



From Avoidance to Appreciation: Body Image as a Predictor of Procrastination

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION – A: Study design - B: Data collection - C: Statistical analysis - D: Data interpretation – E: Manuscript preparation - F: Literature search

ARTICLE INFO

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Dates:

Received: 27-02-2026

Accepted: 29-04-2026

Published: 30-04-2026

Keywords:

Academic Performance;
Personality Traits; Self-
regulation; Avoidance
Coping

How to cite:

Pandey, A., Verma,
A., Prabhakar, A.
(2026) From
Avoidance to
Appreciation :
Body Image as a
predictor of
Procrastination
Mind and Society, 15(1): 36-45
doi: 1056011/mind-
mri-15120265

Abstract

Body Image attitudes play a critical role in shaping psychological functioning, yet their influence on academic behaviors such as procrastination among young women remains under-studied. The present study explored the predictive role of body image factors—specifically Body Appreciation as a protective variable and Body Image Avoidance as a risk variable—on academic procrastination in female students exposed to unique sociocultural pressures. The sample comprised 105 female participants aged 18 to 25 years ($M = 20.72$, $SD = 1.54$), who completed the Body Image Appreciation Scale-2 (BAS-2), the Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ), and the Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS). Data were collected through both online and offline cross-sectional surveys. Correlational analysis demonstrated significant associations, with Body Appreciation negatively related to both Procrastination ($r = -.404$, $p < .001$) and Body Image Avoidance ($r = -.436$, $p < .001$), whereas Body Image Avoidance showed a positive correlation with Procrastination ($r = .322$, $p = .001$). Regression analyses revealed that Body Appreciation was a significant predictor of reduced procrastination, explaining 16.4% of the variance ($\beta = -.404$, $p < .001$). Conversely, Body Image Avoidance predicted increased Procrastination, accounting for 10.4% of the variance ($\beta = .322$, $p = .001$). These findings highlight the dual roles of body image attitudes, identifying Body Appreciation as a protective factor enhancing self-regulation and Body Image Avoidance as a maladaptive factor contributing to procrastination. The study underscores the importance of integrating body image interventions into educational and psychological strategies aimed at reducing procrastination and promoting academic success among female students.

INTRODUCTION

Body Image Avoidance and Body Appreciation represent theoretically distinct yet empirically interconnected dimensions of body image that significantly influence psychological functioning among female students (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015; Swami et al., 2017). Body Image Avoidance encompasses behavioral strategies aimed at evading situations or stimuli that trigger negative body-related thoughts (Alleva et al., 2016). Body Appreciation reflects a positive and accepting attitude toward one's body regardless of its conformity to societal ideals (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015). Both dimensions contribute meaningfully to how individuals manage academic demands, regulate emotions, and engage in everyday responsibilities (Rodgers et al., 2020).

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Their interplay shapes motivation and self-regulation patterns, influencing outcomes in academic functioning and personal growth (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016). Recognizing these as influential factors offers insights into mechanisms underlying procrastination, adjustment, and effectiveness among female students in demanding environments (Sirois, 2023)

Contextualizing Body Image and Academic Behavior

In contemporary higher education, young women encounter academic demands alongside pervasive sociocultural pressures related to appearance. Heavy coursework, performance expectations, and career planning generate stress, while media and social norms emphasize thinness and attractiveness (Rodgers et al., 2020). This dual environment heightens self-consciousness; social media and peer comparison intensify appearance anxiety (Tiggemann & Slater, 2020). Body Image Avoidance (BIA) involves strategies to evade situations provoking distressing body-related thoughts, such as avoiding mirrors or wearing loose clothing (Alleva et al., 2016). Body Appreciation (BA) encompasses positive, accepting attitudes toward one's body irrespective of sociocultural ideals (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015). These dimensions are salient among female university students given the intersection of sociocultural expectations and media-driven beauty standards (Rodgers et al., 2020).

Such attitudes may affect Procrastination, defined as intentional delay of tasks despite expected negative outcomes (Zhang et al., 2019). High BIA correlates with maladaptive coping and distress, whereas high BA is linked to resilience and adaptive coping. Academic procrastination represents emotion-driven task avoidance; students who habitually avoid body-related thoughts may exhibit entrenched avoidance coping styles extending into academic life. Procrastination has been framed through self-regulatory deficits and motivational conflicts (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016), with avoidance as a critical underlying dynamic. The role of body image attitudes within this framework remains underexplored, particularly among urban Indian females facing unique cultural pressures (Perloff, 2021; Yang et al., 2021).

Rationale and Research Aims

The current study investigates how BIA and BA predict Procrastination among female university students. Treating these as parallel pathways, this paper examines whether negative body image serves as a risk factor while positive body image acts

protectively. Young women report body dissatisfaction at substantially higher rates than men and face unique pressures from peers and media. In the Indian context, female students experience a blend of collectivist values and Westernized beauty ideals, navigating traditional expectations alongside global media's emphasis on slimness and fairness. This cross-pressured environment may intensify body image concerns and their behavioral impact.

Using validated self-report measures and quantitative analysis, this study advances understanding of how positive and negative body image attitudes function as behavioral predictors. Two primary hypotheses are tested: Body Image Avoidance will positively predict academic procrastination, reflecting a risk pathway, while Body Appreciation will negatively predict procrastination, reflecting a protective pathway.

Theoretical Foundations of Body Image

BIA is conceptually anchored in avoidance coping models, whereby individuals engage in behaviors to protect themselves from anticipated criticism related to appearance. Such strategies may confer immediate relief but paradoxically reinforce negative self-perceptions and perpetuate psychological stress. BIA encompasses behavioral tactics for evading situations that provoke adverse body-related cognitions, including avoiding mirrors, photographs, or social interactions (Alleva et al., 2016). Analogous to procrastinatory behavior, these strategies are motivated by desire for transient respite from discomfort, even when avoidance incurs longer-term costs. From self-discrepancy theory, recognition of disparity between actual body and culturally endorsed ideals generates affective distress regulated through avoidance behaviors. BIA exemplifies threat-focused regulatory orientation mirroring motivational processes driving procrastination (Sirois, 2016).

Body Appreciation represents a multidimensional construct characterized by acceptance, respect, and positive valuation of one's physical form irrespective of adherence to societal appearance standards (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015). This construct assumes particular significance for female university students facing intensified sociocultural pressures and prone to internalizing media-driven beauty ideals (Rodgers et al., 2020). Affirmative attitudes cultivated through BA may reduce task avoidance emerging from self-doubt or anxiety, mitigating procrastinatory behaviors (Swami et al., 2017). BA is grounded in positive psychology and self-compassion principles,

emphasizing valuation of the body for its uniqueness and functional capacities. Tylka and Wood-Barcalow (2015) note that BA transcends absence of body dissatisfaction, actively contributing to psychological resource development. Individuals with high BA report enhanced self-worth, emotional resilience, and adaptive coping abilities, with elevated BA positively associated with life satisfaction and self-efficacy (Swami et al., 2017).

Coping and self-regulation frameworks suggest BIA and BA exert contrasting influences on behavioral outcomes. Avoidance-oriented coping is associated with heightened risk for depression and anxiety, while approach-oriented coping inferred from BA is linked to adaptive functioning. Body-related avoidance depletes cognitive and emotional resources required for other tasks. The present hypothesis posits BIA and BA as distinct yet interacting pathways: BIA, through amplification of emotional distress, is expected to exacerbate procrastinatory tendencies, whereas BA, by fostering emotional resilience, is likely to attenuate them.

Empirical Linkages to Procrastination

Contemporary literature indicates that BIA and BA are linked to distinct psychological profiles. Elevated BIA is consistently associated with maladaptive outcomes including diminished self-esteem, heightened anxiety, and avoidance-oriented coping reliance (Allewaert et al., 2016; Dakanalis et al., 2017). Higher BA correlates with positive traits such as self-compassion, resilience, and psychological flourishing (Swami et al., 2017). These patterns mirror established procrastination predictors: negative affect, self-regulatory deficits, and low self-efficacy are recognized antecedents of task delay often heightened in the presence of poor body image (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016; Sirois, 2016).

Although direct relationships between body image and procrastination have rarely been tested, converging evidence suggests conceptual links. Zhang et al. (2019) emphasize procrastination reflects conflict between emotional regulation and motivational goals, while Swami et al. (2017) show positive body attitudes facilitate adaptive coping. BIA, by amplifying anxiety and avoidance motivation, is likely to predict greater academic delay, whereas BA, by fostering resilience, should reduce it. Sirois (2016) notes domain-specific anxieties can generalize into broader avoidance behaviors, reinforcing this link's plausibility.

Sociocultural and Gender Influences

Gender plays a pivotal role in shaping body image and its academic implications. Female students encounter heightened pressures surrounding physical appearance from gendered socialization, objectification experiences, and media-driven ideals promoting normative discontent (Perloff, 2021; Tiggemann & Slater, 2020). Such influences increase susceptibility to body image avoidance linked to maladaptive coping strategies including procrastination (Yang et al., 2021). Meta-analyses confirm body dissatisfaction and avoidance behaviors are two to three times higher among females compared to males (Fiske et al., 2014; Griffiths et al., 2015), justifying focus on a female sample.

In the Indian context, cultural norms and modernization pressures create a distinctive backdrop for body image concerns. Traditional beauty ideals intersect with Western standards perpetuated through social media and advertising (Perloff, 2021; Yang et al., 2021). This dual influence generates complex cultural landscapes where collectivist values coexist with individualistic attractiveness ideals. Social media exposure intensifies body dissatisfaction among Indian adolescents through upward appearance comparisons (Rodgers et al., 2020). For female students, compounded pressures intersect with cultural emphasis on academic success, creating heightened stress. Body-related anxieties may spill over into academic contexts, with procrastination functioning as temporary escape from appearance concerns and fear of academic failure.

Theoretical Integration and Research Gaps

Avoidance coping and self-discrepancy theory suggest students experiencing body image concerns may use procrastination as emotion-focused coping to manage distressing self-perceptions (Sirois, 2023; Dakanalis et al., 2017). BA may foster adaptive coping and reduced procrastinatory behaviors (Swami et al., 2017). Despite theoretical implications, research examining interconnections among BIA, BA, and Procrastination within female university populations remains scarce. By situating these constructs within self-regulation and academic procrastination models, the present study addresses this gap.

This integration proposes opposing body image constructs operate as distinct but interacting pathways influencing procrastination. Avoidance exacerbates emotional dysregulation and perpetuates delays, while appreciation cultivates psychological resources facilitating goal pursuit. The study uniquely addresses these dynamics among a culturally specific

population undergoing rapid sociocultural transition, offering theoretical insights previously underrepresented in the literature. Although body image and procrastination have largely been studied separately, this inquiry bridges the two literatures, proposing that body image perceptions extend beyond health outcomes to shape students' self-regulation and academic performance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

The study sampled 105 urban female university students (age 18–25, $M = 20.72$, $SD = 1.54$) from major academic institutions in India, chosen for high exposure to body image-related pressures. Selection criteria included university enrolment, age, and ability to complete English-language measures. Participants completed self-report questionnaires measuring the three variables.

Research design and procedure

A quantitative cross-sectional design was implemented, using convenience and snowball sampling methods. Data collection occurred online (Google Forms) and offline (paper distribution at campuses), ensuring broad reach. Informed written consent was obtained and ethical standards in research and confidentiality were strictly followed. Participants were informed about the study's purpose and notified that the survey would take approximately 10–15 minutes. No incentives were offered. Data collection spanned 4 weeks, with incomplete or duplicate entries excluded during analysis.

Assessment tools

Below are the assessment tools used-

1. **Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS):** A 16-item measure of academic procrastination developed by Tuckman in 1991. It has 5 items with negative scoring, namely items 5,7,12,13 and 16 and the rest of the items were scored positively. It has strong reliability ($\alpha > .85$) and has been validated across student populations. Higher scores indicate greater Procrastination.
2. **Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ):** A 19-item scale assessing behavioral avoidance associated with body image concerns, developed by Rosen et al. in 1991. It demonstrates good reliability ($\alpha = .80-.87$) and validity (Alleva et al., 2016). Higher scores reflect greater avoidance.
3. **Body Appreciation Scale-2 (BAS-2):** A 10-item instrument assessing positive Body Image,

developed by Tylka & Wood-Barcalow in 2015. It has high internal consistency ($\alpha > .90$) and cross-cultural validity (Swami et al., 2017). Higher scores indicate greater Body Appreciation.

All measures show strong reliability and validity, with cross-cultural applicability confirmed in prior research.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics, correlational analyses, and regression analyses were performed to systematically examine the relationships among Body Appreciation, Body Image Avoidance, and Procrastination in a sample of urban female college students. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, ensuring accuracy and reliability in statistical computation. The constructs were assessed using well-established and psychometrically validated instruments, namely the Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ), the Body Appreciation Scale-2 (BAS-2), and the Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS). These standardized tools allowed for a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the interrelations among the psychological variables under study.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics, correlational analysis, and regression analysis were utilized in this study to examine the intricate relationship between Body Appreciation, Body Image Avoidance, and Procrastination among urban female university students. Specifically, rigorously standardized scales were employed to measure each psychological construct: the Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ), Body Appreciation Scale – 2 (BAS-2), and Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS). Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for this analysis. The outcomes and significant findings are as shown below:

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Body Appreciation, Body Image Avoidance, and Procrastination among participants

Variable	Mean	S.D.	N
<i>Body Appreciation Score</i>	36.36	8.594	105
<i>Body Image Avoidance Score</i>	32.70	12.431	105
<i>Procrastination Score</i>	41.55	5.394	105

The study sample consisted of 105 participants. As shown in Table 1, the mean score for Body Appreciation was 36.36 (SD = 8.59), indicating moderate to high levels of positive engagement and acceptance regarding one's body. The mean Body Image Avoidance score was 32.70 (SD = 12.43), reflecting the degree to which participants avoided situations eliciting body-related anxiety. The substantial standard deviation (12.43) indicates considerable individual differences in avoidance behaviors. The mean Procrastination score was 41.55 (SD = 5.39), capturing tendencies to delay academic and daily tasks. The relatively lower variability (SD = 5.39) suggests participants were comparatively more similar in procrastination patterns than in body image measures.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 - Pearson Correlations Between Body Appreciation, Body Image Avoidance, & Procrastination

Variable	Body Appreciation Score	Body Image Avoidance Score	Procrastination
Body Appreciation	1	—	—
Body Image Avoidance	-0.436**	1	—
Procrastination	-0.404**	0.322**	1

*Note. *p<0.05, **p<0.01, N=105

As depicted in Table 2, Pearson's correlation coefficients revealed significant associations among all three variables. Body Appreciation and Procrastination demonstrated a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.404, p < 0.001$), indicating that individuals with higher body appreciation exhibited reduced procrastination. Body Image Avoidance was positively correlated with Procrastination ($r = 0.322, p = 0.001$), suggesting greater avoidance behaviors were linked to increased procrastination tendencies. Body Appreciation and Body Image Avoidance were also significantly negatively correlated ($r = -0.436, p < .001$), underscoring their opposing relationships. Spearman's rho analysis showed a significant negative monotonic correlation between Body Appreciation and Procrastination ($\rho = -0.211, p = .031$). The positive correlation between Body Image Avoidance and Procrastination ($\rho = 0.133$) did not reach statistical significance ($p = .175$), suggesting this relationship may be predominantly linear.

Regression Analysis

Table 3- Regression Analysis for Body Appreciation Predicting Procrastination

R	R ²	R ² Change	Adjusted β	t	F
0.404	0.164	0.164	0.155	-0.404	-4.49***
					20.149*

*Note. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Beyond examining bivariate associations, regression analysis was employed to statistically predict procrastination levels from body image attitudes. Body Appreciation significantly predicted procrastination, $F(1, 103) = 20.15, p < .001$, accounting for 16.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .164$). The negative regression coefficient ($\beta = -0.404, p < .001$) confirmed that as Body Appreciation increased, Procrastination significantly decreased.

Table 4 - Regression Analysis for Body Image Avoidance Predicting Procrastination

R	R ²	R ² Change	Adjusted R	β	t	F
0.322	0.104	0.104	0.095	0.322	3.449**	11.894**

*Note. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Body Image Avoidance also significantly predicted Procrastination, $F(1, 103) = 11.89, p = .001$, accounting for 10.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .104$). The positive regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.322, p = .001$) indicated that higher Body Image Avoidance was associated with increased Procrastination. These findings highlight distinct pathways through which body-related attitudes influence procrastinatory behavior.

Visual inspection of histograms and P-P plots confirmed normally distributed residuals for all regression models. Assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were met, residuals were normally distributed ($SD \approx 1, M \approx 0$), and no influential outliers were found (Cook's Distance < 0.2). Thus, regression analyses are statistically reliable.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined interrelationships between Body Appreciation, Body Image Avoidance, and Procrastination among urban Indian female students, a demographic navigating rigorous academic expectations and pervasive sociocultural

appearance pressures. Findings confirmed that Body Appreciation acts as a protective factor against Procrastination, while Body Image Avoidance emerges as a risk factor. Higher Body Appreciation was associated with significantly lower Procrastination ($r = -.404, p < .001$), whereas higher Body Image Avoidance positively correlated with Procrastination ($r = .322, p = .001$). A strong negative association emerged between Body Appreciation and Body Image Avoidance ($r = -.436, p < .001$), highlighting their opposing yet independently predictive influences.

Regression analyses reinforced these associations. Body Appreciation explained 16.4% of variance in Procrastination, while Body Image Avoidance accounted for 10.4%. Results emphasize that body-related attitudes significantly shape behavioral self-regulation and task management. By situating Body Appreciation as a resilience factor and Body Image Avoidance as a maladaptive coping mechanism, the study broadens understanding of Procrastination beyond traditional views of poor time management. Procrastination is better understood within an emotional and cognitive framework where body-related self-perceptions influence motivation, self-control, and coping strategies.

Findings are particularly important because body image research has traditionally focused on eating disorders or emotional distress rather than academic functioning. By identifying Procrastination as an outcome linked to body image, the present study contributes to an emerging perspective that cognitive-behavioral domains of student life are affected by how individuals perceive their bodies. This underscores the importance of incorporating body image considerations into interventions targeting Procrastination.

Body Appreciation as a Protective Factor

The negative correlation between Body Appreciation and Procrastination reinforces the protective role of positive body image in self-regulation and academic behavior. Body Appreciation refers to accepting, respecting, and holding favorable attitudes toward one's body regardless of conformity to societal ideals (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015). This construct embodies active orientation toward valuing one's body for appearance and functionality.

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) provides a framework for interpreting this finding. Positive emotions expand cognitive and behavioral repertoires, enabling individuals to build psychological resources. Body

Appreciation generates positive affect, broadening attentional focus and facilitating adaptive problem-solving. By reducing appearance-related monitoring and freeing cognitive resources, students with higher Body Appreciation focus better on academic tasks, initiate action, and persist through challenges. This protective role aligns with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), emphasizing intrinsic motivation and self-acceptance in sustaining adaptive behaviors. Students with higher Body Appreciation experience greater self-acceptance, reducing self-critical cognitions that undermine motivation.

Regression analysis demonstrated that Body Appreciation significantly predicted lower procrastination and explained substantial variance (16.4%). This quantitative evidence strengthens interpretation that positive body regard enhances self-regulation. Enhancing Body Appreciation through body-affirmation exercises, mindfulness practices, or positive psychology interventions could improve students' ability to regulate behavior and manage time effectively. Mindfulness-based interventions targeting Body Appreciation improve self-compassion, reduce avoidance behaviors, and enhance coping skills (Alleva et al., 2016). Such practices integrated into academic support programs could help students improve body relationship while reducing task delay.

Body Image Avoidance as a Risk Factor

In contrast, findings revealed that Body Image Avoidance positively correlated with Procrastination and significantly predicted higher task delay. Body Image Avoidance refers to behaviors designed to evade situations evoking body-related anxiety, such as avoiding mirrors, social gatherings, or clothing accentuating body shape (Rosen et al., 1991). While these strategies may reduce distress short-term, they perpetuate negative self-perceptions and restrict adaptive functioning.

Self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) illuminates this process. When individuals perceive gaps between actual and ideal selves, distressing emotions such as shame and anxiety arise. Body Image Avoidance attempts to regulate discomfort by evading triggering situations, but such avoidance reinforces negative self-beliefs and limits opportunities for positive corrective experiences. Generalization of avoidance beyond body-related contexts represents a particularly important implication. Avoidance coping may begin as strategy to reduce body-related distress but spills over into academic contexts, where Procrastination functions as another evasion form. This aligns with Sirois' (2016,

2023) argument that domain-specific anxieties generalize into broader avoidance behaviors, undermining adaptive functioning.

Regression results indicating Body Image Avoidance accounted for 10.4% of variance in Procrastination highlight its significance as a risk factor. From self-regulation perspectives, avoidance consumes cognitive and emotional resources otherwise available for goal-directed action. The ego-depletion framework (Baumeister et al., 1998) suggests ongoing effort to manage body-related distress diminishes energy available for other self-control forms. Students engaging in high avoidance struggle to initiate or sustain academic tasks, leading to Procrastination. This maladaptive pathway emphasizes addressing avoidance directly in interventions, as time management strategies alone are insufficient when procrastination is underpinned by avoidance coping rooted in body dissatisfaction.

Interplay Between Body Appreciation and Avoidance

The significant negative correlation between Body Appreciation and Body Image Avoidance highlights the importance of considering their interaction. Although conceptually distinct, these constructs exert opposing influences on Procrastination. Body Appreciation reflects approach-oriented engagement and acceptance, while avoidance reflects withdrawal and disengagement. Their negative association indicates higher appreciation tends to co-occur with lower avoidance, yet regression analyses confirm each contributes independently to Procrastination outcomes. This suggests a dual-pathway framework: Appreciation serves as a protective factor fostering resilience and engagement, whereas Avoidance functions as a maladaptive pathway leading to disengagement and delay. Interventions may benefit from targeting both pathways simultaneously through programs encouraging functional body regard and exposure-based strategies to reduce avoidance behaviours. This complementary approach recognizes dual influence of body image attitudes and may produce stronger outcomes than focusing on either alone.

Theoretical Integration

Results resonate with broader Procrastination frameworks highlighting emotional regulation and self-control roles. Traditionally framed as time-management issues, contemporary models emphasize Procrastination's function as avoidance strategy driven

by emotional distress (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016). Present findings align with this perspective by situating body image attitudes within emotion-regulation frameworks.

From a transdiagnostic standpoint (Flett et al., 2016), avoidance represents a core process underlying psychological difficulties from anxiety to eating disorders. The present study extends this model by showing body-related avoidance contributes to Procrastination, reinforcing view of Procrastination as avoidance-based coping. The study contributes to growing recognition that Procrastination is influenced not only by cognitive and motivational factors but also by body-related attitudes.

Sociocultural Context: Indian Female Students

The sociocultural context is particularly salient. Female students in urban India face complex pressures including intense academic competition, collectivist cultural expectations, and pervasive media-driven beauty standards. Traditional norms emphasizing fairness, slimness, and conformity intersect with globalized ideals propagated through social media, creating a "double bind" for young women (Perloff, 2021; Rodgers et al., 2020). Within this environment, body dissatisfaction and avoidance are likely heightened, while Body Appreciation becomes more difficult to cultivate. Pressures of maintaining academic excellence alongside conforming to appearance norms generate significant psychological strain. For some students, Procrastination may function as coping mechanism to escape both academic stress and body-related anxiety.

This cultural context underscores the importance of culturally sensitive interventions. Approaches simply importing Western body positivity models may not fully resonate with Indian students. Interventions must account for collectivist values and intersectional pressures specific to this demographic. Emphasizing functional body aspects in relation to academic and social roles may align more closely with cultural values. Findings also highlight the need to recognize intersectionality - urban-rural divides, socioeconomic status, and family expectations may differentially shape body image experiences and academic behaviors.

Practical and Clinical Implications

Findings carry several practical and clinical implications. Interventions targeting Procrastination in academic settings often focus narrowly on time

management and study skills. While useful, these approaches may be insufficient if underlying body image concerns drive avoidance behaviors. Incorporating body image components could significantly enhance effectiveness.

Practical strategies include body-neutral affirmations encouraging students to view bodies functionally; mindfulness-based practices cultivating non-judgmental awareness of bodily experiences; cognitive-behavioral strategies challenging negative body beliefs; and self-compassion training reducing self-criticism when approaching academic challenges (Neff, 2003). These approaches integrated into academic support workshops, counseling services, and peer-led initiatives offer dual benefit of improving body image and reducing Procrastination. Clinically, findings suggest therapists working with students struggling with Procrastination should assess body image attitudes as part of formulation. Combining exposure therapy for avoidance behaviors with Body Appreciation exercises may simultaneously reduce anxiety and increase task engagement.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations require acknowledgment. First, cross-sectional design precludes causal inference. Although findings support hypothesized direction, Procrastination could contribute to negative body image attitudes rather than reverse. Longitudinal and experimental studies are needed to clarify temporal relationships. Second, the study focused exclusively on urban Indian female students. While this population is particularly vulnerable to body image concerns, results may not generalize to rural populations, male students, or individuals identifying outside gender binary. Third, reliance on self-report measures introduces potential biases such as social desirability or inaccurate self-assessment. Behavioral proxies for Procrastination could complement self-report data in future studies. Finally, modest sample size (N = 105) limits statistical power to detect smaller effects or complex moderated relationships.

Future Research Directions

Building on these limitations, several research avenues emerge. Longitudinal designs could track changes in Body Appreciation, Body Image Avoidance, and Procrastination over time, clarifying causal pathways. Experimental interventions could test whether enhancing Appreciation or reducing Avoidance directly decreases Procrastination behaviors. Mixed-methods approaches would provide

richer insights into how students experience interplay between body image and academic behaviors. Future research should also examine moderating and mediating factors such as self-esteem, perfectionism, and self-compassion. Contextual variables including peer influences or social media exposure may also moderate the impact of body image attitudes on academic behaviors. Finally, extending this research to male populations is essential, as male students may experience muscularity-oriented ideals shaping Body Image and Avoidance behaviors differently (Griffiths et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to growing recognition that body image attitudes extend beyond emotional health to influence everyday cognitive-behavioral functioning, particularly academic procrastination. Higher Body Appreciation emerged as a protective factor reducing Procrastination through fostering self-regulation and resilience, while Body Image Avoidance functioned as a risk factor sustaining Procrastination through maladaptive coping. Together, findings highlight a dual-pathway framework where appreciation and avoidance independently shape self-regulatory outcomes.

Results illuminate the importance of incorporating body image considerations into interventions targeting Procrastination. By fostering appreciation and dismantling avoidance, educational institutions and clinicians can support both academic success and psychological well-being. In the Indian context, where academic demands intersect with pervasive appearance norms, culturally sensitive interventions hold particular relevance. Ultimately, findings challenge narrow views of Procrastination as merely poor planning. Procrastination should be recognized as part of broader self-regulatory processes influenced by body-related attitudes. Addressing Body Image within this framework provides a novel avenue for promoting healthier self-regulation, greater academic engagement, and improved well-being among young women.

Statements and Declarations

This research received no external funding. The authors declare no conflict of interest. The content of this article is original and not published anywhere. The authors declare that they have no financial or non-financial interests that are directly or indirectly related to the work submitted for publication. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Body Image And Procrastination Among Female Students

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