

Chasing the Perfect Look: Navigating Global Beauty Standards and University Girls 'Everyday Struggles

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Abstract: *Beauty Standards have become increasingly homogenized in the era of digital globalization. It often reflects Eurocentric beauty standards that shape how young females perceive themselves and interact socially. These beauty ideals are continuously reinforced through social media, advertisements, and peer group culture that affect the women's self-image and emotional wellbeing. Yet female university students show resilience as they negotiate these beauty norms while striving to maintain individuality and purpose of lives. The present study aimed to explore the influence of global beauty standards on self-perceptions and social lives of female university students. The current study inspired from objectification theory and social comparison theory to explore this phenomenon with the help of field data. A qualitative phenomenological research design was used, and 10 participants enrolled in the M. Phil programs at the Fatima Jinnah Women University and Rawalpindi Women University were selected through purposive sampling. In-depth interviews were conducted, and data were analysed through thematic analysis. Three themes emerged: 1) Shaping of self-perception in globalized beauty culture, 2) Social challenges concerning beauty norms, and 3) Coping strategies. The findings disclosed that the beauty standards affected the self-worth of participants, causing body image dissatisfaction. They consistently bear family and peer pressure to meet beauty norms. This study also provided future directions for conducting research emphasizing intersectional perspectives.*

Keywords: Beauty Norms, Self-Perception, Social Lives, Coping Strategies, Female University Students

Introduction

Beauty standards act as implicit yet influential forces that shape individuals' behaviors and perceptions. In today's world, beauty standards are homogenized due to technological advancements, migration, and colonization. Across cultures, beauty standards are not only aesthetic values; they also define individuals' identities. In Pakistan, beauty standards are a mixture of traditional cultural expectations and modern values. Eurocentric beauty ideals influence these standards, promoting unrealistic beauty norms such as slender figures, fair skin, sharp features, and long hair (Rasool, 2024).

Pakistani women are pressured to conform to these norms otherwise, they are stigmatized. It is a burden that they bear to adjust to society. They confront challenges in balancing Islamic values with modern beauty standards. Social media catalyzes filtered perfection and intensifies social pressure. As a result, it shapes body image dissatisfaction and affects self-esteem and mental health. In the current scenario, beauty is more than skin deep; it has become a social currency necessary for societal validation and self-acceptance (Abbasi, 2024).

This study aims to explore the influence of global beauty standards on female university students' self-perception and social lives. The research focuses on how young women perceive beauty norms and internalize them. Investigating how these standards affect their self-image and social interactions, the study strives to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges confronted by young women.

Social agents influence social lives, so in this article, the roles of family, peer groups, and media will be discussed, whether they reinforce or resist beauty standards. Family plays a significant role in an individual's personality and development. Peer interactions contribute to developing individuals' perceptions about their bodies. Social media has blurred boundaries between real and filtered beauty, and women are trying to chase these unrealistic standards. This study brings attention to the role of these social agents in women's lives to conform to beauty standards. The third objective highlights the coping mechanisms used by female students to overcome the beauty pressure.

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Global beauty standards are disseminated through the media industries, presenting women as objects of attractiveness. Unrealistic beauty standards create identity conflict in women. Filtered life of social media has created body image dissatisfaction among women, and female university students are more vulnerable to that. Conformity to beauty standards has impacted their self-perception. Despite the growing literature, there is still a gap in the literature to highlight this issue concerning the Pakistani context. There is a need to highlight the challenges encountered by university students in their social lives due to beauty standards. This current study explores how do global beauty standards influence female university students' self-perception and social lives?

Rationale of Study

In this digitalized world, beauty standards have become homogenized and often represent Eurocentric ideals of beauty such as a slim body, fair tone, ideal height, and flawless skin. These standards are disseminated through social media apps and have a far-reaching influence on women's lives, including women in the culturally diverse country of Pakistan (Latif et al., 2024). Pakistani women are confronted with immense cultural, religious, and family expectations, and now an additional burden to conform to beauty standards is on their shoulders.

Despite growing awareness regarding challenges, much of the existing knowledge is Western-centric, with a limited focus on Pakistani women. This study will explore how Pakistani females internalize or resist global beauty standards. Previous studies predominantly investigate physical appearance, self-perception, and psychological problems. So, there is a crucial need to highlight the social challenges and lived experiences of this particular demographic group and locale.

Significance of Study

This study centers on female voices and emphasizes the lived experiences of female university students, facilitating them to disclose their opinions, experiences, and coping strategies concerning beauty norms. This research introduces a crucial cultural perspective to global viewpoints on beauty standards by focusing on female university students who are underexplored in the existing literature. This study aims to develop self-love campaigns and mental health awareness programs by examining the implications of beauty norms on the personal and social lives of university students. This research informs policymakers, counselors, educators, and parents about the adverse consequences of beauty standards and draws attention to the importance of diverse, inclusive, realistic, and healthy representations of beauty in both society and media.

Literature Review

Conceptualizing Beauty

Beauty is a socially constructed concept. It has a subjective reality rather than an objective one. Although beauty is a universal truth, every society has set its parameters for beauty, mostly associated with women. Feminine beauty is commonly perceived as having two aspects: internal and external. Internal beauty refers to individual attributes, while external beauty pertains to physical features (Abid et al., 2021).

Evolution of Beauty Standards

Beauty standards in Pakistan have evolved due to colonization. Eurocentric standards introduced during colonial rule favored fair skin tones and associated them with intelligence and superiority. Cosmetic and media industries consistently reinforce the colonial doctrines affecting societal standards and self-concept. Traditional beauty standards in Pakistan contradict Western beauty parameters. Unlike colonial influences, traditional values embrace a range of skin tones and native beauty ideals. Present global preferences conflict with traditional values, which emphasize inclusivity in a culturally diverse landscape (Rasool, 2024).

Fair skin is a source of cultural and social capital. In the past, skin complexion was used to determine social class. Those who had lighter skin were considered upper because they could afford to stay indoors and avoid sun exposure. Whereas those with darker skin were considered lower because they worked under

direct sunlight. Asian culture admires white skin by complimenting it as pretty, whereas darker skin is considered ugly (Rodrigo-Caldeira, 2016).

Islamic Teachings and Cultural Viewpoints

Islamic Doctrines emphasize modesty, but societal norms objectify women. Islamic teachings discourage physical beauty and objectification of women; in contrast, Pakistani culture prioritizes women's visual appearance, leading to a clash between religious beliefs and cultural realities. Women's beauty has a social value and can be used to achieve certain ends. Attractive women who uphold beauty standards benefit over others. They have advantages in professional, educational, and material contexts. Pakistani women internalize beauty standards and spend money to enhance their beauty to increase societal value (Zubair, 2022).

Objectification of Women through Media

Pakistani media prioritizes fair skin to idealize feminine beauty over dusky skin. Women with darker skin tones experience social rejection. Advertisements of fairness creams, beauty procedures, and facial treatments portray Eurocentric ideology. Songs are dedicated to praising the fair skin of women. Lighter skin is associated with superiority, while darker skin is considered marginalized. Media represents the hyper-reality of beauty that negatively affects the self-perception and self-esteem of women, leading to investment in fair beauty treatments to show conformity to ideal beauty standards (Latif et al., 2024). Television advertisements objectify women and present them as selling sources of products. Body-revealing outfits present women as sexual entities. They are portrayed as emotional, weak, and subordinate. In automobile advertisements, women in supporting roles glamorize the advertisements by wearing tight-fitting dresses (Waheed et al., 2018).

Body Image Dissatisfaction

Social media stimulates body image dissatisfaction in users. Influencers act as a driving force to promote beauty standards. Physical beauty is more important among women because of socio-cultural pressure. An attractive woman is perceived as having a slim body, fair skin, a sharp nose, big lips, and slanted eyes. Social media acts as a catalyst to promote these standards. Women must fit those beauty standards to enter the marriage market because a patriarchal society prefers attractive women over others. Filtered images on social media promote flawless skin and slim bodies, which creates insecurities among women about their bodies. Influencers promote beauty brands to achieve certain skin colors, and these products have harmful chemicals that deteriorate the skin of their consumers. Social media objectifies women because of sociocultural factors, colonial ideology, and patriarchal expectations that lead to mental and psychological disorders among them (Hafeez & Zulifqar, 2023).

Social Comparison

Social media apps such as Instagram serve as a source to share images and videos, and as a result, become a tool for social comparison. Women compare their beauty with others, which leads to anxiety and lower self-esteem. Individuals edit their photos and apply different beauty filters to look slim and fair. They are under constant pressure to meet beauty standards because of excessive social media usage (Latif et al., 2022).

Positive feedback about selfies posted on Instagram boosts the confidence of users. Increasing the number of likes and appreciative comments leads to higher self-esteem and self-worth. Negative feedback lowers the self-worth of users, which ultimately leads to psychological problems. Individuals use Instagram for the surveillance of others' lives and compare them with their own lives, leading to dissatisfaction among them (Bint-e-Nazir., 2021).

Beauty and Social Relationships

Physical appearance and attractiveness are vital prerequisites in a marriage proposal. Families prefer to make a bond with charming women. Those women with darker complexions, low heights, and high weights face rejection in mate selection. They start using cosmetic products and dieting to gain the ideal weight

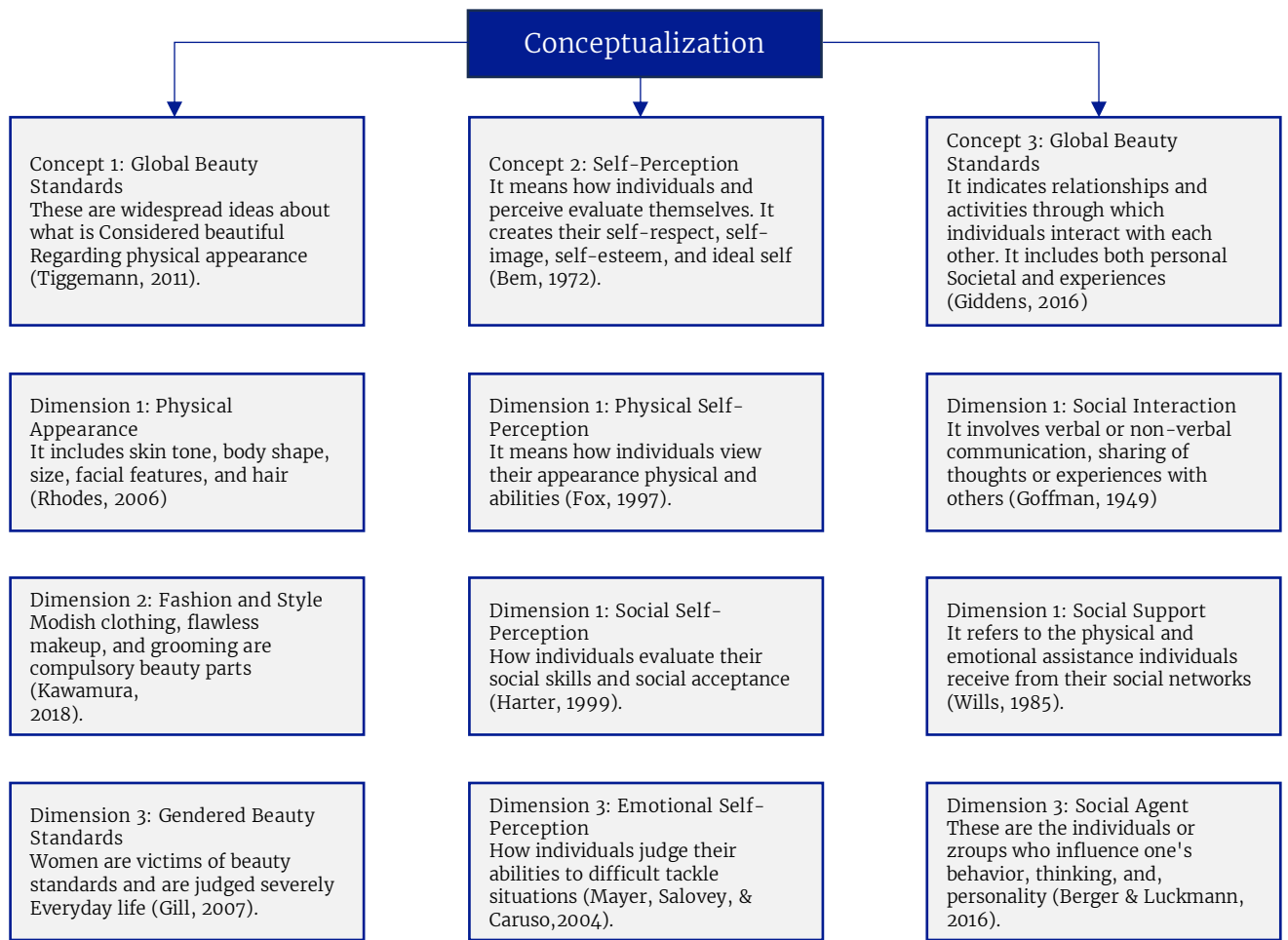
and skin tone to increase social acceptance. External beauty surpassed women’s internal beauty, skills, and qualifications in marriage proposals. Women face social comparisons regarding beauty standards when marriage proposals are considered (Malik et al., 2023).

Existing studies that focused on self-image and physical appearance overlooked social challenges and the lived experiences of young women. This study will shed light on the social experiences of females. Prior research emphasized the role of media in strengthening beauty standards but overlooked peer and family influences. This study will fill this gap in the literature.

Theoretical Framework

Objectification theory 1997 by Barbara Fredrickson and Tom–Ann Roberts is most suitable for this study. This theory posits that women are socialized to internalize societal perspectives to view their bodies, leading to body shame and self-objectification. Women are treated as sexual objects, with the primary focus on their physical appearance and beauty rather than their intellectual abilities and skills. Due to this, women constantly monitor their bodies and judge themselves according to others’ perspectives, which leads to anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, and other mental health issues. This theory suggests that media and culture play a crucial role in shaping women’s viewpoints about themselves. Beauty standards contribute to the sexual objectification of females. Women internalize these external standards through media, social agents, and cultural norms (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Social Comparison theory 1954 by Leon Festinger is also applicable to this study. It explains that individuals evaluate their opinions, abilities, traits, and achievements with others for self-evaluation, self-improvement, and self-enhancement. Most people compare themselves with those who are better than them, which leads to feelings of inadequacy, but sometimes comparison with the worst boosts their self-esteem. Social comparison motivates individuals for self-improvement, but at the same time creates feelings of dissatisfaction and envy (Festinger, 1957).



Materials and Methods

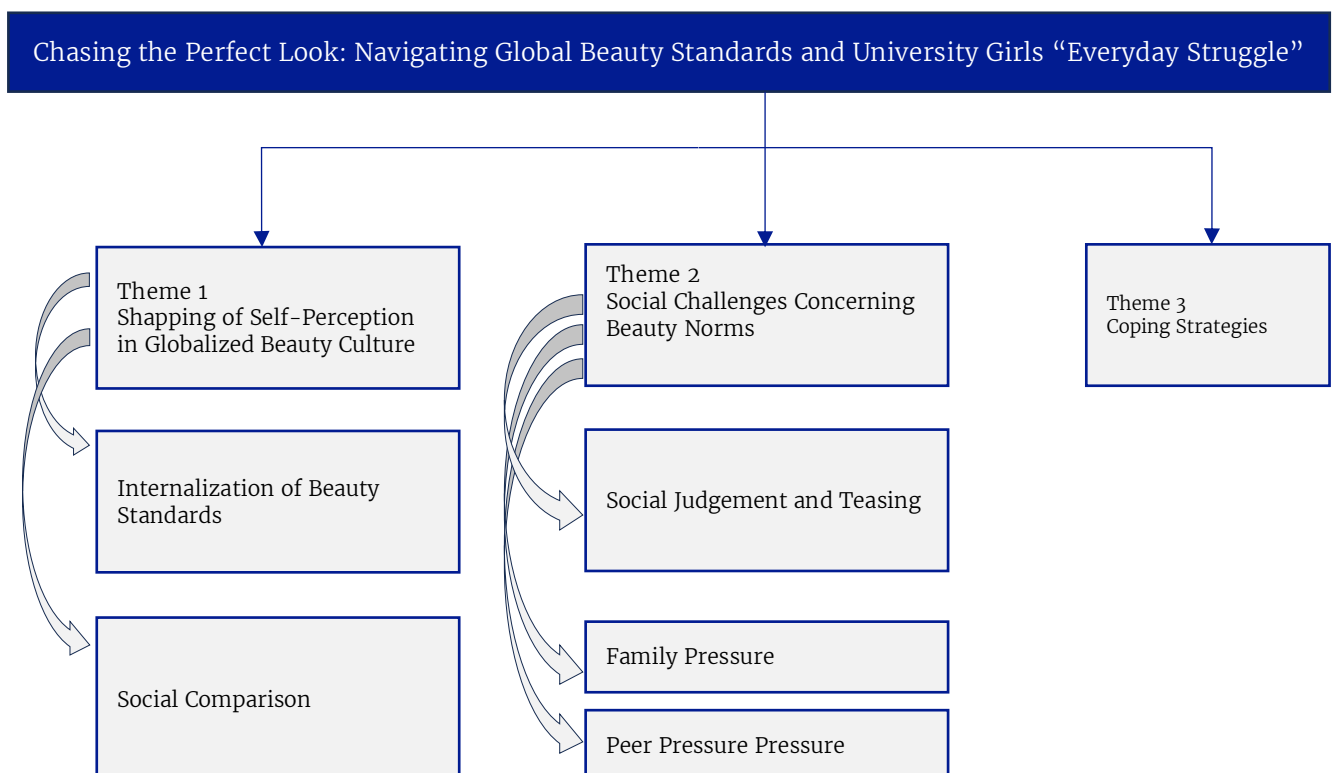
Qualitative methodology is deemed appropriate for this study because it offers a clear understanding of the consequences of beauty norms on female university students. This method is suitable as the investigation aims to provide insights into women's experiences, perceptions, and social interactions. Phenomenological research aims to provide to universal essence of an event (Knacck, 1984). It strives to offer individuals' reality from their perspectives and produce an in-depth description of a phenomenon. This study revolves around the lived experiences and interactions of females regarding beauty standards, so a phenomenological design is applicable for this reason.

The universe of study is confined to District Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan. The population of the study is female university students. The locale of the study is the public sector university of Rawalpindi, Fatima Jinnah Women University and Rawalpindi Women University. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, is used to choose the sample female students. The sample of the study comprises those students who were enrolled in MPhil programs in various departments of the university, age ranges from 23 to 27. The sample of this study is 10 M Phil students from various departments of Fatima Jinnah Women University and Rawalpindi Women University. Data was collected through semi-structured and in-depth interviews. For convenience, the researcher prepared an interview guide as a research tool. All questions were open-ended to get a thick and in-depth description of experiences.

Thematic analysis was employed to identify and analyze the variations in participants' narratives. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring codes, sub-themes, and themes related to the internalization of beauty norms and their impact on self-perception and social lives. It will help in a comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences of female university students. Participants' informed consent was obtained before conducting interviews. Participation was voluntary. They were not forced to participate in the study, and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. The anonymity of participants was ensured. Confidentiality of data was strictly maintained.

Results and Discussion

The researcher has identified three major themes from the participants' responses: 1) Shaping of Self-Perception in Globalized Beauty Culture, 2) Social Challenges Concerning Beauty Norms and Coping Strategies.



Theme 1: Shaping of Self-Perception in Globalized Beauty Culture

Beauty standards are defined parameters and prerequisites to look beautiful and are usually associated with femininity. These standards reinforce a slim body, fair skin, and sharp facial features, accompanied by modern and westernized dressing. Beauty standards are widely spread due to westernization, globalization, technological advancement, and the media industry. These established benchmarks of beauty influence the views of women about themselves. They want to look like what they see on social media (Rasool, 2024).

This major theme has been categorized into two sub-themes

- Internalization of Beauty Standards
- Social Comparison.

Internalization of Beauty Standards: Internalization of beauty standards means individuals gradually accept beauty norms and conform to those idealized images. Individuals unintentionally evaluate their appearance with unrealistic standards. This is due to the constant use of social media applications. So, young women consider these ideals as mandatory and essential to look attractive (Thompson & Stice, 2001). Most participants who used social media a lot started accepting those standards. They wanted to look like celebrities and influencers. It is evident from one participant's response:

I have followed a lot of celebrities and influencers. Whenever I open and scroll my Instagram, I see the celebrities dressed up in an iconic way with an ideal body and shining hair. I start feeling bad about myself because my face is full of pimples. Though I use medicated creams and face washes, but pimples do not fade away. I try my best to maintain myself, possibly (P4, Aneela).

Students ingrained the beauty standards and applied them. Every action done by celebrities becomes a fashion, and women start following those trends to look classy. A participant stated:

Mashallah, my hair growth is healthy because of genetics. Three months ago, I got a bob haircut following the Bollywood Actress Alia Bhatt. I do not think there is a single trend that I did not follow. Now, I am thinking of getting a new haircut (P6, Fatima).

Social media life is unrealistic and edited. Everyone posts filtered images to look fair, beautiful, attractive, and slim. But edited photos affect social media users. Participants know it is a fictional life but somehow internalize what they see on social media. A participant claimed:

I was confident about my skin. My skin is clear, but my complexion is dull. When I started using social media in twelfth grade, I viewed everyone using skin-lightening creams. Since then, I have used different whitening creams. To look fair is not a desire but has become a need for women (P1, Sobia).

Most participants follow and internalize beauty trends intentionally or unintentionally. These findings are aligned with Latif et al. (2022), women persistently bear beauty pressure and try to adopt changes. Objectification theory explains that women internalize the societal expectations and treat their bodies as objects, leading to self-objectification and body shame (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Social Comparison: Social comparison means that individuals evaluate their abilities and appearances with others. It can be positive or negative. Mostly, it influences negatively. This is because of popular culture and beauty ideals (Latif et al., 2022). Participants have internalized the beauty standards, causing body image dissatisfaction and low self-esteem. They considered themselves inferior to others and did not post pictures because of low confidence. They do not consider their natural beauty enough, leading to shame. A participant illustrated:

Obesity is a genetic disease in our family. I avoid taking fast food, but I have been obese since my childhood. Whenever I check the WhatsApp status of others, I feel guilty about myself. I tried different diet plans, but they do not work for me. I also want to look slim and smart so that I can post my pictures on my status (P2, Tabeer).

Participants have an internal belief that they are not beautiful enough. They wanted to modify themselves by using an excessive diet plan, whitening creams, and makeup. Beauty standards harm their personality and ultimately lower their confidence. One participant said:

I have sharp features and fair skin, but I am obese. Whenever I am ready to go to a wedding, I ask everyone in the home that I am looking smart or fat in this dress. I need validation from everyone. I avoid wearing frocks because I look fatter in them. Now, everyone admires girls who have slim bodies (P5, Ayesha).

The above findings are parallel to Hafeez and Zulifqar (2023), social media has instilled insecurities among women about their bodies. They compare themselves with the influencers who just show an unrealistic and filtered life. It leads to dissatisfaction and low self-esteem. Social comparison theory explains that when individuals compare themselves with those who are better than they lead to inadequacy (Festinger, 1957). Objectification theory posits that self-objectification leads to self-monitoring, causing body shame and dissatisfaction (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Theme 2: Social Challenges Concerning Beauty Norms

Beauty standards profoundly influence the social lives of female university students. Beauty pressures not only affect self-esteem but also impact the social interaction of individuals. In today's culture, those women who upgrade themselves with changing trends get admiration in their social circles, but those who remain simple face social exclusion, judgement, and social rejection.

This major theme has been divided into three subthemes:

- Social Judgement and Teasing
- Family Pressure
- Peer Pressure

Social Judgement and Teasing: Social judgment means people evaluate and make decisions about others in social settings (Fiske & Taylor, 2013). Pakistan is an integrated and collective society where everyone influences each other's lives. University students face social judgment in everyday life, which affects their mental health and self-esteem. Women are considered objects who must have a perfect figure, skin, and height, otherwise, they become the victims of teasing. Women are consistently judged because of their physical appearance. One participant said:

I have a dark complexion, but my elder sister has a fair complexion. Some months ago, a close relative aunt, came to our house, and we all accompanied her. In gossip, she told me why you do not use fairness creams, see your elder sister, you do not look like her. Improve your skin color (P1, Sobia).

Most participants experience social judgments in various social settings. Shockingly, teachers also judge students' physical appearance and dressing sense, which harms the students emotionally. One participant claimed:

In the fourth semester, we presented a group project on Rural sociology practically. After performing, we took a group photo with the lecturer. Meanwhile, she told me in front of my group members, why don't you change your dressing sense? She just said to me this line, and my facial expression suddenly changed because this single sentence hurt me a lot. I wear loose dresses; I do not like to wear tight clothing. It's my personal choice. I do not feel comfortable in tight clothes. Teachers should not judge the students because it remains with them whole life. Since that day, I have avoided interaction with that teacher (P2, Tabeer).

Participants are teased by their family members because of their body figures. It hurts them because nobody wants to hear negative comments about their physical appearance. It's human nature that he wants everyone to praise him. But in the Pakistani context, individuals are judged negatively, which lowers their confidence.

My younger brother always teases me with words like fatty, buffalo, or elephant. Though he said this humorously, sometimes I hurt. When I start to eat something, he tells me to eat a little, otherwise it will be difficult to carry your funeral (P5, Ayesha).

University students face social judgments in both their academic and personal lives. Negative comments emotionally hurt them. These findings are parallel to the study of Zubair (2022), women with dark complexion and an obese body are negatively judged in Pakistani society and experience marginalization.

Family Pressure: Family is the primary socializing agent, and girls are socialized to maintain their beauty. Different stereotypes are attached to girls from childhood, such as being sensitive, pretty, beautiful, and attractive. Throughout their lives, they are pressured to maintain them. No doubt, parents have deep affection towards their daughters, but they also have societal pressure to present their daughters in a feminine way, following the beauty norms. Mothers usually advised their daughters to maintain weight, take care of their skin, and hair. One participant responded:

I have pimples on my face. My mother is more worried than me about my skin. It is because of hormonal issues. My mother forcefully took me to a dermatologist, but after using medicated creams and face washes for one year, my face is the same as before. My mother scolds me that you eat oily foods at university, that's why your pimples do not go. She made different home remedies for me. She is worried that pimple marks will remain on my face. Sometimes, I start feeling irritated. (P7, Rahat)

Relatives also pressure women to maintain their beauty norms, otherwise, they judge and tease them. Interpersonal comparison is common in Pakistani culture, which affects the girls emotionally and mentally.

I have a lower height than my cousin. At every social gathering, whether it's Eid or a Wedding, my aunt, who is my cousin's mother, stands both of us and checks our heights. I know I have short height, and I am comfortable with it. My aunt wants to satisfy herself that her daughter's height is good enough. Then she said to everyone that now short-heighted girls are everywhere, with few exceptions (P3, Ghasia).

Cousins also tease and judge based on beauty standards. Now, conformity to beauty standards is mandatory to be accepted by society otherwise, women face social rejection and disapproval.

I am a Pathan, but my skin color does not match my family. In my family, everyone is fair. My cousins usually tease me by saying that you are adopted. I start using whitening creams when weddings are approaching. So, I can look presentable (P1, Sobia).

Participants experience family pressure to look presentable and attractive. Now, to look beautiful for women has become a need; otherwise, in the family, women face judgment, teasing, and disapproval. These results are consistent with the findings of Malik et al. (2023) that women are judged by their physical appearance, not by internal qualities. They are pressured to conform to beauty norms for social acceptance.

Peer Pressure: Students spend most of their time in academic settings, where they are influenced by others. Female university students are consistently under peer pressure to maintain certain standards. At this period of age, women are impressed by others and start comparing themselves with others. With time, intentionally or unintentionally, students conform to those standards for social approval. One participant claimed:

In my friend's circle, nobody wears an abaya; two of my friends wear Western dresses, while others wear Shalwar Kameez. Every friend is fond of doing makeup. In the starting semesters, I wore an abaya, but from the fifth semester, I changed. Now, I also come to university in Shalwar Kameez with minimal makeup (P6, Fatima).

In university settings, participants try their best to maintain the beauty standards because it boosts their confidence and self-worth. Those who do not keep themselves updated experience social exclusion in classroom settings. Due to the social environment, students are compelled to conform to beauty standards.

Usually, I come to university in an abaya, but when there is a presentation, I wear a good dress, do a hairstyle with light makeup. It gives me confidence because most of the girls in my class wear Western dresses. It gives me a sense of belongingness (P8, Sana).

Participants encounter peer pressure to maintain beauty standards. They get influenced by their friends' circle; otherwise, they feel social exclusion. These findings are aligned with Malik et al. (2023) that individuals are influenced by social groups to conform to beauty standards, especially peer groups.

Theme 3: Coping Strategies

Individuals adopt coping mechanisms to deal with difficult situations. Sometimes participants find long-term solutions to problems, whereas in some cases, they adopt strategies to get timely relief. Participants encounter beauty pressure in social settings, so they manage it through different methods. They do not take social criticism too seriously. They keep doing what they want. They do not want to change themselves for society. *"I do not take into account other people's opinions. My mental peace is more important than anything else. I try my best to ignore negative comments (P2, Tabeer)"*.

A few participants did not take these standards seriously. They consider themselves perfect and do not want to make any changes. They think that this stuff has created more complexities for middle-class women. Participants want to enjoy their lives without caring about others' statements.

I am satisfied with the way I am. I use social media but never think to change myself to adopt to a trend. From the seventh class, I used to wear an abaya and veil, and I will continue it for my life. Our religion teaches us to focus on the inner self, but today's society has gone in the opposite direction. Religion teaches us that beauty centers around positive character and kindness. Religion fosters self-acceptance and minimizes the beauty standards. I believe that those who offer prayers have a spiritual glow on their faces (P3, Ghasia).

Participants, limit their exposure by unfollowing those influencers who spread unrealistic beauty standards. They follow those pages that spread positivity in society. They avoid toxic social gatherings and set their boundaries. One participant stated: *I try to avoid interaction with those who judge my appearance. Because I cannot change their thinking, it is better to ignore them (P5, Ayesha)"*.

From the above findings, participants adopt different strategies to cope with the beauty pressure. Participants avoid toxic environments, selectively use social media, and focus on religious teachings. These strategies help them improve their emotional health. Previous literature reveals similar findings that individuals engage in positive environments that improve their self-worth (Mabe, Forney, & Keel, 2014).

The researcher studied the influence of global beauty standards on self-perception and the social lives of female university students, and strategies for managing beauty pressure. University students internalize the beauty standards because of social media usage, where beauty influencers and celebrities persuade them. Participants compare themselves with influencers, which causes body-image dissatisfaction. They are judged in social gatherings, encounters with family, and peer pressure to meet beauty standards. However, they opted for strategies to deal with the beauty pressure.

Women internalize societal expectations and take on changing trends (Latif et al., 2022). Social comparisons with others instill insecurities among women (Hafeez & Zulifqar, 2023). Individuals who do not meet certain criteria of beauty face bullying and teasing (Zubair, 2022). Family members and friends stressed them to conform to beauty standards (Malik et al., 2023).

Conclusion

To conclude, this study highlighted the experiences and challenges of female university students concerning global beauty norms. They encountered challenges in their social lives, experienced teasing and judgments, but they stayed optimistic about life. They did not take criticism too seriously. They were satisfied with their bodies. They took assistance from religious teachings that helped them in self-acceptance. They surrounded themselves with positive individuals. These strategies can help to minimize the beauty standards and positively influence society.

Limitations

The current qualitative study on beauty standards has some limitations. This study is limited to a specific university, so the findings cannot be generalized to women across different cultures or institutional backgrounds. This study is limited to female experiences and does not explore the male perspective of beauty standards. Due to the absence of psychological tools, body image dissatisfaction and self-esteem issues may lack accuracy. But the researcher ensures to explore the real-life experiences and challenges of female university students concerning global beauty norms.

Recommendations

This study recommends future directions for conducting research. Future research can include male, female, and transgenders to explore hoe beauty standards affect individuals of different genders, what are the differences between their experiences. Future research can be carried out on how beauty standards affect the academic performance and professional growth of students. An intersectional study involving individuals of different genders, races, cultures, ethnicities, and religions can provide a holistic picture of how beauty norms influence their lives.

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