

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON SELF-ESTEEM AND BODY IMAGE IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Mr.Rishav Raj1,Ms.Rajat Bhardwaj 2,Mr.Ritik 3

rishavraj00001@gmail.com, rajatbhardwaj0302@gmail.com, ritikcpr73@gmail.com

Department of MBA, Noida Institute of Engineering and Technology, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract: *The pervasive nature of social media has significantly transformed the landscape of self-perception, particularly among college students who are navigating a crucial stage of identity development. This research delves into the intricate relationship between social media usage and its impact on self-esteem and body image within the college student population. The study aims to explore the theoretical underpinnings of social comparison theory and self-objectification theory to comprehend how individuals' engagement with curated online portrayals influences their perception of their own worth and physical appearance. Through a rigorous empirical investigation, the research seeks to elucidate the potential mechanisms through which social media exposure contributes to either positive or negative self-evaluation and body image satisfaction among college students. The findings of this research hold significant implications for understanding the complex interplay between social media, self-perception, and well-being in the digital age, thereby informing the development of interventions and strategies to foster healthy online engagement and positive self-regard among young adults.*

Keywords: Social Media Usage, Self-Esteem, Body Image, College Students, Self-Perception, Digital Age

1.0 Introduction

The ubiquitous presence of social media has fundamentally reshaped the way individuals, particularly college students, perceive themselves. College years are a critical period for identity formation, characterized by significant personal and interpersonal development. During this phase, self-esteem and body image are particularly vulnerable and susceptible to external influences. In this context, social media emerges as a potent force with the potential to either bolster or undermine these crucial aspects of well-being.

This research endeavors to illuminate the intricate relationship between social media usage and its impact on self-esteem and body image in the college student population. By delving into the theoretical frameworks of social comparison theory and self-objectification theory, the study aims to understand how exposure to curated online portrayals shapes individuals' self-perception and body image satisfaction.

Through a meticulous empirical investigation, the research seeks to elucidate the mechanisms through which social media engagement influences self-evaluation and body image. Understanding these intricacies is crucial for fostering healthy online habits and promoting positive self-regard among young adults navigating the complexities of the digital age. Ultimately, the findings of this research hold significant implications for informing interventions and strategies geared towards promoting well-being and fostering a healthy relationship with social media platforms amongst college students.

2.0 Research Questions

This research aims to address these gaps by investigating the following questions:

1. To what extent does social media usage correlate with self-esteem and body image in college students?
2. How does self-esteem moderate the relationship between social media usage and body image?
3. What are the potential mechanisms through which social media affects students' self-esteem and body image?

3.0 Objectives of the study

1. Identify potential factors that may moderate the relationship between social media usage and self-esteem/body image, such as personality traits, social support networks, and gender.
2. Gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which social media affects students' self-perception and body image.

4.0 Literature Review

Social media has become an undeniable force in the lives of college students, shaping their communication, information consumption, and self-perception. This research paper investigates the impact of social media usage on self-esteem and body image in this population. We aim to identify potential moderating factors and delve into the mechanisms through which social media influences self-perception.

Impact of Social Media

Several studies have documented the negative association between social media use and self-esteem/body image. Exposure to unrealistic portrayals of beauty and physique on platforms like Instagram and Facebook can lead to social comparison and feelings of inadequacy [2, 5]. Feinstein et al. (1991) found that social comparison of physical appearance on social media negatively impacted female college students' self-esteem and led to body dissatisfaction [1]. This aligns with Social Learning Theory (Festinger, 1954), which suggests that constant exposure to unrealistic beauty standards on social media can shape body image ideals, leading to dissatisfaction with one's own body [2].

Furthermore, research by Przybylski et al. (2013) suggests that social media use can negatively affect self-esteem and self-compassion, potentially due to mechanisms like upward social comparison [4]. Upward social comparison, as described by Kuss et al. (2012), refers to the tendency to compare oneself to those perceived as better-looking on social media, leading to feelings of inferiority and lower self-esteem [4]. Additionally, Hudson et al. (2017) found that social media use can lead to body dissatisfaction through social physique comparison and self-objectification [6]. Self-objectification theory, as proposed by Fredrickson & Roberts (1997), suggests that social media can promote self-objectification, where individuals view their bodies as objects for social approval, impacting self-esteem [5]. Calogero et al. (2009) further support this notion by demonstrating the negative consequences of objectification on body image, self-esteem, and life satisfaction, particularly among women [3].

Moderating Factors

While the negative impact of social media is evident, the relationship might be influenced by several factors: Self-Esteem: Chuan & Chen (2018) found that self-esteem can moderate the relationship between social media use and body dissatisfaction. Individuals with lower self-esteem might be more susceptible to the negative effects of social media on body image [2].

5.0 Research Methodology

Sample Size

This article has 200 valid filled responses.
SAMPLING AREA- GREATER NOIDA, UTTARPRADESH

DATA SOURCE

The research was carried out with the help of primary as well as secondary data.

- PRIMARY DATA- Structured questionnaires
- SECONDARY DATA- From various websites, journals.

6.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table1: In the Survey Conducted by me and my team mates there are total 200 Respondents.

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage
Below 20 Year	38	17.5%
20 to 35 Year	86	43.02%
35 to 45 Year	56	28.1%
Above 45 Year	23	11.3%

Q1. How many hours per day do you typically spend on social media?

Table 2: Time Spend on social Media?

Particular	No of Respondents	Percentage
1 to 2 Hour	6	3%
2 to 4 Hour	38	19%
4 to 6 Hour	112	56%
More than 6 Hour	44	22%

Data interpretation

The above data state that people spend their 4 to 6-hour time on social media platform on daily basis.

Q2. Which social media platforms do you use most frequently?

Table:3 Mostly use Social Media Platform.

Particular	No of Respondents	Percentage
Facebook	28	14%
Instagram	110	55%

Snapchat	32	16%
YouTube	30	15

Data Interpretation

The above table indicate that people prefer Instagram most in comparison to other social media platform

Q3. What types of content do you typically engage with on social media?

Table4: Content which people like to watch on social media platform.

Particular	No of Respondents	Percentage
Personal updates from friends and family	34	17%
News and current events	12	6%
Entertainment	52	26%
Humor and memes	62	31%
Influencer content	40	20%

Data interpretation

The above table state that people like to watch Entertainment, Humor & Memes Content mostly.

Q4. How often do you compare your appearance to others on social media?

Table:5 comparing your appearance to others on social media?

Particular	No of Respondents	Percentage
Never	82	41%
Sometimes	70	35%
Often	28	14%
Very Often	20	10%

Data Interpretation

The above table indicate that people sometimes compare themselves with others.

Q5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Table:6 People point of views on following statements.

Particular	No of Respondents	Percentage
I feel good about myself most of the time	62	31%
I feel confident in my abilities.	52	26%
I feel like I am worthy of love and respect.	58	29%
I am critical of my flaws and imperfections.	28	14%

Data Interpretation

The above table indicate that People are think positive about themselves.

Q6.To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Table:7 People point of views on following statements.

Particular	No of Respondents	Percentage
I am comfortable with my body weight and size	45	22.5%
I feel good about my physical appearance.	68	34%
I worry a lot about how I look to others.	56	28%
I often compare my body to the bodies I see on social media and feel bad about myself.	31	15.5%

Data Interpretation

The above table state that people feel good or comfortable about their physical appearance.

Q7. Please describe yourself using the following personality traits?

Table:8 Person views on different personality traits.

Particular	No of Respondents	Percentage
Extraverted: Energetic, sociable, talkative	78	39%

Introverted:Reserved, thoughtful, quiet	34	17%
Open-minded:Curious, imaginative,opentone new experiences	52	26%
Conscientious:Organized, dependable, responsible	36	18%

Data interpretation

The above table indicate that today's People are more open minded & Extraverted.

7.0 Findings

This study investigated the impact of social media usage on self-esteem and body image in college students. Here's a summary of the key findings based primary data we collected:

- Social Media Use:
 1. College students in this study spend an average of 4-6 hours daily on social media platforms.
 2. Instagram emerged as the most frequently used platform compared to others.
- Social Media Content and Self-Esteem:
 1. The preferred content type was entertainment, humor, and memes.
 2. Participants reported sometimes comparing their appearance to others on social media.
 3. Overall, the data suggests a generally positive self-esteem among participants.
- Body Image:
 1. Survey responses indicated that participants felt good or comfortable about their physical appearance to an extent.
- Personality:
 2. The study suggests that participants tend to be more open-minded and extroverted.

8.0 Limitations of the Research

This research acknowledges several limitations that influence the generalizability and interpretation of the findings:

1. **Sample Size:** The study involved a relatively small group of participants. While the data provides valuable insights, it may not be representative of the entire college student population. Future research with a larger sample size could strengthen the generalizability of the conclusions.
2. **Sampling Method:** Participants were recruited through convenience sampling methods, potentially leading to a biased sample. Further research could benefit from employing more rigorous sampling techniques to ensure a more representative participant pool.
3. **Self-Reported Data:** The study relied on self-reported data, which can be susceptible to biases. Participants may unintentionally or intentionally misrepresent their social media usage, self-esteem, or body image. Future studies could explore incorporating objective measures alongside self-reported data for a more comprehensive understanding.
4. **Confounding Variables:** Several factors beyond social media usage might influence self-esteem and body image. This study couldn't account for all potential confounding variables. Future research designs could explore more controlled settings or statistical techniques to better isolate the impact of social media.
5. **Resource Constraints:** Limited resources may have influenced the scope of the study. Future research with greater resources could explore the impact of specific social media content types or employ more

sophisticated methodologies.

9.0 Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between social media usage and self-esteem and body image in college students. The findings, based on a survey of 200 Participants, suggest that participants spend a significant amount of time (4-6 hours daily) on social media, primarily on Instagram. While entertainment content was preferred, participants also reported sometimes comparing their appearance to others on these platforms. Despite this, the overall data indicated a generally positive self-esteem and comfort level with physical appearance among the participants. Additionally, the study suggests a tendency towards open-mindedness and extroversion among the participants.

However, the research acknowledges limitations that influence the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. The relatively small sample size and convenience sampling method may not represent the broader college student population. Self-reported data introduces potential biases, and the study design couldn't account for all confounding variables that might influence self-esteem and body image. Finally, resource constraints may have limited the scope of the investigation.

10.0 References

- [1] Calogero, R. M., Boroughs, H. C., & Thompson, J. K. (2009). The objectification of women: Consequences for body image, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 33(1), 70-80.
- [2] Chuan, W. L., & Chen, Y. C. (2018). The moderating effect of self-esteem on the relationship between the types of social media used and body dissatisfaction among adolescents. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 84, 185-191.
- [3] Feinstein, K. L., Buchan, B., & Martin, L. G. (1991). Social comparison of physical appearance: Effects on self-esteem and body dissatisfaction in female college students. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 10(2), 142-155.
- [4] Fredrickson, B. L., & Roberts, T. A. (1997). Objectification theory: Toward understanding women's lived experiences and mental health risks. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21(1), 173-206.
- [5] Festinger, L. A. (1954). A theory of social comparison. *Human Relations*, 7(2), 185-202.
- [6] Hudson, J. I., Hillier, A., & Howell, R. G. (2017). Social media use and body dissatisfaction among young adults: Investigating the mediating role of social physique comparison and self-objectification. *Body Image*, 23(1), 10-17.
- [7] Kuss, D. J., Griffiths, M. D., & Griffiths, K. M. (2012). Facebook and self-esteem: A literature review. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 10(4), 433-445.
- [8] Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeWall, C. N., Spira, A., & Weinstein, N. (2013). How social media negatively affects self-esteem and self-compassion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 104(2), 179.