

BODY IMAGE AND DARK SIDE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract:

The mainstream media has a negative impact on female body image; less is known about social networks. The aim of the study was to examine how female use Social sites and if using Social sites affects body image. A descriptive qualitative approach was used. As the nature of the present research is qualitative. So the researcher used the case study method by way of its data is more detailed. All the qualitative research based on in-depth knowledge of case. The current study has been conducted in Punjab Pakistan and the target population was females using social media and conscious about their body image and its acceptance. The researcher selected female on different social sites. They all were from different backgrounds and social statuses. Age group of the respondents ranged from 25 to 35. Participants were selected on the basis of their usage of social sites and how much they performed. The data was analyzed on the basis of themes.

Keywords: *Body Image, Social Networking, Young Females*

Introduction and Related Literature:

In the 21st century, where social networks are easily accessible to all kinds of ages and people, there is a lot of emphasis on you can see the idealized body, skin and type. With various blogs and beauty pages come consequences that it can lead to degraded mental health, as one of the main problems in our society is body shame. Body Shaming is a form of bullying that primarily targets the physical parts of someone's body. Physical aspects include weight, shape, hairstyle, clothing choices, makeup, or size. Humiliating and doing negative statements about someone's body, or criticizing your own body for its appearance. In a study conducted on young adults, it was observed that individuals who experience feelings of shame towards their own body exhibit depressive symptoms associated with self-critical behaviors, which can also lead to binge eating, acting as social drug for people. (Samari, E. 2022)

Body Shaming can now be found widely in young adults as well as with the increasing trends of diets, exercise and fashion portrayed by celebrities, people who deviate from these trends are criticized or humiliated by the same. We can see people shaming both men and women nowadays because of their body type. In the case of women, they are mostly criticized or humiliated for their weight by being called "Fat" or "Too skinny". Men watch our body in terms of musculature, lean frame, hair and torso rather than looking at it from a holistic perspective and this convenience of a muscular frame can be seen in many men. Men's self-esteem too so it was found to be correlated with their features comprising face, hair and musculature. (Ridgway, J. L. 2016)

Therefore, men also experience body shame if they are not muscular enough like the idealized examples of Men with 'Perfect Bodies'. Due to growing trends, only men with built abs and muscles are considered handsome and fit. It has also been pointed out that the media is posing as

negative moderators among the muscular ideals that men have, which in turn leads to a negative image and evaluation of their own bodies with respect to social comparisons. It seems that even though both sexes experiencing body shame in various ways, however, certain differences in perception and body image of men and women still exist. Women tend to have more negative images of their bodies compared to men. Men in different situations from each other. However, the evaluations are at a similar level in both genders. When in the presence of their partners. It was observed that lower body self-esteem leads to a negative body. Assessments including weight, appearance, etc. during sexual activities for both men and women. (Kennedy, K. 2019).

Although comments are made about the physical aspects of an individual's body, the impacts are often psychological. For example, when we are exposed to magazines and Social sites pages that portray the desired body shape, we tend to question ourselves by comparing our bodies to digitally altered ones. This practice doubting ourselves can lead to a loss of self-confidence and a lack of self-esteem. Some aspects of mental health that can be affected are the way we express our emotions, called Emotional Expressiveness and our idea of Life Orientation. (Haferkamp, N. 2011).

Emotional expression can be defined in terms of how individuals represent their feelings or emotions. Emotions, it can be expressed through facial movements, verbally or with gestures. Crying, laughing, smiling or shouting are some ways in which emotions are expressed. It has been observed many times that women who tend to they identify their body as deviating from "standards" and tend to fall into disordered eating patterns. This idea of discrepancy leads women to be cognitively inclined to react to negative and unwanted internal situations. Experiences for example, eating less to lose weight. Similarly, men who experience unwanted emotions regarding their body shape, size, and features, they often indulge in negative assessments and experience dissatisfaction with their bodies; and participate in dysfunctional behaviors to cope with. Regulating one's own emotions then becomes very important as if not done correctly, it also leads to maladaptive and harmful eating patterns. (Desai, D. 2015)

On the other hand, Life Orientation is how individuals see themselves with respect to situations and people around them. It has to do with the values and beliefs that people have, the environment and how they are responsible around you, how can someone lead a healthy and wise life, physical activities and mental health. According to studies to examine the concept behind a positive body image, it has been very significantly. Since a secure attachment can be considered to lead to greater self-esteem and optimism, and also to a great predictor of positive body image. (Matzen, P. L. 2020).

Therefore, considering all of the above discussion, can conclude that for an individual to lead a happy and satisfied life. Everything around and needs to be in harmony, including nurture and support from others and love for ourselves.

Main objective:

- To explore the relationship of body image acceptance through digital world.
- To highlight the issues between influencers and ordinary social media users.

Research Methodology:

The present study was conducted to explore the body image and dark side of social networking: a qualitative study. The present study used qualitative method to investigate the "our body image and dark side of social networking". However this topic requires a more detailed and in-depth understanding to know the issues and challenges faced by the women. So the researcher used qualitative method to investigate the phenomena of body acceptance and obstacles which create

hurdles. In this present study exploratory research design has been applied. As the nature of the present research is qualitative. So the researcher used the case study method by way of its data is more detailed. All the qualitative research based on in-depth knowledge of case. The current study has been conducted in Punjab Pakistan and the target population was females using social media and conscious about their body image and its acceptance. The researcher selected female on different social sites. They all were from different backgrounds and social statuses. Age group of the respondents ranged from 25 to 35. Participants were selected on the basis of their usage of social sites and how much they performed. The data was analyzed on the basis of themes. At the first stage interviews were transcribed and were reviewed many times to come up finally with some themes.

Thematic Analysis:

Effort:

Many of the participants do not accept their body as it is. They tried to get slim and fair. On the other hand they used filters. When they think about posting they used to select cloths which looks good on them. They used high quality gadgets like camera or cell phones. They used to seem like slim fair and beautiful. So that they put so much efforts on it. Many participants doing diets and using high end product for beauty and social acceptance. The impact of social media algorithms on participants' posting efforts with their body image. Many participants reported feeling frustrated by the way social media platforms prioritize certain types of people, which can make it challenging to gain traction and gain visibility with their posts. This theme highlights the role of body image and platform design in shaping social media celebrities.

Promotion:

In the age of social media, promotions are becoming more and more famous. This paper analyzes the various themes that emerge from promotions posted on social media by participants. **Body Features:** Many participants focused on highlighting the features of the body or flaws as well for promotion. They emphasized the unique beauties of the skin and hair as well as complexion. **Personal Experience:** Participants often shared their own personal experiences using or consuming the product for beauty. This helped to build acceptance and credibility with their followers. On the other hand they are bullied by the other people and get trolled. They got very unethical comments on posts most often. Some of their publicity stunts are also discouraged by the users. Paid content may also lead to promotion some of products by good body image influencers. And that may lead to deception in the form of consumers. So that body image plays vital role in media promotion.

Comparison

Many of participants do follow celebrities and unintentionally do compare themselves with stars. This may also lead to ward dark body image and lake of acceptance. Many of the participants do use the makeup brand same as celebrities. On social media, participants often compare themselves to others based on their appearance, lifestyle, accomplishments, and relationships. This can lead to feelings of envy, jealousy, and low self-esteem, as people may feel that they are not measuring up to the standards set by others. The role of social media in constructing and reinforcing social norms. Social media platforms are often used to showcase a certain lifestyle or image, and participants feel pressure to conform to these norms in order to fit in or gain approval. This can lead to a feeling of conformity and a lack of individuality, as people may feel that they need to present a certain image in order to be accepted. The impact of social media on

mental health. Although social media can be a great way to connect with others and share experiences, it can also be a source of stress, anxiety and depression.

Dissatisfaction:

Many participants feel dissatisfaction when other people post their pictures and videos with good body. Level of anxiety and depression takes place when participants don't get likes on their posts. The reaction and behavior also interlink with the posting on social media. Attention seeking through personal content sharing and acceptance by other members may also be the reason of dissatisfaction. This could be seen as intrusive or attention-seeking, and may lead to feelings of discomfort or annoyance. Inauthenticity: Participants dissatisfied with social media content that seems fake or disingenuous, such as posed or staged photos, heavily filtered images, or overly curated feeds. This could be seen as dishonest or insincere, and may lead to feelings of distrust or disconnection.

Conclusion:

Young women reported spending a lot of time when browsing on Social sites and following others (such as peers, celebrities, and models), allowing you to constantly access unrealistic and edited images. They also posted their own photographs, often to show off your best side. They posted great value for getting feedback from followers.

These results give an idea of how activity can influence the participants' opinion of themselves. Several participants noted that idealized images are likely to be changed (for example, edited or filtered). And knew about the detrimental effect this may have. However, they still felt pressure to adjust to those standards.

In line with previous studies, participants reported a lot of beauty ideals from Social sites, not only subtle ideals, but everything that is difficult for most women to achieve. For example, they described admiration for thin women, fitness models and women of large sizes or with more magnificent forms. Interestingly, participants did not consider "positive body" useful as many of the photos seemed unrealistic, edited, and inalienable.

The results suggest that women who participate in Social sites' appearance comparisons may be vulnerable to a feeling of dissatisfaction with their appearance, body size and shape. These findings are consistent with research that found Social sites users who follow accounts based on appearance (e.g., celebrities and models) report more problems with body appearance. When discussing comparisons, several participants wanted to look like "they" but knew that was impossible, creating discrepancies between their ideal self and their real self. Members also expressed feelings of inadequacy when comparing themselves (and the feedback they received) with friends and peers. The pressure to live up to the ideals of beauty can be even stronger when from peers rather than celebrities, as peers represent supposedly more achievable ideals.

Social sites has also been found to encourage increased attention to the appearance. In an effort to gain confirmation, participants were concerned about monitoring their Social sites image in order to get approval/reviews from others. They did this in a variety of ways, including editing before publishing, posting their best photos or deleting photos with insufficient likes.

It's important to note that Social sites hasn't always been associated with body dissatisfaction. Participants felt verified when they received a large number of likes. It's consistent with previous research showing that the number of likes associated with popularity and attractiveness.

Limitations include the small sample size and the inability to draw causal inferences. Future work should use longitudinal and pilot projects, explore unique effects different ideals of beauty in different populations, and on mental health factors. As research continues, clinicians and

educators should consider how Social sites influences clients and students assess their bodies and consider providing psychological education. It can be helpful to implement social media literacy, as these interventions can prevent harmful consequences. In addition, promotion self-compassion and self-acceptance regarding body image can be effective.

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