

The Impacts That ‘Appearances’ Make On The Average Image Of The Woman’s Body

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Social Media and Female Body Image

Recent research discusses the impacts that ‘appearances’ make on the average image of the woman’s body. Comparisons are made in many contexts, such as social media, magazines, and social media. The imperative link is social media, as very little was known prior to comparisons in everyday lives. If the ecological assessment method is used for undergraduate students, one can see the effect that women tend to face due to social media (Ruddock et al., 2024). In essence, there is a lot of literature that looks at the effects of factors on body image concerns in adult women in the United States. As such, there is less theoretically driven data that has studied implications. The American Psychological Association (2023) states that social media can reinforce cultural stereotypes of body image through appearance-focused comparison, attention to personal photographs, and feedback from others. After that, there is the social cognitive theory that looks at a communication-related model.

Eating Disorders and Self-Esteem

Research looks at common problems that are associated with eating disorders and among young adults. It is found that young adults tend to have low self-esteem, and that is a reciprocal effect of body dissatisfaction. Such factors are important in the development of eating pathologies. Previously published literature suggests that the media is key when body images are cultivated and eating behaviours are also studied in men. The key point is that social networking sites are different from many other traditional forms of media, where differences likely exist due to the active level of participation in social media sites. Many of these social media outlets include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest. One ought to assess the rapid growth of social networking sites and the associations that they have with eating habits and body image connections. Adolescents use social media to procure information about other social media stars or friends online. Many of these times, there is a negative relationship between the way that social media is seen to impact body image. However, future research ought to look at other ways that these social media outlets impact body image (Digennaro & Tescione, 2024).

Social Anxiety and Online Validation

In many cases, social anxiety is a common cause that social media seems to impact individuals who use social media as a form of validation. Students and young adults who are highly anxious tend to use their mobile phones more than those who do not need to look for constant validation. There is a relationship between the ways that social anxiety was seen in women as opposed to men, as they discovered higher anxiety tendencies in women. Young adults tend to visualize their body images and compare them to those online. This perception is created for those people who look for body images in social media and compare them to their personal selves. Body image will involve many self-assessments of different body images, such as size, proportions, and other body features. Such issues are important as cultural and social comparisons feed the personal self about the larger element of self-worth and physical attractiveness. A 2025 meta-analysis found that social comparison was associated with greater body-image concerns, eating-disorder symptoms, and lower positive body image across a large international sample (Bonfanti et al., 2025).

Changing Ideals of the Female Body

Essentially, the image of the ideal female body type has changed across cultures and times. In modern Western society, the ideal body image is thinness that ranges from athletic to slim and somewhat lanky. The millennial woman today has aspirations for a thin body but with a bigger flank region. There is a growing sense of unawareness about the real image of a body and one that is seen online. Body image and self-esteem are also highly dependent on one another in young men who are unhappy about their body image. All existing researches look at the way that individuals possess a poor sense of body image and can also develop physical and mental issues due to such deviations (American Psychological Association [APA], 2023).

Cultural Pressures and Thinness

Current evidence aims to bring about the forces that play their part when negative influences are seen in the context of self-image and perceptions in young women. Moreover, there is a constant striving goal to achieve that ultra-thin ideal. Focus groups tend to look at the way that such perceptions are seen and the real impacts they have on eating habits. As a result, researchers have used qualitative and quantitative methods to explore the real barriers, emotions, and information that are seen in thin ideals. The findings relate to social comparison processes and network influences that spread appearance information. Research finds that there is a need today for women to stay ultra-thin; in many cases, women do not know about the adverse effects of remaining underweight or undergoing strict eating regimes. The practical implications of such events relate to social marketing programs, stress habits, and the importance of the thin ideal image (Bonfanti et al., 2025).

Interactivity and Media Influence

One of the key features that allows one to distinguish social media from mass media is the high level of interactivity that is seen. The information that is uploaded or shared among recipients is well-received by virtually everyone. All these social media outlets are highly personal outlets that are conventionally impersonations of mass media. People tend to bond with technology and content that revolves around the self. From YouTube to posting selfies about self, there is a sense of disclosure that relates to the play of smartphones and computers. As far as fashion is related to many factors, one can see there are many graphically rich modalities that relate to transformative media and the way that its presence is felt in transporting the psychological well-being of individuals. Also, when one discusses the body image effect of social media, one can see that it is an assimilation of like-minded individuals on social media outlets, and that can be seen in the way that social media is there to fill pictures of thin women with idealized makeup care, exercise regimes and so forth. Similarly, men tend to follow idealized pages that are available to them for viewing anywhere and at any time. Such events allow there to be more events for comparing oneself to others (Digennaro & Tescione, 2024).

Global Effects on Young Women

Most of the time, the effects are seen in young adult women in the United States, but there are notable global reach and influences on the way that body image is seen to impact self-image perceptions. Such experimentations have uncovered the negative relationship and impact that the media's depictions have on body image. Though much less is known about the image effect that the man sees, it is expected that there is a lean, stronger, and thin image that men are required to have via social media. A negative contrast effect is seen when exposed to muscular media. The introduction of smartphones in some nations after others results in similar effects. The ultimate issue is that social media can be used to change the way that young individuals tend to harness their lifestyle habits of disordered eating. It is essential that online interventions fall in place when campaigns are used to reach out to young adults, and these campaigns can be used to take into account attitudes, theories, and understanding of the audiences (APA, 2023).

Social Comparison and Self-Perpetuating Cycles

Social media effects via transportation, social comparisons, and norms lead to self-perpetuating cycles of bad or good influence. They are motivated to reduce the negative effect via the mediating mechanisms discussed before; young women struggling with body image disturbances and eating issues may turn to social media, hoping to derive reassurance and validation. Daily-life research found bidirectional links: appearance comparisons predicted lower body satisfaction and stronger disordered-eating urges, while low body satisfaction and eating urges also predicted more comparison (Ruddock et al., 2024).

Self-Image and Eating Behaviors

Recent studies examine the effects of self-image on the essential factor of food disorders. The research looks at the way that self-image seemingly changes when one looks at the way that health behaviours change. Social media also shows changes due to the peer image that changes the likelihood of young adults developing anorexia. Findings across systematic reviews show that appearance-focused social networking, idealized content, and comparison behaviors are linked with body dissatisfaction and disordered eating, although individual vulnerability and the type of content viewed affect the strength of these relationships (Bonfanti et al., 2025; Digennaro & Tescione, 2024).

Conclusion

Overall, digital technology and social media are playing with today's youth. In many places, lessons are learnt, and attitudes are formed. Body image concerns are cultivated in the minds of young ones. The previously conducted research has identified these correlations, and literature reviews look at a more theoretical background to the cause. Theoretically-based papers offer insights into the striking effects that new media exerts on young women, and also generate strategies to help adults of a variety of ethnic groups adopt healthier attitudes toward their bodies. The insights of researchers in the body image and media domain ought to be harnessed to generate new empirical studies. As the venerable theorist of self and others, Hillel, stated, "If not now, when?" Current guidance emphasizes media literacy, limits on harmful appearance-focused content, supportive adult discussion, and attention to how young people use social media rather than treating all use as uniformly harmful (APA, 2023).

References

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