

**Am I Worth It?: Female Beauty Standards in Balochistan, Pakistan**Pohana Maqbool¹, Ghina Saleem², Ammara Shahid³¹ Department of Psychology, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences, Quetta, Pakistan. Email: ponomaqbool@gmail.com² Department of Psychology, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences, Quetta, Pakistan. Email: ghina.saleem@buitms.edu.pk³ Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences, Quetta, Pakistan. Email: amarashahid190201@gmail.com**ARTICLE INFO****ABSTRACT***Article History:*

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The present study aimed to explore the perception of female beauty standards among women in Balochistan and its effects on their self-perception and life choices. For this purpose 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with females aged 18 to 45 years. Thematic analysis yielded eight superordinate themes; beauty is in the eye of the beholder, faith over facelift, good morals complement beauty, health driven choices, beauty on a budget, the pretty woman privileges, chasing western shadows in the digital age. The implications of the themes were discussed for further research.

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1. Introduction

The attribute of beauty has always influenced not only how people are perceived by others but also how they perceive themselves. This attribute also seems to be strongly related with an individual's identity, self-worth, and life choices. As far as conceptualization of the idea of 'beauty' is concerned, there seem to be two major categories of beauty referred to in the literature; physical beauty, which refers to features such as facial symmetry, skin, slim figure, symmetrical facial features and other visible attributes (Foy, 2022, October 13; Ma, 2023) and internal beauty, which refers to kindness, confidence, creativity, good manners and confidence (Zhang, 2012). In the context of the idea of female beauty, physical beauty has always been discussed a lot more than internal beauty. Moreover, although the concept of beauty is shaped by environment and culture, however there certainly are some beauty standards that are universal such as youthfulness, narrow chin, well-defined lips, well defined eyebrows etc (Albert & Muthusekhar, 2021; Dimitrov & Kroumpouzos, 2023). Society's emphasis on women's physical beauty may however overshadow the importance of internal beauty. Mills, Shannon and Hogue (2017) noted that the media often glorifies physical attributes, leading to an overemphasis on appearance which leads to the undervaluing of character and virtue. Patgiri (2016) argued that beauty practices like the use of makeup products, grooming (waxing, pedicure, manicure, etc.) and different surgeries result in manipulation of women and incorporates in them a belief that if they do not fulfil the standards of beauty, then they are worthless. Hossain and Imtiaz (2017) studied the reasons women in Bangladesh show an increased tendency of going through beauty enhancement procedures. The findings suggested that women try to achieve the beauty standards set by men, using enhancement technologies mostly before marriage to secure a good husband. Other studies also reveal a strong relationship of body perception with romantic relationships (Duncan, 2017; Goldsmith & Byers, 2016). Derakhshan, Derakhshesh and Ghahjavarestani (2022) explored women's motivation for the tendency toward beauty surgery. The findings revealed that the most motivating factor in women's tendency to get these surgeries is the thought of beauty as a factor in boosting self-esteem. According to Abid (2021) individuals

may feel pressurized to conform to the specific beauty ideals prevalent in their culture, impacting their choices and behaviors.

Henriques and Patnaik (2021) in their study found that purchase decisions regarding beauty products were directly influenced by social media. The study also revealed that posts on social media platforms encouraged individuals to engage in body modification procedures. Another study found that excessive Instagram usage contributes to negative psychological outcomes and poor appearance-related self-perception (Sherlock & Wagstaff, 2019). Rehman (2022) in their study on societal beauty standards found that there is no positivity associated with these standards. People who do not meet these standards are considered unattractive or ugly and that could lead to body dysmorphia. Another study suggests that society has constructed certain beauty standards, despite the fact that beauty cannot be recognized as an objective reality, thus it is necessary to understand it in terms of both subjective and objective aspects (Bovet, 2018). Gray (2022, May 25) explains that there are so many factors responsible for negative perception of body image such as media highlighting certain body types, shapes, and sizes, and these factors can make an individual feel that they are not appealing enough. McCabe, De Waal Malefyt and Fabri (2020) also highlight that cosmetic advertising makes women use makeup products to build their self-confidence. Henriques and Patnaik (2021) highlight similar negative long term outcomes especially related with selfie culture. The findings of similar studies also revealed how the society's idealized beauty standards have a great influence on adolescent and young women's overall self-esteem and body image (Kaziga et al., 2021; Paschal, 2012).

1.1. Perception of Female Beauty in Pakistan

Farooqui (2022, November 15) found that the social conversation about beauty in Pakistan mainly revolves around the concept of "fair" or light skin. This is probably the legacy left by British rule in subcontinent (Chen et al., 2020). A qualitative study conducted by Malik, Rafaqat and Zafar (2023) on experiences related with perception of ideal beauty in terms of marriage proposals among women in Lahore, Pakistan. It was found that physical appearance and attractiveness were considered extremely important in marriage proposals. Husain and Gulzar (2015) in their study on the process of mate selection found that men reported to value beauty of women the most while women preferred educated men as their top priority. The findings of another study suggested that in Pakistan, women whose bodies reflect the commodified and sexualized beauty standard are preferred over women who do not have such bodies (Zubair, 2022). Another study found similar results related with the objectification of women in TV advertisements in Pakistan and the in portrayal of women as sexual objects (Nasir, Hussain, & Waheed, 2021). It has also been found that an increasing number of women is suffering from body dysmorphic disorder resulting in poor self-esteem, self-harm, depression, and suicide (Hafeez & Zulfiqar, 2023). The findings of a study by Abid (2021) regarding the concept of feminine beauty in Pakistan, suggest that self-perception that one is beautiful also makes a person feel as if one deserves attention by people around. The aim of the present study was to explore the concept of feminine beauty among women in Balochistan as there are no empirical studies conducted in this region on this topic. The present study predominantly adopted Cooley's "looking glass self" (1902) and social comparison theory by Festinger (1954) in interpreting the participants' perceptions regarding beauty standards, as both the theories emphasize how society shapes self-perceptions.

Keeping in view the foundations provided by existing literature as well as the cultural context, following research questions were developed.

1. What are the perceived beauty standards among woman?
2. How do these beauty standards affect their life choices?
3. How do these beauty standards affect their self-perception?

Furthermore, a comparison between young women and those in middle age was carried out to explore the similarities and differences in perception of beauty as well as its relationship with life choices and self-perception.

2. Methodology

Qualitative research method was employed to address the research questions. Questions included in the semi structured interviews were as follows:

- What is beauty in your opinion?
- What do you think makes a woman beautiful?
- What are the current beauty trends that you're following and why are you opting to follow them?
- How does following these beauty trends make you feel?
- How do you believe these beauty trends affect your social status?
- What would you like to change about yourself in terms of beauty and why?
- How do you think this new change will affect you?
- What would you look for in your future daughter-in-law regarding beauty?
- How much do you spend on beauty products?
- How do you see the usage of aesthetic procedures?

Approval from the department ethics review committee was taken before commencement of data collection.

2.1. Sample

The sample comprised 12 women, with the age range 18 to 45 years. The inclusion criteria was at least 12 years of education (see table 1). The participants were selected through purposive sampling. Informed consent was taken from each participant before the interviews and they were allowed to quit the interview whenever they wanted to.

Table 1: Sample Demographics

Participant	Age (years)	Occupation	Marital Status
Participant 1	18	University student	Single
Participant 2	23	University student	Single
Participant 3	25	University student	Single
Participant 4	28	University student	Single
Participant 5	30	University Teacher	Married
Participant 6	24	University student	Single
Participant 7	40	University Teacher	Married
Participant 8	27	University student	Single
Participant 9	32	University Teacher	Single
Participant 10	38	Home maker	Married
Participant 11	26	University student	Single
Participant 12	45	Home maker	Married

2.2. Data Collection

The interviews were approximately an hour long on average. The interviews were planned in a way that the timing and place was feasible for both the interviewer as well as the interviewees. The permission for audio recording was taken from all the participants. To keep the identities of the research participants anonymous their names or any information that might reveal their identity was removed from the transcripts. The interviews were conducted in Urdu language.

2.3. Data Analysis Procedures

Thematic analysis was adopted for analyzing the data. Thematic analysis was considered suitable for this research as it meets the goal of exploring and understanding the perspectives of the target population through discovering, examining, putting in order, illustrating, and give an account of themes emerging within collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This analysis was done in three phases. The first phase consisted of thorough reading and re- reading each interview transcript to look for emergent themes. In second phase the emergent themes from all transcripts were scanned for subordinate themes, on the basis of similarity of meaning. In the third phase, subordinate themes were organized into superordinate themes on the basis of similarity of meaning. Data collection was stopped when theoretical saturation was achieved and similar themes were observed to emerge repeatedly. Two independent coders developed the subordinate themes. Discrepancies were eliminated later through discussion and superordinate themes were developed with consensus. The superordinate themes, where consensus between the coders could not be developed, were dropped from the final results.

3. Results

Thematic analysis yielded eight superordinate themes (see Table 2).

Table 2: Superordinate Themes

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes	References from Interview Transcripts
1. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder	Aesthetically appealing physical features are an indication of physical beauty. Exhibiting fine moral characteristics are a sign of inner beauty.	I would look at how beautiful their eyes are, or how symmetrical their nose is. (Participant 8) If the person is pretty, has a fair complexion, is smart physique wise and has a good height, any person fulfilling these criteria is considered beautiful. (Participant 1) The people who are progressive in nature, those who can adopt change and who do not discriminate people on the basis of cast, gender or religion are beautiful in my view. (Participant 10) For me a kind of an aura that makes you feel you want to be with a person is beautiful. (Participant 12)
2. Looking-glass self	Fulfilling demands of close family members regarding physical appearance. Women feel societal pressure to conform to beauty standards. Parental influence on self-concept	My father used to make me refrain from eating because he thought I will become fat. (Participant 3) My husband asks me to get ready before going out. (participant 5) Society makes me feel that way. People point out in such a tone that makes me feel uncomfortable.(Participant 6)
3. Faith over facelift	lesser preference for surgical interventions to enhance beauty due to religious preaching of gratefulness and respect for god-made features	It is in our religious teachings that Allah Almighty has made every human perfect in its own fashion. So I go against this and do fillers or injections? Never because I would be interfering with nature in some way. (Participant 9) I won't change anything because I think that the way Allah has created me its fine since sometimes I have seen people do surgeries and change themselves which end up looking uglier than before in my view. (Participant 7)
4. Good morals complement beauty.	A good look without good character is not desirable. Good morals are ideal for both men and women.	Because there are many people who are beautiful but when they talk their whole appearance is ruined as well. (Participant 12)
5. Health-driven choices	Lifestyle changes for health concerns rather than looking young and beautiful.	I feel unhealthy and there are some medical concerns due to which I want to eat healthy diet. (Participant 12) Although I can wear braces but it is not unhealthy to have crooked bunny teeth so I won't go for it (braces). (Participant 11)
6. Beauty on a budget	Frugal expenditure on beauty enhancement products and wardrobe items.	One can buy some clothes in a month or three months and use them throughout a course of time, not to buy clothes every now and then and that too the expensive ones. (Participant 10)
7. The pretty woman privileges	Physical beauty improves self-esteem Physical beauty attracts attention Physical beauty confers privileges Physical beauty elevates inferior perception of women in patriarchal society Beauty portrays affluence.	I follow trends for my satisfaction, to standout, to look beautiful.(Participant 2) People reach out to me because of my physical beauty.(Participant 1) The way I carry myself that is because people have always praised me this way, i have received much importance. (Participant 11)

8.Chasing western shadows in the digital age	Social Media shapes beauty perception for younger females. Beauty ideals for women are influenced by west. Women prefer filtered/ retouched pictures.	People who are beautiful are cast in dramas, those who have a symmetrical face. (Participant 3) People who belong from rich families are apparent from their appearance and overall health. (Participant 7) We have observed since historical times that women are considered inferior so whenever they get an opportunity be it homemaking etc. they invest all their efforts to get recognized. On the other hand men get recognition and opportunities to prove their capabilities. In the same way, the beauty standards made by society compel women to fulfil these criteria because that is what gives them recognition. (Participant 10) I think these beauty standards have originated from the so called influencers especially west whom we follow in other aspects as well. (Participant 6) But sometimes if I watch anything on social media I compare myself and feel like I am a little fat or a particular feature is not so good. So I feel a little sceptical. (Participant 2) I would prefer filtered pictures. (Participant 8)
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The first superordinate theme was termed as 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder'. This theme highlights the subjectivity in defining beauty. The participants mentioned both 'inner beauty and 'physical beauty'.

The second superordinate theme was 'the looking-glass self'. When participants were asked questions about how they view themselves they pointed out how the opinions of people around them shape their sense of self. In other words, the self-concept of individuals was dependent upon the judgments they received from people around.

The third superordinate theme was labeled 'Faith over a facelift'. When the participants were asked about their views and wishes to undergo any aesthetic procedure common nowadays like Botox for wrinkles, fillers for the lips etc., most of them showed their disregard for such interventions to enhance their features or change their current features by quoting their religious beliefs.

The fourth theme is titled 'good morals complement beauty'. This theme elaborates how bearing good moral characteristics is not only necessary but also enhances the physical beauty of an individual.

The fifth theme is termed as 'health-driven choices'. Most participants wanted to alter their diet and incorporate exercise or some kind of physical activity in their schedule due to health concerns.

The sixth theme is termed as 'beauty on a budget'. Majority of the participants spoke about their decisions regarding spending only a fractional portion of their money on beauty products and wardrobe items.

The seventh superordinate theme was 'the pretty woman privileges'. This theme represents the gains or perks of being a physically attractive woman. It describes how a person's physical beauty can privilege them in various ways.

The eighth superordinate theme was 'chasing western shadows in the digital age'. Social media has become a crucial part of our lives. Every person has access to the contents of social

media related with beauty trends that in the context being studied are mostly inspired by western standards. The constant interaction with such beauty content affects the perception of women regarding their bodies and overall looks.

4. Discussion

The idea of beauty among humans must have existed ever since human consciousness came in to being. Beauty rituals have played an important role in society since ancient times, serving as a representation of power and status in addition to having an aesthetic value. However among mankind, the emphasis has been laid more often on the feminine beauty and females have been historically known much more for their attractive or unattractive physical features than their intellectual talents and accomplishments in comparison with their male counterparts. The present study explored the perception of beauty standards and its implications for life choices among women in the Balochistan. Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan however, as compared to other provinces of the country there is, for women, relatively little exposure to education and other means of socialization like restaurants and shopping malls. However, due to availability of internet, smart phones and other forms of media, in Balochistan too, people are usually well aware of the current trends regarding everything including physical beauty. Besides, being a patriarchal culture, women in Balochistan still seem to be valued more in terms of their physical attributes than their abilities and skills, which probably makes the perception of beauty standards extremely relevant for women in this region.

The first theme, 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' refers to subjectivity in the standards of beauty. Where a few participants talked only about physical beauty, others mentioned inner beauty, by which they meant having characteristics like empathy, politeness, kindness and good hygiene. Tennekoon (2022) in a study also highlighted that a woman's beauty is found in good morals, being clean, hygienic as well as in being confident and elegant. As for physical beauty, majority of participants mentioned features that were aesthetically pleasing, such as beautiful eyes, nose, long and thick eyelashes, beautiful hair, symmetrical face, slim figure, clear skin, delicate features and fair skin.

The second theme, 'looking-glass self' comprises sub-themes regarding women viewing themselves in the eyes of others. This concept resonates with Charles Cooley's looking-glass self. Cooley (1902) coined the phrase "looking-glass self" to describe the way in which a person's social identity or social self is based on how they appear to other people. The findings suggest that the centrality of beauty in women's self-concept comes from their spouses' and parents' concern for their wives' and daughters' good looks. Other studies as well emphasize the importance of others' opinions in the development of a person's self-concept (Chandler & Munday, 2011; Snapp, Hensley-Choate, & Ryu, 2012). Participants also elaborated how thinking pattern of parents lays ground for insecurities in their children. Sometimes, they would impose their standards directly through verbal mock or indirectly through backhanded compliments. The theory of social comparison as well emphasizes that people form all sorts of judgments about themselves, and one of the main processes they do this is through social comparison or evaluating one's self in comparison with other people (Festinger, 1954). Women seem to follow beauty standards because they compare themselves with others in their social circles. When women see other women around them adhering to certain beauty practices and ideals, they feel pressured to do the same to fit in and be accepted. This attitude of conformity in terms of beauty standards gets even more pronounced in collectivistic cultures where interdependent self-construal is more prevalent (Madan et al., 2018).

The third theme discussed is 'faith over facelift'. Among many Muslims, altering or intervening to change physical features except when necessary, is perceived as going against the religious teachings. In the present study as well, participants were asked about the perception of aesthetic procedures. In response to this question, a number of participants showed their disregard towards it and thought of it as something that is against the teachings of Islam. A study by Muslu and Demir (2020) that investigated the association between religious practices and the acceptance of aesthetic surgical operations also indicated an inverse relationship between religious practices and attitude for aesthetic surgery.

Fourth theme of this study was 'good morals complement beauty'. As mentioned earlier participants described two kinds of beauty, one had to do with looks and the other had to do with

morals. It was said by many participants that physical beauty vanishes if the person shows disrespect, arrogance and manipulative behaviour. Ma (2023) also illustrated in a study that inner and outer beauty cannot be seen as two altogether different categories. Both of them are mandatory in making a person beautiful.

The fifth theme, 'health-driven choices' and the sixth theme, 'beauty on a budget', both address the question whether beauty standards have an effect on women's lifestyle choices. Considering the content women are exposed to through social media as well as the beauty standards set by society, it was assumed that women would be investing a large proportion of their resources, including their time and finances, in beauty products, cosmetics and clothing. On the contrary, most of the participants reported a very practical approach towards their life style related choices regarding beauty standards. Many of the participants said that they wished to lose weight, change their diet and incorporate physical activity in their schedules because of health concerns such as coping with chronic diseases and not because they wanted to look beautiful. Moreover, most of the participants mentioned that they spent money to buy beauty products only in a small fraction and only when they needed it. They mentioned that less than 5% or up to 10% is invested in buying beauty related products. As for wardrobe items like clothes, shoes, bags and other accessories, most of the participants reported that they bought these things only when needed. As mentioned before there was no preference for surgical interventions or aesthetic procedures to alter or enhance one's features apart from necessary ones like laser hair removal or laser eye surgery. The reason behind this could be because women in our study belonged to middle socio economic class, and they were also either studying or working, which probably leaves them with less time and money left for buying and thinking about unnecessary things. Some participants also clearly mentioned how they used to spend a lot of time and energy on getting dressed and applying makeup but with time, have significantly reduced it due to busy routines. Some married women told that their priorities changed after marriage and that they have other things to manage in their routine than just trying to look glamorous.

Seventh theme 'pretty woman privileges' describes the advantages of being physically beautiful. It is human nature that if one finds something attractive one immediately thinks that it also bears good qualities. Zubair (2022) studied how women in Pakistani society perceive their beauty as an instrumental factor in achieving certain goals. The findings revealed the perception that women whose bodily features depicted the sexualized beauty standards were preferred over women who did not fulfill these criteria. Rehman (2022) also found that people who are beautiful find it easier to adjust in society, as they have an elevated self-esteem. In the present study too, participants said that having fair skin and clothes that exude affluence make women attractive and noticeable at once. Commenting in a similar way, Wolf quoted that "beauty is a currency system like the gold standard in assigning value to women in a vertical hierarchy according to a culturally imposed physical standard; it is an expression of power relations" (De Casanova, 2004).

Objectification of women thus seems to be a product of patriarchy and beauty standards are set in ways to objectify women. Participants also highlighted how beauty is a means for women to elevate their inferior status in a patriarchal society. Pandian (2020) stated that the expectation from the Indian women to change themselves to a Barbie doll image is the paramount means used by males to attain a kind of power. He highlighted that the status of an Indian man in the society is not only reflected in his financial status but is also demonstrated by the women he has in his life. In another study, Lee Bartky (1990) mentioned that whatever a woman may become, she is chiefly perceived as a body which is devised to derive pleasure from Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) proposed that many women are objectified in a sexual manner and their bodies are treated like objects as to place value on its use. They elaborated that women begin to internalize this view of them and begin to self-objectify by attending to their bodies as an object to be noticed. In the cultural context of Balochistan and Pakistan as well patriarchal values have a very strong hold and this might result in objectification of female bodies. However this still needs to be explored to what extent culture and religion shape objectification of female bodies in this region.

The eighth theme was 'chasing western shadows in the digital age'. This theme illustrates the impact of social media and west on beauty standards. Social media has become an integral part of our lives. Anything happening in one part of the world is known to everyone around the

globe. Be it political reforms, a tragic accident or what do famous people have for breakfast, it is all accessible through social media. Platforms like Instagram, Tiktok and Snap chat are some of the apps that are used by almost everyone of all age groups. Celebrities and renowned fashion influencers post the best versions of themselves which have also been retouched multiple times before posting. This mask of filters and a fake portrayal by such social media stars, of being perfect all the time impacts the way viewers perceive their bodies. Participants highlighted how the content they consume on social media affects their sense of self. Hughes (n.d.) reported regarding beauty standards prevalent in Pakistan that the country's historical background has a strong impact on the development of female beauty standards. These persisting standards have roots in the Colonial Rule when female beauty became synonymous with fair complexion, long lustrous hair, almond shaped eyes and slim figure. The obsession with fair color and slim physique are the two mainstream beauty standards that continue to prevail till date.

One important observation that was made in the present study is the apparent contrast in the views of young and middle aged participants regarding beauty standards, effects on their self-perception and life choices. For example, middle aged participants were much more self-confident and more comfortable in their skin than the participants in their young adulthood. These middle aged participants described themselves in terms of their experiences rather than their looks more often than younger participants did. Also majority of the middle aged participants mentioned that home making skills were more important than investing one's energy in trying to pursue physical beauty. This finding might reflect the socially constructed nature of beauty standards among women as young women in Pakistan usually do not get sufficient opportunities to develop their self-concept in diverse ways. There are limited social categories available in the sociocultural environment they live in and those are mostly based on conventional patriarchal gender role divisions. As time passes and women grow, they find themselves doing much more in the context of home or in that of workplace that makes them explore their abilities beyond the traditionally set standards of merely living like a beautiful fairy tale princess. They incorporate these experiences into their concept of beauty and therefore the concept of female beauty undergoes transformation for these women as they age. However, the extent to which these middle aged women keep living and transmitting these transformed and more inclusive standards of beauty to people around needs to be explored as these transformed and closer to life beauty standards are hardly visible among women in early and young adulthood. It seems that despite the changed perceptions among older women, there are some factors that hinder these perceptions from being inherited to women in early and young adulthood. There might be the role of media, social desirability or conforming to traditional standards of beauty and attractiveness on part of the middle aged women themselves later in life.

5. Conclusion

This study was designed to explore the perception of beauty standards among women and the way it influences their self-perception and life choices. Beauty was described in two ways; external superficial beauty and internal moralistic beauty, with more emphasis laid on the latter. It was also found that these women do not blindly internalize societal standards of superficial beauty beyond their means, and they set their priorities in terms of their resources. This more resilient and independent attitude among these women could be attributed to the culture of Quetta city which has little to no facilities available for aesthetic beauty procedures as well as to the religious faith prevalent in this region. Parental influence appeared to play a significant role in shaping self-concept and self-perception, often reinforcing societal beauty standards. The participants also reported that physical beauty improves self-esteem among women and makes them capable of claiming certain social privileges particularly in a patriarchal social context. Beauty expressed as an aura of affluence can also enhance social standing and can thus help get access to opportunities that might otherwise not be easily available. Another important observation was that middle aged participants associated beauty more with personal achievements and life skills and less with physical attributes. The study provides useful insights regarding stereotypes associated with females that could inspire research questions to further feminist scholarship in Pakistan.

5.1. Limitations

Although theoretical saturation was achieved, however some participants wanted to share more about their experiences and perception regarding female beauty. Due to the scope of the study and time constraints those topics could not be discussed. The study could also benefit from

including a quantitative research part in the form of a survey, based on the findings of qualitative analysis. This could have provided certain generalizable conclusions and could add to the findings.

5.2. Implications

The findings of the study shed light on various factors that surround the prevalent standards of beauty. However, the findings highlight the importance of education, financial independence and learning skills that may help in developing self-confidence. In order to transform the conceptualization of female beauty to more realistic terms, socialization patterns at home need to include inculcation of skills and behaviors that would make the girl child feel more in control of her life, these skills might include home making skills as well as skills required to excel in academic and professional settings. Educational institutions can help build broader and more inclusive self-concept among women by providing them resources and opportunities to explore their various talents. Lastly, media has a very significant role to play when it comes to transforming the society. Images of women who have excelled and achieved certain goals on the basis of effort and ability need to be projected as more desirable than women who look beautiful and live in luxury. The study also suggests several potential relationships among various variables that should be studied through quantitative methods. These variables include financial independence and self-satisfaction, perception of beauty and affluence, preferred physical features in choosing a spouse and age differences in perception of beauty.

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