

## **Body image in relation to perceived stress and optimism in patients with skin diseases**

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### **Abstract**

The present research work was conducted to study the nature of perceived stress, optimism and body image in a sample of skin patients; comprising mainly adolescents and young adults, to examine the relationship between perceived stress and optimism with body image, to identify any gender differences in relation to these variables, and to find out which of the variables under study best predicted body image. The study included 120 skin outpatients suffering from skin diseases; acne (n = 40), alopecia areata (n = 40), and melanosis (n = 40), ranging from 15-25 years of age undergoing treatment in a private dermatology clinic. Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) and The Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire – Appearance Orientation Scale (MSBRQ-AOS) were the measures used. This study was performed using correlational method. The data were tabulated and analyzed by means of SPSS, which was used to calculate descriptive indices and Pearson correlation coefficients, as well as to perform multiple regression analysis. The results showed significant relationship between perceived stress and optimism with body image in patients with skin diseases. Significant gender differences were observed on which females scored higher in terms of distress and concern for appearance while males were found to be slightly more optimistic than females. Regression analysis indicated optimism and perceived stress to be significant predictors of body image. Along with pharmacological treatment, management of psychological factors through psychotherapeutic interventions may help in better adjustment and coping with skin diseases.

**Keywords:** *Perceived stress, Optimism, Body image, Adolescents, Adults*