

**Influence of body image perceptions on life satisfaction and  
emotional well-being among Undergraduate students of Lahore,  
Pakistan: A survey-based study.**



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**2023-2025**



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## **Abstract**

Body image perception and its impact on emotional well-being and life satisfaction are important areas of study because they signify broader concerns about psychological health in various groups, especially among teenagers and young adults. Body image is defined as an individual's mental representation and physical appearance assessment. This research seeks to find out the ways through which the influence of body image perceptions can be reduced among undergraduate students. This research was conducted to investigate the influence of body image on life satisfaction and emotional well-being of undergraduate students in Lahore, Pakistan. In this research, emotional well-being was measured in terms of self-esteem. The research operated a quantitative method such as a questionnaire to collect data from the target population. The target population of this study was the undergraduate students of FCCU. Convenient sampling method was used to recruit the participants and the sample was taken from total 204 participants. After the data collection, SPSS was used to analyze the data by through descriptive statistics and regression analysis to understand the relationship between variables. Results showed that Body image was a positive predictor of life satisfaction ( $p < .001$ ), indicating that as the score on the body image scale increases so the life satisfaction will increase. And body image 1 showed a negative correlation with self-esteem ( $p < .001$ ). Understanding the influence of body image on life satisfaction and mental well-being is crucial for informing policies and interventions aimed at improving the quality of life for its individual who face body image problems.

*Keywords: body image perception, life satisfaction, emotional well-being, self-esteem.*



# 1 Introduction

Body image perception and its impact on emotional well-being and life satisfaction are important areas of study because they signify broader concerns about psychological health in various groups, especially among teenagers and young adults. Body image defined as an individual's mental representation and physical appearance assessment (Dotse &Asumeng, 2015), substantially impacts self-esteem, emotional well-being, and overall life satisfaction. According to research, body image is greatly influenced by experiences in teenagers and early adulthood, which can have serious psychological consequences later in life. Self-esteem, an important personality attribute that measures emotional and mental well-being, is intrinsically connected with body image.

Life satisfaction, as opposed to transient happiness, is an overall evaluation of one's life across multiple dimensions, such as health, relationships, and personal fulfillment (Naz et al., 2023). It is mainly observed that adults struggle a lot with their morphological look because of different factors. Still, university students are more inclined to have body image problems as major differences in appearances take place at that time (Abbas et al.,2024). In Pakistan, body image's influence on life satisfaction and emotional well-being among male and female university students requires further scientific inquiry. People's life is based on the opinions of others about them. How people think about others can impact their psychological health and even their own perspective about themselves. In the developing countries like Pakistan, life satisfaction and the wellbeing of a person by the impact of body image is badly inferred. Life in Lahore is still very complicated, especially for the students. In the study, the goal is to understand how the body image affects the mental health, happiness and emotional wellbeing of students. Students in Pakistan who are not appreciated in the society because of their body would have the different way of living than those



who are well appreciated in the society. There are numerous studies that shows a strong association between the emotional wellbeing, like stress, depression, anxiety and the discontent due to body image. A study conducted in Lahore emphasized that body image satisfaction has a positive effect on the wellbeing of a person. Similarly, another study highlighted that body image concern was positively correlated with psychological distress among university students in Islamabad (Rashid et al,2021).

By investigating, this study hopes to shed light on the various effects of body image on life satisfaction and emotional well- being, the emotional well-being here will be observed in terms of measuring self-esteem among the students. The results will help us plan some ways through which the influence of body image on life satisfaction and emotional well-being can be reduced.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

Body image has emerged as a crucial component of personal identity and self-worth in today's visually driven and appearance focused society, especially for young people. Due to peer pressure, media impact, and social comparisons, undergraduate students who are in the early adulthood, are more susceptible to forming negative body image perceptions. Their emotional health and general level of life satisfaction may be greatly impacted by these perceptions. Students' mental health, social interactions, and academic achievement are all significantly impacted by their emotional well-being, especially their sense of self-esteem Even though body image concerns are becoming more and more of a global concern, there isn't much empirical research on how body image impacts life satisfaction and mental well-being in Pakistan, particularly at academic institutions like Forman Christian College University (FCCU).



Therefore, this study aims to quantitatively examine the influence of body image perceptions on life satisfaction and self-esteem among undergraduate students at FCCU, providing valuable insights to educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals

## **1.2 Aim of the study**

The main aims of this research are:

- To understand if students are satisfied with their bodies or not.
- To find out how the body image can impact the psychological wellbeing of students.
- To find out how the level of life satisfaction changes due to body image perception in undergraduate students.

## **1.3 Significance of the research**

This research is significant as it sheds light on the critical role of body image in shaping the life satisfaction and emotional well-being of undergraduate students. By focusing on a population that is particularly vulnerable to societal and peer pressures related to appearance, the study addresses a pressing issue that impacts students' mental health, academic performance, and overall quality of life. In a big city like Lahore, undergraduates are highly affected by their own culture and international trends. This can create immense and high standard about how the girls should look like and what type of body they should have. This constant pressure to look perfect can leads to anxiety, stress, lack of self-esteem and un-satisfaction ( Rashid et al,2021). By understanding how the students feel about themselves and their bodies and in what ways these feelings impact their mental health, can assist many psychologists to make an improve support program (Haroon & Khurshid, 2018). Literature shows that female students tend to feel more dissatisfaction towards



their body and have the constant pressure to look good than the male students (Zubair & Zubair, 2015).

#### **1.4 Definitions**

##### **Body image:**

Body image perception is defined as how a person perceives his or her body and which type of body a person considers most attractive, it also includes one's perception of his body shape and size (Toselli et al., 2023).

##### **Life satisfaction:**

Life satisfaction has been defined as “a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life” (Diener et al., 2002).

##### **Emotional well-being:**

Mental health foundation has given an appropriate definition of emotional well-being: ‘A positive sense of well-being which enables an individual to be able to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life; people in good mental health have the ability to recover effectively from illness, change or misfortune’ (Mental Health Foundation, n.d.).

##### **Self-esteem:**

Self-esteem is perceived as an individual's positive and negative attitudes towards himself (Rosenberg, 1965).

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

RQ1. What is the relationship between body image perceptions and emotional well-being, in terms of self-esteem, among undergraduate students in Lahore, Pakistan?



RQ2. How do body image perceptions affect life satisfaction among undergraduate students in Lahore, Pakistan?



## **2 Literature Review**

Many studies highlight that body image perceptions are intricately associated with subjective wellbeing mainly in the area of life satisfaction and emotional wellbeing. If we talk about Lahore, Pakistan like other urban centers, the increasing societal standards of beauty are gradually influencing the perception of body image in young adults. These societal standards are shaped by different factors involving media, peer comparisons and cultural norms. And these influences are not only changing young people views about their physical appearance but also how they feel about themselves and what is the level of their life satisfaction.

Body image is not just as known as how someone looks but it also involves how someone thinks and feels about his/her appearance (Cash & Smolak, 2011). According to research it is found that when people perceive differences between their real and ideal body image, they lead to disappointment and as a result their emotional well-being and life satisfaction is affected satisfaction (Nishina, Ammon, Bellmore, & Graham, 2006). Earlier for a long-time body image concerns have been related with western societies but now such matters are becoming more bulging due to the globalization of beauty standards and increased social media exposure in south Asian cultures including Pakistan (Altabe, 1998; Yamamiya, Cash, & Thompson, 2005). But still there is comparatively limited research on adolescents' and young adults in non- western areas, related to body image. Neglecting the fact that adolescent and adult hood is the time period when the perceptions of body image are formed and shaped. Fast biological and physical changes come with puberty due to which people are more conscious about their body image, and as a result their psychological health get affected (Holmqvist Gattario et al., 2014). During this period, we can see



that how young adults and adolescents evaluate their physical appearance because of significant factors like media, peer comments and familial attitudes.

Another study explores how body appreciation and social appearance anxiety affect life satisfaction among young adults in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Involving 600 participants (300 males and 300 females, aged 18-41), the research used scales to measure body appreciation, social appearance anxiety, and life satisfaction (Naz, Malik, Farooq, & Waseem, 2023). Key findings include that body appreciation positively correlates with life satisfaction, while social appearance anxiety negatively predicts it. Additionally, females reported higher levels of social appearance anxiety than males. The study highlights the importance of understanding these dynamics, suggesting that improving body appreciation may enhance life satisfaction and reduce anxiety in young adults.

Another study examines the relationship between body image, psychological distress, self-esteem, and social adjustment among university students in Faisalabad. Involving 300 participants (150 males and 150 females aged 18-35), the research tested two hypotheses: that there is a significant relationship among these variables and that body image can predict mental health issues. Various scales were used to measure the key constructs. Findings supported both hypotheses, indicating significant correlations and predictive relationships. The study highlights the importance of addressing body image to improve mental health outcomes among students, making it valuable for students, mental health professionals, and academic institutions (Abbas, Batool, & Shahzadi, 2024).

Moreover, in literature we found several gender differences, which reveal that body dissatisfaction is experienced by both males and females and there are high levels of dissatisfaction in females as they frequently observe themselves as overweight even when this isn't true at all (Yates et al.,



2004). And due to these gendered differences substantial mental health and emotional well-being outcomes appear. In today's media saturated world, we see that social comparison is the key factor in shaping young adults' perception of body image. People idealize images over social media platforms like tv, magazines and then compare themselves with them. It was found that about 85% of females and 65% of male do comparison of their bodies with pictures they idealize on media, and then about half of the women and over one-third of the men do not feel good about themselves after doing this (Hawk, 2017). Individuals' happiness and self-confidence can get affected because of this leading them to body dissatisfaction. According to a study sometimes people learn to know about themselves while comparing with others but this kind of comparisons are not always obliging (Van Der Zee et al., 2000). Some people's behaviors around others is also affected if they feel anxious about how their body appears. As every individual is different, so everyone behaves how they feel in a specific situation in different time or place, either positively or negatively. In cultures where appearance is considered very important, the individuals have fear of being judged and rejected by others as they are affected from social anxiety (Kilic, 2015). And in today's world, according to research what is shown in social media, movies and fashion promotes that beauty is associated with physical appearance. This emphasis on beauty lead individuals to worry about their appearance and makes them less confident about their skills and talent (Turel et al., 2018).

Many studies have found a direct correlation between the feeling of dissatisfaction about one's looks and several mental health issues, including substance abuse. According to research on higher rates of suicide, determining body dissatisfaction may be an essential part of attempts to prevent suicide in both males and females. Additionally, these people may be more prone to suicidal feelings and attempts (Sanchez-Ortiz, 2010). One of research was conducted on body image, self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students, which showed that self-



concerns were in positive correlation with body image and psychological well-being. Moreover, body image also showed a positive correlation with psychological well-being (Abbasi & Zubair, 2015). Studies discovered that as compared to boys the dissatisfaction about weight and physical appearance were more significant in girls, because of different factors including family functioning, psychological well-being and perceived physical attractiveness, and the level of variation in self-esteem and other psychological wellbeing was more due to above mentioned factors rather than other psychological variables (Delfabbro, Winefield, Anderson, & Winefield, 2011).

The researchers conducted for the past 50 years on body image and psychological well-being discovered that as compared to men women have higher levels of depression and lower level of self-esteem, because of the dissatisfaction with body image (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2001). It was found that around 40% of the Australian girls between the age of 8-12 show dissatisfaction with the shape of their body (Blowers et al., 2000). According to one of researcher Garmer the body image fears are not only limited to women, but studies have revealed that around one third of men are dissatisfied with the size and shape of their body and have more communal eating disorder in comparison to anorexia nervosa (Yamamiya et al., 2005). In another study it was found that, in a number of populations, body image may have a detrimental impact on psychological distress, self-esteem, and social adjustment; nevertheless, findings showed that it can have a negative impact on university students' psychological distress, self-esteem and social modification.

In research conducted on Self-Esteem and Body Image Perception in a Sample of University Students, a significant negative correlation was found between body image dissatisfaction and self-esteem, while in young educated females' high level of self-esteem was observed (Pop, C, 2016). It is noticed in adolescence that girls have more specific concerns about their body image, self-



image and weight in comparison with boys. And it is scientifically proved that majority of females and girls experience body image negatively (Furham, Badmin & Snead, 2002; Grogan, 2008). Because slimness is perceived as the required beauty standard specifically for young females, many of them are dissatisfied with their weight and body size (Ali & Lindstrom, 2006).

Another study investigates the impact of body image satisfaction on psychological well-being in an African context, involving participants from Ghana and eight other African countries (Dotse, Asumeng, 2015). It expands the concept of body image to include factors like facial appearance and complexion, in addition to body mass index. The research found a significant positive relationship between body image satisfaction and psychological well-being, with Africentric values acting as a moderator. Males reported higher body image satisfaction than females, while education level did not significantly affect satisfaction levels. The findings suggest that cultural values play a critical role in self-perception, potentially influencing practices such as skin bleaching. Overall, promoting positive body image in the context of cultural values could enhance mental health among individuals in African societies.

Researches have explored that body image and obesity are the known health pointers, carrying the potential to significantly influence the life satisfaction of females. While life satisfaction is the overall cognitive evaluation of a person's life, depending upon the comparison between the persons perceived life and the man-made beauty standards (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2004). The degree to which one's perceived life circumstances align with a self-imposed standard or set of conditions is known as life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Adolescents and young adults' lives depend seriously on life satisfaction, which can impact them in both ways, psychologically and physically (Frisch, 2000; Gilman & Huebner, 2003; Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001). People who are obese and have a poor body image are more likely to experience anxiety, depression, unpleasant



emotions, and low level of life satisfaction (Albertini & Phillips, 1999; Boyes et al., 2007; Martin et al., 2000; Thompson, Coover, Richards, Johnson, & Cattarin, 1995).

The existing literature on body image perceptions underscores the important factors influencing life satisfaction and emotional well-being, yet significant gaps remain, particularly regarding the specific cultural, social, and psychological contexts of Lahore, Pakistan. Many studies reference cultural influences on body image but often overlook the unique dynamics present in Lahore. Understanding local societal norms, values, and beauty standards is crucial for comprehensively assessing body image perceptions among Pakistani students. Additionally, the intersection of religion and culture in Pakistan may significantly affect body image and emotional well-being, a factor that is seldom explored in depth.



### **3 Theoretical Framework of Study**

This chapter explores the theoretical foundations underpinning the relationship between body image perceptions, life satisfaction, and emotional well-being among undergraduate students. The discussion is guided by two well-established psychological frameworks: Social Comparison Theory and the Top-Down Theory of Life Satisfaction. Together, these theories offer a comprehensive lens through which both external social influences and internal cognitive processes affecting students' self-concept and mental health can be understood. These theoretical lenses provide insight into both external (media and peer influence) and internal (global life satisfaction) processes that are relevant in understanding how students respond to or make sense of their body image.

#### **3.1 Social Comparison Theory**

Social Comparison Theory, introduced by Leon Festinger in 1954, suggests that people have an inherent tendency to assess their own abilities and opinions by comparing themselves to others, particularly when no objective benchmarks are available. Over time, this theory has broadened to encompass various areas of comparison, including physical appearance, which has become increasingly important in today's society. Social comparisons are not simply passive observations; they involve active cognitive processes shaped by factors like personality, social context, and emotional states. Kruglanski and Mayseless (1990) further explained that these comparisons help individuals understand societal norms and determine their position in the social hierarchy. Such comparisons can impact self-esteem, goal-setting, and identity formation, especially during late adolescence and early adulthood, a developmental phase that includes many college students.



There is an ample amount of exposed, perfect body standards advocated by digital media today which makes Social Comparison Theory significantly suitable now. The Instagram and TikTok social media sites are one way we realize this, because they are appearances as entertainment but are also visual fields in which appearance comparisons almost continuously(function.) When students consume content from both influencers and peers who appear to be perfectly fit, they will internally possess the ideals and use that as a comparison for themselves. There are more precise manifestations, but these comparisons do not just extend to celebrities, but to students like us, and friends and acquaintances whose early choice social media moments seem more curated, more perfect, more successful.

Moreover, even more so than in other places, in Pakistan cultural and social expectations surrounding beauty only heighten the impacts of upward comparison. The narrow standards of fair-skinned, slim, conventional femininity that are fetishised in many a South Asian culture can crawl deep in your life and shatter you if you do not live up to these metrics. According to Rizwan et al. In addition, (2022), male university students in Pakistan were feeling in need and pressure in real life and global media that create an unreal standard of appearance.

### **3.1.1 Upward Comparison**

Upward social comparison is the inclination to compare ourselves to someone we consider to be more successful than ourselves in a given area. And when it comes to body image, it is often these who sport that idealized look, most notably as this is being projected on social media. Collins (1996) stressed that although upward comparisons might be encouraging in some situations, such as academic progress, they are generally depressing when applied to appearances leading to feelings of inadequacy and dissatisfaction. Myers and Crowther (2009) and Fardouly et al. (2015)



found that appearance-related upward comparisons significantly reduce body satisfaction and raise negative affect, particularly among women.

There is a slew of negative psychological fallouts from us comparing ourselves with others.

- **Decrease in body satisfaction:** Students might feel less satisfied with their own body after comparing themselves to the idealized images they see, leading them to feel less than others (Myers & Crowther, 2009; Fardouly et al., 2015).
- **More depressive symptoms and negative mood:** If users are regularly exposed to ideals that can never be realized, emotional distress may result—including anxiety and depression symptoms (Haferkamp & Krämer, 2011; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2016).
- **Unrealistic standards of body image:** According to Perloff (2014), students are unable to differentiate what healthy and normal body looks like due to exposure to unrealistic media portrayals.
- **Internalization of thin ideals:** (Thompson et al. People who regularly look to upward comparisons, they argue, are finding themselves vulnerable to internalizing societal ideals of beauty that create never-ending dissatisfaction (1999).

### 3.1.2 Downward Comparison

Downward comparison is when you compare yourself to someone who is perceived to be worse off. It may offer an emotional lift, at least for a while, but studies show those effects don't usually stick around, and risk giving way to complacency or guilt. Wills (1981) proposed that downward comparisons can momentarily boost self-esteem, but Buunk and Ybema (1997) found that these benefits are transient and may even lead to indifference or superiority bias.



Notably, Tesser's Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model (1988) proposes that the emotional consequences of comparison are determined not only by the direction of comparison, but also by the proximity of the target and the domain's relevance to the self.

- **Sudden self-esteem boosts:** simply viewing other as less sexually appealing than you, less troubled, and so on, can work wonders for your self-esteem (Wills, 1981).
- **Risks of an inflated self-concept:** According to Crocker and Park (2004), reducing the self to such an inferior position creates a “fragile” self-esteem that can collapse at any moment upon receiving critical feedback.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Buunk and Gibbons (2007) argues that repeating the downward comparison can lead to creating an arrogant or complacent involving personality, which will inhibit any progress.

Social Comparison Orientation is the tendency to compare oneself to others using the habitual way of playing. PSYCHOLOGY: Shows a higher susceptibility to the negative psychological effect of comparisons (upwards, downwards) (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). SCO is measured by the Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM)

### 3.1.3 Cultural and Social Media Context in Lahore

In Lahore's campus culture, social value is becoming inextricably tied with appearance. Social network sites amplify this connection rendering quotidian social life as a kind of performance in service of visual data. You are also trained, on SNS, in constant self-monitoring and peer comparison often on superficial performance metrics like likes, comments, and follower totals (Perloff 2014).



Female students, in particular, face a cultural double bind. They're meant to possess old-fashioned modesty, but also slimness and aesthetic perfection on an Instagram scale. As Rizwan et al. (2022) even go so far as to say that this internal battle creates so much psychological distress that it leads to body dissatisfaction, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Such dynamics make Lahore an interesting context to examine the consequences of appearance-based social comparisons.

### **3.2 Top-Down Theory**

The Top-Down Theory of Life Satisfaction posits a causal channel in which for more globalized subjective life satisfaction to be reflected in the evaluations of more specific realms of an individual's life, domains, something like general degrees of life satisfaction must exist or the phenomenon would not take place (Heady, Veenhoven, & Wearing, 1991). This perspective emphasizes how internal dispositions, such as optimism or self-esteem, can shape the way events body image, in this case are understood and interpreted.

Based on this theory, people who are very satisfied with their life see their body conjugation greater way when they feel that they do not meet beauty standards. This comes with a beneficial global life perspective that operates like a filter, blocking harmful comparisons and confirming self-worth. At the opposite end of the scale, people with poor life satisfaction tend to magnify insignificant flaws or criticisms and in so doing, greatly increase their level of dissatisfaction with their image.

Revised Snyder Interpersonal Trust Scale (IST-S) The Interpersonal Trust Scale [34] was originally devised by Snyder and subsequently revised by Snyder, Appley, and Cyphers. subjective measure of this global evaluation. This makes sense as a complementary theory to Social Comparison



Theory looking at Social Comparison Theory's influence weighed against internal well-being as a protective barrier against suffering from the negative effects of external rivalry. As society has been exposed to more unrealistic standards of beauty, student in the peak of their self-concept with high evaluation of their lives will not fall prey to these body ideals.

### **3.2.1 Cultural Application in Lahore**

Students in Lahore, who come from a collectivist society, are molded by their family structure, religion and social circles, which serve to dictate how satisfied they feel with life. Students who have strong roots in their social systems show more emotional stability while being less naively affected by the pictures presented in the media. On the other hand, individuals with academic pressure, living in metropolis isolation, or riven with identity conflict may experience attenuated Top-Down effects.

Hence, life satisfaction was a significant mediator in how students in Lahore perceive their body image. Those who have a strong internal moral compass and sense of self-identity are less likely to feel emotionally out of whack comparing themselves to others and those who are devoid of internal pillars can completely shatter under ideals promoted by media. Your body image, handling body tension and relaxation, your mental health and emotion,

### **3.2.2 Emotional Well-Being and Body Image**

Emotional well-being (EWB) defined as the prevalence of positive affect (experienced feelings) over that of negative (sadness or anxiety). It plays an integral part in students' mental health and academic performance. According to a systematic narrative review performed by Guo et al. For

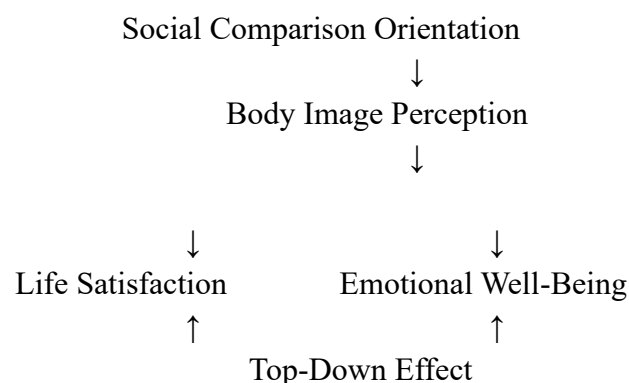


measuring EWB, one of the most researched instruments is the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Watson et al. 1988.) (2016).

Poor body image is strongly associated with negative emotional well-being. Research summarized in Grabe, Ward, and Hyde (2008) confirmed that negative body image is linked to anxiety, lowered self-esteem, and depression symptoms. Conversely, positive body image is often linked with other positive attributes, such as happiness, social confidence, emotional regulation (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015). In the Pakistani context, cultural norms regarding modesty, skin tone, and traditional gender roles add an additional layer of stress for students particularly females. Rizwan et al. (2022) note that women who deviate from societal beauty standards often experience a decline in self-esteem and a rise in anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Thus, body image perceptions not only shape self-concept but are directly linked to emotional functioning and overall well-being. Societal pressure around appearance takes an emotional toll in Lahore Students have reported that factors like appearance, clothing and behavior which are transmitted and amplified along digital platforms are measured and judged in addition to academic performance.

### 3.2.3 Conceptual Framework

The following framework illustrates the interaction of the core constructs investigated in this study:





This framework illustrates how social comparison orientation influences body image perception, which then impacts both life satisfaction and emotional well-being. The Top-Down effect acts as a moderator, buffering or amplifying the impact of body image perception on psychological outcomes.



## **4 Research Methodology**

Research methodology is the systematic approach for conducting research, which includes the theoretical framework, procedures, and techniques used to acquire and analyze data. It directs the researcher in approaching the research challenge, ensuring that the study is rigorous and valid. Research is the exercise of generating innovative ideas through knowledge and data.

### **4.1 Research Design**

A quantitative study design was used to comprehensively quantify and analyze the relationship between body image perception, emotional well-being and self-esteem of the students. Quantitative research is a scientific approach that focuses on quantifying data and statistical analysis to better understand patterns and relationships. It frequently employs organized techniques like surveys or experiments, which allow researchers to draw conclusions based on numerical data. This method is very useful for testing hypotheses and determining causal linkages. This research design is concerned with attempts to quantify social phenomenon, and collect and then analyze numeric data. This method simplifies the collection of numerical data and enables statistical analysis to uncover patterns and correlations between variables. The implementation of a structured questionnaire allows for a complete study of the factors influencing higher education and employment-related migration aspirations.

### **4.2 Hypothesis**

- Undergraduate students in Lahore with positive body image beliefs show significantly higher levels of life satisfaction than those with negative body image perceptions.
- There is a significant positive relationship between positive body image and self-esteem among undergraduate students in Lahore.



- Higher levels of negative body image (e.g., body dissatisfaction or self-consciousness) are significantly associated with lower self-esteem.

### **4.3 Ethical Considerations**

#### ***4.3.1 Privacy and Confidentiality:***

Ethical considerations were carefully observed, throughout the study. Participant confidentiality was maintained, along with coding and storing the personal information and responses securely. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time without any consequence to their medical treatment.

#### ***4.3.2 Data security:***

It was ensured that the responses of the participants will be anonymous and confidential. No personal identifiers will be collected. And it was ensured that the data will be securely stored on the researcher's laptop privately and only accessible by the researcher. Also, the data will be permanently deleted after analyzation, and no personal identity of the participants will be identified while reporting the results.

#### ***4.3.3 Voluntary participation:***

In consent form voluntary participation was included in which it was clearly stated that their participation is clearly voluntary. Participants had the option to skip any question or withdraw from the survey at any point without any consequences. It was made sure that the decision to participate will not affect the academic standing, nor harm in any way.



#### ***4.3.4 Informed consent:***

The purpose of the study was clearly explained in the consent form, including the potential benefits and risks. Support and resources were also clearly provided, along with the right to withdraw with any time (appendix A). And in the last participants consent was clearly asked in a statement. Ethics clearance was taken from Institutional Board Office, Forman Christian College, University, Lahore

### **4.4 Sample Design**

#### ***4.4.1 Selection criteria:***

The participants were recruited only from FCCU undergraduate students, as the population criteria was undergraduate students from FCCU only.

#### ***4.4.2 Sampling method:***

For this study convenience sampling technique was used to recruit the participants. This sampling technique involves the selection of participants who are easily accessible and willing to participate voluntarily. The total sample size consisted of 204 participants who belong to FCCU. Only online means like google forms were used to circulate the questionnaire, as it increases the response rate. The online survey was distributed through university channels like mails and students' group to gather data from large number of populations.



## **4.5 Instruments**

A well-structured questionnaire was formed including four sections, first section was based on demographic data, second section included questions from body image scale, third section included questions from self-esteem scale and the last section was based on questions from life satisfaction scale. Questionnaire is attached as Appendix B in this document

### ***4.5.1 Socio demographic***

Sociodemographic data was obtained in the first section of survey that covered various aspects of respondents' backgrounds. The survey begins by collecting information on age groups, gender, place of residence, year of education, housing situations, family system, monthly family income, involvement in physical exercise and perception of weight.

### ***4.5.2 The Body Image Satisfaction Scale***

This scale was used to examine the subjective assessment and social and behavioral components of body image. The items in this scale were derived from the Body Shape Questionnaire and the Satisfaction with Appearance Scale (SWAP). First nine questions measure the positive attitude towards the body image. It contained questions like “I am satisfied with my overall appearance”. The reliability of these questions was measured and then they were all commuted into body image 1 variable. The remaining questions were negatively reported, so they were reverse coded during analysis and after the reliability analysis 7 items were commuted into body image 2 variable. And in this scale 4 items were dropped as they weren't reliable. The reliability details of variables are given below in table 1 under the reliability analysis of scale.



#### ***4.5.3 Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)***

The third part of the survey was based on Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) to assess the self-esteem of students. It contained total 10 items. Some questions like 1, 3, 4 and 10 were measuring the positive attitudes and satisfaction with one's self. It included questions like "on the whole I am satisfied with myself". And the remaining questions were negatively reported, so they were reverse coded during the analysis. These questions were like "There are situations where I doubt my capabilities". The five positive questions were commuted together after checking the reliability. Three reverse coded items were also commuted after doing the reliability analysis and the remaining two items were dropped because of unreliability.

#### ***4.5.4 Life Satisfaction Scale***

The last part of the survey contained 5 items from life satisfaction scale created by Diener (1985), to measure the overall life satisfaction of individuals. The reliability of these items was checked and then commute variable of life satisfaction was made.

### **4.6 Reliability Statistics**

Table 1 shows the Reliability analysis that was carried out for five measures including self-esteem 1, self-esteem 2, body image 1, body image 2 and life satisfaction. Cronbach's alpha was computed for all variables to ensure in-depth understanding regarding reliability of the measure.



**Table 1 Reliability Statistics for Variables**

Variables	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-esteem 1	5	.832
Self-esteem 2	3	.690
Body image 1	9	.918
Body image 2	7	.832
Life satisfaction	5	.816

#### **4.7 Data Collection**

The data collection method included survey containing closed ended questions which provide fixed response rate. The survey was solely in English language as the target population was undergraduate students, who were able to read and understand the English language easily. Google form was used to circulate the survey online via university official students' groups.

#### **4.8 Research Site**

The research site was FCCU, as the study focused on undergraduate students from Forman Christian College University, Lahore.

#### **4.9 Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed with SPSS software to discover relevant patterns and linkages. The analysis involved Descriptive statistics to summarize the sample's demographic characteristics as well as the response distribution. Regression analysis was used to find the relationships between body image, life satisfaction, and emotional well-being of undergraduate students. Some items from



body image and self-esteem were reverse coded during the analysis, as they were negatively reported. The details of those items are explained above in instrument section. The Hypotheses were tested to find significance using techniques such as regression analysis.



## 5 Results

This section presents the key findings derived from the data collected and analyzed in the research. The results are organized according to the research objectives, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the outcomes related to body image perception, life satisfaction and self-esteem of undergraduate students. Initially, demographic characteristics of the sample are outlined to provide context, followed by regression analysis of the main variables.

**Table 2 Demographic Details of the Sample**

Variables	Categories	<i>f</i> <i>N</i> =204	Percentage (%)
Age			
	18-19	62	30.4
	20-21	75	36.8
	22-23	40	19.6
	24-25	22	10.8
	Above 25	5	2.5
Gender			
	Male	78	38.2
	Female	126	61.8
Year of study			
	1 year	89	43.6
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	32	15.7
	3 <sup>rd</sup> years	38	18.6
	4 <sup>th</sup> year	45	22.1
Field of study			
	Business	35	17.2



	Health sciences	17	8.3
	Science and tech	29	14.2
	Social sciences	82	40.2
	other	41	20.1
Family income			
	50k-100k	56	27.5
	100k-150k	48	23.5
	150k-200k	33	16.2
	Above 200k	67	32.8
Place of Residence			
	Rural	36	17.6
	Urban	167	81.9
Current living situation			
	On campus housing	13	6.4
	Off-campus rental	37	18.1
	Living with family	149	73.0
	Other	4	2.0
Family system			
	Nuclear	142	69.6
	Joint	61	29.9
Physical exercise			
	Daily	29	14.2
	Several times a week	44	21.6
	Once a week	34	16.7
	Rarely	84	41.2
	Never	13	6.4
Self-perception of weight			
	Under weight	35	17.2



	Normal weight	120	58.8
	Over weight	40	19.6
	Obese	4	2.0
	Prefer not to say	5	2.5

## 5.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents is important to understand and interpret the data in a better way because it describes the characteristics of the study population.

Table 2 shows the distribution of frequencies and percentages by age, gender, year of study, field of study, family income, place of residence, current living situation, family system, physical exercise and self-perception of weight. The bulk of respondents (36.8%) are between the ages of 20 to 21, with 30.4% falling in the 18-19 age range. 19.6% of the respondents lies in age range 22-23. 10.4% in 24-25 age range and a smaller proportion (2.5%) are older than 25. This identifies that the majority of the sample is based on young adults, which is significant considering the perception of youth about their body image and life satisfaction. The variable of gender was divided into two categories i.e. male and female, with 38.2% males and 61.8% females. This isn't a balanced representation but according to literature we found that females are more conscious towards their body image.

The year of study reveals that most respondents are from 1 year (43.6%), followed by 4<sup>th</sup> year (22.1%). And then (18.6%) are from 3<sup>rd</sup> year followed by 2<sup>nd</sup> year (15.7%). Because the perception of body image may change as the year of study changes, that's why it is an important variable.



The majority of the sample (40.2%) is from social sciences, while (17.2%) belong to business, (14.2%) from science and technology, (8.3%) from health sciences and remaining (20.1) belong to other departments. This would help in seeing the differences between perception of students from different departments.

Table 2 also shows the percentage distribution of respondents by monthly family income. The variable of income was divided into four response categories. The data showed that the majority (32.8%) of the respondents fall in the category of those having a family income of 200k above; 27.5% have family income of 50k-100, then 23.5% have a family income 100k-150k. and only 16.2% have family income 150k-200k.

Moreover, Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of respondents by place of residence. The variable of residence was divided into two response categories. The data showed that majority (81.9%) of the respondents fall in the category of those living in urban areas and only 17.6% have residence of rural areas.

Further the table shows the current living situation of respondents. The majority of respondents 73.0% live with their family. While 18.1% live off campus rental, 6.4% in on-campus housing and only 2.0% marked the other situation.

Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of respondents by type of family system. The variable of family system was divided into two response categories. The data showed that majority (69.6%) of the respondents fall in the category of those having nuclear family systems and only 29.9% have joint family system.

Then the table shows the engagement in physical activities which was divided into five categories. 41.2% of respondents show that they rarely engage in physical activities, followed by 21.6% as



several times a week, 16.7% shows once a week, 14.2% show daily engagement and only 6.4% show that they never indulge in physical activities.

Lastly, table shows the self-perception of respondents about their weight. This variable was also divided into five categories. 58.8% respondents as majority show that they perceive their weight normal, then 19.6% marked as overweight, 17.2% perceive themselves as underweight, only 2% perceive themselves as obese and only 2.5% of respondents didn't prefer to say.



**Table 3 descriptive statistics for scale variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Self-Esteem (1)	5.00–20.00	14.38	3.17
Self-Esteem (2)	3.00–12.00	5.64	1.62
Life Satisfaction	5.00–35.00	20.72	6.57
Body Image (2)	7.00–49.00	25.43	9.44
Body Image (1)	9.00–63.00	46.36	12.11

## **5.2 Descriptive Statistics For Scale Variables**

The table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables used in the study, these include self-esteem, life satisfaction and body image. The table shows the score of self-esteem 1 first which ranges from 5.00-20.00 with a mean of 14.38 (SD=3.17), Showing there is moderate level of self esteem among participants. In contrast to self esteem 1, the variable self esteem 2 has low range 3.00-12.00 and a lower mean score 5.64 (SD=1.62), showing some possible variability according to the scale used.

Further life satisfaction of the respondents ranges from 5.00-35.00, with a mean of 20.72 (SD=6.57) reflecting a moderate level of life satisfaction among respondents. The next variable body image 2 ranges from 7.00-49.00 with a mean of 25.43(SD=9.44), which is less than the mean of body image 1 i.e 46.36 (SD=12.11) Ranging from 9.00-63.00. overall, the descriptive statistics show that participants have moderate level of self-esteem, life satisfaction and body image.



**Table 4 Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Life Satisfaction from Body Image Satisfaction scale 1**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S. E</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>p</b>
Constant	8.972	1.681		<.001
Body Image Satisfaction	.254	.035	.458	<.001
R	.458			
R <sup>2</sup>	.210			
$\Delta F$	52.22			

**Table 5 Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Life Satisfaction from Body Image Satisfaction scale 2**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S. E</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>P</b>
Constant	16.89	1.316		<.001
Body Image Satisfaction	.150	.049	.215	.002
R	.215			
R <sup>2</sup>	.046			
$\Delta F$	9.567			

### 5.3 Linear Regression Analysis For Life Satisfaction

A simple linear regression showed that life satisfaction is significantly predicted by body image ( $F(1, 197) = 52.22, p < .001$ ), as a result significant amount of variance is observed by the predictor. The model reported for approximately 21% of the variance in life satisfaction ( $R^2 = .210$ ). The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = .254$ ) suggests that one unit change in body image (IV) brings about .254 change in the life satisfaction (DV). The Correlation was positive and statistically significant ( $\beta = .458, p < .001$ ).

A simple linear regression showed that life satisfaction is significantly predicted by body image ( $F(1, 198) = 9.567, p .002$ ), as a result significant amount of variance is observed by the predictor. The model reported for approximately 4.6% of the variance in life satisfaction ( $R^2 = .046$ ). The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = .150$ ) suggests that one unit change in body image (IV) brings



about .15 change in the life satisfaction (DV). The Correlation was small to moderate positive and statistically significant ( $\beta = .215, p .002$ ).

**Table 6 Linear Regression Analysis Predicting self-esteem 1 from Body Image Satisfaction scale 1**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S. E</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>p</b>
Constant	18.73	.829		<.001
Body Image Satisfaction	-.094	.017	-.358	<.001
R	.358			
R <sup>2</sup>	.128			
$\Delta F$	29.49			

**Table 7 Linear Regression Analysis Predicting self-esteem 1 from Body Image Satisfaction scale 2**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S. E</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>p</b>
Constant	17.76	.589		<.001
Body Image Satisfaction	-.133	.022	-.397	<.001
R	.397			
R <sup>2</sup>	.157			
$\Delta F$	37.71			

#### **5.4 Linear Regression Analysis For Self-Esteem 1**

A simple linear regression showed that self-esteem1 is significantly projected by body image ( $F(1, 198) = 29.49, p < .001$ ), as a result significant amount of variance is detected by the interpreter. The model reported for approximately 12.8% of the variance in self-esteem ( $R^2 = .128$ ). The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = -.094$ ) suggests that one unit change in body image (IV) decreases



the self-esteem by 0.094 units. The Correlation shows a moderate negative relationship but statistically significant ( $\beta = -.358, p < .001$ ).

A simple linear regression showed that self-esteem1 is significantly projected by body image ( $F(1, 198) = 37.71, p < .001$ ), as a result significant amount of variance is detected by the interpreter. The model reported for approximately 15.7% of the variance in self-esteem ( $R^2 = .157$ ). The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = -.133$ ) suggests that one unit change in body image (IV) decreases the self-esteem by .133 units. The Correlation shows a moderate negative relationship but statistically significant ( $\beta = -.397, p < .001$ ).

**Table 8 Linear Regression Analysis Predicting self-esteem 2 from Body Image Satisfaction scale 1**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S. E</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>p</b>
Constant	7.376	.435		<.001
Body Image Satisfaction	-.037	.009	-.279	<.001
R	.279			
R <sup>2</sup>	.078			
$\Delta F$	16.98			

**Table 9 Linear Regression Analysis Predicting self-esteem 2 from Body Image Satisfaction scale 2**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S. E</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>p</b>
Constant	6.235	.325		<.001
Body Image Satisfaction	-.023	.012	-.136	.053
R	.136			
R <sup>2</sup>	.018			
$\Delta F$	3.795			



## 5.5 Linear Regression Analysis For Self-Esteem 2

A simple linear regression showed that self-esteem2 is significantly projected by body image ( $F(1, 198) = 16.98, p < .001$ ), as a result significant amount of variance is detected by the interpreter. The model reported for approximately 7.8% of the variance in self-esteem ( $R^2 = .078$ ). The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = -.037$ ) suggests that one unit change in body image (IV) decreases the self-esteem by .037 units. The Correlation shows a moderate negative relationship but statistically significant ( $\beta = -.279, p < .001$ ).

A simple linear regression showed that self-esteem2 is slightly anticipated by body image ( $F(1, 198) = 3.795, p .053$ ), as a result significant amount of variance is detected by the interpreter. The model reported for approximately 1.8% of the variance in self-esteem ( $R^2 = .018$ ). The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = -.023$ ) suggests that one unit change in body image (IV) decreases the self-esteem by .023 units. The Correlation shows a weak negative relationship but the relationship isn't statistically significant ( $\beta = -.136, p .053$ ).



**Table 10 Multiple regression model for life satisfaction with demographic and body image variables**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Life satisfaction	8.378	3.330		2.516	.013
Gender	1.109	1.030	.081	1.077	.283
Age	.642	.544	.103	1.180	.239
Place of residence	-1.121	1.170	-.063	-.958	.339
Living system	.800	1.026	.053	.779	.437
Family system	-1.621	.925	-.112	-1.752	.081
Family income	.163	.355	-.030	.459	.647
Year of study	.130	.450	.024	.289	.773
Physical exercise	-.387	.390	-.071	-.994	.321
Perception of weight	-.765	.568	-.094	-1.346	.180
Body image 1	.217	.039	.390	5.557	<.001
Body image 2	.108	.046	.154	2.350	.020

Note: Dependent variable: life satisfaction with variables gender, age, place of residence, living system, family system, family income, year of study, physical exercise, perception of weight, body image 1 and body image 2.

## 5.6 Multiple Regression Model For Life Satisfaction

Out of all the variables only two variables were found to be statistically significant. Body image 1 showed a positive correlation with life satisfaction ( $p < .001$ ). this indicates that as the score on the body image scale increases so the life satisfaction will increase. Body image 2 was also a significant positive predictor ( $p = .020$ ). higher scores on this body image 2 scale were associated with increased life satisfaction, but the impact of size was less than the body image 1.

The remaining variables, including gender, place of residence, living system, age, monthly family income, year of study, physical activity, and self-perception of weight, were not statistically significant predictors of life satisfaction. However, the Family system showed a negative



correlation ( $B = -1.621$ ,  $p = .081$ ), which is not statistically significant, but come near marginal significance. This suggests that people from joint or extended family systems may have slightly lower life satisfaction, but the evidence is insufficient to draw strong conclusions.

**Table 11** *Multiple regression model for self-esteem 1 with demographic and body image variables*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Self-esteem 1	22.762	1.538		14.804	<.001
Gender	.061	.481	-.009	.127	.899
Place of residence	.309	.540	-.037	.572	.568
Living system	.044	.481	-.006	.091	.927
Family system	-.496	.428	-.072	-1.157	.249
Age	-.552	.253	-.184	-2.180	.031
Family income	-.009	.166	-.003	-.052	.958
Year of study	.357	.211	-.136	1.693	.092
Physical exercise	.106	.184	.040	.577	.564
Perception of weight	-.517	.267	-.131	-1.937	.054
Body image 1	-.083	.018	-.315	-4.616	<.001
Body image 2	-.127	.021	-.378	-5.198	<.001

Note: Dependent variable: self-esteem 1 with variables gender, age, place of residence, living system, family system, family income, year of study, physical exercise, perception of weight, body image 1 and body image 2.

## 5.7 Multiple Regression Model For Self-Esteem 1

Only three variables were found to be statistically significant for self-esteem from all the variables. One was age which showed a negative correlation with self-esteem ( $p = .031$ ). according to which self-esteem gradually decreases as the age range increases. With age body image 1 also showed a negative correlation with self-esteem ( $p < .001$ ). this shows that if individuals have high scores on body image scale, they are more likely to show low level of self-esteem. The third variable body



image 2 was also a strong negative predictor  $p < .001$ , which again indicates that higher scores on body image 2 is related to lower score on self-esteem.

The remaining variables, including gender, place of residence, living system, monthly family income, year of study, physical activity, and self-perception of weight, were not statistically significant predictors of self-esteem. This shows that in this study these variables do not cause any variation in the self-esteem.

**Table 12 Multiple regression model for self-esteem 2 with demographic and body image variables**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Self-esteem 2	8.017	.880		9.110	<.001
Gender	.274	.275	.082	.995	.321
Place of residence	.021	.309	.005	.069	.945
Living system	.113	.275	.030	.411	.681
Family system	.355	.245	.100	1.448	.194
Age	.076	.145	.049	.522	.602
Family income	.010	.095	.007	.103	.918
Year of study	-.104	.121	-.077	-.859	.391
Physical exercise	.020	.105	.015	.192	.848
Perception of weight	-.268	.153	-.132	-1.754	.081
Body image 1	-.039	.010	-.288	-3.772	<.001
Body image 2	-.013	.012	-.078	-1.098	.274

Note: Dependent variable: self-esteem 2 with variables gender, age, place of residence, living system, family system, family income, year of study, physical exercise, perception of weight, body image 1 and body image 2.



## 5.8 Multiple Regression Model For Self-Esteem 2

In this analysis on body image 1 was the significant indicator of self-esteem 2  $B = -0.039$ ,  $SE = 0.010$ ,  $\beta = -0.288$ ,  $t = -3.772$ ,  $p < .001$ . this negative correlation shows that if the body image scores are high, the level of self-esteem 2 will be low. And the remaining variables do not show any variation to level self-esteem 2 in this study.



## **6 Discussion**

This chapter enlightens and contextualizes the findings reported in the results section, connecting the current data to existing literature and how it aligns with the theoretical framework. The study investigated the association between body image satisfaction, self-esteem, and life satisfaction among undergraduate students in Lahore, Pakistan, identifying a variety of demographic and psychological characteristics.

The study found that body image satisfaction, particularly measured in terms of Scale 1, was a strong and statistically significant predictor of life satisfaction. As, body image scale 1 carries all the positive questions in terms of satisfaction with appearance of body. This complements earlier studies indicating that views of physical attractiveness play an important influence in people's level of life satisfaction (Cash & Smolak, 2011). Higher scores on this scale indicated a more favorable body image, which was linked to higher levels of life satisfaction. This result is consistent with Nishina et al. (2006), who contend that differences between real and ideal body image frequently result in emotional distress and poor life satisfaction.

This finding is also consistent with top-down theory (Heady, Veenhoven, & Wearing, 1991), which states that people who are generally happy with their lives tend to perceive specific life domains more positively, including their physical appearance. Therefore, despite of social pressures students who report higher life satisfaction may satisfied with their body image.

Furthermore, according to the findings a positive association is found between both scales of body image and life satisfaction, which identifies that for better emotional well-being a positive body image perception is necessary.



Then in the context of self-esteem it was determined that in all measures body image satisfaction was a significant predictor. But here the correlation was found negative, which shows that lower self-esteem is linked with higher body image dissatisfaction scores. This result is reliable with Pop's (2016) findings which displayed a negative relationship between university students' self-esteem and body dissatisfaction. According to the current study, internalizing unattainable beauty standards may seriously undermine one's sense of self-esteem in the context of Pakistani setting specifically in Lahore.

These findings are also compatible with Festinger's (1954) Social Comparison Theory, according to which people assess themselves by comparing their appearance with others whom they find more attractive. We can say that in this study students who showed high levels of body image dissatisfaction may frequently indulge with people where they compare themselves. And due to those social comparison's students develop a negative body image perception which eventually lower their self-esteem. Also, in context of Lahore the frequency of beauty standards and media idealized images is very high, which may intensify the tendencies of students to compare themselves.

In case of demographic variables, it was found that majority of the variables like gender, family income, physical exercise or perception of weight were not a significant indicator of life satisfaction and self-esteem. And body image perceptions served as major predictor of the emotional well-being and self-esteem in this sample. In one of the regression models only one demographic variable was found significant but negative indicator of self-esteem and that was age. This highlights that the self-esteem of students decreases as their age increases. This can be because of number of reasons due to which students affect their own self-identity, like media influenced beauty standards or increased social and academic pressure. This finding doesn't match



some existing literature according to which as age increases the self-esteem also increases because of improved self-regulation. Maybe the older undergraduate students face different stressors due to which their self-esteem decreases.

New ideal body image standards have been established in Pakistan's urban areas as a result of changing beauty standards, which are frequently influenced by Western media. Young people are especially susceptible to these influences, according to the research (Van Der Zee et al., 2000). The current study demonstrates that among undergraduate students in Pakistan, body image dissatisfaction might have a substantial impact on students' self-esteem and life satisfaction.

## **6.1 Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to find out the relationship between body image satisfaction, self-esteem and life satisfaction between the undergraduate students of Lahore Pakistan. It was found that both self-esteem and life satisfaction can be strongly predicted through the body image satisfaction level. Low levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction were identified among the students who were dissatisfied with their body image. These results compliment the previous researches that emotional well-being and the level of life satisfaction is greatly influenced during the adulthood by the body image perception of people. Along with body other demographic variables like gender, family income, place of residence, physical exercise and perception of weight didn't emerge as the significant predictors of life satisfaction and self-esteem.

## **6.2 Limitations:**

Though the study has some valuable contributions but still it has some limitations. First as the sample was taken from FCCU undergraduate students that's why the findings cannot be generalized to other population. There is a possibility of sampling bias, as convenience sampling



method was used and the data was taken from the students who were available due to which the responses can differ from those who are not, possibly affecting the validity of study. Another limitation is that in this study the emotional well-being was by measuring the self-esteem. And their other important domains like anxiety and depression were not directly measured which may impact the emotional well-being in other ways.

### **6.3 Implications:**

There is a need of several necessary implications according to the findings of this study. Firstly, the universities should focus on taking a step to make mental health support systems at university level, which will address the issues related to body image perception and emotional well-being. There is a need to introduce Counseling services, which will help students about self-acceptance and body positivity and train them how to handle the societal pressures and emerging unrealistic beauty standards in the society. Moreover, awareness campaigns should run to reduce the negative behaviors like comparisons, as social comparisons play a significant role in shaping the body image perceptions of identity.

In addition to these measures, incorporating educational workshops and seminars into the academic calendar can promote critical thinking about media representations and societal expectations of beauty. These sessions can empower students to challenge harmful stereotypes and develop a healthier self-image. Furthermore, universities should consider integrating body image and mental health topics into the curriculum of relevant courses, especially in psychology, sociology, and health sciences, to build long-term awareness and empathy among students.



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## **Appendix A: Informed Consent Letter**

**Title:** Influence of body image perceptions on life satisfaction and emotional well-being among Undergraduate students of Lahore, Pakistan: A survey-based study.

Principal Investigator: Amil Imran Butt

MPhil Candidate, Department of sociology, Forman Christian college university. Contact: [253064695@formanite.fccollege.edu.pk](mailto:253064695@formanite.fccollege.edu.pk)

### **Supervisor information:**

Dr. Vaqas Ali

Department of Sociology, Forman Christian College University, Lahore.

[vaqasali@fccollege.edu.pk](mailto:vaqasali@fccollege.edu.pk)

### **Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of this research is to understand the relationship between body image satisfaction, life satisfaction, and emotional well-being among undergraduate students. Your contributions will assist us in measuring the significance and direction of this association.

### **Voluntary Participation:**

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may choose to skip any question or withdraw from the survey at any point without any consequence. Your decision to participate or not will not affect your academic standing or relationship with the university or harm you in any way.

### **What Participation Involves:**

You will be asked to complete a survey that includes questions about:

- Body image perceptions



- Emotional well-being
- Life satisfaction

The survey will take approximately 15–20 minutes to complete.

### **Potential Risks and Discomforts:**

Some questions may touch on sensitive topics related to body image and emotional well-being, which could evoke emotional responses. Certain questions may cause discomfort. You may skip any question or stop the survey at any time. If you feel distressed, counseling services are available to support you. For any kind of support or help please refer to the ***Support and Resources*** given below.

### **Benefits of Participation:**

While there are no direct benefits to you, your participation will contribute to research that may help universities and policymakers better understand how body image issues affect student well-being, potentially leading to improved support services.

### **Confidentiality and Data Protection:**

Your responses will be anonymous and confidential. No personal identifiers will be collected. Data will be securely stored on the researcher's laptop, accessible only by the researcher. The data will be deleted permanently after being analyzed. Results will be reported in a way that no individual participant can be identified.

### **Support and Resources:**

If you experience any discomfort or distress during the survey, the following resources are available to you:

- University Counseling Services: [ Campus counseling center, **In person:** Visit the CCC on the



first floor of Mercy Health Center, **By phone:** Call 0331-444-1518 to schedule an appointment,  
**By email:** [ccc@fccollege.edu.pk](mailto:ccc@fccollege.edu.pk)]

Crisis Helpline: (92) 03117786264 (UMANG Pakistan). Umang is Pakistan's first 24/7 Mental Health Helpline run by GCP-certified Clinical Psychologists, Psychiatrists and active listeners. Founded in early 2017 by Dr. Kinza Naeem along with her compassionate team.

Researcher Contact: If you have any concerns or need further support, please contact [Amil Imran Butt] at [[253064695@formanite.fccollege.edu.pk](mailto:253064695@formanite.fccollege.edu.pk)].

**Right to Withdraw:**

You have the right to withdraw at any time without providing a reason. Any data you have provided will be excluded from the final analysis if you withdraw.

**Consent:**

By clicking "I agree" below, you indicate that:

You have read and understood the information provided. You voluntarily agree to participate in the study. You understand that you can withdraw at any time.

☐ I agree to participate

☐ I do not agree to participate



## Appendix B: Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to find out the influence of the level of body image satisfaction on life satisfaction and emotional well-being among undergraduate students. Your answers will help us to understand the relationship between these variables. Therefore, please try to answer these questions as accurately as possible. You can skip any question if you feel any discomfort and mark prefer not to say.

### Demographic Information

1. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Age:

- ☐ 18-19
- ☐ 20-21
- ☐ 22-23
- ☐ 24-25
- ☐ Above 25

3. Monthly Family Income:

- ☐ 50k-100k
- ☐ 100k-150k
- ☐ 150k-200k
- ☐ Above 200k

4. Year of Study:

- ☐ 1st Year
- ☐ 2nd Year
- ☐ 3rd Year
- ☐ 4th Year

5. Field of Study:

- ☐ Business
- ☐ Health Sciences
- ☐ Science and Technology
- ☐ Social Sciences
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Place of Residence:

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Rural



7. Current Living Situation:

- ☐ On-campus housing
- ☐ Off-campus rental
- ☐ Living with family
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Family System:

- ☐ Nuclear
- ☐ Joint

9. How often do you engage in physical exercise or sports activities?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Several times a week
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

10. Body Mass Index (BMI) Category (if comfortable providing):

- ☐ Underweight
- ☐ Normal weight
- ☐ Overweight
- ☐ Obese
- ☐ Prefer not to say

## Part 1: Body Image Satisfaction Scale

This section examines social-behavioral components of body image as well as subjective assessments. Items are derived from the Body Shape Questionnaire and the Satisfaction with Appearance Scale (SWAP). You can skip any question if you feel any discomfort and mark prefer not to say.

Statement	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
I am satisfied with my overall appearance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with the appearance of my scalp.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with the	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



appearance  
of my face.

I am satisfied with the appearance of my neck.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I am satisfied with the appearance of my hands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

I am satisfied with the appearance of my arms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

I am satisfied with the appearance of my legs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

I am satisfied with the appearance of my chest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

I feel comfortable with how my clothes fit me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

I wonder how my height affects my interactions with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------



<i><b>How comfortable are you with the questions so far?</b></i>	very uncomfortable	uncomfortable	neutral	comfortable	Very comfortable		
Generally, I feel obnoxious about my physical structure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have had experiences where I felt treated differently based on my appearance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I sometimes think about how my body affects my confidence or daily life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I sometimes think about building more strength or improving my fitness level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with the shade of my skin color.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think in my society	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



others do  
not see my  
skin color  
as beautiful.

I sometimes find myself comparing my appearance to others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

I have been more aware of my shape and weight when spending time with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

I have thoughts about my body size that affect my daily activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Changes in my weight affect my mood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<i><b>How are you feeling overall as you complete this section?</b></i>	great	okay	neutral	A bit overwhelmed	uncomfortable
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**Part 2: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)**

Statement	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly Disagree
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On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are times when I find it challenging to recognize my positive qualities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometimes, I find it hard to recognize things I can feel proud of.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are situations where I doubt my capabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that I am a person of worth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At times, I find myself questioning my successes and progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><i>How comfortable are you with the questions so far?</i></b>	Very uncomfortable	uncomfortable	neutral	comfortable

Very



comfortable

### Part 3: Life Satisfaction Scale

To measure overall life satisfaction, the Life Satisfaction Scale will be used in this part.

Scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Slightly Disagree 4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 5 = Slightly Agree 6 = Agree 7 = Strongly Agree


Statement	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Slightly Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Slightly Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The conditions of my life are excellent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>How are you feeling overall as you</b>	great	okay	neutral	A bit overwhelmed	uncomfortable		



*complete  
this  
section?*



## Appendix C: IRB Approval certificate

  
**FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**  
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**  
**APPROVAL CERTIFICATE**

IRB Ref: IRB-764/09-2024

Date: 24-09-2024

Project Title: Influence of body image perceptions on life satisfaction and emotional well-being among Undergraduate students of Lahore, Pakistan: A survey-based study.

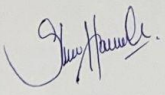
Principal Investigator: Amil Imran Butt

Supervisor: Dr. Mohammad Vaqas Ali

The Institutional Review Board has examined your project in the IRB meeting held on 24-09-2024 and has approved the proposed study. If any changes occur during your research related to participant risk, study design, confidentiality or consent, or any other change, then IRB must be notified immediately.

Please be sure to include the IRB reference number in all correspondence.

Estd. 1864



Dr. Sharoon Hanook  
Convener-IRB  
Chairperson Department of Statistics  
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