

COMBATING THE NORMAL LIFE WITH SENSATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS: A STUDY ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA OF THE MODERN WOMEN

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ABSTRACT--The social concepts of gender and sex and its influences on the psychological level of human being especially women is a topic of discussion in the contemporary critical theory. The psychological dilemma of women regarding their body and health encompasses various studies of women's identity and the position of women. The inferior status of women physically, economically and politically and the consequences of this social condition influence the psychology of women. The societal factors which evaluate the psychological trauma of women in this modern society are questionable in the present culture. The gender issues and the socio-political conditions have an impact on the physical as well as the mental health of women. The biological aspects, domestic conditions, cultural reverberations and the image of women in the society directly regulate the psychological concerns of the world of women. In this way, this article mainly focuses on the psychological trauma of modern women in terms of their physical appearances and the biological nonconformity between men and women in the contemporary society.

Key words--Modern women, Patriarchal society, Psychology of women, Gender Inequality, Body Image.

I. INTRODUCTION

Apart from the equality between men and women, their differences are discussed in psychological terms. The troubles women encounter lead the way to the psychological dilemmas which is mainly the backlash of the gender inequality where woman is inferior and subordinated by the male centred power. Though women have a history of the struggles and movements for the liberation they agree that the subordination of them creates crucial psychological disorientation in the society. For many reasons the mental disturbances are more reflected by women than men.

II. THE REASONS BEHIND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA OF WOMEN IN THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Biological determinants have a clear role in the life of modern women. The psychological trauma of women has a far-reaching connection with their body concepts. The attention of women to project their physical beauty is a challenging topic which explains various dimensions of the social, physical and psychological aspects of women. In the modern society, woman is in a mood to cultivate their body in an attractive way as a part of liberation. The

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biological disaffection is considered to be one of the factors which drag women to equal themselves with men. The image of beauty and its consequences compel women to concentrate on their physical appearances. As a part of women's psychology, the external appearances build up a world where crave for the external attractiveness impels them to be more beauty conscious.

The body image of the modern women is the reflection of their self esteem which is also mirrored in the cultural platform. The investments for the physical attraction such as costumes, medical treatments to intensify beauty, use of social media such as selfie etc are the repercussion of the thirst for the self expression and the self confidence. The way of the physical expression determines the intrinsic motivation of women to manifest their identity and physical fitness in front of the society. According to Cristiana Pop , "Body image is not just a cognitive construct, but also a reflection of attitudes and interactions with others" (p. 32). In order to avoid the worthlessness and the low status, women struggle to build up a world where they compete with beauty and physical attractiveness. The agitation of the modern world of women to fix their identity in the male dominated society results in the desolation and dilemma in the modern world. The opinion of people about one and what he or she feels about himself or herself boosts one's confidence level. So the concept of beauty and the self esteem are the sides of a same coin. The praise of the outer world regarding the appearance of women encourages her to beautify herself which demands more psychological and economics efforts from them.

The anxiety of women about pregnancy and the changes associated with female body constrain her to perform her duty as a mother. The psychological stress of the body weight or the diminishing of the beauty overwhelms their natural instinct to give birth their children by considering pregnancy as a vulnerable part of their womanhood. The risk of women to keep her healthy and glamorous body is mirrored in the contemporary age. The unhealthy engrossment about the physical beauty, the frustration with then attractiveness and the promotion of the fashion stimulate women to frame a critical attitude towards their instinctive womanhood. Alla Kholmogorova, P. Tarhanove and O. Shalygina have the opinion that, "When unrealistic, unhealthy standards become this internal tool in the form of a system of perceptions about beauty; they induce a high level of dissatisfaction with the person's own appearance and a high critical attitude towards others" (p. 2-3).

Women dream to construct their identity by enhancing their physical attractiveness to be a model in the world where women are in a great effort to project them before the society. The coercion to become perfect and the effects of media compel her to maintain her beauty and display self image. The female anatomy and the changing biological conditions play a pivotal role in the psychological state which always tempts her to withdraw from the mainstream of the society. The biological and emotional variations as a result of menopause, the complexities of pregnancy and the short term potential to produce the child have direct pressure on the mental power of women, which are absent in both physiological and psychological realms of men. The age limit of the fertility of women is one of the strongest psychological traumas which are faced by many women. Compared to men, women have a short span of fertility which breaks the expectations of women to compete with men in the area of productivity. The pressure of the child bearing capacity and sometimes infertility of women compress their sound mental health as well as physical integrity. The depression during menopause paves way to the mental distress and an ineffectual psychological condition of women.

How a person view himself is a most important factor. The intermixing of beauty and the confidential level go hand in hand with each other. Most of women are confined to the household work which does not deserve any appreciation from others. Sometimes this fact drives women to make them attractive than men, who get more

social appreciation. Ranjitha G. P. and Anandhakuttan B. Unnithan have the opinion that “A positive feedback from men reinforces the feeling of being an ideal woman among women”(p.38). Beauty consciousness of women sometimes leads them to attain both self worth and self love and it is a mean to sustain their position in the society. The self appreciation and appreciation from others are the major intentions which urge women to hold this issue. The desire to exhibit the beauty is the part of the culture. The advocacy of beauty, as a part of the cultural impact always pressures women to hang on the cosmetic materials and appearance enhancing substances.

The quest of women to enhance their appearance and intensity their beauty and to gain a perfect body image have a cultural background. The dream of the physical beauty among women is inborn which bothers them to become perfect and ideal women. The anxiety of women regarding their appearance is a bitter fact and the underestimation of their attractiveness is a comparatively high than men. The dissatisfaction of women is centred around the concept of the valuation by others in the society. The loss of beauty after the child birth, the weight issues and the hormone changes make women conscious about their external appearance. The insecurity feelings burden their over concern regarding the public opinion and attitude of the society.

The emotional and mental problems encountered by modern women have various dimensions which affect them both physically and psychologically. The pattern of the formation given to boys and girls differences the psychological health of the human world. Susan Hekman in “Feminism” suggests that “The result is that when these boys and girls become men and women they have very psychological make ups. Men are good at competition and autonomy and bad at relationships and emotion. Women excel in relationships and emotions and are bad at competition and autonomy”(p. 95). The imbalance between work and life produce work stress among women which is mainly lack of the support from the male partners. The unmanageable domestic works and the public jobs demand more productivity and performances from them. The stress is high for the working women who face more effort in the absence of entertainments and free time. Physical changes in women such as adolescence and puberty and the ignorance intensity the emotional problems in the young women. Unpredictable changes of moods in women as the past biological growth face more depressive mental problems. In the modern world infertility and the physical causes of the lack of child bearing capacity result tension and the signs of depression. The range of dissatisfaction and the negative thoughts of body structure are also major reasons associated with the psychological disturbances.

The human world shapes the perceptions and the idea of body image through various determinants. The perception of the body concepts of women in the modern society are determined by the factors such as the culture, media, compulsion from the patriarchal society and the women world itself. Sarah Gamble in “The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism” pinpoints that “Femininity is thus a set of rules governing female behaviour and appearance, the ultimate aim of which is to make women conform to a male ideal of sexual attractiveness” (p.23). Media is the platform where women build up a world of beauty and cultural ideologies. Media, especially advertisement, convince the inclination of women to build up a strong body image in the modern cultural society. It always broadens the conception of physical beauty and the tools which expand the application of the beauty consciousness. The patriarchal society constructs the positive and negative impression regarding the beauty consciousness of women from where they expect great admiration and appreciation. The social and political pressure also amplifies the emphasis of the physical expression and presentation of fashion. The cultural agents provide ample of exposure which enhances the physical attractiveness of women in the modern society. Culture constructs a framework where women exercise and exhibit their beauty concepts in a successive manner. Women

herself is influencing factor who prompts the women community to express their inner thirst publically. Women have a rendering role to transfer the beauty impression among women world.

Though there are huge similitude among men and women, there are many contrasts with regards to the biological and psychological area of them. The multiple dimensions of the disadvantages of women in the modern society are mainly based on the dependency on men. Though women acquire more equal position in the society than the earlier period, the dominant nature of men over women still exists. The lack of income and unemployment urge women to depend them economically which produce mental troubles in them. The difficulty of women to adjust with the biological changes and high level of biological and sexual productivity build up a bridge between the male and female world. The anxiety about the living conditions, worry about beauty, the insecurity of women in the patriarchal society and the inequality of women in the domestic and public spheres are the major constraints to establish a world of women with healthy psychological condition. Chris Weedon has the opinion that “Female desire is seen as totally foreign to male desire and the two can only be brought together through a patriarchal repression of the female” (64).

The major demands faced by women are mainly child care and domestic duties which expect more responsibilities from them. The noticeable role of women in the private and public arena prompts them to be more creative and active in distinct ways. The unequal status of woman in the patriarchal society and the treatment of woman as an inferior one compel them to fight for the liberation of women from the male dominated society which need more mental power and social support in the modern world. The rape culture, unequal treatment of women and the misuse of the media against woman’s privacy are the radical threats which make the lives of women more complex and miserable. In order to dedicate the life of woman for the well-being of the family, the ultimate freedom and exuberance of their capacity are sacrificed. The lack of proper education and the barriers which prevent women to become self reliant also struggle them to lead a healthy social life. The problems faced by women to adjust with family life and professional life are another leading factors which influence the psychological balance of women. Shambunath describes this issue in “Problems and Challenges Faced by Urban Working Women in India” by saying that “Professional women feel isolated and burdened by the simultaneous demands of their new aspirations on one side and the traditional way of life on the other” (628).

The wide range of child abuse, one of the aftermaths of the result of the media, is one of the reasons behind the disturbing psychological state of women. The violation of the physical coalition of the earlier age of a woman severely impacts the self confidence as well as the physical integrity and their further social connection in their future. Personality disorders of women have a parallel relationship with the child abuse. The maltreatment of female child in physically and psychologically causes disordered psychological problems. The childhood health of a woman regulates the mental health of her future and the dimension of her relationship with both same and opposite sexes. Sunita Sinha expresses her views about the connection between the childhood experiences and the adulthood psychological health in *Rethinking Gender: Masculinity, Femininity and Queerity in Postcolonial Indian Fiction* that “Women’s oppression is based on childhood experiences where masculinities and femininities are constructed and communicated, leading to the ways of thinking about oneself” (91). The childhood abuse devastates the healthy marital relationship and shatters both domestic and public proximity throughout her life. The emotional responses of modern women have a strong connection with a healthy mental condition of woman in the modern society.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY

In order to make the study more authenticate, questionnaire based survey has been done which consists of 10 questions. The questionnaire was distributed to 100 women from various area comes under the age limit of 20-45 based on the objective to find out various dimensions of the psychological dilemma of the modern women. Besides the questions related to the psychological trauma of women, the profile of the respondents such as age, qualification, marital status and current status are also taken for consideration.

The table and the graphical representation of each question are given below.

1. According to you, how much importance is given to the physical beauty among the modern women?

Table 1: Importance of the physical beauty among the modern women.

Importance of beauty	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Very much	39	39
Moderate	51	51
Less	10	10
No	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

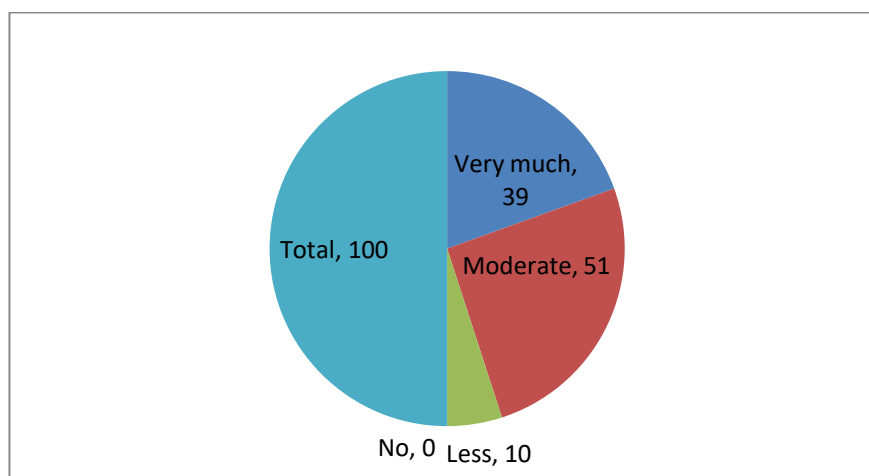


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of the importance of the physical beauty among the modern women

Out of 100, 39% of women have the opinion that women give very much importance to beauty. 51% women have moderate and 10% have less importance to the beauty where as no one has the opinion that women do not give any importance to beauty. The above data gives the information that most of the women have the opinion that moderate importance is given to the concept of beauty.

2. Do you think that men can maintain their physical capacity to attain more productivity in their lives than women?

Table 2: Physical productivity of men than women

Physical productivity of men than women	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Always	21	21

Frequently	46	46
Rarely	23	23
Never	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

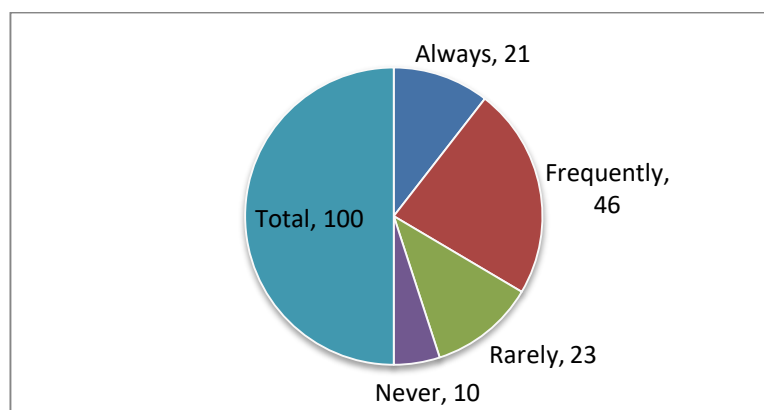


Figure 2: Graphical representation of physical productivity of men than women

The above data gives the picture that 21% of women supported that men have more productivity, 46% said that frequently men are more productive and 23% had the opinion that rarely men are productive than women. 10% of the correspondents suggested that men are not more productive than women. From the above graphical representation 90% supports the productivity of men while 10% neglected the concept.

3. Do you feel that, generally women have self esteem sustained from their physical appearance?

Table 3: Self esteem of women from the physical appearance

Self esteem of women from physical appearance	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Always	32	32
Frequently	46	46
Rarely	19	19
Never	3	3
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

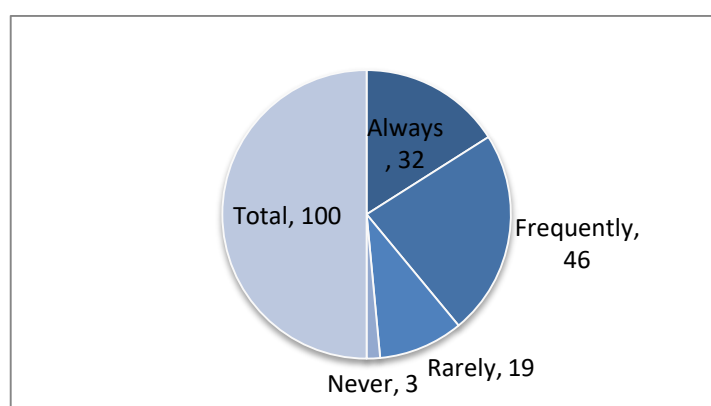


Figure 3: Graphical representation of the self esteem of women from the physical appearance

According to the above information 32% agreed that women always have sustained self esteem from their physical appearance, 46% suggested frequently whereas 19% supported rarely. Only 3% had the opinion that women never get self esteem from their physical appearance. From the graph it is clear that only 3% strongly reject the relationship between the self esteem and the physical appearance of women.

4. According to you, why women are thinking about their beauty?

Table 4: Consideration of women about beauty

Reason of the consideration of women beauty	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
In born	14	14
Part of culture	19	19
To get attention from others	20	20
To attain self esteem	47	47
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

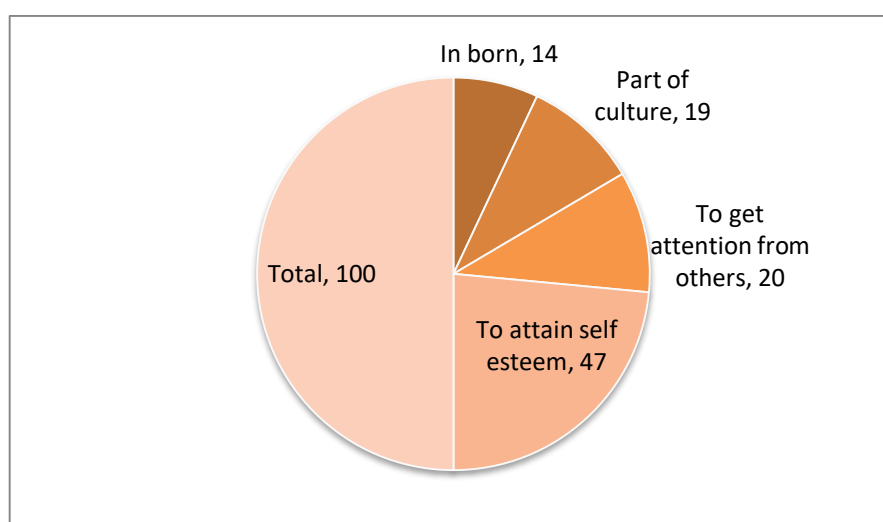


Figure 4: Graphical representation of the consideration of women about beauty

The above information states that 14% of women supported that women have inborn nature to think about their beauty but 19% suggested that it is the part of culture. 20% of the respondents had the idea that the beauty consciousness of women is to get attention from others and 47% had the suggestion that the reason behind the beauty concept to attain self esteem.

5. Which is the major demand of modern women in their daily lives?

Table 5: Demand of modern women in daily life

Women's demand	No. of respondents	Percentage
To liberate from male power	18	18
To achieve a high position in the society	51	51
To exhibit their beauty	6	6
To live for their family	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

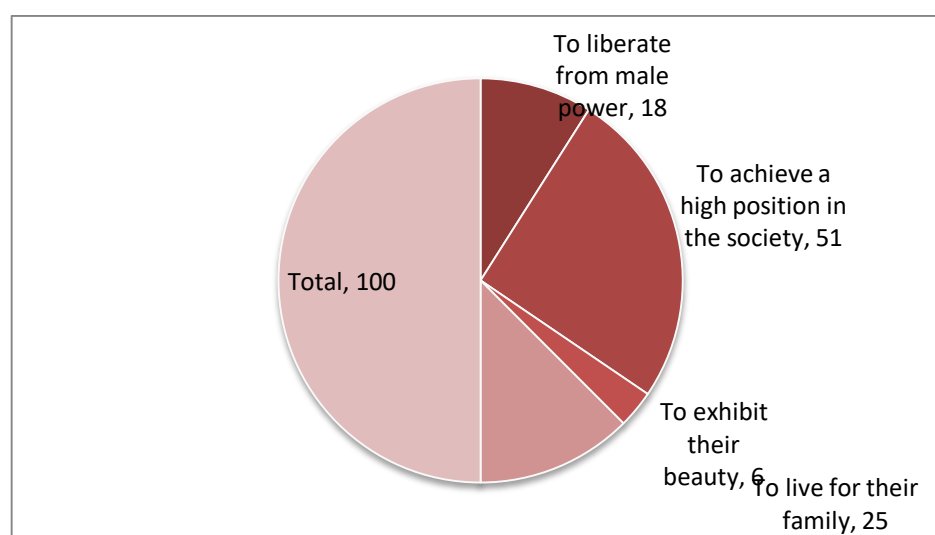


Figure 5: Graphical representation of the demand of modern women in daily life

The study clears that 18% of the respondents supported that the major demand of the modern women is to liberate them from male power and 51% agreed that the reason is to achieve a high position in the society. But only 6% said the reason is that to exhibit their beauty whereas 25% argued that it is to live for their family.

Do you consider that women are more anxious regarding their physical appearance than men?

Table 6: The anxiety of women regarding physical appearance

Women's anxiety regarding physical appearance	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Always	43	43
Frequently	41	41
Rarely	9	9
Never	7	7
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

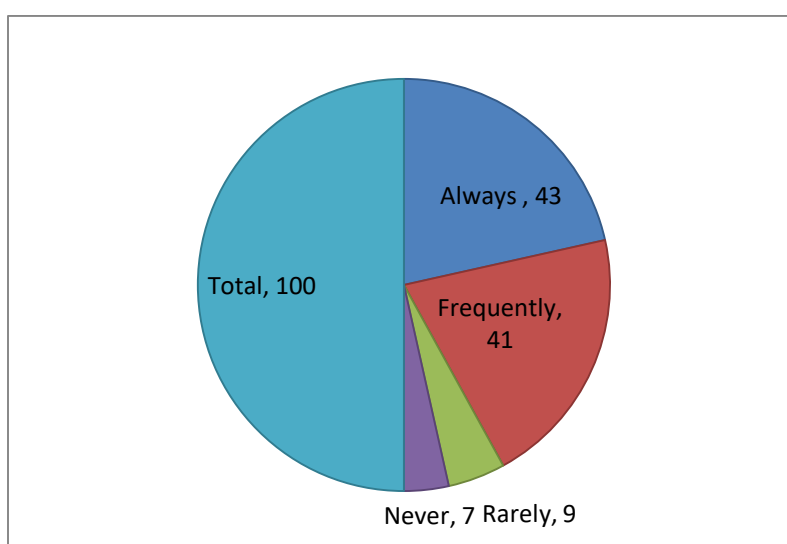


Figure 6: Graphical representation of the reason behind the anxiety of physical appearance

The graph gives the explanation that 43% of the respondents stand for the opinion that women always have anxiety regarding their physical appearance and 41% held the idea that women are frequently anxious. 9% promote it as rarely and 7% argued that women are never anxious about the physical appearance.

6. What is the major psychological problem faced by the modern women?

Table 7: Major psychological problems of modern women

Women's major psychological problem	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Stress at work	55	55
Physical changes of women	26	26
Problems related to child bearing	10	10
Care of the bodily appearance	9	9
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

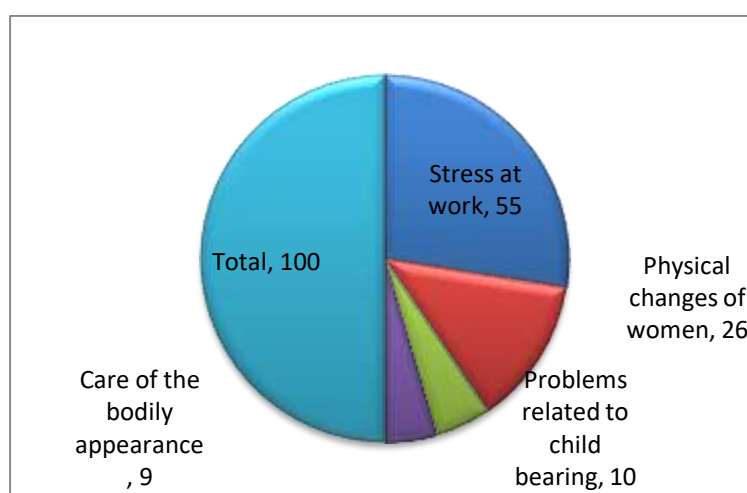


Figure 7: Graphical representation of the women's major psychological problem

According to the above graph, 55% of the respondents stated that the psychological problem of modern women is as a result of stress at work, 26% suggested that due to the physical changes of women, 10% had the opinion that it is because of the problems related to child bearing and 9% supported the reason by suggesting the care of the bodily appearance.

7. Do you think that psychological trauma of modern women is closely associated with the child abuse in their early age?

Table 8: Parallel relationship between the psychological trauma and child abuse

Connection between psychological trauma and child abuse	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Agree	26	26
Partially agree	57	57
Disagree	17	17
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

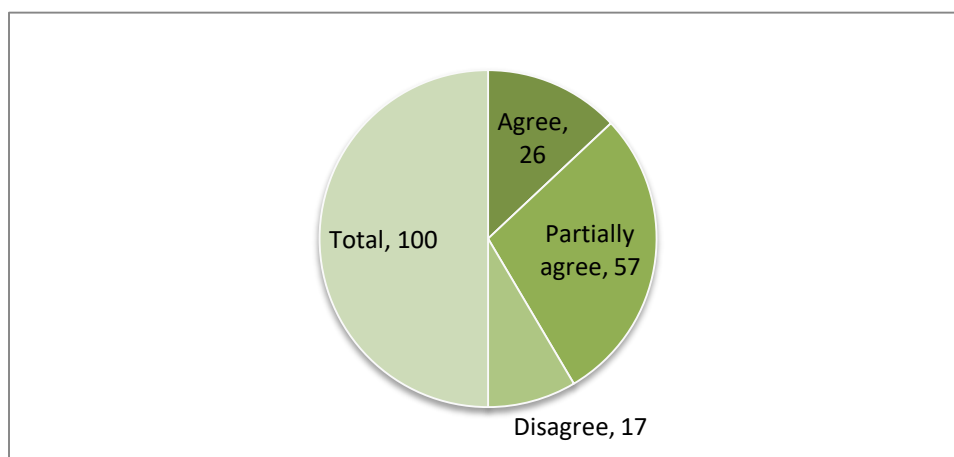


Figure 8: Graphical representation of the connection between psychological trauma and child abuse

The graph gives the information that 26% of women agreed the connection between the psychological trauma of women and the child abuse, 57% partially agree while 17% disagree the concept.

8. Which is the major factor that influences the body concept of women in the modern world?

Table 9: Factors affect the body concept of women

The influencing factors of body concept	No. of respondents	Percentage(%)
Media	63	63
Patriarchal society	17	17
Women	8	8
Culture	12	12
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

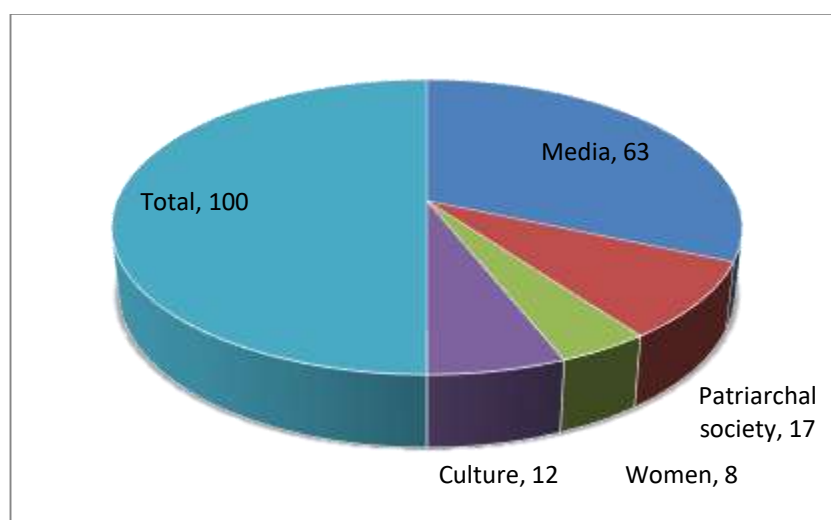


Figure 9: Graphical representation of factors affect the body concept of women

Regarding the major factor affects the body concept of women 63%, 17%, 8% and 12% suggested media, patriarchal society, women and culture respectively.

9. According to you, what is the major disadvantage of women compared to men?

Table 10: Major disadvantages of women

Inconvenience of women	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Worry about beauty	25	25
Age limit of child bearing capacity	6	6
Dependency on men	44	44
Difficulty to adjust with biological change	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

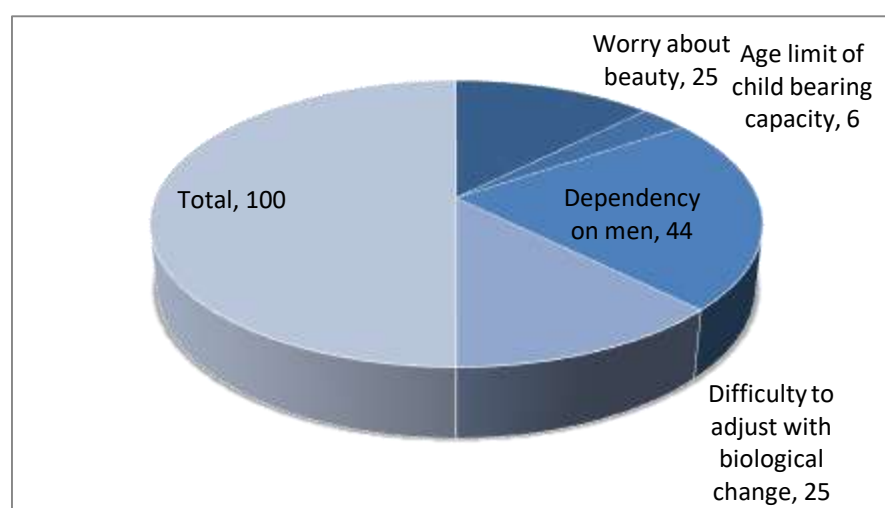


Figure 10: Graphical representation of the inconvenience of women

The graph gives the details that 25% of the respondents accepted that worry about beauty is the major disadvantage of women compared to men and only 6% suggested that age limit of child bearing capacity causes the above problem. According to 44% and 25%, dependency on men and the difficulty to adjust with biological changes are the reasons behind it respectively.

IV. CONCLUSION

The demanding concepts of the modern women in the world challenge the physical, emotional and psychological conditions and the dominating power of the male centred society isolates women both in the domestic and the public spheres where they reside. The psyche of the oppressed community throws light into both

biological and psychological discrepancy between the world of men and women. The psychological disorders of women show a parallel relationship with how women are treated by the society. The wide range of the factors which affect the mental health of women should be considered and examined to bring up a healthy society.

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