

IMPACT OF PEER PRESSURE ON BODY IMAGE SATISFACTION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN THE COLOMBO DISTRICT, SRI LANKA

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Peers are a notably powerful social force that impacts one's behaviour. Peer pressure refers to the influence exerted by a peer group on its members to conform to group norms and expectations. In today's society, body image concerns have become a prominent issue, particularly among university students. Body image satisfaction denotes the extent to which individuals feel satisfied with their body image. The current study investigated the impact of peer pressure on body image satisfaction among undergraduates in the Colombo District, Sri Lanka. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted with a sample of 303 undergraduates (125 males and 178 females) selected through convenience sampling from state and non-state universities in the Colombo District. Data was collected via self-administered online surveys using the Adopted Peer Pressure Scale (PPS) and the Adopted Body Image Questionnaire (BIQ). Statistical analyses, including linear regression, were performed using SPSS version 27. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethical Review Committee of KIU (KIU/ERC/22/053). Peer pressure significantly predicted body image satisfaction ($b = -0.101$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.059$). This study reveals that higher levels of peer pressure were associated with body image dissatisfaction among undergraduates. Conversely, lower peer pressure correlates with body image satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of addressing peer dynamics in interventions aimed at improving body image satisfaction in the undergraduate population. Addressing peer pressure can foster a healthier, more supportive environment that promotes positive body image and overall well-being among students.

Keywords: Body image satisfaction, Colombo district, Peer pressure scale, Undergraduates