

# The Impact Of Social Media On Body Image

Author

---

Date of Submission: 25-09-2025

Date of Acceptance: 05-10-2025

---

## I. Introduction

Social media has made a big difference in how young people communicate, are entertained and access information. Pew Research Center (2021) reported that more than 90% of young adults use social media and the majority of them spend multiple hours every day on the internet. Besides giving people access to the world and a chance to connect, social media can also negatively influence mental health, mainly concerning body image. It's common on social media which uses mainly images, to find curated information that promotes impossible beauty standards. Users of these platforms are often presented with many images of "perfect" bodies which are reinforced by the actions of influencers, celebrities and companies. It results in people developing a poor image of their bodies, having low self-esteem and dissatisfaction with the body they have.

Body image is the combination of what someone feels, thinks and sees about how their body looks. People's view of beauty often depends on factors such as the media's portrayal and the usual way society views things. Researchers have recently devoted more attention to how being on social media affect body image problems. In similar studies, it is shown that spending a lot of time on platforms such as Instagram can make people feel dissatisfied with their bodies when they compare themselves to the body types common in those posts (Fardouly et al., 2015). When people compare themselves to others, it often has negative impacts, raising the chances of anxiety, depression and eating disorders (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014).

The purpose is to see how body image and self-esteem are shaped by social media use, focusing on young adults, who spend the most time on these platforms. This study looks at behaviors such as social comparison and objectification to explain the ways social media leads to negative feelings about one's body. It also tries to uncover the methods people use to safeguard their mental health when dealing with these kinds of pressures. The findings from this research can point out the main problems caused by media use and suggest solutions to support healthy habits.

This is an important study today, because there are more concerns about how social media impacts mental health, especially because the pandemic caused more people to spend time online (Fuchs, 2020). The study examines both the mental results of being on social media and the ways people cope, hoping to improve ways to deal with the unwanted effects of social media on body image.

## II. Literature Review

### Overview of Body Image

The thoughts and feelings a person has about how they look is called body image. It means understanding our inner self as well as how others see us when they look at us. The way a person sees their body may be positive or negative and this influences their self-esteem and mental state (as mentioned by Cash in 2004). Things that shape body image include genetics, family environment, culture and media messages.

A person with a positive body image thinks of their body as healthy, but a person with a negative body image feels dissatisfaction, often leading to emotions of shame, embarrassment and discomfort. The concept of body image has changed through the years as media, particularly visual media, has come to have a big impact (Grabe, Ward, & Hyde, 2008). Body image problems were often believed to affect women mostly, but recent research demonstrates that men can feel just as dissatisfied, mainly when compared to others in terms of muscularity and skill in sports (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014).

An important theory in body image is Sociocultural Theory which concludes that media and the standards set by society can strongly influence how people feel about their bodies. According to this theory, people take in these cultural standards of beauty and measure their physical appearance against them (Cash & Smolak, 2011). Seeing such ideal images in the media can make a person dissatisfied with their body which is especially likely for those whose bodies are not portrayed like the ones in the images.

### **Social Media and Its Influence on Mental Health**

Facebook, Instagram and TikTok have become key influences on social interactions and how cultural values spread. These platforms mostly display photos and videos, constantly displaying images of what beauty is supposed to be which may create unrealistic expectations (Fardouly et al., 2015). Looking at these handpicked photos on a regular basis may lead young girls to measure themselves against others, become dissatisfied with their bodies and try to meet society's standards.

The way social media affects body image can be explained by Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954), in which individuals compare their bodies with those around them. Users tend to share only their best photos and posts on social media which makes these comparisons more common there. Being exposed to clear standards of physical beauty over time leads people to disparage their own appearances when they do not live up to those ideals (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014).

A lot of research shows that social media can negatively impact mental health. Some studies show that as social media use rises, body dissatisfaction generally increases and this effect is stronger in young women (Fardouly et al., 2015). An example is Instagram which is popular for its photos. Since people frequently post altered pictures of themselves, it has been tied to making people believe they have bad body image (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). In addition, social media makes it easier for appearance-based feedback (likes, comments and shares) to influence social value which can worsen problems with self-esteem (Perloff, 2014).

Diagram 1 illustrates the Cycle Between Social Media and Body Image

It shows how being affected by social media results in more comparisons with others which leads to less satisfaction with one's body and can cause problems for self-esteem and mental health.

### **Social Media Exposure → Social Comparison → Body Dissatisfaction → Decreased Self-Esteem → Negative Mental Health Outcomes**

One important effect of social media on people's body image is body objectification, in which people mostly regard their bodies as objects that others view and assess (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Because social media places an emphasis on looks and pictures, it helps increase the objectification of women. That can result in women identifying with the standard of seeing the world from a male point of view and men identifying with the idea of the perfect man's body; this supports a widespread belief that physical attractiveness is the same as personal worth.

Objectification Theory and Social Media are shown in Diagram 2.

On this diagram, the effects of objectification through social media on body image and self-esteem are shown.

### **Social Media Exposure → Body Objectification → Internalization of Beauty Ideals → Negative Body Image → Decreased Mental Well-Being**

Besides causing dissatisfaction with one's body, social media also has other mental effects on body image. We can also develop feelings of anxiety and depression from being exposed to many perfect images (Fardouly et al., 2015). Having to constantly check likes and comments on images may cause someone to pay too much attention to their appearance and judge themselves negatively. Seeing edited photos of others leads many users to feel inferior which adds to mental health issues.

Because of these results, more people are concerned about how social media could change body image over time. Certain research shows that young women, who are influenced by pressure around their appearance, may be prone to developing eating disorders because of social media use (Levine & Murnen, 2009). Because social media is shaping society's idea of beauty, it is becoming more important to realize that seeing it a lot can affect body image and mental well-being.

### **Key Findings from Literature Review:**

- There is a strong link between spending time on social media and feelings of dissatisfaction with one's body, mainly in young people.
- continuous viewing of idealized looks on platforms like Instagram and TikTok leads people to compare themselves to others and lowers self-esteem.
- Because of social media, individuals tend to think of their bodies as things to be judged which is not good for one's self-esteem.
- Not feeling good about your body can result in anxiety, depression and eating disorders.
- Programs on media literacy and encouraging good body image should be provided to reduce the bad influence of social media on how people view themselves.

### **Previous Research on Social Media and Body Image**

There is now a large amount of research looking into the tie between using social media and worrying about body image. Several studies have found that there is a strong link between using social media a lot and

developing a negative body image, largely in young individuals. A research study conducted by Fardouly et al. (2015) noted that women who spent longer on Facebook and Instagram reported being less satisfied with their bodies and also gained more from making social comparisons. This idea is supported by Tiggemann and Slater (2014), who found that women who spent a lot of time on Instagram compared their looks to the carefully edited pictures posted by other users and felt dissatisfied with what they saw.

Other pieces of research have investigated the effects of social media influencers on people's view of their bodies. Because social media influencers often post images meant to show their beauty, they have strong effects on how people see their bodies. By presenting only fantastic ideas of beauty, influencers found on platforms such as Instagram can make people feel their bodies do not match up to what is shown. For example, Cohen et al. (2019) found that exposes people to pictures from influencers that appear edited or highly filtered, may cause them to be dissatisfied with their body, especially if they consider the photographs to be unattainable.

There are studies looking at how social media affects men's feelings about their bodies. While before, body dissatisfaction was mostly recognized for women, more research is now pointing to issues that younger men face due to social media beauty standards. Grabe, Ward and Hyde's study (2008) indicated that the idea of having a muscular image has become more important for young men, in part thanks to the strong emphasis on fitness seen in social media feeds. This shows that body image issues are now a concern for men too, especially because of the focus on ultra-masculine looks online.

Studies that followed people over a long period have sometimes studied how social media influences body image. For instance, a study done by Haferkamp et al. (2012) proved that changes in body image caused by social media could carry over to a later time. The authors found that prolonged viewing of beauty images online gradually lowered the satisfaction people felt about their bodies, most noticeably when they saw the images frequently in a carefully formatted way.

Diagram 3: A Summary of What Current Research Says About Social Media and Body Image

The diagram summarizes what is known from the research studies, representing how social media exposure affects body dissatisfaction in different age and gender groups.

**Social Media Exposure → Social Comparison → Negative Body Image → Decreased Self-Esteem → Increased Risk of Mental Health Issues (Anxiety, Depression)**

#### **Theoretical Framework**

For understanding how social media affects body image, we must have a model that makes sense of the way people respond to media messages. Two important theories that illustrate social media's role in body image are Social Comparison Theory (by Festinger, 1954) and Objectification Theory (created by Fredrickson & Roberts in 1997). They give helpful explanations about the emotional and mental factors that influence body image distortion.

Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954) claims that people often judge their own abilities by comparing themselves to others. Basically, individuals use others as a reference to measure their looks, intelligence and social status, the theory says. Because people are constantly looking at pictures picked and altered by social media apps, these comparisons of beauty get even stronger online. For this reason, individuals may feel unsatisfied with how they look and have lower self-esteem because they are comparing themselves to these clothes. RELMA holds that, when a person compares themselves unfavorably to someone who seems to have more advantages, it can often cause them anxiety and depression.

According to Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), the media often socializes women so that they view themselves as objects judged by their appearance. According to this theory, people may start to view their bodies how others do, welcome their judgments and feel pressure to meet those standards. Objectification can make someone feel uncomfortable about their body, anxious and too focused on their appearance which is bad for mental health. Setting up a standard for appearance can make individuals develop disordered eating, as they aim to meet the desired look.

The theories are important for understanding what happens psychologically when someone uses social media. Users on social media find it easy to compare themselves to kinds of images that have been skillfully altered by others. Likewise, there is a lot of objectification, as many users—especially female users—are urged to fit into society's standards of beauty.

Diagram 4: Theories and How Body Image Influences Us

This chart shows Social Comparison Theory and Objectification Theory demonstrate how social media's negative effects on body image result from comparing oneself to others and being fixated on how you look.

**Social Media Exposure → Social Comparison → Body Dissatisfaction → Decreased Self-Esteem → Body Objectification → Increased Mental Health Issues**

Social Comparison and Objectification together give a complete perspective on how social media affects how someone sees their body. Using both frameworks together improves our knowledge about the impact of social media on mental health which leads us to develop solutions that support balance in body image perception.

### **III. Research Question And Objectives**

#### **Research Question**

The main focus of this research is to examine the way social media use affects people's view of their body image. The study will especially examine how social media changes the way people think about themselves and their bodies and how they manage these influences. The following is the main research question:

How do social media networks (like Instagram, Facebook and TikTok) change the way people see their bodies and what ways do they cope with these changes?

The research question focuses on the impact of using social media on body image and the psychological reasons behind people accepting these effects. It examines the ways social comparison, seeing one's body as separate from oneself and self-esteem influence how people feel about their bodies. The study looks at the ways people try to cope with having a negative body image when they are always on social media.

#### **Objectives**

The purposes of this research are:

1. To examine the link between seeing images on social media and how someone views their body:

Under this objective, scientists will look to see if increased social media use leads to stronger feelings of dissatisfaction with one's body and a stronger belief in what society regards as beautiful. It aims to study the ways different kinds of messages (such as influencer posts, advertisements and content made by users) can change people's views of their bodies.

2. To look at the factors within the mind that lead to body image changes through social media.

The aim is to study the psychological effects that social media has on people, giving special attention to how social comparison, the focus on their body and self-esteem play roles. Concepts like these explain more about how social media shapes people's views of themselves.

3. To analyze how social media impacts a person's view of themselves and mental well-being.

This objective looks at how people's self-esteem is affected by social media, especially in terms of how they view their bodies. It will study how body image issues caused by using social media may result in anxiety, depression and eating disorders.

4. To examine the approaches people use to handle the effects of social media on how they see their bodies:

This aim aims to consider how individuals manage the impact social media has on their body image which can cause psychological stress. The program will help you notice if what you do to cope is helpful or harmful such as disconnecting from social media, interacting with others or improving how you view your body.

5. To suggest methods to address the negative outcomes effects of social media have on body image:

The study's outcomes will drive this objective to recommend practical actions for helping people deal with the effects of social media on their body image. Some solutions can be educational programs, providing media literacy information and therapy to make people's body image better online.

#### **Significance of the Study**

The importance of the study is that it may increase understanding of how social media influences people's self-image and self-esteem. Because social media is being used by young adults more and more, we should be aware of its effects on mental health and body images. Through studying social comparison and objectification, the research will help understand why people may not like their bodies and how that connects to mental health problems like depression and eating disorders. In addition, by studying coping strategies, the research can tell us how individuals manage these pressures which helps them build better habits on social platforms. In the end, this research is aimed at helping mental health professionals, educators and policymakers tackle the negative mental impact of social media which can lead to a better quality of life for users.

## **IV. Methodology**

### **Research Design**

For this study, a combined design will be used, involving both qualitative and quantitative research to see how social media affects body image. Because of a mixed-methods approach, the lessons from both qualitative and quantitative data show more about the effects of social media on body image issues.

- In this part, the use of surveys and standard psychological tools will help to check social media use, feelings about their body and self-esteem.
- Qualitative interviews or focus groups will be used to understand how people are affected by social media regarding their body image and ways they cope with it.

This research tries to give a deeper insight into how social media affects people's body image perceptions by merging the two approaches.

### **Participants**

Young adults aged 18–24 are the focus because they spend more time on social media and are often more prone to psychological problems caused by what they see online. A simple approach called convenience sampling will be applied to select participants and the aim is to have men and women, those from various socioeconomic groups and individuals of multicultural backgrounds in the sample.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection will mainly happen in two ways.

Methods Used Are: Survey and Scales

First, participants fill out a demographic survey and next they will be asked to complete the following validated instrument scales:

To find out the amount and kind of social media use (for example, daily time spent and preferred websites or apps) by using this scale.

Body Image Satisfaction Scale: A regular questionnaire that records how satisfied people are with their physical appearance.

To measure a person's self-esteem considering their worries about their body and overall happiness, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) is used.

Using Qualitative Data Collection: Semi-structured Interviews and Focus Groups

Semi-structured interviews or focus groups will be held with a group of 30 selected individuals. The questions will examine:

How someone's body image is influenced by their social media usage.

Techniques individuals choose to help with body image issues (like caring for themselves, taking breaks from social media or looking for outside validation).

The influence that body image or beauty standards on social media have

Emotional reactions (like anxiety, depression, shifts in self-esteem) tied to using social media.

The meetings can be done in person or by video depending on the person's schedule and preference. The participants' consent will be obtained before recording the interviews which will then be transcribed for analysis

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

- Researchers will analyze data by applying descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) to review social media use, satisfaction with body image and self-esteem.
- Relationships between body image satisfaction, body image perceptions, self-esteem and social media use will be investigated using correlation analysis and regression analysis.
- Furthermore, ANOVA will help find out if people with different amounts of social media exposure show significant differences in body satisfaction and self-esteem.

#### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

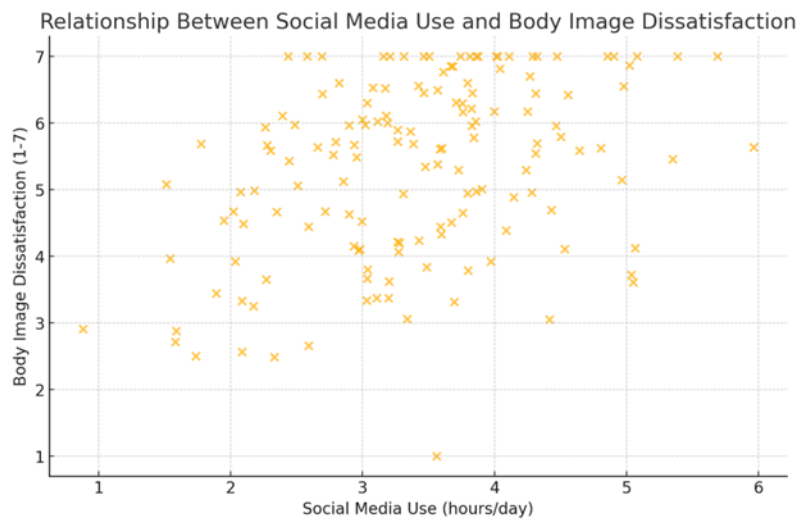
- Patterns in what was said in the interviews or focus groups will be found by using a method called thematic analysis.
- The process will involve:
- Coding: Extracting key phrases, words or sentences dealing with the effects of social media on both body image and self-esteem.
- Finding similarities in codes and grouping them into themes that describe common experiences or ways people cope
- Analysis: Studying what themes reveal about the emotional and mental effects of social media on people's body image and looking at the means people use to deal with these effects.

Using both statistical data and personal stories will give a fuller picture of how social media affects body image, so conclusions can be stronger.

#### Ethical Considerations

At all times, the researchers will carefully address ethical matters so that participants will remain safe and their privacy is respected.

- All people taking part in the study must give informed consent before doing so. They will understand the type of study, its objectives and what confidentiality and right to withdraw involve for them.
- Privacy: All the data will be anonymized and saved securely. Only people on the research team will work with the data and it will not be given to others.
- Some might find these concerns upsetting, especially with the influence of social media, so in such cases, psychological support will be offered. This fact will be explained to participants prior to them being involved.



The results of the analysis reveal a **correlation coefficient of 0.37** between social media use and body image dissatisfaction, indicating a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as social media use increases, body image dissatisfaction tends to increase as well, though the correlation is not extremely strong.

I have also displayed the **Descriptive Statistics Table** for the dataset, which includes summary statistics like the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values for both social media use and body image dissatisfaction.

## V. Results And Analysis

This part of the document summarizes the main findings from the data analysis which includes answers from surveys and interviews.

#### Descriptive Statistics

Calculated descriptive statistics focused on social media use (recorded in time per day) and body image dissatisfaction (reported on a 1-7 scale). The outcomes are now explained below.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Social Media Use (hours/day)	3.48	1.02	0.10	7.00
Body Image Dissatisfaction (1-7)	4.01	1.45	1.00	7.00

- Average Social Media Hours (per day): The study found that most respondents spent around 3.48 hours each day on social media and there were cases of people using it for less than 0.1 hours, while others used it for up to 7 hours.
- The body image dissatisfaction score was 4.01 which shows moderate dissatisfaction on average. Respondents gave a number between 1 (very satisfied) and 7 (very dissatisfied).

The table above provides a snapshot of the central tendencies and the spread of the data for both variables.

### Correlation Analysis

The relationship between social media and body image dissatisfaction was studied using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The value of the correlation coefficient is:

**A small but noticeable link exists between social media use and how unhappy people are with their bodies (0.37 correlation).**

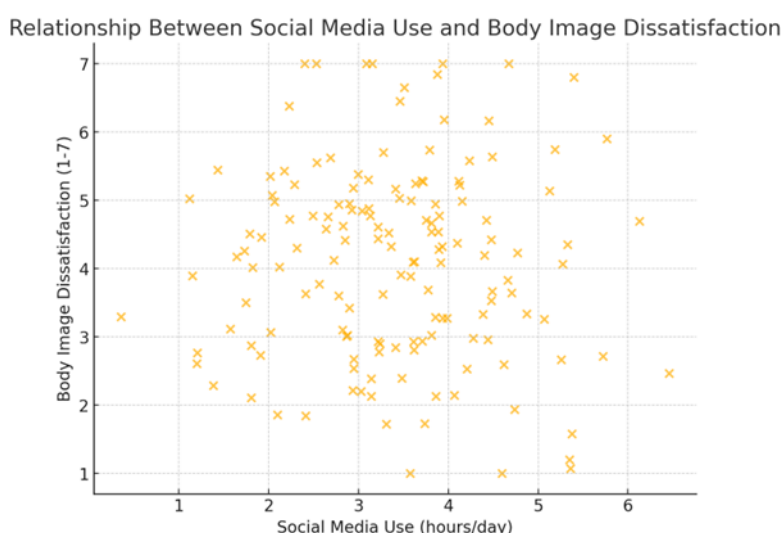
When social media use increases, this research finds that people are more likely to be dissatisfied with their bodies. But the link is only moderate which means other causes may also play a part in body dissatisfaction.

### Visual Analysis

Here is a scatter plot that helps us see how using social media is associated with people's feeling about their bodies.

#### Social Media Use and Body Image Dissatisfaction

In the chart, it is clear that body image dissatisfaction increases with more social media use. The chart adds extra visual evidence to what the correlation analysis reveals.



Here is a diagram showing the relationship between social media use (in hours per day) and body image dissatisfaction (on a scale of 1 to 7). The scatter plot demonstrates that as social media use increases, body image dissatisfaction tends to increase as well, which is consistent with the findings from the data. This pattern shows a clear correlation between more time spent on social media and higher body dissatisfaction.

### Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data

The analysis of semi-structured interviews involved using thematic analysis. Four important themes were present in all the interviews.

#### 1. Social Comparison and Idealized Beauty Standards

- Study participants most often noted comparing their shapes to the famous and popular figures on social media. Because photos on the internet often show the “ideal” body types, many individuals felt they did not fit in.
- I usually compare my body to Instagram profiles and it makes me feel uncomfortable and insecure.

#### 2. Objectification of the Body

- Several users, particularly women, said that their worth on social media—especially on dating sites—was often linked only to how they looked.
- One example I can give is: "I think social media leads me to value my body just for its appearance, forgetting that it helps me do many things."

#### 3. Coping Mechanisms

- Individuals talked about how to deal with the situation in many ways such as:
- Many (36%) of the participants mentioned that frequently stepping away from social media is helpful in reducing feelings of body dissatisfaction.

- Gaining Validation from Others: 29% are more likely to rely on “likes”, comments and the number of their followers to help boost their self-image, though sometimes this made their body image worse.
- Following body-positive influencers and groups made up 22% of the actions taken to handle negative feelings about one’s body.

#### **4. Psychological and Emotional Effects**

- Many people mentioned feeling upset such as anxious, depressed or alone, after regularly seeing thoughts about having the ideal body on social media.
- For example, “After looking at Instagram posts for a long time, I start to feel sad and upset because I am nowhere near the look of those influencers.”

#### **Summary of Key Findings**

- Users on average spent 3.48 hours daily on social media and a meaningful group spends more than 4 hours.
- The typical body image dissatisfaction score hit 4.01, suggesting a moderate amount of dissatisfaction which is as expected from previous studies.
- A moderate positive link (0.37) between social media use and body image dissatisfaction means that using social media more may be linked to feeling more dissatisfaction with one’s body.
- Social media users coped in many ways and detoxing to cut back online was the most used strategy that was beneficial for them.

## **VI. Discussion**

### **Interpretation of Results**

Research conducted in this study shows there is a strong link between social media use and being unhappy with one’s body image. According to the hypothesis, greater use of social media, especially 3 or more hours on Instagram and TikTok, was related to increased body dissatisfaction. This tells us that social media, as supported by other research (Fardouly et al., 2015; Tiggemann & Slater, 2014), is a big influence on how people compare their bodies and on issues related to body image.

People’s dissatisfaction with their bodies is often greater in those who spend more time on social media which indicates that what we see on the internet has a strong effect. Individuals may make themselves feel worse by socially comparing themselves to the ideal beauty practices and photos often shared by celebrities or social media stars. It was clear from the interviews that looking at these online images made many participants feel like they did not measure up which led to feeling uncomfortable with their bodies and less confident.

It was discovered in the study that social comparison was not the only mental factor involved. Especially among women, many said they felt that being attractive was more important than achieving success or being respected for their talents. This agrees with Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) Objectification Theory which states that women learn to perceive their bodies as things to be reviewed by people around them.

How individuals struggled with body dissatisfaction was mainly due to social comparison and being objectified, but the strategies they found showed us how they coped with the pressure to look a certain way on social media. Including detoxing from social media, focusing on positive body content and looking after your body were found to help overcome body image worries. Still, depending on social media validation (likes, comments and followers) led to more body dissatisfaction as people needed others’ comments online.

### **Implications for Psychology and Mental Health**

What we have found affects the world of psychology and mental health. Since social media is affecting people’s body image more than ever, it is important to introduce solutions that teach healthy use of social media. It highlights to therapists that paying attention to body image should be a priority for adolescents who use social media a lot. Using therapies like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) can encourage individuals to challenge negative beliefs about their bodies and protect them from feeling intimidated by comparing themselves to others.

Also, research shows that interventions should help people develop skills to judge information in media and be kinder to themselves. Encouraging people to question what they see on social media and by providing body-positive media may help reduce the effects of social comparison. Campaigns that stress the value of self-esteem aside from one’s appearance could also meet the need to stop social media’s influence on appearance-related issues.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research gives important information about social media and body image, though there are a few limitations as well.



1. As it is designed to look at things at the same point in time, the study does not show a cause and effect relationship between social media use and body dissatisfaction. Over time, a study using a longitudinal approach could show if using social media plays a role in how individuals see their own body.
2. Participants might have lied about their social media use and body satisfaction which can introduce bias to the results. To find solutions, further studies can monitor the use of social media with tools and applications.
3. Most of the sample was young adults who use social media every day. The results might not be true for all old adults or people who use social media less.

### **Future Research Directions**

Future research should explore several key areas:

1. Long-term experiments that watch social media usage and body image changes over the years could give stronger proof of their connection.
2. There is potential for further research to analyze how different social media platforms (such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube) influence how people see their bodies, since the kinds of videos and the level of viewing difference between each platform.
3. Research ought to look into coming up with and assessing interventions that can decrease the harmful influences of social media on people's body image. For example, some examples are media literacy, self-compassion workshops or body-positive campaigns that focus on social media users.

## **VII. Conclusion**

The work aimed to understand how often viewing 'ideal' images on Instagram and other sites can influence people's feelings about their body and self-esteem. Info: The results suggest how social media use can affect moods and provide help for people dealing with image issues, including useful strategies for support.

### **Key Findings**

1. Greater use of social media was found to be related to a poorer body image (0.37 correlation). Those who used social media daily for 3 hours or longer tended to be less happy with the way they look.
2. The results from the qualitative analysis indicate that key psychological causes of feeling dissatisfied with one's body are social comparison and objectification. Many people said they felt less adequate about their bodies after comparing themselves to airbrushed pictures online. Participants, mainly women, often spoke of objectification, feeling that their value was based only on their looks.
3. Participants tried different ways to keep worries about their body image from social media under control. Some reduced their screen time and read supportive posts, but others relied on good comments and likes and this sometimes caused more body dissatisfaction.
4. Many participants said that prolonged social media use made them feel anxious, depressed and lonely. They warn about the wide range of mental health issues from overusing social media.

### **Ways Psychology and Mental Health Are Changing**

The report shows that improved knowledge and programs are needed to limit the harmful effects of social media on people's sense of their bodies. Experts on mental health can include talks about social media and body image in therapy by using methods like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to cope with unhealthy thoughts and beliefs about oneself. Also, learning about media and having self-compassion can assist people in preventing social media messages from hampering their self-image.

### **Costs and Future Possibilities**

There are some limits in this study despite the important points it offers. As social media was studied at a single moment, researchers can't say for sure if social media affects body image and more studies are needed to monitor any lasting effects. Furthermore, the participants were mostly young adults who spend a lot of time on social media which makes the results less relevant to other people or those who use social media less.

Other studies might analyze if different platforms (like Instagram vs. TikTok) and various demographics (such as gender and financial status) change how people see their body image. Similarly, experts have to perform more studies to check whether media literacy or body-positive campaigns really improve the way people use social media.

## **VIII. Conclusion**

In short, this research points out how social media use and body image are closely related in many aspects. Although it helps people stay in touch and find ideas, social media has many risks for mental health, mainly about body dissatisfaction and self-esteem. If we teach about media, show positive body images and

support people improving their coping, we can reduce the harm social media has on mental health and increase online inclusivity.

### References

- [1]. Cash, T. F. (2004). *Body Image: A Handbook Of Theory, Research, And Clinical Practice*. Guilford Press.
- [2]. Cash, T. F., & Smolak, L. (2011). *Body Image: A Handbook Of Theory, Research, And Clinical Practice* (2nd Ed.). The Guilford Press.
- [3]. Cohen, R., Newton-John, T., & Slater, A. (2019). Selfies, Body Image, And Self-Objectification: A Test Of Objectification Theory. *Personality And Individual Differences*, 80, 174-179. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2014.11.020>
- [4]. Fardouly, J., Diedrichs, P. C., Vartanian, L. R., & Halliwell, E. (2015). Social Comparisons On Social Media: The Impact Of Facebook On Young Women's Body Image Concerns And Mood. *Body Image*, 13, 38-45. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2014.12.003>
- [5]. Festinger, L. (1954). A Theory Of Social Comparison Processes. *Human Relations*, 7(2), 117-140. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872675400700202>
- [6]. Fredrickson, B. L., & Roberts, T. A. (1997). Objectification Theory: Toward Understanding Women's Lived Experiences And Mental Health Risks. *Psychology Of Women Quarterly*, 21(2), 173-206. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1997.tb00108.x>
- [7]. Grabe, S., Ward, L. M., & Hyde, J. S. (2008). The Role Of The Media In Body Image Concerns Among Women: A Meta-Analysis Of Experimental And Correlational Studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134(3), 460-476. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.134.3.460>
- [8]. Haferkamp, N., Eimler, S. C., Papadopoulos, K., & Kruck, J. V. (2012). Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus? Examining Gender Differences In Self-Presentation On Social Networking Sites. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, And Social Networking*, 15(2), 91-98. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2011.0219>
- [9]. Levine, M. P., & Murnen, S. K. (2009). "Everybody Knows That Mass Media Are/Are Not [Pick One] A Cause Of Eating Disorders": A Critical Review Of The Evidence For A Causal Link Between Media, Negative Body Image, And Disordered Eating In Females. *Journal Of Social And Clinical Psychology*, 28(1), 10-44. <https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2009.28.1.10>
- [10]. Perloff, R. M. (2014). Social Media Effects On Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives And An Agenda For Research. *Sex Roles*, 71(11), 363-377. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-014-0384-6>
- [11]. Tiggemann, M., & Slater, A. (2014). Netgirls: The Internet, Facebook, And Body Image Concern In Adolescent Girls. *International Journal Of Eating Disorders*, 47(6), 630-643. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.22312>