# A descriptive study to assess the level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among students of selected colleges of Amritsar, Punjab.

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## INTRODUCTION

*"Beauty begins the moment you decide to be yourself."*

Beauty is the eye of beholder. Traditionally, simplicity was considered as core of beauty but with advancement of time it becomes a more social complex phenomenon which adds more preference to external beauty than internal aspects. Beauty is originated from Greece which shape the physical beauty attributes based on ancient Greek Gods Aphrodite and Apollo, the two deities of physical beauty. Greek people are so concerned about beauty that they place statues of these gods in their homes during pregnancy to bear beautiful offspring. In ancient Rome, a portly figure with curvaceous forms, especially prominent hips and ample bosoms was considered the ideal of female beauty. Individually, beauty standards are set by human nature to strive for the conformity to their socio-cultural system but meaning of beauty is drastically changed in a short period of time from mid twentieth to early twenty first century due to cultural convergence of the inherited culture to western culture as an effect of industralization.

Western culture is adopted by people of different social strata and culture and is considered as the classic lifestyle of people of business world all around the globe. The modern set standard of beauty are slim body shape, sharp facial features, light skin tone, tall height and less weight. In addition to these nowadays clothing style, dress sense, makeup and hairstyles are also considered as fashion icon to enhance beauty. The word beauty is derived from the Latin adjective "bellus" which means pretty, handsome, charming and pleasant. Beauty refers to the attractive appeal of a person's characteristics which include body shape, facial proportion, skin tone, height and weight.

There are several definitions describing the term 'beauty' but shortest definition of beauty is found in Britannica dictionary which defines beauty as "the quality of being physically attractive". Human beings have an inherent ability to distinguish between attractive and non-attractive based on physical features that include facial averageness, symmetry, skin homogeneity and sexual dimorphism. The facial and body consonance have a highly important role in our social life. The perception of beauty is influenced by environment and perceptual adaptation, an experience based process and it varies by race and ethnicity. Mark Twain a well known American writer once wisely noted "figures do not lie, but liars do figure".

Beauty standard can regulate individual's perception of their own appearance, leading to self-demand to comply with these standards. Perceived beauty has various effects on self-image by influencing self-esteem, social comparisons, adherence to beauty standards and emotional well being. Modern beauty standards play a vital role in people's self-image by informing and reflecting what people consider to be beautiful or attractive. Often

termed the "thin ideal", they communicate the way people believe they should look in order to be attractive and desirable to others. In the Merriam Webster dictionary, beauty is described as, "the quality or aggregate of qualities in a person or thing that give pleasure to the senses or pleasurably exalts the mind or spirit". Exploring the evolution of how beauty is preserved through the centuries is an aspect of investigating society's evolution.

Hyper-masculinity has been ingrained into our society for generations and parallel tradition gender stereotypes such as short men not being manly, fat men being lazy, skinny men being weak. The masculine beauty ideal traits include but are not limited to male body shape, figure, height, weight, muscle mass, physical fitness, hair and genital size. The male attractiveness standards are affected by cultural values, media representation, social norms and globalization. Being masculine has been associated with being tough and not talking about feeling and also illustrates that more powerful aura of men. Even though those norms of masculinity are being disassembled in recent years, they still exist and are challenging for present generation. Like toxic masculinity which traps men in unhealthy mindsets, beauty standards can impose harmful or unrealistic expectations on men too. The pressure of heterosexual self-presentation is an important facet of today's masculinity.

The feminine beauty ideals is "the socially constructed notion that physical attractiveness is one of the women's most important assets and something women should strive to achieve and maintain" and are mainly rooted in heteronormative beliefs. An ideal beauty is an entity which is admired or possesses features widely attributed to beauty in a particular culture, for perfection. Beauty standards are a set of values applied to these appearance which are regarded as beautiful in order to rightly fit in the community. The different standards of beauty that has been established over period in different societies have evolutionized body image. Currently, the culture of beauty has overestimated the perfect image by placing it as synonym of success which raises as lot more attention to the body image.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A descriptive study was conducted to assess the perceived impact of body image on self-esteem in Baru Sahib, district Sirmour, Himachal Pardesh. The study was conducted on 100 adolescent girls aged 14-19 years. A structured questionnaire for body image and rosenburg for self-esteem were used. The reliability of tool worked out by using cronbach's alpha and found to be 0.78. the study results showed that mean and standard deviation were computed for perception of body image among adolescent girls. The most of subjects fall in category of 43-69 indicating that they are partially satisfied from their body image. The self-esteem was measured by using rosenburg self esteem scale in which most of sample i.e. 94% falls in normal limits (score of 15 to 25). Using karl pearson's method, relation coefficient (r) was calculated which was equal to 0.6 indicating that body and self-esteem has strong positive relation. Further, the significant association was found between adolescent girls was found to be significantly associated with education, height and weight. It also suggest that 43 were highly satisfied, 46-49 partially satisfied and 65 were dissatisfied related to perception of body image and finding related to self-esteem of study subjects reveals that <15 were low self-esteem and 15 to 25 were within normal limits.

A descriptive study to assess the effect of body image on self-esteem among female teachers in selected educational institutes of Punjab. This study includes 60 female teachers in selected educational institutes by

using non-randomization convenient sampling technique through structured interview schedule with the help of a self structured body image questionnaire and rosenburg's rating scale. The study results showed that out of 60 female teachers that 56.7% teachers are highly satisfied about their body image and 43.7% were partially satisfied and second variable self-esteem that reveals about 91.7% teachers have high self-esteem and 83% have a low self-esteem and there is significant relation in body image and self-esteem at 0.05 level.

A descriptive study was conducted on assessment of body image satisfaction among female medical student of Mysuru. The study was conducted on 210 medical student by using self-administered questionnaire and visual analogue scale. The study result shows that there was neutral perception regarding body image by 33.8% are satisfied and 24.2% were unsatisfied regarding body image. Body image perception showed majority 52.35% had normal patterns like skipping meals and increasing quantity and frequency meals were reported and other parameters like anxious, lack of confidence were also affected their mental health.

A study was conducted to assess the body image satisfaction and self-esteem in adolescent girls. The study was conducted on 100 adolescent girls was randomly selected by using body image questionnaire and self-esteem scale were used. The scores were correlated using pearson-product-moment correlation. The study result showed that 36% are satisfied with their body image 37% of girls have positive body image and 6.1 girls are dissatisfied with body image and also suggest that 12% of girls have very high self esteem and 69% of girls have positive self-esteem.

A descriptive study was conducted to evaluate the perception of body image and satisfaction with body shapes among men and women. The study consist of 100 college students of both gender which were measured through self-assessment through a scale figure silhouettes. The study results showed that there were significance difference in subjective perception of body image in comparison between genders, women presented greater discrepancy between the real and perceived image. It concluded that 46.2% of men would like to decrease their body shapes, 53.8% would increase them for women, 76.1% would like to decrease their body dimensions and 23.9% to increase them. The strong pressures imposed by society and standards set by prescribing the media in determining body image dissatisfaction of self-assessment negatively, regardless of gender.

## METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH APPROACH

The non-experimental research approach was considered appropriate as it aims to assess the level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among students of selected colleges of Amritsar, Punjab.

### RESEARCH DESIGN

the descriptive research design was selected to accomplish the objectives.

### RESEARCH SETTING

Research setting is the location where the research takes place. The research study, the environment within which studies are run has important consequences for non-experimental design, the type of data can be collected and the interpretation of results.

The present study was conducted on students of department of Commerce and Department of Literature in Khalsa College, Amritsar.

## TARGET POPULATION

The target population for the research study was the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students of Khalsa College, Amritsar.

## VARIABLES UNDER STUDY

The variables under the study are age (in years), gender, religion, education, family type, pocket money, place of living, type of diet, media forum influence and physical appearance comparison to others.

## SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sampling is a process used in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations are taken from large population. The methodology used to sample from a larger population depends on the type of analysis being performed, but it may include simple random sampling.

The sample was students of PG Department of Commerce and PG Department of Literature of Khalsa College, Amritsar. Total subjects 150 were selected and convenient sampling technique was used to collect the sample. Convenient sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which people are sampled because they are easy to access and are convenient sources of data for research.

## SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TOOL

Quantitative research tools involve the collection and analysis of objective data, in numerical form. Quantitative research is generally used to explore values, attitudes, opinion, feeling and behavior of individual in question.

The research tool was selected and developed by keeping in mind the objectives of study' reviewing theoretical researches, previous studies, internet, and thorough discussion with field experts.

## DESCRIPTION OF TOOL

### Part 1: Socio-demographic characteristics

Socio-demographic data includes the personal information of students including age, gender, religion, education, type of family, monthly allowance, place of living, diet, media form influence and physical appearance comparison.

### Part 2: Broad Conceptualization of beauty scale

This part is considered as the necessary aspect of the study. A standardized broad conceptualization of beauty scale (BCBS) was used to assess the level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among students of selected colleges. It consists of 16 questions

## PERMISSION FOR STUDY

Prior to the data collection procedure, formal permission to conduct the study was obtained from the head of department of P.G. department of commerce and department of literature of Khalsa College, Amritsar.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Data collection was done from Khalsa College of Amritsar by using a standard tool BCBS from sample of 150 subjects. A convenient sampling technique was used to select the sample from the population. Prior to data collection investigator had given self introduction to the students and explain the purpose of gathering information. A good rapport was established with the subjects. They were assured that their responses will be kept confidential and information will be used only for research purpose. Written consent was taken from students. The time was given to each respondent for filling the tool. At the end, queries of the student ( if any) were clarified.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Keeping in mind the legal rights of the subjects only those students were included who were willing to participate. Written consent was obtained from the study subjects. Anonymity of the study subjects and the confidentiality of the study subjects were maintained

## RESULTS

**To assess the level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among students of selected colleges.**

**Frequency and percentage distribution of level of perceived beauty standards among students of selected colleges.**

**N=150**

| Level of Knowledge | n | % | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Good | 111 | 74 | | |
| Average | 39 | 26 | 82.15 | 14.6 |
| Poor | 0 | 0 | | |

Maximum score =112

Minimum score = 16

Table depicts the frequency and percentage distribution of level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among students. Out of 150 students, majority of students had good perception 111(74%) followed by only few were in average perception 39(26%), whereas mean score and standard deviation of level of perception regarding modern beauty standards 82.15±14.6.

Hence, the assumption which was stated by the researcher was correct. It is concluded that majority of college student have a good level of perception regarding modern beauty standards.
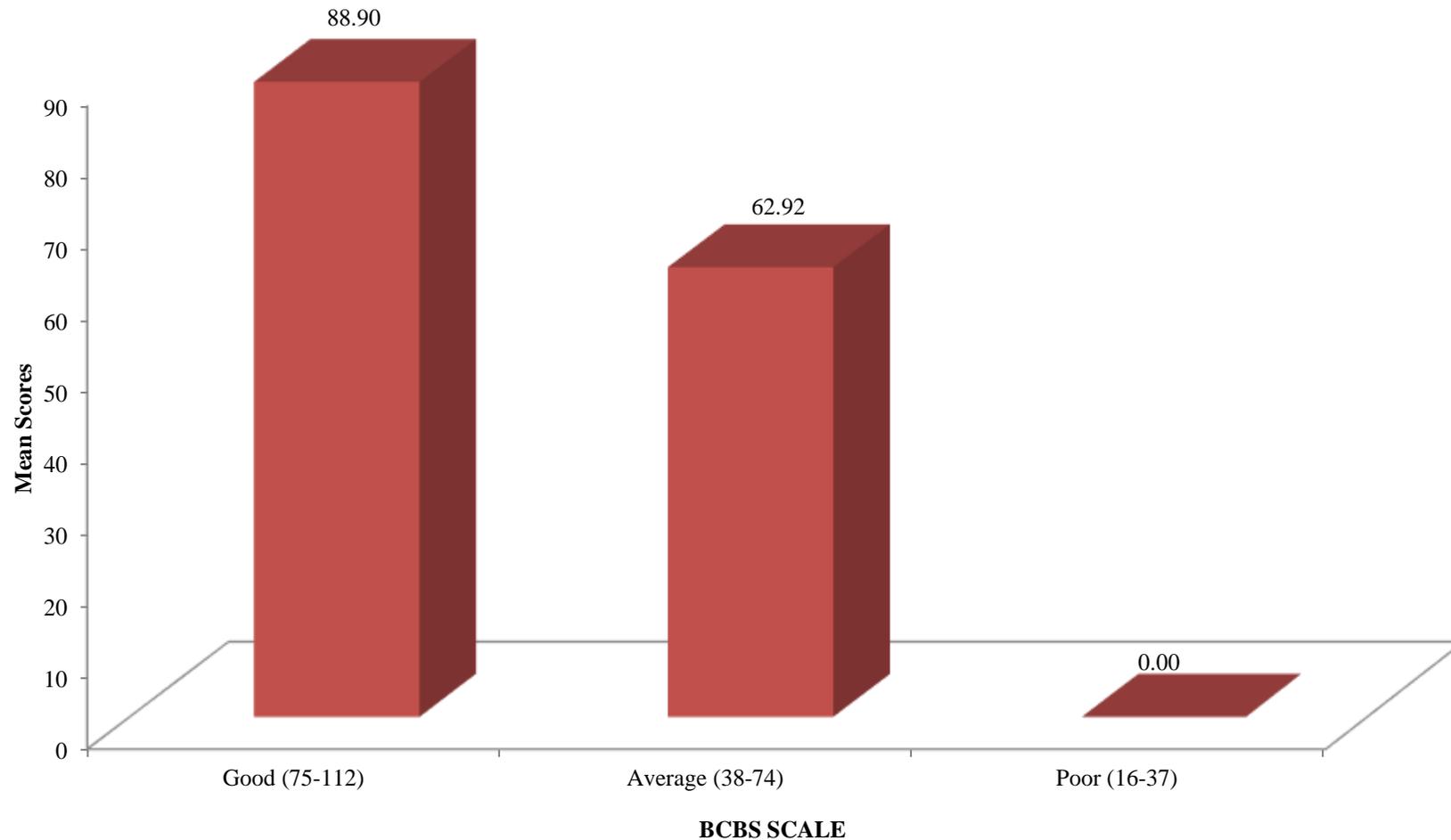


**Percentage distribution of students according to level of perception regarding modern beauty standards.**

**Objective: To determine the association of level of perception regarding modern beauty standards of students with their selected socio-demographic variable**

**Association of perceived modern beauty standards among student of selected colleges with age (in years)**
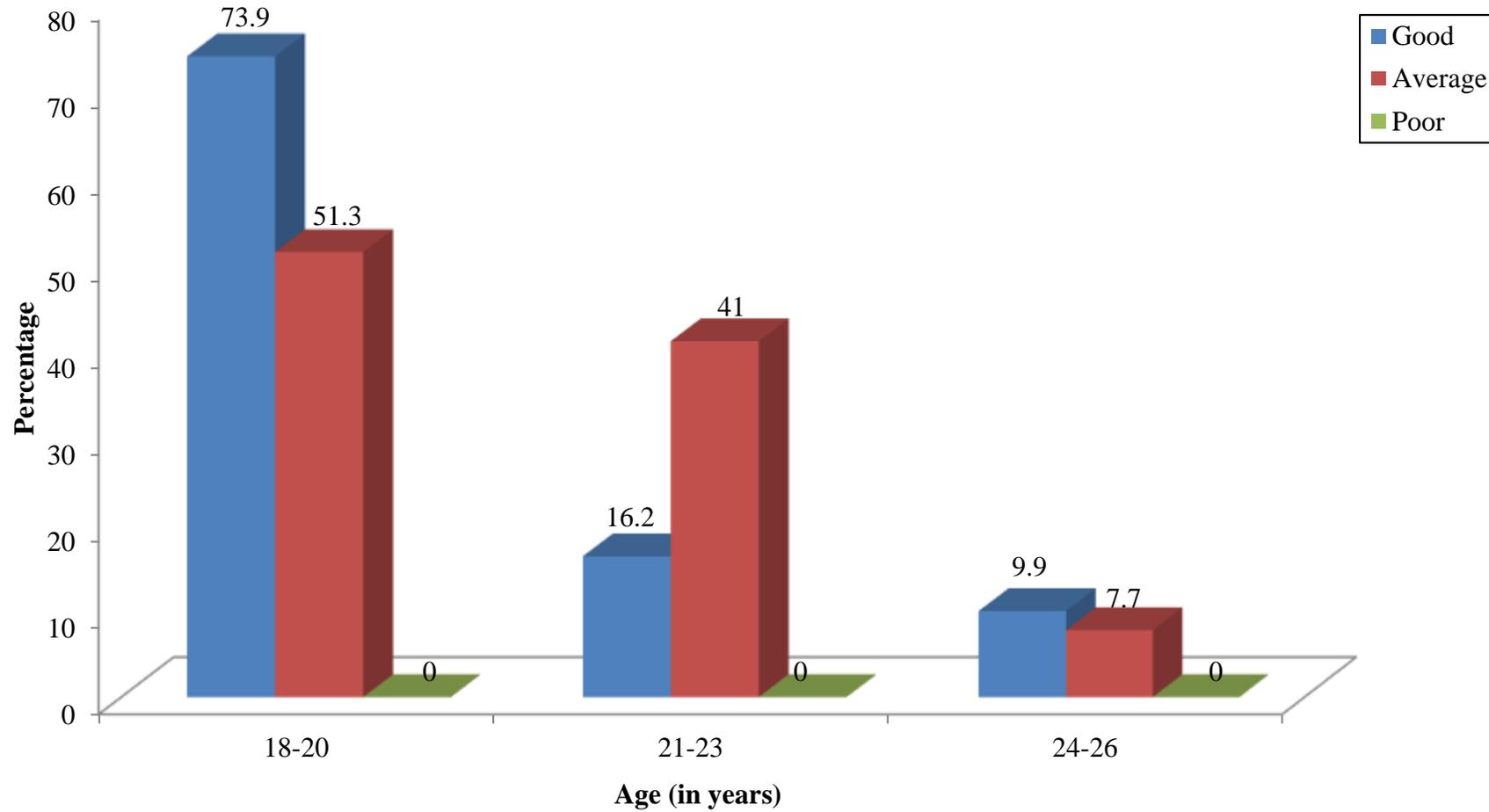
N=150

| Age | Level of perception | | | df | $\chi^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Good** **n(%)** | **Average** **n(%)** | **Poor** **n(%)** | | |
| 18-20 | 82(73.9%) | 20(51.3%) | 0(0%) | | |
| 21-23 | 18(16.2%) | 16(41.0%) | 0(0%) | 02 | 10.15 |
| 24-26 | 11(9.9%) | 3(7.7%) | 0(0%) | | |

**Maximum Score = 112**　　　　　　　　　**Significant at p<0.05**

**Minimum Score = 16**

Table 3(a) and figure 6(a) shows percentage and frequency distribution of level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among students. The majority of students age group 18-20 (73.9%) had good level of perception, followed by average level of perception (51.3%).

To explicate the association of level of perception among college students with age group was computed by chi-square, which was found to be 0.006 at df 2. It is found to be statistically significant at p<0.05 level.

Therefore, it is concluded that level of perception regarding modern beauty standards is significantly associated with age.

**Percentage distribution of students according to age (in years).**

**Association of perceived modern beauty standards among student of selected colleges with gender**

**N=150**

| Gender | Level of perception | | | df | $\chi^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Good** n(%) | **Average** n(%) | **Poor** n(%) | | |
| Male | 29(26.1%) | 26(66.7%) | 0(0%) | 1 | 20.425 |
| Female | 82(73.9%) | 13(33.3%) | 0(0%) | | |

**Maximum Score = 112**　　　　　　　　　　　**Significant at p<0.05**

**Minimum Score = 16**

Table 3(b) and figure 6(b) depicts the frequency and percentage distribution of level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among college students according to gender. It illustrates that 29(26.1%) males have good perception while 27(66.7%) have an average level of perception on modern beauty standards.

The majority of females 82(73.9%) have a good level of perception, followed by 13(33.3%) who have average level of perception.

To explore the association of level of perception among students with gender was computed by chi-square and the value of $\chi^2$ was 0.00 at df 1 which was found to be statistically at p<0.05 level.

Therefore, it is concluded that level of perception regarding modern beauty standards is significantly associated with gender.
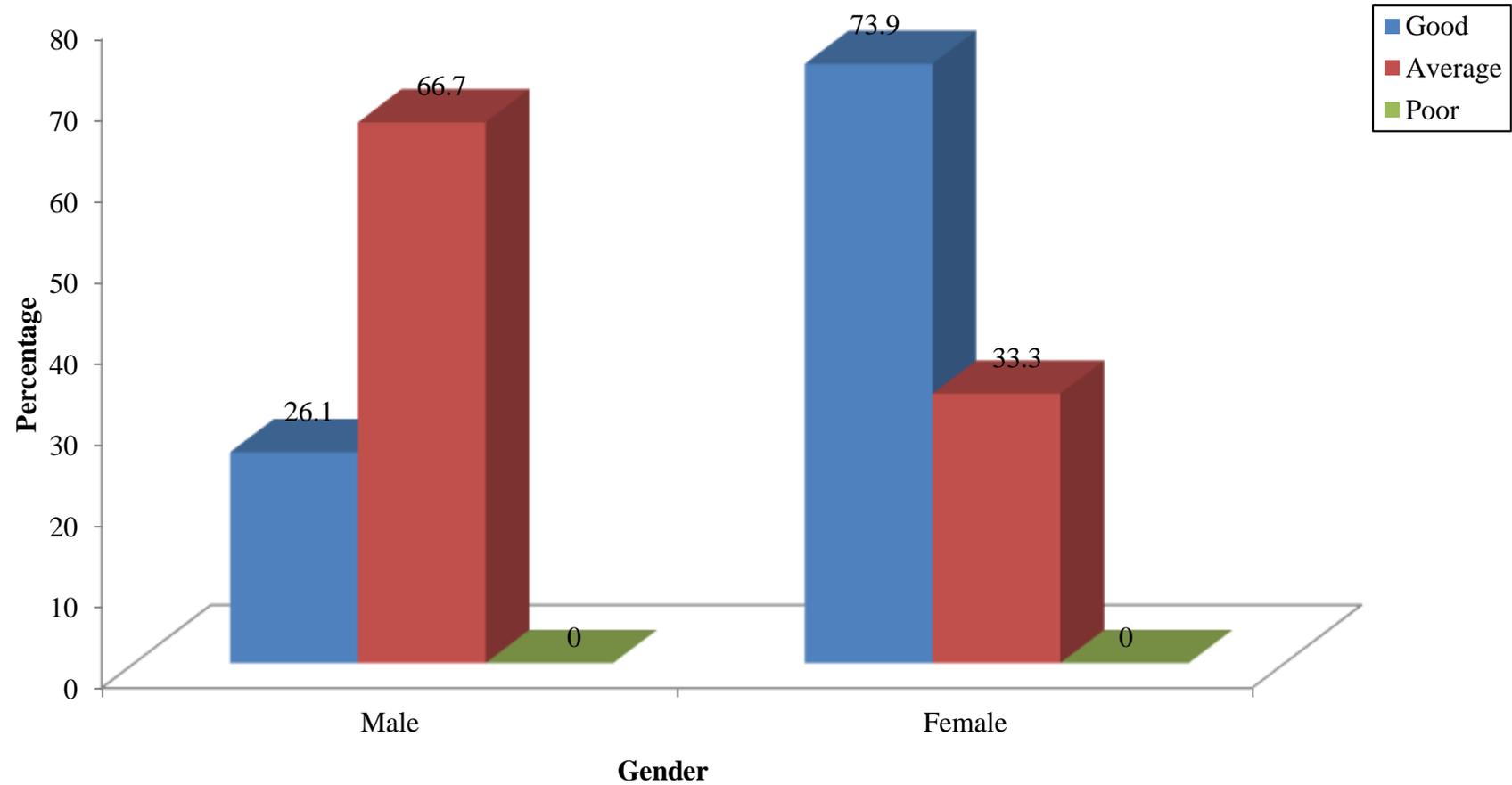
**Figure 6(b): Percentage distribution of students according to gender.**

**Association of perceived modern beauty standards among student of selected colleges with Religion**

**N=150**

| Religion | Level of perception | | | df | $\chi^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Good n(%) | Average n(%) | Poor n(%) | | |
| Sikh | 79(71.2%) | 28(71.8%) | 0(0%) | | |
| Hindu | 30(27.0%) | 8(20.5%) | 0(0%) | 3 | 6.261 |
| Muslim | 2(1.8%) | 1(2.6%) | 0(0%) | | |
| Christian | 0(0.0%) | 2(5.1%) | 0(0%) | | |

**Maximum Score = 112**                                    **Non-significant**

**Minimum Score = 16**

Table 3(c) and figure 6(c) depict the relationship of level of perception regarding modern beauty standards with religion. The maximum subjects 79(71.2%) had a good level of perception who belong to Sikh religion whereas 28(71.8%) Sikh's had average perception. One-fourth of subjects belonging to Hindu religion had a good level of perception 30(27%) followed by 1(2.6%) who belonged to Muslim religion with good level of perception.

To explore the association of level of perception with religion was computed by chi-square and the value of $\chi^2$ was 6.261 at df 3 and found to be non-significant.

Henceforth, it is concluded that there is no association of level of perception regarding modern beauty standards among students with their religion.
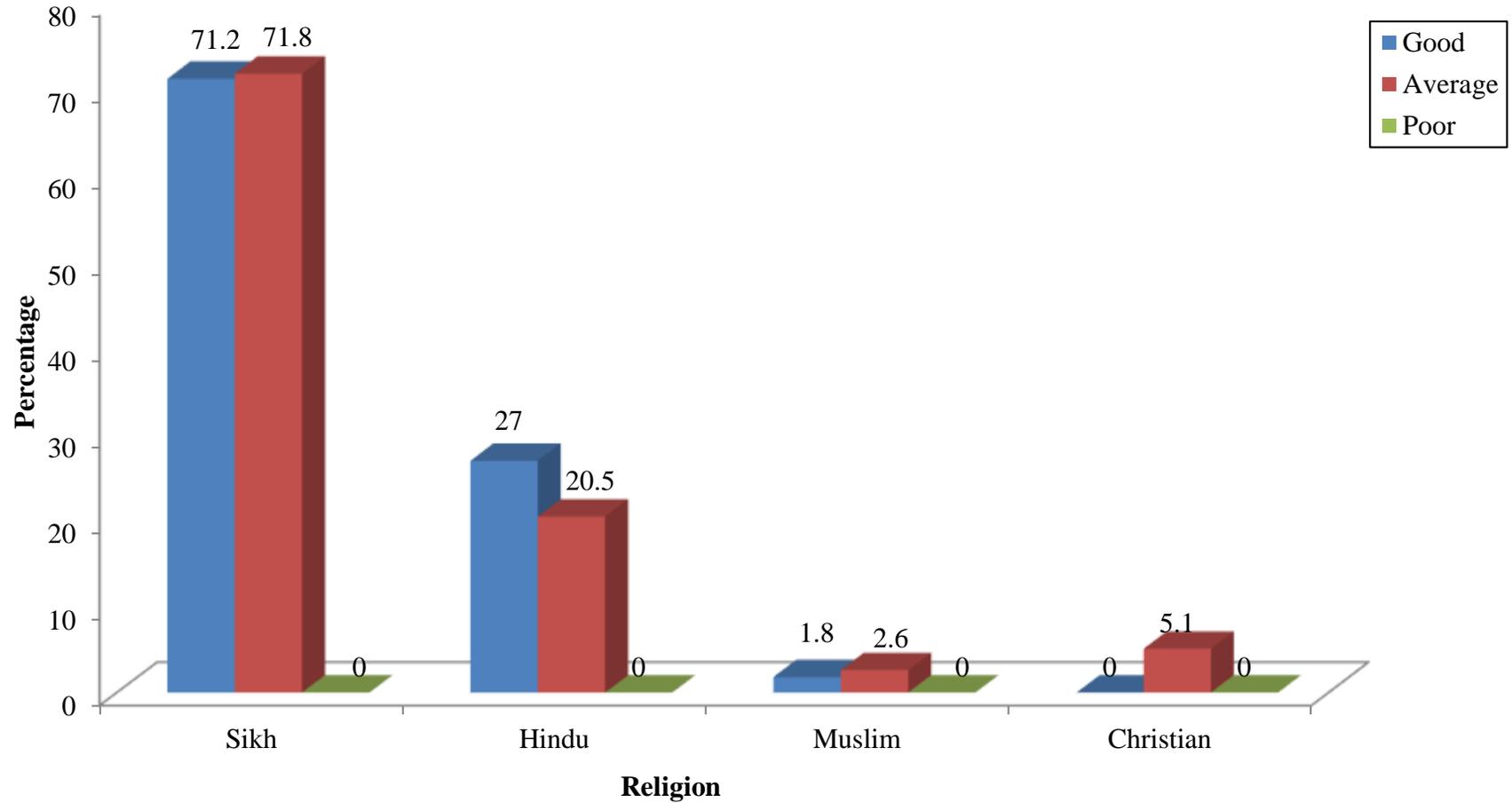
**Percentage distribution of students according to religion.**

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