

**RESEARCH PAPER****Impact of Parental Bonding on Body Dissatisfaction: The mediating Effect of Socio-cultural Attitude towards Appearance among University Students****¹Bushra Arshad, ²Aqsa Abdul Khaliq* and ³Mehak Haroon**

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ABSTRACT

This study was intended to analyze the impact and relationship of parental bonding on body dissatisfaction by the mediating role of socio-cultural attitude towards appearance among university students. Body appearance has become a great concern among university students and it can negatively impact an individual. University students are an important asset for any nation and it becomes vital to understand the variables that may affect their lives. The total sample was 325 that was selected by per indication method by multiply the total items (65) of all scales to 5. 165 were males and 158 were females was obtained through Convenient sampling technique. Age range of the sample size was 18 years above. The instruments used to collect the data were Parental Bonding scale (Parker et al.,1979) 25- items. It has two subscales, care and overprotection. Body dissatisfaction scale (Garner et. al.,1983) includes 10 items and Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance scale Thompson et al., (2004) contains 30 items that were divided into 4 subscales as information, Pressures, Internalization general and Internalization Athlete. Findings indicated that there is impact of parental bonding on body dissatisfaction. The socio-cultural attitude towards appearance played a moderator role between parental bonding and body dissatisfaction rather than mediator.

Keywords: Body Dissatisfaction, Instruments, Parental Bonding, Sociocultural Attitude towards Appearance

Introduction

Body dissatisfaction, characterized by negative thoughts and feelings towards one's body, is a prevalent issue among university students, with potentially detrimental effects on mental and physical well-being (Grabe, Hyde, & Lindberg, 2007). Understanding the factors contributing to body dissatisfaction is crucial for developing effective interventions to promote positive body image. One such factor that has garnered attention in recent research is the quality of parental bonding experienced during childhood and adolescence. Parental bonding refers to the emotional connection between parents and their children, encompassing aspects of warmth, acceptance, and communication (Bowlby, 1969). Research suggests that the quality of parental bonding can significantly influence various aspects of individuals' psychological functioning, including self-esteem, self-concept, and body image (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014).

Moreover, socio-cultural attitudes towards appearance play a significant role in shaping individuals' perceptions of their bodies. In contemporary society, where media portrayals often idealize thinness and muscularity, individuals are frequently exposed to unrealistic beauty standards, contributing to body dissatisfaction (Grabe et al., 2007). These socio-cultural attitudes towards appearance are transmitted through various channels, including family, peers, and media, and may interact with the quality of parental bonding to influence body image concerns among university students. However, limited research has examined the interplay between parental bonding, socio-cultural attitudes towards

appearance, and body dissatisfaction, particularly among university students. Thus, this study aims to investigate the mediating effect of socio-cultural attitudes towards appearance on the relationship between parental bonding and body dissatisfaction among university students. Understanding these mechanisms can inform targeted interventions to promote positive body image and psychological well-being among this population.

Literature Review

Research consistently shows that lower levels of parental care and higher levels of overprotection during childhood are associated with increased body dissatisfaction in adolescence and young adulthood (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). This suggests that the quality of parent-child relationships significantly influences individuals' body image perceptions. Such findings underscore the importance of examining familial relationships' impact on body image concerns among university students as they transition to adulthood.

Exposure to media images depicting unrealistic body ideals has been linked to heightened body dissatisfaction and disordered eating behaviors among university students (Grabe et al., 2007). Peer and family influences further contribute to individuals' dissatisfaction with their bodies by reinforcing societal beauty norms (Thompson et al., 1999). These findings highlight the profound influence of societal beauty standards on body image concerns among university students.

While research has independently examined the relationships between parental bonding, socio-cultural attitudes towards appearance, and body dissatisfaction, few studies have investigated the mediating role of socio-cultural attitudes (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Understanding how socio-cultural factors mediate the relationship between familial relationships and body dissatisfaction is crucial for elucidating the underlying mechanisms driving these associations. Exploring these mediating pathways can provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between familial influences, societal pressures, and body image perceptions among university students.

Material and Methods

Research Design

A survey method would employ a quantitative research methodology by using a questionnaire to collect data via practical sampling.

Participants

The sample are consisting of 325 university students. The participants are both male and female from different universalities by the convenient sampling. The convenient sampling is used to collect the data because it is useful and according to facility. The per indication method was used to determine the sample size in which we multiply the total items (65) of all three scales under study with 5.

Measures

Parental Bonding

The intense attachment that develops between parents and their child refers as parental bonding. Parental bonding is the formation of a mutual emotional and psychological closeness between parents and their child. Parental bonding can measure by the Parental Bonding Inventory (PBI) is a 25- items instrument intended to quantify parent-child bonds according to the viewpoint of the youngster. (Parker et. al., 1979).

Body dissatisfaction

Body dissatisfaction is the negative subjective evaluation of one's body as it relates to body size, shape, muscularity or muscle tone, weight, and fitness. ... Typically, dissatisfaction involves a perceived discrepancy between one's current body and one's ideal body that fosters negative emotions and discontent. The body dissatisfaction subscale includes 10 things with Likert-type answers from consistently (4) to never (0) with the more prominent qualities showing higher body dissatisfaction. The items of this scale are simply identified with four spaces of the body in particular, hips, thighs, rear end, and stomach. Garner. et al. (1983).

Socio cultural Attitude toward Appearance

Socio cultural Attitude toward Appearance refers to forming a socio cultural attitude by valuating and internalizing his/her body with ideal beauty delivered through mass media. This (SATAQ) 30-items self-report measure gave four subscales: Information (nine items; e.g., "television programs are a significant wellspring of data about style and being appealing"), Pressures (seven items; e.g., "I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to get more fit"), Internalization—General (nine things; e.g., "I contrast my body with the assortments of TV and celebrities"), and Internalization—Athlete (five things; e.g., "I attempt to look like games competitors .Thompson et al.,(2004).

Research Instruments

- Parental Bonding Scale (Gordon Parker, Hilary Tupling and L.B. Brown)
- Body Dissatisfaction Scale (BDS) Garner., et al. (1983)
- Socio cultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Scale-3 (SATAQ-3R) Thompson et al., 2004

Procedure

I provide the participant my research instruments all at once for data collection after providing a brief explanation of the context of the study questions and tools with the assurance of confidentiality. After gathering the questionnaire, I will use SPSS to generate a data sheet, input responses, and carry out regression analysis to evaluate the primary hypothesis of the study. It should take about 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables

Table 1. Mean and Standard deviation of age of participants

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Age of respondent	325	21.00	36.00	26.6646	3.32334
Valid N(listwise	325				

Above table shows that continuous variable age has a minimum value 21 maximum value 36 with Mean (26.6646) and S.D(3.32334) with respect to age. On the basis of maximum and minimum value we will convert the continuous variables into categorical demographic characteristics of sample with respect to age. As shown in table 1 the mean age of participants (N=325) ranged from 21 to 36 of current study having (M=26.6646, S. D=3.32334).

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage for gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent%
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Male	165	50.8
Female	158	48.6
3.00	2	.6
Total	325	100.0

The table 4 showed that present research consists of 325 participants of sample which are university students (both) males and females .There were 165 males and 158 females in present research. The gender variable lies into categories males and females with their frequency and percent (165, 50.8%), (158, 48.6%).

Psychometric Properties of Scales

Table 3. Reliability analysis and Cronbach's Alpha of Parental bonding, Body dissatisfaction and Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance

Moderating Effect 1	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Moderating Effect 1		1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Body dissatisfaction	10	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Parental bonding	25	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Socio Cultural attitude towards appearance	30	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000

Cronbach's alpha reliability of three scales is 1.000. Pls3 was used to determine the psychometric properties of the tool in table no 6 the body dissatisfaction scale consists of 10 items and Cronbach's alpha reliability is 1.000. The second Scale parental bonding with two dimensions (Care and Overprotection) that consists of 25 items and Cronbach's reliability is 1.000. The last and third scale is Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance that consists of 30 items and Cronbach's reliability is 1.000. The Cronbach's alpha of all scales was found 1 which means that scales are highly reliable.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 4. Mediating analysis for parental bonding, socio-cultural attitude towards appearance and body dissatisfaction

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Parental bonding -> socio Cultural Attitude -> Body dissatisfaction	-0.021	-0.020	0.012	1.838	0.067

The above table showed the mediation analysis in which Parental bonding, socio-cultural attitude towards appearance and body dissatisfaction with M (-0.020) S.D (0.012), and P (0.067) which means that socio-cultural attitude towards appearance has not mediating role among parental bonding and body dissatisfaction. Due to which we check moderation analysis in given variables and found it significant.

Table 5. Moderation analysis for body dissatisfaction, parental bonding and socio-cultural attitude towards appearance.

	Beta	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	LL,UL
Moderating Effect 1 -> body dissatisfaction	0.001	0.001	0.000	2.466	0.014	0.000, 0.002
Parental bonding -> body dissatisfaction	-1.181	-1.197	0.505	2.338	0.020	-2.244, -0.388
Parental bonding -> socio-cultural attitude towards appearance	-0.163	-0.164	0.059	2.753	0.006	-0.273, -0.037
Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance -> body dissatisfaction	-0.847	-0.861	0.413	2.051	0.041	-1.817, -0.200

According to the above table the effect size of moderation analysis the first path model shows that body dissatisfaction with M (0.001), S.D (0.000), P value (0.014), LL, (0.000) and UL (0.002) which show that body dissatisfaction has a significant effect on parental bonding. The second path model of moderation analysis Parental bonding and body dissatisfaction with mean value (-1.197), S.D(0.505),P value (0.020),LL,-2.244A and UL,(-0.388) which show that parental bonding has a significant effect on body dissatisfaction which show that parental bonding has a significant effect on body dissatisfaction. The third path model of moderation analysis mean value (-0.164), S.D(0.059),P(0.006),LL(-0.273),UL(-0.037) which show that parental bonding has a significant effect on socio-cultural attitude towards appearance. The fourth path model of moderation analysis with mean value (-0.861), S.D(0.413) P (0.041), LL(-1.817)UL(-0.200) which show that Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance has a significant effect on body dissatisfaction which means that as socio-cultural attitude increased it have more effect on body dissatisfaction.

Table 6. Independent Samples t-test for gender and parental bonding (N=325).

Variable	Male n=169		Female n=154		t	p	95%CI		Cohen's d
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			LL	UL	
Parental bonding	89.3195	9.18097	88.6234	7.58316	.745	.560	1.14125	2.53355	0.082672

Note: CI confidence interval, LL= lower limit, UL = upper limit.

Table 1. demonstrated the relationship between gender and parental bonding with male mean 89.3195 and S.D 9.18097 and female Mean 88.6234 and S.D 7.58316 with $t=.745$, $p=.560$, Cohen's d 0.082672 that shown that there is no significant difference in term of gender on parental bonding.

**Table 7
Analysis of variance of Parental bonding, body dissatisfaction and socio-cultural attitude towards appearance on the basis of Age**

Variable	21_23 years	24-26 years	27-29 years	30_32 years	33_36 years	F	p	Partial η^2
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	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Parental bonding	83.67	9.45	84.24	12.50	83.40	10.75	83.29	6.55	99.59	28.96	7.66	.00	1.07
Body Dissatisfaction	25.65	6.48	24.45	5.59	25.59	6.10	24.07	5.02	23.59	6.01	1.11	.34	0.27
Socio-cultural Attitude towards appearance	112.346	12.33	111.22	12.23	112.02	11.78	110.63	12.95	102.91	11.77	2.71	.03	0.63

The above figure show that we have the five categories of age in all which parental bonding has a effect but figure tells us that parental bonding has a great effect and also increased in five 33_36 category of age. According to Bowlby parental bonding is a universal relation. Bonding with parents is always matters for everyone in life because bonding or attachment with parents give the balance to the emotional development of a person. According to experts parental bonding is increased in adulthood because in age of 30's adults betterly realize the matters and patterns of parenting and try to adopt the ways of Parental bonding for being a parent which promotes and supports , emotional, social, and moral development of adulthood(Bowlby ,1977).

To check the validity of the variables under study Fornell Lacker Criterion analysis has been used for parental bonding -0.078, body dissatisfaction -0.073 and Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance has the construct validity 1.000 .The section is most highlighted section that is called testing the main hypothesis in which we discussed the mediation, moderation and regression analysis of main variables of our study. t- test, mediation, moderation Annova and regression analysis were used for interpretation.

Discussions

Parents are the key factor in adults' social comparisons and development of body dissatisfaction. Early parental bonding is vital in preparing a child for later life through adulthood, as well as for social responsibilities. In other words, a positive parental bond can shape good behaviors. Parental Bonding allows parents and their adults to express their feelings and thoughts, which is a form of effective communication that strengthens their relationships, Okpako (2004). Lee and Lock (2012) have pointed out that adults who enjoy parental bonds with warmth, acceptance and autonomy have better chances to develop the good self-perception is called body image. Larose et al., (2005). The present study conduct to check the impact of parental bonding on body dissatisfaction through mediating effect of socio-cultural attitude towards appearance among the university students. The objective of our study was to explore relationship among parental bonding, body dissatisfaction and socio-cultural attitude towards appearance. Parental bonding was independent, body dissatisfaction was dependent and socio-cultural attitude towards appearance was mediator variable. Information about the respondents like demographics, number of participants in each category was discussed in Table 2. To check the validity of the variables under study Fornell Lacker Criterion analysis has been used for parental bonding - 0.078,body dissatisfaction -0.073 and Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance has the construct validity 1.000 (Table 8).To check the reliability of scales, reliability analysis was done parental bonding scale consists of (25) items has 1.000 that is good on the other hand body dissatisfaction scale consists of (10) items has 1.000 reliability score and socio-cultural attitude towards appearance scale consists of 30 items has also 1.000 reliability score that is good (Table 6). To test our hypothesis further analysis like independent sample t- test, mediation, moderation Anova and regression analysis were used for interpretation. According to hypothesis we have to check the mediation role of socio-cultural attitude towards appearance on parental bonding and body dissatisfaction at first.

The first hypothesis was about that there would be a significant relationship among parental bonding, socio-cultural attitude towards appearance and body dissatisfaction among university students, to analyze we runs the mediation analysis through Pls.

(Table11) with $M(-0.020)$, $S.D(0.012)$ and $P(0.067)$ which means that Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance has not mediating role among parental bonding and body dissatisfaction among university students .This finding was somewhat unexpected as previous researches. Because researchers in (2003) investigates the relationships among socio-cultural pressures to be thin, internalization of the thin ideal, social comparison, body mass index, and body dissatisfaction in young girls. The sample was 153 from 10– 13year old girls completed measures assessing socio-cultural pressure to be thin, media exposure, body dissatisfaction, social comparison, and internalization of the thin ideal. Although socio-cultural factors, as a group, were significantly associated with internalization of the thin ideal, perceived media pressure was the only socio-cultural influence uniquely related to internalization of the thin ideal. Perceived pressure to be thin delivered by the media was found to be associated with body dissatisfaction via internalization of the thin ideal. The relationship between internalization of the thin ideal and body dissatisfaction was also partially influenced by social comparison. Results of previous study shows that there is a relationship present in body dissatisfaction and socio-cultural attitude towards appearance that does not support the results of present study. However, there is a lack of research verifying the nature of the relationship between patterns of bonding with parents, socio-cultural attitudes toward appearance, body image, and their role in developing body image (body dissatisfaction). There are many reasons due to which results are different. First the population of our study because the results of above study was conducted on the adolescent's girls that is a very challenging age with many tendencies and trends. Researchers suggests that parental influences play a central role in life of preadolescent girls. Second reason may be the other factors as body mass index. Thin ideal and perceived media pressure were studied with body dissatisfaction and Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance (Blowers et al., 2003).

Conclusion

The research is conducted to explore the impact of parental bonding on body dissatisfaction through mediating effect of socio-cultural attitude towards appearance among university students. To sum up the findings of present research, this study has served a number of purposes. Firstly, it has explored the domain of body dissatisfaction, parental bonding and socio-cultural attitude towards appearance in university students of Pakistan area which has received little attention from researchers in the past. The findings lead to the conclusion that there is not significant relationship between parental bonding by the mediating role of socio-cultural attitude towards appearance among university students. The finding suggested that Parental bonding plays a vital role in all periods of life and work as a predictor in the personality and moral development. Body dissatisfaction that is an important construct for the individual of this modern age has effected and also caused the development of eating disorders. Socio-cultural attitude towards appearance fulfill the roles of both mediation and moderation.

Recommendations

- During analysis and discussion, it is suggested that some of the research's limitations be solved in order to broaden the scope of this important piece of work.
- It is advised that some of the research's limitations be resolved through analysis and discussion in order to widen the scope of this significant piece of work.

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