

## ASSOCIATION BETWEEN BODY IMAGE SATISFACTION AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG VITILIGO PATIENTS

Ms. Amna Noor

MS Scholar Faculty of Education and Social Sciences, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science Technology, H-8/4 Islamabad (SZABIST, Islamabad Campus)

### Keywords

Vitiligo patients, self-esteem and body image satisfaction

### Article History

Received: 29 October, 2024

Accepted: 11 December, 2024

Published: 31 December, 2024

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Corresponding Author: \*

Ms. Amna Noor

### Abstract

**Objective:** The present study aims to investigate the association between body image satisfaction and self-esteem among vitiligo patients.

**Methods:** This study included 100 patients (Male = 46 and Female = 54) diagnosed with vitiligo, and age ranged from 18 to 75 years. Sociodemographic characteristics of the participants were collected and hypo pigmented lesion involvement regions were recorded to identify types of vitiligo. The Body Image Satisfaction Scale (BIS), and State Self-Esteem Scale were completed for the investigation of variable of study.

**Results:** Results revealed that body image satisfaction and self-esteem significantly negative correlated ( $p = < 0.00$ )

**Conclusion:** Patients' Self-Esteem and Body Image Satisfaction may suffer as a result of vitiligo. We may conclude that the disease's unpleasant skin look affects patients' BIS and SE, but more research is needed to determine how it relates to neurobiological causes. Further psychological interventions are needed to work with body image satisfaction and self-esteem of vitiligo patients.

## INTRODUCTION

Vitiligo is defined as an autoimmune skin disorder and it's commonly acquired depigmenting skin illness due to progressive damage to the skin cells such as melanocytes. It is basically a psych dermatological condition in which patient's overall psychological well-being is greatly disturbed and there is an impairment in their daily life functioning such as low self-esteem, impaired body image, avoiding social contacts, anxiety, and stress (Sangma et al., 2015). Skin Illness can cause a great distress in patients' psychological as well as mental health. Moreover, it can also affect a person's social, and personal life by triggering and enhancing the emotional reactions such as feeling ashamed, reduced self-worth, low opinions of

themselves and other psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety, hopelessness, and impaired quality of life (Sangma et al., 2015). Moreover, studies suggested a great decline in the physical, social, personal, psychological and environmental domains among patients with vitiligo that play a role in hindering the overall life functioning of the individuals suffering from vitiligo (Sangma et al., 2015). Deep emotional pain and problems with an individual's self-image are frequently brought on by the condition's obvious attributes. People are especially prone to peer pressure and societal beauty standards currently, which makes having vitiligo a possible cause of vulnerability. Studies

suggested that there is a large comorbidity of psychological disorders with skin illness such as vitiligo most commonly depression, low self-esteem and disturbed body image that impairs the overall quality of life of individuals with vitiligo. Social stigma and enhanced beauty standards can play a major role in worsening the psychological distress in individuals with vitiligo, moreover, patients suffering from vitiligo often face stigmatization and due to which they used to conceal or hide their affected area of body with clothing or makeup that also show their level of self-esteem (Thompson et al., 2010).

The depigmented spots could emerge anywhere on your body. Vitiligo has a substantial effect on the patient's overall quality of life and psychological well-being as they face stigmatization and severely disturbed by their condition, because vitiligo is a condition in which the patient's are suffering from disturbed physical status of their health as well as impaired mental and psychological well-being 3. Vitiligo is a skin illness that can serve as a big constraint in the patient's quality of life and health status as they often face stigmatization, discrimination, and various psychosocial problem that enhance their possibility to suffer from major depression and possibly the suicide(Nasser et al., 2021).

#### Types of Vitiligo:

There are two varieties of vitiligo:

**Generalized Vitiligo:** All-encompassing white spots that develop precisely on both sides of the body are known as generalized vitiligo. With up to 90% of cases falling into this category, it is the most prevailing form of vitiligo.

**Segmental Vitiligo:** Segmental Vitiligo is not nearlyso common. It occurs when confined areas of white patches emerge on a single side of the body.

Vitiligo constantly has a negative influence on a person's psychological health. The condition's obvious form might cause significant issues with

self-esteem and dissatisfaction with one's body image (Hussain et al., 2022). Since the skin is the body's most noticeable organ, it has been hypothesized that any abnormality or deformityon the outside could have a deleterious impact on a person's psychological well-being (Parsad et al., 2003). Vitiligo is a deleterious pigmentary disorder that progresses in an unforeseeable manner and can result in extended stretches of stable disease without any obvious cause (Alikhan et al., 2011;Fistarol & Itin, 2010). Globally, the prevalence of disease is not at all the same (Forschner et al., 2007). There have been reports that depigmentation brings about the emergence of psychiatric illness and that individuals with vitiligo constantly score badly on health- related quality of life (HRQL) assessments 6. Furthermore, it has been observed that the origination of depressive symptoms can be imputed to a negative self-image (Parsad et al., 2003). With a prevalence of 0.5% to 2% worldwide, vitiligo is a chronic depigmenting skin disorder that results in the occurrence of white patches on the skin. Since not every patient seeks a diagnosis, it is difficult to identify the precise number of cases. People of all ages and ethnic backgrounds may be impacted by it.. Though it can occur to anyone at any age, vitiligo usually starts in childhood or before the age of 20 (Patel et al., 2023). Approximately 70% to 80% of instances of vitiligo will have developed by the time a person reaches the age of 30 (Bergqvist & Ezzedine, 2020). The research has been incompatible with the fact regarding which gender is most affected. According to some research, men are more prone to be affected by vitiligo than women, whereas other studies have found the opposite results for it (Patil et al., 2014). Although vitiligo's physical symptoms are mostly skin-deep, its psychological effects can go over and above the condition's obvious signs. Severe mental distress and body image issues can be caused by depigmented patches because they frequently appeared on noticeable body parts

such the face, neck, and hands (Krüger & Schallreuter, 2015). Up to 30% of instances with vitiligo have a family relative who also has been suffering from vitiligo, and some gene alterations can intensify the commencement of the condition (Gandhi et al., 2022). In certain individuals, vitiligo severity can be aggravated or triggered by an extreme exposure to sun results in sunburn, emotional suffering, or extreme exposure to chemicals. Stress has a special association with vitiligo that emerges later in life (Henning et al., 2020).

According to studies, patients' quality of life is frequently impacted by vitiligo lesions on sensitive or prominent parts, like the genitalia or hands and face (Grimes & Miller, 2018)15. Significant psychological and emotional problems, such as low self-esteem, depression, other mental health issues, stigma, and hopelessness, can additionally damage the quality of life for those who are suffering with this condition (Wang et al., 2011). *Self-Esteem*, a key component of psychological health, is a person's overall evaluation of their abilities and self-worth (Rosenberg, 1965). Contrarily, *Bodily Image Satisfaction* deals with a person's gratification with their outward look and how they look at their bodies according to cultural norms (Quittkat et al., 2019). Self-esteem and satisfaction with one's physical appearance are specifically essential in the context of vitiligo since the condition's obvious features can affect how people view themselves and how they think other people look at them. In addition to physical difficulties, vitiligo, a long-lasting skin condition manifested by depigmented patches on the skin, can cause serious psychological suffering in sufferers, especially in their crucial developmental years as young adults. Due to cultural influences and one's own perceptions, the considerable aspect of vitiligo frequently causes disturbed body image and reduced self-esteem. To assess how vitiligo impacts people as a psychosocial stressor, one of the previous studies discovered that vitiligo

patients with healthy control subjects regarding psychosocial characteristics such as Self-esteem, Bodyimage, and Quality of Life. It has a significant impact on how self-esteem and veracity of ego evolve (Domonkos, 1971). Thus, it can be asserted that a person's body image is harmfully impacted by numerous chronic diseases as well as by the presence of skin problems. In this examination, the patient group's BI ratings were statistically substantially minimal.

Previous research, however, discovered that a variety of clinical and demographic variables, such as gender, family structure, monthly income of the family, age at diagnosis, duration of the illness, the form of vitiligo, and percentage of the body affected by vitiligo, tend to impact the psychosocial functioning and quality of life of those who have vitiligo (Parsad et al., 2003)5. The skin is an important organ that assists in perception of feelings, sexuality, and social interactions by facilitating communication with the external environment. Therefore, skin disorders can impact both body image and self-esteem (Russo et al., 2004). Patients with vitiligo were shown to have a minimal mean self-esteem score (Khattri et al., 2015). A rising component of body image that is related to sexual well-being and satisfaction is genital self-image (Komarnicky et al., 2019). Most disappointed people with their bodies are women, particularly when it comes to an altered genital image brought on by the expansion of loss of pigment to the genital area (Silva Gomes et al., 2019). According to published research, women generally feel a diminished quality of life as they recurrently encounter psychosocial issues at workplace or in social situations with their peers, which eventually lowers their sense of well-being. Several studies have revealed that vitiligo sufferers experience a poor quality of life, encounter stigmatization, scuffle with adjustment, experience biasness at work, have fewer marriage opportunities, have poor mental health, and so forth. (Morrone, 2004; Hedayat et al., 2016)

## METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional study aimed to investigate the Association between Body Image Satisfaction and Self-Esteem among Vitiligo Patients. A clinical sample of 100 diagnosed vitiligo patients from the dermatology department of different hospital in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Approval from the hospital administration was required. The purpose of the study was mentioned to them. Furthermore, they were also explaining about their right to reject and withdraw at any point of time. The participants were providing instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. With the willingness of the patients the data was collected. To obtain data,

various demographics was observed and a comprehensive demographic sheet was formulated which included gender, family system and socioeconomic status. Association between Body Image Satisfaction (Holsen et al., 2012) and Self-Esteem among Vitiligo Patients was evaluated using the Body Image Satisfaction Scale (BIS) and The State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES) (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991).

### Statistical Analysis:

Data were analyzed by SPSS version 22. Descriptive statistics and correlation tests were used for the analysis of the results.

## RESULTS

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the sample

Demographics	Frequency	Percentages
Gender		
Male	46	46 %
Female	54	54 %
Socioeconomic Status		
Upper	27	27%
Middle	73	73%
Lower	000	00%
Family System		
Nuclear	56	56%
Joint	44	44%
Type of Vitiligo		
Generalized (Full body)	29	29 %
Segmental (Part of body)	71	71%

Table 2

Correlation between Body Image Satisfaction and Self-Esteem among vitiligo Patients

Variables	r	N	P
Performance Self-esteem	-.694**	100	.000
Social Self-esteem	-.837**	100	.000
Appearance Self-esteem	-.778**	1000	.000
Total Self-Esteem	-.813**	100	.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

## DISCUSSION

The demographics of the current study revealed the composition of the sample in terms of gender, family system, socioeconomic status, type of vitiligo. Gender distribution indicates that 46% of the population identified as male patients and 54% identified as female patients. In terms of family structure, 56% of respondents belonged to nuclear family and 44% identified as part of joint family system. In terms of Socio-economic status, 73% of the respondents were from middle class and 27% were from upper class. Regarding the type of vitiligo, 29% of the patients had been diagnosed with generalized (in which full body is affected) type of vitiligo and 71% of patients had been diagnosed with segmental (in which only a part of body is affected) type of vitiligo.

The demographic information indicated that most of the participants were female, part of nuclear family system. The findings of this study reveal significant insights into the Association between Body Image Satisfaction and Self-Esteem among Vitiligo Patients. Notably, the data indicates that a considerable proportion of participants reported significant negative impact on their psychological wellbeing such as self-esteem and body image satisfaction with significantly negative correlation of performance, social and appearance self-esteem among vitiligo patients i.e., ( $p=0.000^{***}$ ). These results are consistent with existing literature that points to the emotional and psychological challenges faced by patients suffering from vitiligo. Quality-of-life parameters assessed in Vitiligo patients were significantly lower. Moreover, significant psychological and emotional problems, such as low self-esteem, depression, other mental health issues, stigma, and hopelessness, can additionally damage the quality of life for those who are suffering with this condition (Wang et al., 2011). Overall, the findings support that there is a negative association in self-esteem and body image satisfaction among patients with vitiligo. The results highlighted the importance of that

how vitiligo alters the sense of self-worth / self-esteem and body image satisfaction in patients. The main area focused here was to pay attention to the importance of association in understanding the sense of self-worth and satisfaction with their body image in patients with vitiligo.

Furthermore, the most common complaint is mental dysfunction, which demonstrates as psychological issues ranging from little disgrace to a significant loss of confidence and social anxiety, particularly when the lesion is on a visible portion of the body like the hands, feet, or face. According to Osman et al. (2019) vitiligo sufferers encounter a range of bad emotions, such as despair, anxiety over their skin condition getting adverse over time, anger, mortification and shame, stigmatization, and serious social impairment. Obvious skin-related complications can lead to considerable social burdens, especially when it comes to developing friendships and preserving relationships, especially in those who are certain they have vitiligo (Morrone, 2004)24. The knowledge acquired from this examination can be valuable to clinicians handling vitiligo patients. They can use the outcomes as a reference to facilitate them to adapt therapeutic approaches. This individualized approach might benefit future researchers in advancing interventions that are more effective in addressing the psychological strains that people with vitiligo contend with. As patients with vitiligo suffer from severe distress and they have more sensitivity to environmental stress. Specifically, self-esteem and body image satisfaction have an essential role in explaining the behavioral outcomes of patients with vitiligo. This research adds to the body of knowledge regarding the association between self-esteem and body image satisfaction in explaining the psychological consequences of vitiligo among patients.

## CONCLUSION

This study indicates that there is a significant association between self-esteem and body image satisfaction among vitiligo patients as they negative feelings regarding their quality of life and overall psychological wellbeing, suggesting that the challenges associated with vitiligo may have a profound impact on their overall well-being. The association between self-esteem and body image satisfaction highlights the importance of addressing the emotional and psychological needs of patients suffering from Vitiligo, as improving and paying attention towards the psychological challenges of this population may lead to better outcomes.

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