawing upon insights gleaned from the literature to propose evidence-based strategies that address the root causes of body image dissatisfaction among adolescents. By leveraging this knowledge, practitioners and policymakers can design targeted interventions that promote body positivity, resilience, and self-acceptance among young individuals, thereby mitigating the adverse effects of negative body image on their psychological well-being and quality of life.

Ultimately, this systematic literature review serves as a critical step towards advancing our understanding of body image dissatisfaction among adolescents and informing the development of holistic interventions that empower young individuals to cultivate a positive sense of self and thrive in today's society. To conduct a thorough exploration of Body Image Dissatisfaction (BID) across diverse cultural contexts, a rigorous systematic search strategy was meticulously crafted and executed across prominent electronic databases, notably PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar. This comprehensive search encompassed peer-reviewed articles spanning the years 2010 to 2023, aiming to capture recent developments and insights in the field. A meticulously curated set of keywords, spanning topics related to body image dissatisfaction, cultural factors, and geographical regions, was employed to ensure the inclusivity and breadth of the search.

The process of data extraction was guided by a structured framework, focussing on key elements essential for a comprehensive understanding of BID within different cultural contexts. This included meticulous examination of study designs, participant demographics, key findings, and the cultural implications inferred from each study's results. By systematically synthesising and analysing data from a diverse array of sources, this approach facilitated a nuanced exploration of the multi-faceted interplay between cultural factors and body image dissatisfaction.

1.1. Eastern Countries

Different communities exhibit unique responses to and perceptions of body image. *Khodabakhsh & Leng (2020)* highlight that in Malaysia, negative feedback from family members, peers, and social media, coupled with the tendency to compare oneself to others, are primary factors contributing to body image dissatisfaction. The mixture of indigenous, Chinese, Indian, and Malay civilizations in Malaysia results in a varied environment of perfect beauty. For example, pale skin is

typically highly prized, maybe as a result of East Asian historical and cultural influences. There may be a lot of negative pressure to live up to these standards. For example, the desire for pale skin has given rise to a thriving business for skin whitening cosmetics, some of which include hazardous substances. The stress on thinness might encourage eating disorders or bad diets. Furthermore, these criteria of beauty have the potential to reinforce negative stereotypes and lower self-esteem, especially in the case of individuals who don't match the standard. The emphasis placed by society on looks frequently obscures other admirable qualities, such as compassion and intellect. It may be difficult for people's mental health. Additionally, slim body types are frequently idolized, mirroring worldwide media and fashion trends.

The proliferation of mass media has significantly influenced Malaysian society's awareness of body image, as it plays a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions. Individuals, particularly youth, are highly susceptible to societal pressures and trends propagated by the media, including the emulation of celebrity fashions and appearances.

The impact of media portrayal and societal standards of beauty can be profound, often leading individuals to adopt extreme measures to attain their perceived ideal body shape. Goldfield et al. (2010) underscore the detrimental consequences of this phenomenon, including the adoption of unhealthy eating habits and lifestyles, as well as resorting to drastic weight management procedures. The intense desire to conform to societal beauty standards and achieve an idealised body image can drive individuals, particularly impressionable youth, to engage in behaviours that compromise their physical and mental well-being.

The phenomenon of body image distortion among adolescents is complex and influenced by a multitude of factors, as emphasised in the research conducted on Korean adolescents by Jung et al. (2014). Among these factors, a prominent contributor to body image distortion. Adolescents identified as being at high risk for eating disorders exhibit a greater propensity for experiencing distorted perceptions of their bodies. This correlation underscores the intimate connection between disordered eating behaviours and skewed body image perceptions among adolescents. Additionally, weight status has emerged as a notable determinant contributing to body image distortion among Korean adolescents. Individuals classified as overweight or obese demonstrate a heightened susceptibility to experiencing distorted perceptions of their bodies. This phenomenon highlights the influence of societal norms and personal beliefs about body weight on body image development.

Moreover, gender and age have been identified as significant factors influencing the prevalence of body image distortion among Korean adolescents. Research indicates that boys and older adolescents exhibit higher rates of body image distortion, indicating potential variations in body image concerns based on gender and developmental stage. These findings highlight the nuanced interplay of demographic variables in shaping adolescents' perceptions of their bodies and underscore the

importance of considering these factors in interventions aimed at promoting positive body image among youth.

Research conducted in Mumbai, India, suggests that the phenomenon of media internalisation among young girls bears striking similarities to patterns observed in Western societies, indicating a pressing need for potential prevention and intervention efforts (Shroff & Thompson, 2004). Similarly, findings from Chennai reveal that a significant proportion of women aspire to attain a smaller and thinner physique, often overestimating their current weight. Additionally, disordered attitudes and behaviours towards eating were found to be prevalent among college women in Allahabad, with approximately 26.67% exhibiting such tendencies (Sasirekha, 2012). Moreover, studies have shown that levels of body dissatisfaction and fat-phobic attitudes among the Indian population are comparable to those observed in Western populations. This suggests a convergence in societal values and beliefs surrounding body image across diverse cultural contexts. The homogenisation of appearance culture, primarily driven by media influences, has facilitated the adoption of Western beauty standards and ideals that were not necessarily prevalent in Indian society before. This change in culture is thought to directly cause eating disorders and disordered eating behaviours in Indian people. This shows how important it is to use culturally sensitive interventions to help people have a positive view of their bodies and stop eating disorders from starting (Singh & Gadiraju, 2020).

1.2. Western Countries

The intricate interplay between societal, familial, and media influences on adolescents' body image perceptions constitutes a significant area of study within the realm of developmental psychology. This multifaceted issue warrants comprehensive exploration to elucidate its complexities and implications for adolescent well-being.

In contemporary Western society, the pervasive influence of social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, has emerged as a salient factor shaping adolescents' body image perceptions. Ferguson et al. (2011) underscore the substantial impact of peer interactions facilitated through these platforms, where adolescents are exposed to idealised representations of beauty and success. The comparison process inherent in social media consumption can engender feelings of inadequacy and dissatisfaction among adolescents as they strive to attain unattainable standards set by their peers. Moreover, the approval and validation sought from peers, particularly among teenage girls, hold considerable significance in matters pertaining to body image. Carey et al. (2010) underscore the influential role of peer approval in shaping adolescents' perceptions of their bodies. Positive feedback from peers may bolster self-esteem, while negative remarks or comparisons can evoke feelings of insecurity and inferiority. In the familial domain, parental attitudes and behaviours wield significant influence over adolescents' body image perceptions. Helfert and Warschburger (2011) elucidate the impact

of parental criticism, specifically regarding weight and physical appearance, on adolescents' self-concept. Criticism from parents, whether explicit or implicit, can foster feelings of inadequacy and dissatisfaction with one's body, leading to adverse psychological outcomes.

The media, encompassing traditional forms such as television and magazines, as well as digital platforms, plays a pivotal role in disseminating societal beauty ideals and norms. O'Keeffe and Pearson (2011) highlight the omnipresence of idealised images and curated lifestyles on social media platforms, contributing to the cultivation of unrealistic body standards among adolescents. Exposure to such media content can exacerbate body image concerns and perpetuate a cycle of comparison and self-doubt. Within this context, it is imperative to acknowledge the detrimental consequences of body image dissatisfaction on adolescent well-being, including the development of eating disorders, low self-esteem, and diminished self-satisfaction, as observed by Markey (2010). Addressing these issues necessitates multi-faceted interventions that target societal, familial, and media influences while fostering a supportive environment conducive to promoting positive body image and self-esteem among adolescents.

2. Implications

Body dissatisfaction is increasingly important among both adult populations and adolescents enrolled in higher education institutions, manifesting as an excessive preoccupation with physical appearance, adherence to societal norms regarding weight, and attainment of desired weight levels. This issue bears significant implications for adolescent mental health, influencing the emergence of eating disorders, heightened levels of anxiety, and diminished self-esteem. Moreover, the pervasiveness of body image concerns is underscored by a notable surge in the utilisation of cosmetic surgical procedures as individuals seek to address perceived flaws and attain idealised physical forms.

Especially for individuals grappling with bodily disorders or dysmorphia, there exists a prevalent inclination towards altering facial features in a perpetual quest for perceived attractiveness, driven by discontent with their physical appearance (Mulken et al., 2012). Despite outwardly appearing flawless, such individuals often seek recourse in cosmetic surgical procedures. In Malaysia, liposuction procedures aimed at achieving a desirable, slender physique have surged in popularity in recent years (Melissa, 2020). Liposuction entails the extraction of fat cells, which are permanently eliminated from the body; however, failure to adhere to exercise regimens or dietary restrictions may lead to the proliferation of residual fat cells, precipitating weight regain. Despite the widespread adoption of liposuction in Malaysia, instances of adverse outcomes, including fatalities, underscore the inherent risks associated with such procedures. Masitom (2022) documented the tragic cases of two women, aged 44 and 30, who succumbed to complications arising from cosmetic surgery in 2008 and 2009, respectively, eliciting nationwide shock and concern. More recently, a distressing incident unfolded when a 23-

year-old woman, driven by the desire to radiate beauty on her wedding day, met a tragic demise during liposuction treatment (Bahaudin, 2020). Although popular in Malaysia, liposuction carries risks, including fatalities. While the procedure can be effective in removing fat cells, it does not guarantee permanent weight loss. Failure to maintain a healthy lifestyle, including exercise and diet, can lead to the growth of new fat cells and weight regain. Additionally, it underscores the serious risks involved in cosmetic surgery and it does not address the underlying psychological factors that contribute to dissatisfaction with one's body. In many cases, body image issues stem from deep-seated insecurities, self-esteem problems, or societal pressures. Relying solely on cosmetic surgery to address these issues may provide temporary relief but does not address the root causes. In addition, some individuals may become psychologically dependent on cosmetic procedures, believing that they are the only way to achieve happiness or acceptance. This serves as poignant reminders of the critical imperative to scrutinise the safety and ethical considerations inherent in cosmetic surgical practices, particularly in contexts where their prevalence is on the rise.

Drawing from data and statistics provided by the Institute for Public Health (2017), anxiety emerges as a burgeoning mental health concern in Malaysia and other Asian nations. Notably, college campuses serve as focal points where this trend is particularly pronounced, with a substantial portion of the affected demographic comprising adolescents and young adults. Hart et al. (2008) categorise the apprehension surrounding negative body image into two distinct constructs: physical social anxiety and social appearance anxiety. In these manifestations, individuals exhibit a heightened preoccupation with external perceptions of their physical appearance, thereby magnifying concerns about social acceptance and validation. Such anxieties can exert detrimental effects on various facets of individuals' lives, including interpersonal relationships and academic performance.

Moreover, a robust association exists between body image dissatisfaction and self-esteem levels. Individuals grappling with negative body image perceptions often experience a concomitant decline in self-esteem, further exacerbating their psychological distress (Hart et al., 2008). This interplay underscores the intricate dynamics between body image perceptions, social anxieties, and broader psychosocial well-being, necessitating comprehensive interventions that address these multifaceted dimensions. By elucidating the intricate interconnections between body image concerns, anxiety manifestations, and self-esteem fluctuations, researchers and practitioners can devise targeted strategies aimed at bolstering individuals' resilience and fostering positive mental health outcomes. Unfavourable perceptions of body image significantly influence self-esteem in both men and women (Niven et al., 2009). Particularly for women, whose self-concept often hinges on their physical appearance, the perceived attractiveness or inadequacy of their bodies profoundly shapes their self-perception (Grogan, 2016). External evaluations by others play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' self-esteem, with negative assessments contributing to diminished self-worth (Harriger & Thompson, 2012).

Self-esteem manifests across various dimensions, encompassing emotions, cognitions, and attitudes concerning one's body (Smolak & Thompson, 2009). A positive body image fosters robust self-esteem and resilience, insulating individuals against the deleterious effects of negative social feedback, even within the realm of social media (Cohen et al., 2019). Paradoxically, while social media platforms offer avenues for connectivity and self-expression, they concurrently exacerbate issues related to anxiety, self-esteem, and body image dissatisfaction (Ferguson et al., 2011). The ubiquitous presence of curated images and comparative content on social media engenders unrealistic beauty ideals, fuelling feelings of inadequacy and perpetuating a cycle of self-comparison and dissatisfaction.

Body image dissatisfaction exerts a direct influence on the development and perpetuation of eating disorders such as bulimia nervosa and restrictive eating patterns (Shroff & Thompson, 2004). The Dietary Restriction Theory, a prominent framework elucidating the mechanisms underlying disordered eating behaviours, posits that individuals may engage in dietary restriction with the explicit goal of weight maintenance or weight loss (Shroff & Thompson, 2004). However, this pursuit of thinness can escalate into a vicious cycle wherein weight loss is pursued at all costs, disregarding the detrimental effects on physical and psychological well-being. Recent studies underscore the alarming prevalence of eating disorders among Malaysian university students, painting a stark picture of the pervasive impact of body image concerns. Chan et al. (2020) reported that 51% of female Malaysian university students exhibited symptoms indicative of a probable eating disorder, highlighting the distressing prevalence of disordered eating behaviours within this demographic. Similarly, findings from a large-scale cross-cultural study encompassing university students from five Southeast Asian countries, including Malaysia, revealed that 63% of female students in Malaysia were at risk of developing an eating disorder (Pengpid & Peltzer, 2018). These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions aimed at addressing the complex interplay between body image dissatisfaction, disordered eating behaviours, and broader psychosocial determinants of mental health among university populations.

Although the prevalence of bulimia nervosa (bulimia) and anorexia nervosa (anorexia) in Malaysia remains comparatively lower than in the United States, there is an annual increase attributable to the escalating issue of body image dissatisfaction. This phenomenon underscores the profound impact of negative body image perceptions, wherein individuals experience a dissonance between their actual body image and the idealised body image they aspire to attain. Bully and Elosua (2011) elucidate that such comparisons between actual and ideal body images precipitate feelings of dissatisfaction, as individuals invariably fall short of societal beauty standards. This phenomenon is emblematic of the pervasive emphasis placed on physical appearance within contemporary culture, a sentiment echoed by socio-cultural theories elucidated by scholars such as Keery et al. (2004) and Grogan (2016). In essence, the burgeoning rates of bulimia and anorexia in

Malaysia underscore the intricate interplay between socio-cultural influences, body image perceptions, and the development of eating disorders. As societal pressures to conform to idealised beauty standards intensify, individuals are increasingly vulnerable to internalising negative body image perceptions, perpetuating a cycle of dissatisfaction and maladaptive coping behaviours. Recognising the nuanced socio-cultural dynamics at play is crucial for informing targeted interventions aimed at promoting body acceptance and mitigating the adverse impacts of unrealistic beauty ideals on individuals' psychological well-being.

3. Discussion

As widely acknowledged, persistent body image dissatisfaction significantly compromises mental well-being and fosters adverse perceptions of one's physical appearance (Grogan, 2016). Cash (2002) provides a comprehensive framework elucidating the multi-faceted nature of body image dissatisfaction, attributing its genesis to cognitive, perceptual, and behavioural factors. The cognitive facet pertains to individuals' self-perceptions, while the perceptual component delves into how others perceive their bodies. Concurrently, the behavioural dimension encompasses individuals' actions and behaviours concerning their bodies, reflecting their desires and aspirations. Fostering a mindset of positive thinking among adolescents holds promise in mitigating body image-related anxieties and enhancing overall life satisfaction. Research suggests that counselling services play a pivotal role in facilitating shifts in individuals' perceptions and attitudes towards their body image concerns, particularly in terms of their physical appearance. Counselling interventions offer a valuable avenue for individuals to recalibrate their self-worth and cultivate a more positive self-image, thus promoting holistic well-being. Furthermore, Frisé et al. (2012) posit that negative body image issues stem from comparisons related to behaviour, achievements, lack of motivation, and personal achievements, highlighting the multi-faceted nature of factors contributing to body dissatisfaction.

To address the nation's labor shortage of skilled professionals, continuous investment in students' human capital is imperative. A well-recognised and empirically supported approach to addressing prevalent issues such as body image dissatisfaction, anxiety, and low self-esteem is cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) (Cash, 2002; Cash & Hrabosky, 2003). Individuals' negative self-perceptions regarding their bodies have profound repercussions on their emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. CBT offers a systematic and effective framework for individuals to restructure their cognitive processes, thereby fostering adaptive emotional responses and constructive behaviours. CBT operates on the premise that an optimistic mindset not only cultivates resilience but also engenders hope, confidence, and creativity, thereby facilitating the generation of positive thoughts and ideas. Through CBT, individuals learn techniques to modify their reactions to challenging circumstances or triggers that may otherwise evoke distress or maladaptive behavior. Widely utilised in therapeutic settings, CBT programs have emerged as

a cornerstone of treatment approaches for addressing behavioural issues among young people (Cash, 2002). CBT represents a versatile and evidence-based intervention strategy for equipping individuals with the cognitive and behavioural tools necessary to navigate challenges related to body image dissatisfaction, anxiety, and self-esteem. By fostering adaptive coping mechanisms and promoting psychological resilience, CBT not only facilitates personal growth and well-being but also contributes to the development of a robust and skilled workforce capable of addressing the nation's labour needs.

Moreover, given the potential impact of these issues on students' mental health, stakeholders must prioritise addressing eating disorders, anxiety, low self-esteem, and body image dissatisfaction among students (Grogan, 2016). Indeed, students' proficiency in interpersonal skills is equally crucial. The ability to persevere represents a confluence of skills indispensable in today's dynamic global workforce. A large majority of employers concede that today's new graduates are not able to think critically and creatively, solve problems, or write well (Seetha, 2014). Considering that students will transition into the workforce after completing their studies, it becomes imperative for them to apply their acquired knowledge effectively. Consequently, resilience should be cultivated among all students across educational levels, with particular emphasis placed on university-level education to equip students with the capacity to navigate and manage pressure effectively. Efforts to enhance students' interpersonal skills, resilience, and self-efficacy should be ongoing and systematic, facilitated through the provision of relevant programs and instructional modalities.

By prioritising the development of these essential attributes, educational institutions can empower students to thrive in diverse academic, professional, and personal contexts. Schools can implement measures such as body positivity campaign to raise awareness about body image issues. For example, teachers may play as the role models for students by promoting body image positivity through their act and attitudes. Furthermore, fostering resilience among students not only enhances their individual well-being but also augments their preparedness to confront the challenges inherent in the contemporary workforce, thereby contributing to the cultivation of a skilled and adaptable labour force (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). At its core, the integration of counselling services represents a proactive strategy for addressing the complex interplay of cognitive, perceptual, and behavioural factors underlying body image dissatisfaction. By fostering self-awareness, resilience, and positive coping mechanisms, counselling interventions empower individuals to navigate body image concerns and cultivate a sense of holistic well-being.

4. Conclusion

According to independent research findings, body image holds paramount importance for adolescents, primarily due to contemporary societal norms that prioritize physical attractiveness and idealised body standards, resulting in a negative

impact on adolescents' body image perceptions (Roosen et al., 2012). Indeed, the pervasive issue of body image dissatisfaction poses significant risks of adverse physical and psychological outcomes, as it influences individuals' lifestyle choices, including unhealthy eating behaviours and weight management strategies. Adolescents, particularly university students, may experience higher levels of body dissatisfaction, with their perceived appearance deemed distressing, thereby exacerbating psychological concerns such as anxiety and self-esteem issues (Vega et al., 2014). Not addressing this widespread problem could lead to body dysmorphic disorder, a crippling condition marked by an irrational fixation on perceived flaws in one's appearance that drives people to extreme actions like plastic surgery in an attempt to conform to societal beauty standards and ease their own distress (Mulken et al., 2012). As a result, individuals may pursue cosmetic surgical interventions despite having outwardly ideal physical appearances, underscoring the profound impact of body image dissatisfaction on individuals' psychological well-being and behavior. Overall, the high rate of body image dissatisfaction among teens calls for proactive intervention strategies that aim to promote positive body image perceptions and lessen the negative effects of unhealthy coping behaviours. By addressing the underlying factors contributing to body image dissatisfaction and promoting body acceptance, stakeholders can empower adolescents to cultivate resilient self-concepts and navigate societal pressures with confidence and self-assurance.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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