

A MEDIATING ROLE OF SEDUCTIVENESS IN ATTENTION SEEKING BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL COMPARISON AMONG YOUNG FEMALES

Dr. Sameera Shafiq

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Gujrat, Gujrat.

Email: sameerashafiq@yahoo.com

Shamsa Bashir

Department of Psychology, University of Gujrat, Gujrat.

Email: shamsabashir987@gmail.com

Iqra Batool

Department of Psychology, University of Gujrat, Gujrat.

Email: iqra@yahoo.com

Abstract

The study aimed to find out the connection between seductiveness, attention seeking behavior, and social comparison and to examine the connection between demographic variables (age, marital status) with seductiveness, and attention seeking behavior among girls. A cross sectional correlational research design was used to collect data from a sample of 510 women aged 19 years and above from University of Gujrat via purposive sampling technique. The participants were screened by using the HPDS. After the screening process, the selected participants completed the BHPS and the INCOM. The findings indicate adequate variability across all study variables. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient showed seductiveness have a significant positive correlation with attention-seeking behavior ($r = .78$, $p < .01$) and social comparison ($r = .23$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, attention-seeking behavior was positively associated with social comparison ($r = .22$, $p < .01$). The results showed a significant positive partial mediation between attention-seeking behavior and social comparison of ability among females ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$), and with opinions in social comparison ($\beta = .51$, $p < .001$). The results were non-significant with respect to seductiveness and attention seeking behavior among unmarried and married females. Finally, the results showed significant differences with respect to seductiveness ($F(2, 507) = 10.44$, $p < 0.001$) and attention seeking behavior ($F(2, 507) = 11.14$, $p < 0.001$) among females with different age groups. In conclusion, the findings of the present study demonstrated significant positive relationships among seductiveness, attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison. Moreover, seductiveness partially mediated between attention seeking behavior and social comparison. Insignificant differences were found in married and unmarried females in their attraction approach and attention seeking behavior. Youngest group of females showed high seductiveness and attention seeking behavior followed by younger and young groups of the females. Implications are discussed in the light of the present results.

Keywords: Attention-Seeking Behavior, Attraction, Seductiveness, Social Comparison, Young Adult Females.

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INTRODUCTION

People really care about how they look and their ability to be perceived as attractive these days. The way you look can make a difference in how confident you feel and how others see you (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). In today's hyper-connected world, the connection between social comparison in the context of physique and attention seeking behavior has become a prominent focus within psychological research (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016). Seductiveness plays a crucial role in adolescence and young adults as a mean for gaining attention and deriving contentment within the social peer group for satisfactory interactions (Webb, & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2014). These three variables namely seductiveness, attention seeking behavior, and social comparison are linked to influence self-perception, mental health and individual behavior in many ways. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995) in today's society, social media platform have become a major source for triggering such behaviors including attention seeking via seductiveness to get approval and admiration from other people. Sharing pictures and videos online, gaining views, receiving comments, and trying to engage with other users all serve to reinforce their need for attention. Although this type of behavior may help them gain attention for a short period of time, it only provides short term satisfaction. As a result, these girls repeatedly engage in such activities to feel temporarily better about themselves while comparing with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016).

Attention-seeking behavior is a psychological issue. This behavior includes actions that people do to get others to notice them. They might do these things on purpose or not. These actions affect how people interact with each other. They also affect how people see themselves. By looking at what attention-seeking behavior's its types and why people do it. We can understand it better. We can see why people act in ways that get attention. We can also see how it affects their health and relationships with others. Attention-seeking behavior plays a role, in how people connect with each other. It is a part of understanding human interactions. Understanding attention-seeking behavior helps us understand people better (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). Attention-seeking behavior explores actions designed to see the focus of others, often motivated by a need for self enhancement or validation. Attention-seeking behavior, often written off as trivial or superficial, can be a manifestation of underlying emotional needs and vulnerabilities, such as low self-esteem and a deficit of real social connections (Dalili, & Zohuri, 2025). Social comparison, as defined in psychology, entails the process of analyzing ourselves in relation to others, a phenomenon increased by the rise of social media (Lee, 2014). Social comparison refers to the process of comparing one's appearance, achievements, and abilities with those of others. This happens a lot in places where rules are not clear or where the rules we have do not make sense. When it comes to how they look girls often look at girls and compare their height, weight, skin color and face (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison has been linked to a variety of negative outcomes, including envy, resentment, chronic dissatisfaction, and a damaged self-concept (Siddegowda & Sharma, 2023). Social comparison has two types: Upward comparison and downward comparison. Upward social comparison happens when people compare themselves to others they think are better in some way. For example they might think the other person is more attractive, successful or skilled. Sometimes upward comparison can. Motivate people. More often it makes people feel bad. This is especially true when the gap, between them and the person they are comparing themselves to seems big to close. Upward comparison and social comparison are often linked to feelings. People make

upward social comparison to know where they stand. Social comparison and upward comparison can be hurtful. The upward comparison type makes a person feel inferior. It is human to make a comparison. We do comparison and upward comparison daily. This kind of comparison makes people feel envious. It also makes them feel bad about themselves and unhappy with their bodies (Appel, Gerlach, & Crusius, 2016).

Social comparison theory says we look at others to figure out more about ourselves and to get an idea of how good we're, at things and how we look. (Festinger, 1954). However people often compare themselves to others who're more attractive or better and that can make them feel bad. Wood (2014) said that comparing ourselves to others can sometimes motivate us but it can also make us feel unhappy, for a while. When making these comparisons one might think that I am not as successful or not as attractive as others are. Comparing to others make one feel less happy or feel worse (Bunk and Gibbon, 2006). Use of social media changed how teenagers look for attention seeking and seductiveness in daily life situations as well. Social media affects parts of a teenager's life including romantic relationships, what clothes they like and how they seek attention. It gives them chances to express and connect with others. It also makes them feel like they have to look perfect. They feel pressure to look a way and that can hurt their self-esteem. Teenage girls are trying to figure out who they are and social media can make that really hard. They see all these pictures and feel like they don't measure up. That can lead to feelings of sadness and low self-worth (Sukanto, 2019). When people try to get attention to feel better about the way they look it might make them feel good for a while. It can also cause a lot of problems. One big problem is that they start to need people to tell them they are good enough. When young girls get attention for the way they look they like themselves more. When teenagers need likes and comments on social media to feel good about themselves they can get really hurt if someone says something mean. The attention they get from people is what makes them feel good about themselves. So when they do not get that attention they can get really upset. When people only feel good about themselves because of what other people say they can get really sad if someone says something about them. This is because they rely on what other people think to feel good about themselves (Anjum & Kazmi, 2019).

LITRATURE REVIEW

The role of social media in amplifying these problems cannot be understated. Instagram, TikTok and other platforms reward users for putting their best foot forward often with the help of filters and editing tools. This creates an environment ripe for attention seeking and social comparison as individuals compete for likes, comments and followers (Visser, 2018). Shafique, Alvi, Gani, and Mehmood (2024) highlight attention-seeking behavior in females. Societal pressures and expectations from their gender play a role in shaping these behaviors. A study shows that females are more likely than males to have attention-seeking tendencies. Females do these things to get attention because of beauty standards. These standards make girls feel like they need to look away. Girls compare themselves to others. Feel bad if they don't measure up. They seek attention to feel good about themselves. Attention-seeking behavior is a way for females to cope with these pressures. It helps them feel more confident or important. It can also have negative effects, on their mental health. Females need to be aware of these pressures and find ways to deal with them.

Social comparison is really worrying because it can affect health and well-being for a very long time. For example people who get stuck in this cycle may have a time feeling good about themselves

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which can make them more likely to feel anxious, depressed and have other mental health problems. The thing is, when people rely much on what others think of them they may not learn to like themselves just because of who they are so they will have a hard time dealing with life's problems, on their own. Mental health is a deal and this cycle can hurt it (Cash & Smolak, 2011; Seekis, Bradley, & Duffy, 2020).

Significance of the Study

Cultural norms and values are really important when it comes to how people think and feel about things. They have an impact on how people see themselves and their bodies how much they want to be the center of attention and how they compare themselves to others (Grogan, Gill, Brownbridge, Warnock, & Armitage, 2016; Grogan, 2021). Pakistan is an interesting place to study because it has a mix of old and new ideas. On one hand people in Pakistan still follow a lot of ways of thinking and doing things but on the other hand they are also influenced by ideas from Western countries. This means that people in Pakistan get ideas about body, attractiveness, seductive tendencies, and attention-seeking from their culture but also from things like TV and movies from Western countries. This can be really confusing for young females studying in the university. It makes it hard for them to figure out who they are and how they fit in while comparing with others in the social context. By looking at how these cultural factors interact with each other and by studying what researchers have found out about this we can get an understanding of how culture affects these things.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To find out whether seductiveness is related to attention-seeking behavior in girls.
2. To examine the connection between seductiveness, attention seeking behavior, and social comparison among girls.
3. To examine the connection between demographic variables (age, marital status) with seductiveness, and attention seeking behavior among girls.

Research Hypotheses

H1. There is a significant relationship among seductiveness, attention seeking behavior and social comparison among females.

H2. Seductiveness mediates the relationship between attention seeking behavior and social comparison.

H3. Seductiveness and attention seeking behavior show significant differences with respect to marital status.

H4. Seductiveness and attention seeking behavior show significant differences across different age groups.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The present study adopts a quantitative cross sectional correlational research design. The main aim of the study is to examine the relationship among seductiveness, attention seeking behavior and social comparison among university female students. In this study the researcher does not manipulate any variables. Instead the study focuses on observing naturally occurring relationship among the variables. It explores how seductiveness is associated with attention seeking behavior and the tendency

of compare oneself with others.

Sample

The population of present study consists of female university students enrolled in University of Gujrat. The study includes a sample of 510 female university students. Participant in the study are 19 of age and above. Participants belonged to different academic programs, such as social science, Arts, Business, and IT. The present study uses purposive sampling technique. The study includes participants who meet the criteria like female university students, age 19 or above, and were using any type of social media for their social interaction. The study excludes participants who are male Students, below 18 year of age, not university students, and did not engage in any kind of social media.

Research instruments

The present study uses standardized scales along with a demographic from the collect data. The demographic information is designed to gather information background information about the participants such as age, education, Marital status, family system, residential area.

Histrionic Personality Disorder Scale (HPDS)

The item in these scales is usually created based on the diagnostic criteria of histrionic personality Disorder (HPD) from the DSM-5 (Piper, 2026). These criteria include behaviors such as excessive attention-seeking, inappropriate seductive actions, quickly changing emotions, and dramatic or exaggerated expressions. The main purpose of the scale is to screen and access individuals who may show signs of histrionic personality traits, even at mild or subclinical level. Responses are usually recorded using a Likert-type scale with 5 response options (from "Never true" to "Always true"). Scores are obtained by adding the responses to all items. Higher scores indicate higher levels of histrionic personality traits. Carepatron (2026) suggested cutoff scores for screening histrionic tendencies in the individuals.

The Iowa-Netherlands Comparison orientation Measures (INCOM)

The INCOM scale was developed by Gibbons and Bunk in 1999. It was designed to study how people differ in their tendency to compare themselves with others. The scale was tested in both the United States and the Netherlands to ensure it works across cultures. The main aim of INCOM is to measure social comparison orientation. It identifies how much a person tends to observe others and compare their own achievement, opinion and feelings with them for self-evaluation. The scale consist of 11 items and is often divided into two parts: Ability Comparison focuses on achievement and performance, Opinion Comparison focuses on thoughts and feelings.

Response are given on a 5-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Scores are calculated by adding all items responses. Some items are reverse scored to improve accuracy. A higher total score shows a stronger habit of social comparison. The INCOM has good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha usually between 0.78 and 0.85. It also shows strong validity, with a stable two-factor structures and meaningful relationship with traits like self-consciousness and empathy.

Brief Histrionic Personality Scale (BHPS)

The Brief histrionic personality scale (BHPS) was developed by Ferguson and Naggy in 2014. An 11- item self-report Questionnaire designed to measure and Screen for subclinical and clinical features of HPD. The BHPS is used in the present study to identify participants who show tendencies of histrionic personality traits, particularly seductive, and attention seeking behavior. The purpose of

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using this scale is to ensure that the measurement of attention seeking behavior is more accurate by identifying individuals who exhibit characteristics related to histrionic personality. In this research, the BHPS scale is not used for diagnosis, but only for screening purposes. It helps the researcher to Identify participants with noticeable histrionic traits, Support the measurement of attention-seeking behavior, Strengthen the Validity of the findings

The BHPS consists of a number of items (depending on the version used), each describing behavior related to Attention seeking behavior, Emotional Expression, Dramatic behavior Participants respond using a Likert-type scale (e.g, strongly disagree to strongly agree) Response are summed to obtain a total score. Higher score indicates stronger histrionic personality tendencies; lower score indicates fewer such traits. The BHPS shows accepted levels of reliability and validity in assessing histrionic personality characteristics in research settings. However, it is important to note that it is a screening instrument, not a clinical diagnostic tool.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential in psychological research to protect the rights dignity and well-being of participants. The present study was conducted in accordance with standard ethical guideline for research involving human participant. Participant was clearly informed about the purpose of the study procedure involved and their roles as participants. The voluntary agreed to participants by providing informed consent before data collection. They were provided with clear information regarding the research objectives procedure expected duration and types of the questions include in the questionnaires. Participants were informed that their participant was voluntary and inform consent was obtaining prior data to collection. Participation in the study was completely voluntary. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from study at any time without any penalty or negative consequences. Participants were assured that refusal to participate or withdraw from the study would not result in any academic personal or social disadvantages. The privacy of participants was strictly maintained. Personal identifying information was not collected and responses were kept confidential. Data is only for research purpose. Participants were not required to provide Name, Registration number or any other identifying information. All connected data is stored securely and accessed only by the researcher. These insure that individual's response could not be tracked back to any participant.

Procedure

Before the main data collection, participants were screened by using the HPDS. After the screening process, the selected participants completed the BHPS and the INCOM. It took ten to fifteen minutes to complete the questionnaires. The collected data were then prepared for statistical analysis to examine the relationships among seductiveness, attention seeking behavior, and social Comparison.

RESULTS

The results were analyzed with SPSS-27 version and AMOS-27 version. The analysis aimed to check the link among seduction, attention-seeking behavior and social comparison in girls. The study used descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as correlation, linear regression, independent sample t-test, and one way ANOVA to understand these relationships.

Table 1: The descriptive statistics for the study variables

Scales	M	SD	Range	Cronbach's α
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Brief Histrionic Personality Total Scores	19.33	7.49	11-44	.88
Seductiveness	10.35	4.20	6-24	.77
Attention Seeking Behavior	8.98	5.00	5-20	.80
Social Comparison Total Scores	28.23	8.24	11-52	.83
Ability	14.80	4.79	6-30	.74
Opinion	12.08	5.59	5-30	.72

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables. A total of 510 participants were included in the analysis. Body image issues had scores ranging from 16 to 87 ($M = 39.68$, $SD = 14.90$). Attention-seeking behavior scores ranged from 11 to 44 ($M = 19.32$, $SD = 7.49$). Social comparison scores ranged from 11 to 52 ($M = 28.23$, $SD = 8.34$). The findings indicate adequate variability across all study variables.

Table 1 presents the internal consistency of the study measures. The Brief Histrionic Personality Scale (BHPS) showed good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$), while the Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM) also demonstrated good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$). These findings indicate that all three instruments possessed satisfactory reliability for assessing the study variables.

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among seductiveness, attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison.

Table 2: Pearson product-moment correlation among seductiveness, attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison

Variables	M	SD	2	3	4	5
1. Seductiveness	10.35	4.20	.78**	.20**	.38**	.23**
2. Attention seeking	8.98	5.00	-	.17**	.29**	.22**
3. Ability	14.80	4.79		-	.31**	.91**
4. Opinion	12.08	5.59			-	.34**
5. Social comparison	28.23	8.23				-

** $p < 0.01$

Table 2 showed seductiveness have a significant positive correlation with attention-seeking behavior ($r = .78$, $p < .01$), indicating that greater seductive desires were associated with higher levels of attention-seeking behavior. Seductiveness was also positively correlated with social comparison ($r = .23$, $p < .01$), suggesting that individuals with greater seductive desires were more likely to engage in social comparison. Furthermore, attention-seeking behavior was positively associated with social comparison ($r = .22$, $p < .01$) suggesting that individuals with high attention seeking behavior were more likely to engage in social comparison. Overall, all study variables were significantly and

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positively related.

Structure equation model was conducted in AMOS-27 version to examine the relationships among seductiveness, attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison.

Table 3: Structure Equation Model for Mediation of seductiveness Between attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison



Table 3 showed seductiveness have a significant positive partial mediation between attention-seeking behavior and social comparison of ability among females ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$), indicating that greater seductive desires were associated with higher levels of attention-seeking behavior while comparing their attractiveness ability in social interaction. Seductiveness was also significantly, positively, and partially mediated with opinions in social comparison ($\beta = .51$, $p < .001$), suggesting that individuals with greater seductive desires were more likely to hold positive opinions in social comparisons. Furthermore, attention-seeking behavior was insignificantly associated with ability ($\beta = .04$, $p = .64$) and opinions in social comparison ($\beta = -.01$, $p = .89$).

Table 4.

Means, Standard Deviations, and Independent Sample t-test for Seductiveness and Attention Seeking Behaviours in Young Females

	Unmarried Females (n=451)		Married Female(n=59)		t (508)	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Seductiveness	10.39	4.13	10.03	4.72	.61	.54
Attention seeking behaviour	8.97	3.64	9.05	4.30	-.15	.88

Table 4 showed non-significant differences with respect to seductiveness ($t(508) = .61$, $p = .54$) and attention seeking behavior ($t(508) = -.15$, $p = .88$) among unmarried and married females. It suggested that individuals either married or unmarried engages in seductiveness and attention seeking behavior

in social comparison equally irrespective of the marital status.

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations, and One Way ANOVA for Seductiveness and Attention Seeking Behaviours in Young Females

	Group1 19 years (n=123)		Group 2 20 (n=105)		Group 3 21 years and above (n=282)		F (2,507)	F Ratio
	MSD	M	D	D	D	D		
Seductiveness	14.25	10.38					10.44***	1>2>3
	1.75		.07	.71	.08			
Attention seeking behaviour	0.21	3.62	9.19	.67	.36	.66	11.14***	1>2>3

*** $p < 0.001$

Table 5 showed significant differences with respect to seductiveness ($F(2, 507) = 10.44, p < 0.001$) among females with different age groups. Youngest females (19-years-old) showed highest seductive desires followed by younger females (20-years-old). There were insignificant differences between 20-years-old and 21-years-and-above-old females. There were significant differences with respect to attention seeking behavior ($F(2, 507) = 11.14, p < 0.001$) among females with different age groups. Youngest females (19-years-old) showed highest attention seeking behavior followed by younger females (20-years-old) and young females (21-years-and-above-old) with respect to age.

DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out to understand the relationship between seductiveness, attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison with respect to ability and opinion via mediation of seductiveness in young females. The descriptive analysis and the reliability analyses indicated that all scales used in the study had acceptable internal consistency (Mohajan, 2017), showing that the instruments were reliable for measuring the intended psychological constructs.

H1 stated that there is a significant relationship among seductiveness, attention seeking behavior and social comparison in young females. The results of the present study showed a positive significant correlation coefficient among seductiveness, attention seeking behavior and social comparison. This means that participants who appear to be seductive were more likely to display behaviors aimed at gaining approval, validation, and recognition from others. One possible reason for this finding is that individuals who are interested in enhancing their appearance may depend more on external appreciation and attention in order to feel confident and accepted. Modern beauty standards and social media trends may further increase this need for validation because people are constantly exposed to idealized and edited images. Thus H1 is confirmed based on the findings of the present study. These findings are consistent with the research evidences posited by Givens (1978) who proposed behavioral tactics used in social interactions to be attractive, thus gaining other's attention for evolutionary purposes of reproduction. These interactions plays significant role in day to day interaction and might give rise to jealousy in social comparisons among individuals (Dijkstra, & Buunk, 2002).

H2 stated that seductiveness mediates the relationship between attention seeking behavior and social comparison. The findings of the present study also demonstrated a significant positive partial

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mediation of seductiveness between attention seeking behavior and social comparison. Thus, H2 is confirmed on the basis of the present study. Individuals frequently compare themselves with friends, celebrities, influencers, or people on social media but it is only due to their attractive appearance that they get noticed. According to Leon Festinger's *Social Comparison Theory* (1954), individuals naturally compare themselves with others in order to evaluate their own worth and abilities. However, excessive comparison may create feelings of inferiority, insecurity, and dissatisfaction. In today's digital environment, social media platforms provide continuous exposure to unrealistic beauty standards, which may increase comparison behaviors and negatively influence body satisfaction (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016). Wang and Adesope (2016) explored significant mediating impact of seduction in social contexts of interactions.

H3 stated that seductiveness and attention seeking behavior show significant differences with respect to marital status. The findings of the present study showed non-significant differences with respect to seductiveness and attention seeking behavior among unmarried and married females. It suggested females either married or unmarried engages in seductiveness and attention seeking behavior in social comparison equally irrespective of the marital status. Thus, H3 is rejected. The plausible explanation is that in Pakistan females must be beautiful or at least must be attractive to get final approval from the in-laws for wedding proposals (Husain, & Gulzar, 2015; Zubair, 2022). Males and their families prefer attractiveness and seductive looks in females when they decide for a female to get married (Haneef, Alvi, & Ali, 2014), pressurizing females to meet the standards of beauty and attraction to seek their attention and get noticed. However, even after marriage this race of beauty and physical attraction continues. Wives have to work hard on their physical appearances to motivate a strong bonding relationship with husbands and their families.

H4 stated that seductiveness and attention seeking behavior show significant differences across different age groups. The findings of the present study showed significant differences with respect to seductiveness and attention seeking behavior among females with different age groups. Youngest females showed highest seductive desires followed by younger and young females. Thus, H4 is confirmed. Garcia (2025) proposed biological maturity, changing gender roles, and varying psychophysical needs in the individuals responsible for varying degree of expression in attractiveness and attention seeking among individuals in their social contexts.

The implications of the findings are useful for Counselors, Psychologists, Parents and educators understand the challenges faced by women and promote positive self-image and mental well-being.

Limitation and Suggestions

Although the study provides important findings, some limitations should also be considered. The data were collected through self-report measures which means participants may not always provide completely accurate responses. In addition, the sample was limited to a specific group of participants, which may reduce the generalizability of the findings. Another limitation is that the study used a cross-sectional design, which does not allow conclusions about cause-and-effect relationships.

Future researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal studies to explore how attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison develop over time. Future studies may also include large sample to conduct a thorough survey for the investigation of the relationship among attention seeking, seductiveness, and social comparison. Researchers may further examine causal relationship via

experimental design.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the findings of the present study demonstrated significant positive relationships among seductiveness, attention-seeking behavior, and social comparison. Individuals with higher seductive desires were more likely to seek attention from others while comparing themselves socially with respect to their abilities and opinions held for them. Moreover, seductiveness partially mediated between attention seeking behavior and social comparison. Insignificant differences were found in married and unmarried females in their attraction approach and attention seeking behavior. Youngest group of females showed high seductiveness and attention seeking behavior followed by younger and young groups of the females.



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