

Breaking the vicious cycle

“No boy will ever like you, if you keep on gaining so much weight!”
Harsh but words all too common for most young girls all over the world. With the beauty and advertising industry continuously injecting hidden messages like 'flawless is beautiful' and 'size zero' is perfection, we are all prey to the vicious cycle — body shaming rooting towards low body esteem.




On 7 October, 2017 Dove Bangladesh and The Daily Star arranged for a roundtable to address such matters, and its negative consequences in the lives of young girls. The discussion was timed with the International Day of the Girl Child observed around the world on 11 October. Eminent citizens from diverse walks of life had been invited as guests; young girls, who actually face the trauma in real life, have also been invited as panelists to speak out their concerns.

WHY THE DISCUSSION?

A recent comprehensive report developed under the Dove Self-Esteem Project examined 5165 girls aged 10-17, across 14 countries all over the world. The study revealed details; for instance, more than 54 percent of girls across the globe are dissatisfied with their body image. The report also uncovers a clear and powerful connection between a girl's level of body esteem and her overall confidence and self-satisfaction.

A more distressing picture is revealed in a study by Dr Phillippa Diedrichs, Associate Professor, Centre for Appearance Research, University of England which reveals that girls who nurture negative body image are more likely to experience stress, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem; they also get poor grades in school, nurture suicidal tendencies, get involved in drug and alcohol abuse, suffer from eating disorders, and practice risky sexual behaviour.




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