International Journal of Current Advanced Research

ISSN: O: 2319-6475, ISSN: P: 2319-6505, Impact Factor: SJIF: 5.995

Available Online at www.journalijcar.org

Volume 6; Issue 11; November 2017; Page No. 7357-7362 DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijcar.2017.7362.1132



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BODY IMAGE AMONG RURAL AND URBAN ADOLESCENTS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 8th August, 2017 Received in revised form 15th September, 2017 Accepted 30th October, 2017 Published online 28th November, 2017

ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at investigating body image differences among rural and urban adolescents of Haryana. A questionnaire based survey study focusing on adolescents was designed using the random sampling. The subjects investigated were rural and urban high secondary and senior secondary school students of Haryana. The sample consisted of 400 male and 400 female adolescents of age group 14 to 19 years. Body Image questionnaire constructed by T.F CASH (2000) was used to asses' body image perception. T- test was used for the statistical analysis. Obtained result found no significant difference among rural and urban population in all selected groups with regard to body image perception except urban high secondary female, urban senior secondary female, urban high secondary and rural senior secondary adolescents who have significantly greater self-ideal disparity with strongly held physical ideals as compare to rural high secondary female, rural senior secondary females, rural high secondary and urban senior secondary adolescents who have important congruence across all physical attributes.

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INTRODUCTION

In the present scenario, it is not only physical differentials which matter but the psychological make up of an adolescent also plays decisive role in the life of an adolescent and is very important for the smooth functioning of the society. It is the span of life when motor, cognitive, psychological, psychosocial, social, spiritual and ethical maturity begins to take place. Adolescence is also a time marked by an increase in adipose tissue for females and an unease and despondence with bodily appearance. Differences between sexes and between individuals of the same sexes become more pronounced during adolescence period. Certain times in life, like puberty is key time when a person's body image may change. Our emotional state also influences our body image. People who accept the way they look and feel good about their bodies most of the time have a commendatory body image. Having a positive body image is about how you feel about the way you look. If we don't like our body (or a part of our body), it's hard to feel good about our own personality. An individual's body image is closely connected with their self-esteem and many research studies have reached to the conclusion that especially adolescents with body image dissatisfaction have lower self-esteem than those who have

*Corresponding author: Sanjogdeep Singh SGGS College, Chandigarh positive perception towards their body image. Negative body image perception is a strong and regular originator of a entire range of unhealthy body-related behaviours like – detrimental dieting regimes and challenging eating behaviors, medical eating disorders (anorexia and bulimia), superficial surgery, intense exercising, and unhealthful muscle-enhancing behaviours. It is also linked to despair, nervousness, sexual disappointment, and low down self-esteem. Therefore, body dissatisfaction is a noteworthy jeopardy for physical and psychological health, and thus well-being.

Body Image

The phrase body image was first coined by the Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst Paul Schilder in his book 'The Image and Appearance of the Human Body'. Schilder (1935) defined body image as a person's feelings of the aesthetics and sexual attractiveness of their own body. Neurologists, psychiatrics and early influential theorists reported different kinds of distortion in the schizophrenic patients: a sense of alienation from his own body (depersonalization), inability to distinguish the boundaries of his body, and feelings of transformation in the sex of his body. Lightstone (2001) defined that other early influential theorists took the view that a body scheme was essential to the functioning of the individual.

Every person has insight, thoughts and feelings linked to one's body image. Estimating the body dimension and mass

contributes to one's sensitivity, assessment of bodily charisma contributes to one's opinion and how contented is a man or woman with one's body may bring to mind different feelings associated to body image. It is understood that many research studies through out the world done by different researchers confirm that men and women are sufferers of stereotyped depiction of body image. Studies expose that women are portrayed as strangely slim in the media, whereas men symbolize as of average weight, thereby increasing the normative principles of thinness. So, Body image is how you sense and what you imagine when you look at manually. It's in addition how you envisage other people see you. How you experience about your body and all of its parts-your construct and your fingers, arms, nose, chest, the complexion of your skin, and the colour or texture of your hair, for example-plays a very important role in your body image. This also includes your sex organs-the vagina, vulva, breasts, hips or penis.

According to Witkin (1965) body image represents the manner in which a person has learned to organize and integrate his body experience. Body image is how you see yourself when you look in the mirror or when you picture yourself in your mind. (Cash 2004) defined body image as a multifaceted psychological experience of embodiment that encompasses evaluative thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to one's own physical appearance. Cash and Deagle (1997) expressed their views that body image is a multi-dimensional conception that apparent itself in a range of ways, encircling perceptual, cognitive, behavioural, and emotional spheres.

People with a positive body image also recognize that how they look does not decide their self-respect. Clark (2009) suggested that positive body image must start with you. Each human being must rejoice his or her individuality. Wanting to look like someone else is counter-productive; each of our bodies has its own way of rising and divergences, what make us all unique.

A person having distorted body image has a negative perception of his shape and he recognizes parts of his body unlike they really are. He feels uncomfortable and discomfited in his body. Cash and Pruzinsky (2002) defined body displeasure as a trouble in body image or in the way one perceives his/her mass or body figure that has the possibility to influence mental health and value of life. According to Cash (2004) negative body image includes a variety of cognitive and mood states not restricted to suffering and discontent related to one's body image, psychosomatic dysfunction caused by the connected distress, a drive and inspiration to pursue activities that help in facade management and also the level to which a person permits their body image to influence their societal, psychosomatic and private self.

Dosamantes (1992) proposed that cultural definition of the idealized body image is subject to alter under demands from social, financial, political and religious sources. Body image reflects the individuals own attitudes as well as those of others towards his/her embodied self. We do not build up our body image all on our own. The populace around us and our culture powerfully manipulate it. Stormer and Thompson (1996) found that even with self-esteem and level of plumpness removed as influences, social contrast and societal factors are major predictors of body disappointment.

Though, today's civilization is exceptional, in that, the media (including television, Internet, movies, and print) is having a faraway more influential presence than ever before. According to (Agliata & Dunn 2004) adolescents exposed to ideal image in classified-ads are considerably more dejected and had higher levels of body dissatisfaction than those exposed to neutral ads.

Thus, Race, customs, Nationality, Media depiction, Media finances, Media Ownership and societal factors are the key determinants of an ideal body.

Significance of the study

Body image studies and investigations are still nascent in India, and mental health experts have not paid adequate attention to psychosomatic disorders that a negative body image can cause. At this moment, this disorder is grossly ignored and it has not received scientific and scholarly attention it deserves. This study will be undertaken to assess the difference of body dissatisfaction among rural and urban adolescents of Haryana state. Identification of above problem at the earliest can save the adolescent in getting severe psychological damage in future. Results of the study will help to plan strategies and create awareness among adults, teachers and parents to take accountability for educating children healthy way of life, improving confidence and modeling healthy eating and exercise. The findings of the study will add to existing knowledge in this area and will be beneficial to understand this complicated relationship for further research. The researcher has great hopes and faith that this research will help many adolescents for their betterment and future progress both physically and mentally.

Objective of the Study

To compare body image among rural and urban adolescents.

Hypothesis

Based upon the literature found, it was hypothesized that:

There will be a significant difference among rural and urban adolescents with regard to body image perception.

Method and Procedure

A survey design was chosen to reach the research objectives. Male and female adolescent's age 14 to 19 years comprise of the population for the present study. The subjects investigated belong to rural and urban high secondary and senior secondary students. Random sampling technique was used for all groups.

Sample Description

The sample consisted of 800 male and female adolescents of age group 14 to 19 years from rural and urban high secondary and senior secondary schools. The randomly selected 5 districts of Haryana were Faridabad, Panchkula, Fatehabad, Jind and Sirsa. From each district 4 schools (2 rural and 2 urban) were selected randomly. From each school a random sample of 40 students both males and females were selected equally from higher secondary and senior secondary classes. Urban areas were considered where there was Municipal Corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committees. All areas which were not categorized as urban areas were considered as rural areas. The detailed break up of the sample has been shown in the figures below:

Total sample=800									
Faridabad-160	Panchkula-160	Fatehabad-160	Jind-160	Sirsa-160					
	Each	District=160	_						
School-1(rural)-40	School-2(rural)-40	School-3(urban)-4	0 Schoo	ol-4(urban)-40					
	Se	chool=40							
Males-20 Females-20									
Hr.sc-10	Sr.sc-10	Hr.sc-10	S	r.sc-10					

Tools

The research instrument required for the study was explored after working out the information requirements to achieve the stated objectives. Body Image questionnaire constructed by T.F CASH (2000) was used to asses the body image perception of the subjects.

Description of Test

Body Image Test- Body image was measured with the help of BIQ (Body-image ideals questionnaire) developed by T.F CASH (2000). Based on extant research (cash & Szymanski,1995), the initial version of BIQ included 10 physical characteristics: height, skin complexion, hair texture and thickness, facial features, muscle tone and definition, body proportions, weight, chest/ breast size, physical strength, and physical coordination. In a subsequent (current version) of BIQ, an "overall physical appearance" item was added. For each attribute, respondents were asked to think about how they actually are and then to think about how they wish they were. First, on Part A, they rate the extent to which they resemble or match this personal physical ideal on a 4- point response scale:

- 0= Exactly as I am.
- 1= Almost as I am.
- 2= Fairly unlike me.
- 3= Very unlike me.

Then, on part B, they are asked to indicate how important it is that they embody each physical ideal:

- 0= Not important.
- 1= Somewhat important.
- 2= Moderately important.
- 3= Very important.

The table below summarizes the BIQ norms for male and female and indicates that the BIQ has good internal consistency for both sexes.

BIQ Psychometrics	MEN	WOMEN
	M=1.31	M=1.75
Norma	SD=1.35	SD=1.38
Norms	(n=192 across 2 samples)	(n=896 across 5 samples)
Internal consistency (cronbach's alpha)	M=.81	M=.76

Method of Scoring

The scoring of the 22 item BIQ involves calculation of a mean of the item by item cross-products of discrepancy x importance ratings. These are computed after recoding all discrepancy (Part A) ratings of 0 to -1. This permits the extension of the range of scores to include importance- weighted self-ideal congruence ("exactly as I am") for each item. Otherwise item cross –product scores would always equal a 0 for self ideal congruity regardless of the importance of the ideal for which the person reported matching the ideal.

The potential range of these composite BIQ scores is: -3 (for very important congruence across all physical attributes) to +9 (for very important and maximum discrepancies across all physical attributes), Thus, higher scores reflect greater self-ideal disparity with strongly held physical ideals.

Collection of Data

A list of randomly selected schools from of Panchkula district, Haryana was prepared. Data was collected during school hours through personal visits with prior permission from concerned authorities. Before administration of psychological inventory all the subjects were made familiar with the purpose of the study. Then the subjects were motivated to give appropriate and optimum response to each and every part of questionnaires given to them.

The directions were given to make the subjects understand the procedure to fill up the questionnaire and they were permitted to ask queries and their doubts were cleared before administering the tests. The subjects were asked to record the answers for all questions. The researcher tried his level best that there was no distraction or minimum distraction to the subjects who were attempting the tests. The subjects were given sufficient time to answer the questionnaires. The questionnaires were taken back after it was duly completed. Thorough screening was done to ensure that no question/part was left unanswered.

RESULTS

Table 1 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image of Rural and Urban Adolescents

		Rural		Urban		
S. NO	VAR.	N=400 Mean	SD	N=400 Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	17.45	16.65	17.76	20.582	.232

*Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=158

The result presented in table-6 on the variable Body image relate to Rural and Urban adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural sample as 16.95 and 16.723 respectively. However urban sample had Mean and S.D values as 17.26 and 20.475 respectively. The 't' – value -.233 as shown in the table above is lesser than the table value 1.962 and thus shows no significant difference regarding body image among rural and urban adolescents sample. The result might be attributed to the fact that television and other internet services have reached to rural areas also and hence both urban and rural adolescents are equally influenced by media and its images. Standard of living as well as education has left a marginal difference among the mental health of rural and urban adolescents.

Table 2 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image of Rural Male and Urban Male Adolescents

		Rural Male N=200		Urban Male N=200		
S. NO	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	16.04	12.945	15.38	19.247	.405

*Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=398

The result presented in table-32 on the variable Body image relate to rural and urban male adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural male

adolescents sample as 16.04 and 12.945 respectively. However urban male adolescents sample had Mean and S.D values as 15.38 and 19.247 respectively. The 't' – value .405 as shown in the table above shows no significant difference as the 't' value obtained was lesser than the table value of 1.962 at .05 level of significance with (df=398). Thus, it projects that rural males have equal level of body image perception when compared to urban males.

Table 3 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image of Rural Female and Urban Female Adolescents

		Rural Female N=200		Urban Female N=200		
S. No	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	18.86	19.604	20.75	21.659	.620

^{*}Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=398

The result presented in table-3 on the variable Body image relate to rural and urban female adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural female sample as 18.86 and 19.604 respectively. However urban female sample had Mean value 20.14 and S.D value 21.622 respectively. The 't' – value .620 as shown in the table above shows no significant difference as the 't' value obtained was found lesser than the table value of 1.962 at .05 significance level with (df=398). Thus it shows that there is no difference regarding body image among rural female and urban female adolescents.

Table 4 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image, Self-Esteem and Eating Attitude of Rural Senior Secondary and Urban Senior Secondary Adolescents

		Rural Senior Secondary N=200		Urban Senior Secondary N=200		
S.no	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	25.255	14.128	19.995	21.489	2.892**

^{*}Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=198

The result presented in Table-24 on the variable Body image relate to rural senior secondary and urban senior secondary adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural senior secondary adolescents as 25.255 and 14.128 respectively. However urban senior secondary adolescents sample had Mean value 19.995 and S.D value as 19.430 respectively. The 't'-value 2.892 was found significant as the obtained 't' value was found higher than the table value of 2.581 at .01 level of significance with (df=398). Thus, urban senior secondary adolescent have significantly better body image perception than rural senior secondary adolescents with regard to body image perception.

Table 5 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image of Rural Higher Secondary and Urban Higher Secondary adolescents

		Rural High Secondar y N=200		Urban High Secondar y N=200		
S.no	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	9.650	15.29 3	15.525	19.430	3.360**

^{*}Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=198

The result presented in Table-2 on the variable Body image relate to rural high secondary and urban high secondary adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural high secondary adolescents as 9.650 and 15.293 respectively. However urban high secondary adolescents sample had Mean value 15.525 and S.D value as 19.430 respectively. The 't' – value 3.360 was found significant as the obtained 't' value was found higher than the table value of 2.581 at .01 level of significance with (df=398). Thus, rural high secondary adolescent have significantly better body image perception than urban high secondary adolescents with regard to body image perception.

Table 6 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image of Rural Higher secondary Female and Urban Higher Secondary Female Adolescents

	Rural Hr.sc Female N=100			Urban Hr.sc Female N=100		
S. No	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	5.89	16.365	19.43	21.680	4.985**

*Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=198

The result presented in table-42 on the variable Body image relate to rural and urban high secondary female adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural high secondary female adolescents sample as 5.89 and 16.36 respectively. However urban high secondary female adolescents sample had Mean value 19.43 and S.D value 21.680 respectively. The 't' - value 4.985 as shown in the table above shows significant difference as the obtained 't' value was found higher than the table value of 2.581 at .01 level of significance with (df=198). Less scores in questionnaire shows very important congruence across all physical attributes and high score shows very important and maximum discrepancy across all physical attributes. Thus, it projects that urban high secondary females have greater selfideal disparity with strongly held physical ideals as compared to rural high secondary females.

Table 7 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image of Rural High Secondary Male and Urban High Secondary Male Adolescents

		Rural Hr.sc Male N=100		Urban Hr.sc Male N=100		
S. No	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	13.41	13.182	11.62	16.063	.861

*Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=198

The result presented in table-44 on the variable Body image relate to rural and urban high secondary male adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural high secondary male sample as13.41 and 13.182 respectively. However urban high secondary male sample had Mean and S.D values as 14.62 and 16.063 respectively. The 't' -value .861 was not found significant as the 't' value obtained was lesser than the table value of 1.962 at .05 level of significance with (df=198). Thus the result above shows no significant difference regarding body image perception among rural and urban high secondary male adolescents.

Table 8 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image, Self-Esteem and Eating Attitude of Body image of Rural Senior Secondary Female and Urban Senior Secondary Female Adolescents

		Rural Sr.sc Female N=100		Urban Sr.sc Female N=100		
S. No	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	31.83	12.840	20.85	21.650	4.362**

^{*}Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=198

The result presented in table-46 on the variable Body image relate to rural and urban senior secondary female adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural senior secondary female adolescents as 31.83 and 12.840 respectively. However urban senior secondary female adolescents sample had Mean value 20.85 and S.D value as 21.650 respectively. The 't'-value 4.362 was found significant as the obtained 't' value was found higher than the table value of 2.581 at .01 level of significance with (df=198). Less scores in questionnaire shows very important congruence across all physical attributes and high score shows very important and maximum discrepancy across all physical attributes. Thus, it projects that rural senior secondary females have greater self-ideal disparity with strongly held physical ideals as compared to urban senior secondary females.

Table 9 Mean Difference in the Scores of Body Image, Self-Esteem and Eating Attitude of Body Image of Rural Senior Secondary Male and Urban Senior Secondary Male Adolescents

		Rural Sr.sc male N=100		Urban Sr.sc male N=100		
S. No	VAR.	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
1.	Body image	18.68	12.209	19.14	21.402	.852

^{*}Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level, df=198

The result presented in table-48 on the variable Body image relate to rural and urban senior secondary male adolescents. The descriptive statistics shows the Mean and S.D values of rural senior secondary male adolescents sample as 18.68 and 12.209 respectively. However urban senior secondary male adolescents sample had Mean value 22.14 and S.D value 21.402 respectively. The 't' -value .852 was not found significant as the obtained 't' value was found lesser than the table value of 1.962 at .05 level of significance with (df=198). Thus, the results showed in the table above shows no significant difference regarding body image perception among rural and urban senior secondary male adolescents.

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATIONS

The results projected no significant difference between rural and urban adolescents regarding body image variable in all selected groups except rural and urban high secondary adolescents, rural and urban senior secondary students, urban and rural high secondary female and urban and rural senior secondary female, thus partially rejected and partially retained the hypothesis with regard to the body image perception. It was found that urban high secondary female, urban senior secondary female, urban high secondary and rural senior secondary have significantly greater self-ideal disparity with

strongly held physical ideals as compare to rural high secondary female, rural senior secondary females, rural high secondary and urban senior secondary adolescents who have important congruence across all physical attributes.

Recommendations

In the light of previous research and findings of the current study the key recommendations are:

- Body image research is still nascent in India, and mental health professionals have not paid enough attention to psychological disorders that a negative body image can cause. At the moment, this disorder is grossly neglected. Researchers and mental health professionals are urged to give scientific and academic attention it deserves.
- 2. This study was undertaken to assess the problems of body dissatisfaction among adolescents. Identification of above problems at the earliest can save the adolescent in getting severe damage in future.
- 3. The findings of the study may add to existing knowledge in this area and will be beneficial to understand this complicated relationship.
- Results of the study will help to plan strategies and create awareness among adults, teachers and parents to take responsibility for teaching children healthy habits, improving confidence and modeling healthy eating and exercise.
- 5. The study may be conducted on subjects of different age groups and sex with different demographical backgrounds.
- 6. Further study may be conducted by using different designs other than those employed in this study.
- 7. The researcher has great hopes and faith that this research will help many adolescents for their betterment and future progress both physically and mentally.

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How to cite this article:

Sanjogdeep Singh (2017) 'A Comparative Study of Body Image Among Rural and Urban Adolescents', *International Journal of Current Advanced Research*, 06(11), pp. 7357-7362. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijcar.2017.7362.1132
