Research Paper

Social Networking Usage and Appearance Related Social Media Consciousness among Emerging Adults

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ABSTRACT

The usage of social media is currently widespread among emerging adults specifically photo based sites. The purpose of the study is to evaluate emerging adults' use of social networking sites and awareness of appearance-related social media issues at a time when they have the freedom to decide on how to present themselves to their peers and choose when to use social networking sites with no parental supervision. These developmental tasks may make them more vulnerable to the harmful effects of appearance concerns on social networking sites, given that much research focused on the female population, our study attempts to understand these behaviors and their impact on the male population as well. The sample for the study consists of 109 individuals (53 male and 56 female Emerging adults) from different institutions across India, ranging in age from 18 to 29. The Social Networking Usage Questionnaire and Appearance related social media consciousness Scale were used to collect the data. Findings suggest that no significant difference in gender for both ARSMC and social networking usage. Overall, these findings contribute to our understanding of the relationship between social media use and appearance-related social media consciousness among emerging adults, suggesting that while social media usage and ASMC are moderately correlated, gender does not significantly influence these variables.

Keywords: *Social Networking, Social Media Consciousness, Appearance consciousness, Emerging Adults*

Indians spend 2.36 hours every day on social media, on average. India's population has broad access to the internet, therefore in 2023 there will be 467 million more people using social media than there were in 2018. India now boasts a staggering 692 million Internet users, or around 48.7% of the country's whole population. Social media becomes among the most crucial components of Indians' everyday internet usage. The increase of social media users was strongly correlated with the rapid development of internet access and connectivity, fueled by the federal government's Digital India effort. Instagram will likely be the most widely used social media platform in India by 2023, with an estimated 74.70% of the country's internet users using it. In India, there are approximately 516.92 million users of

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Instagram who are active. Instagram's user base is largely made up of young people, especially teenagers and emerging adults. (India Social Media Statistics 2023 | Most Used Top Platforms, 2023). According to research, young adults use social networking sites as a means of dealing with stressful situations and unpleasant feelings. This emotion maintenance technique, however, has the potential to be detrimental and can lead to more serious mental health issues (Rasmussen et al., 2020).

The social comparison hypothesis was first presented by psychologist Leon Festinger in 1954 (Festinger 1954). According to social comparison theory, People have an innate desire to evaluate their own panoramic views and skills by comparing oneself to others. According to (Festinger, 1954, Mussweiler, Ruter, & Epstude, 2006. Mussweiler et al. (2006) People relate information about others to themselves whenever it is presented to them, whether it is knowledge about how others are, what they are able to accomplish and cannot, or what other people have accomplished and failed to do. This implies that interpersonal comparison takes place practically all the time in our daily lives as individuals can readily gain access to or may easily get knowledge about others through numerous channels, such as through engaging in direct social interaction and media consumption (Lee, 2014b). The societal comparison hypothesis and research that have followed it claim that comparing oneself to others can have a variety of effects on an individual, including a negative impact on their self-worth and capacity for making wise decisions. In order to improve their self-esteem and sense of self, people also contrast themselves with others (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). In order to make judgments and decisions more quickly, people frequently participate in comparison behavior (Mussweiler et al., 2006). Relating oneself to more successful people who have positive attributes results in upward social comparison, whereas doing the opposite with less successful people who have bad traits results in downward social comparison. (Wills, 1981; Wood, 1989). Inspiring people to become more like their comparison targets is a good thing (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997), but upward comparison more frequently makes people feel inferior, has lower self-assessment, and has a detrimental effect (Marsh & Parker, 1984; Morse & Gergen, 1970; Pyszczynski, Greenberg, & LaPrelle, 1985). But regardless of certain cases, sometimes people feel liable or guilty, it highlights the extent to which it can be more catastrophic, downward comparison more commonly enhances the effectiveness and self-evaluation of actions. (Wills, 1981). Social networking websites (like Facebook, snapchat and Twitter) are some of the websites that are popular among users to interact with others and see how and what other conduct themselves online. On social networking sites, it's possible that people frequently juxtaposed themselves with other users. This indicates that these websites are crucial for helping individuals establish their own identities, evaluate themselves (including their opinions, skills, and feelings), and experience happiness or unhappiness about themselves as a result of comparison with others, which makes them consciouses about themselves (Lee, 2014). Users can build websites for themselves on social media platforms, Post details about your daily life and events, upload photos, stay in touch, arrange social events, accommodated new people, and track other people's activities, online activities, communicate their views, feelings, and interests; they also fulfill their need for belonging. (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Ivcevic & Ambady, 2012; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Tosun, 2012). Social networking platforms provide fresh chances to obsess over and curate one's online persona, leading to concerns and actions related to appearance that are exclusive to a social media audience. Emerging adulthood, or approximately the period spanning years from18 and 25, could be a particular formative stage in developed places where Identity exploration, instability, independence, and a self-centeredness that frequently seems separate from youth are some of the traits that many

people associate with emerging adulthood. For instance, emerging adults often have more independence than teenagers in high school, frequently moving out on their own or enrolling in college. (Arnett, 2007). Emerging adults can utilize these environments to date and have sexual encounters, to choose how to appear to their friends, and to decide when and how to use social media without the interference of their parents. These developmental activities could make emerging individuals more susceptible to the damaging impacts of social media appearance pressure. Additionally, the transition into adulthood can be difficult on one's mental health because there are more chances for instability in the areas of finances, relationships, careers, and education. (Kuwabara et al., 2007). Social media exposes emerging adults to an unreachable ideal of physical attractiveness through photographs of peers and celebrities. It also encourages users' obsession with their own photographs by giving them the chance to edit, share, and get feedback from others in the form of number of comments and likes. (Choukas-Bradley et al., 2022). Hence the aim of our study is to understand the level of social networking usage and Appearance related social media consciousness among emerging adults.

Appearance-related social media consciousness is the degree to which people's thoughts and actions reveal perpetual awareness of the possibility that they could look beautiful. to a community by means of social media. (Choukas-Bradley et al., 2020) After taking into consideration the amount of time spent on social media, studies have shown that negative social media intuitive, online physical appearance assessments, and photo-based intelligence on social media are all related to eating clutters in youthful grown-up ladies. (Cohen et al., 2018; Saunders & Eaton, 2018; Walker et al., 2015). Based on gender, the level of anxiety brought on by unfavorable body views and thoughts might vary. (Feingold & Mazzella, 1998). Photo-based social media platforms place a strong emphasis on physical appearance (Deighton-Smith & Bell, 2017) Many individuals use social media platforms (like Twitter and Facebook) as a platform for interaction and for observing the way others behave online. In light of the likelihood that individuals frequently compare oneself to others on social media networks, it follows that these kinds of sites are essential for enabling people to evaluate self (which includes their opinions, views, talents, and emotions) and create their own identities. Additionally, social networking sites allow comparisons with others, to feel content or unsatisfied, happy or miserable, or satisfied or unsatisfied with oneself. (Lee, 2014). Validation seeking behavior is common among social media users, People who seek external validation for their self-worth may develop an obsession with the chase of likes, comments, and followers on social media. This reliance on the views of others can erode one's self-assurance and self-worth. Social media frequently displays edited and idealized photos, which causes body dissatisfaction and lowers self-esteem.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Choukas-Bradley et al., 2019) The current study analyses appearance-related social media consciousness (ASMC). Participants included, women in college (N=339; mean age=18.35) who self-reported how frequently they encountered ASMC. Additionally, they provided information on the amount of time they spend on social media generally, their degrees of self-objectification (also known as body surveillance), body comparison, body esteem, and signs of depression. Women experienced frequent ASMC at high rates; for instance, about three-quarters of them reported frequent ASMC episodes. Furthermore, the outcomes of two path analyses showed that greater ASMC had a strong correlation with both greater severity of signs of depression and lower body esteem, both of which were controlled for in terms of body surveillance and social media use. The first findings of this study suggest that while

ASMC may represent a relatively frequent collection of experiences between young women, larger amounts may be detrimental to psychological adjustment. This study also emphasizes the need of comprehending the numerous and intricate ways in which social media may impact the mental health and wellness of young women.

(Özalp & Akbulut, 2022) The present research intends to investigate the gender, art education, and psychological symptoms (depression, anxiety, and stress) characteristics of university students' degrees of appearance-related social media consciousness. Among the quantitative research techniques used in this study was the correlational model. 295 university students from different colleges and universities in Turkey, 229 female and 66 males make up the study group for the investigation. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21, Personal Information Form, and Appearance-Related Social Media Consciousness Scale were employed in the study. The data were analyzed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis and Hierarchical Regression Analysis techniques. It was discovered that psychological symptoms (depression, anxiety, and stress), gender (female), and having an art education all had a significant explanatory value of 14.9% regarding appearance-related social media consciousness.

(Öztürk & Öztürk, 2022) The objective of the study is to compare and assess the social media usage patterns and awareness levels of the students at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Turkey. Comparative relational screening with correlational research strategies was followed in conducting the study. The study involved 203 students from four different institutions who were majoring in fine arts. The research's findings show that many of the participants utilize social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, and others as well as photo-sharing websites like Instagram and Snapchat. The individuals who were enrolled in the Faculties of Fine Arts were found to have low levels of social media knowledge. While the participants' social media awareness of appearance did not differ by gender, class, or degree of efficiency, there were notable variances based on the departments. Finally, a strong correlation between students' degrees of social media knowledge and how frequently they utilize social media platforms was discovered.

(Maheux et al., 2022) Teenagers who use social media often are more likely to have depressive symptoms, despite the fact that previous research has primarily utilized cross-sectional designs and been primarily concerned with "screen time." Teenagers' depression symptoms may be more affected by subjective interactions with social media than just using frequency, such as worries about how one looks online. In previous cross-sectional research, appearance-related social media consciousness, or ASMC, has been linked to depressive symptoms in addition to the frequency of social media use. ASMC is the obsession with one's physical beauty in social media images. Methods: In this succinct report, we examined this relationship longitudinally over the course of a year in a varied sample of high school students in the Southeast US. Findings showed that, even after adjusting for the amount of time on social media, baseline ASMC was linked to increased depressive symptoms one year later. Although girls showed larger levels of ASMC, teenage boys and girls had comparable relationships. There was no proof that more severe depressive symptoms at the start were linked to a greater ASMC a year later. The research shows that, in addition to social media usage frequency, physical appearance concerns have a significant role in the onset of depression symptoms in teenagers.

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(Samra et al., 2022) The goal of this research was to ascertain if negative social media usage and depression are not directly correlated. In two-part research, 144 participants (65 women) provided self-report responses to questions on PSMU-related criteria and then they were made to see a set of social media pictures that had been pre-tested as being upward or downward comparisons. According to the research, women engaged in social media more often than men did. They also compared themselves less favorably to others and enjoyed upward comparison images more than any other group than downward ones. Higher PSMU scores were associated with depression, low self-esteem, and unfavorable online comparisons of oneself to others. Finally, a concentration on comparing oneself with a tendency to draw negative parallels to other individuals on social media had a role in mediating the relationship between PSMU and unhappiness.

(Puglia, 2017) This study set out to investigate how young women's perceptions about their bodies on social media. Body comparison tendency was shown to be positively correlated with in a self-report study of undergraduate women (n=339). inclination to utilize social media for body comparisons and negatively correlated with body image. An exploratory study looked at the impact on multiple internet-based outlets on body satisfaction. (n=58) in this study. Facebook revealed the strongest inverse relationship between body satisfaction and the platforms under investigation. Participants who used Facebook more frequently showed considerably lower levels of body satisfaction than those who used it less frequently. The establishment of health literacy and behavior modification interventions that explicitly target susceptible groups in comparison to those who use Facebook less often is required because, according to this research, social media provides a new setting for people to participate in harmful body comparison processes.

(Jan et al., 2017) Understanding how utilizing social media impacts one's self-esteem was the goal of this study. People's self-esteem has declined due to the upward comparisons that take place on social networking sites. 150 students from the Institute of Business Management were polled to verify the supposition. The most popular social networking site, Facebook, was employed in this study, which was only conducted among students. Using SPSS statistics, a correlation and regression model had been applied to the data in order to look at the connection between social media and self-esteem. The most significant evidence indicates that 98% of people who use Facebook make favorable social comparisons, making up 88% of those comparisons. The results of this study support the notion that social media and self-esteem are strongly related. Individuals' self-esteem declines when they utilize the internet more frequently. One hour a day of Facebook surfing reduces one's self-esteem score by 5.574 points.

(Liu et al., 2017) The research investigation looks at how optimism mediates this relationship and how self-esteem acts as a moderator. 1205 undergraduate Chinese students participated in a survey as a sample about their levels of optimism, self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and upward social comparison on SNSs. The correlation between depressive symptoms and self-esteem was shown to partially mediate upward social comparison on SNSs, according to the findings. Additionally, optimism reduced the individual impact created by social comparison and the mediation influence of self-esteem on depressive symptoms on social networking sites. For people with low optimism vs those with strong optimism, the two impacts were more powerful. Our knowledge of how and when upward social comparison on social networking sites causes an increase in depressed symptoms has improved as a result of the current study. This study has several drawbacks, First, this

survey did not cover the various groups of social networking sites. Future studies should examine if there are differences across social networking sites in the in the connections between the effects of upward social comparison and its ramifications, as well as in the processes that underlie them. Second, it is uncertain if these results extend to other groups as all research participants were college students. The third aspect of this study is a cross-sectional survey. When interpreting the findings in terms of causality, care should be used.

(Fardouly et al., 2023) Small adjustments to social media usage may have a big influence on the general populace. In the current study, young women (N = 159) were directed to either (1) follow a body positive Facebook group, (2) follow an appearance neutral Facebook group, or (3) use Facebook as normal. These unique social media micro-interventions (i.e., brief material provided in everyday life) were examined. Over the course of two weeks, pertinent information was provided to the Facebook groups three times every day. Secondary outcomes were trait self-objectification, the inclination to compare appearances, and body activism. The primary outcomes were trait body image (body dissatisfaction and appreciation) and mood. Three timepoints were used to evaluate outcomes: pre-test (T1), post-test (T2) following the 14-day intervention period, and follow-up (T3) four weeks later. individuals in the body positive condition reported fewer body comparisons from T1 to T2 (medium impact), whereas individuals in the appearance neutral condition reported less comparisons between their appearances from T1 to T2. From T2 through T3, the factors remained unchanged. No more noteworthy variations were discovered. Viewing a few body-affirming or appearance-neutral social media postings might be a successful, low-cost micro-intervention for enhancing young women's body image.

(Choukas-Bradley et al., 2019) The appearance-related social media consciousness (ASMC), that implies to the tendency for a woman's actions and thoughts to reflect continuous awareness of whether she could appear endearing to an online audience, is a new construction related to young women's experiences with social media is a novel concept connected to young women's experiences with social media. A large institution in the Southeast of the United States had 339 college women (Mage = 18.35) enrolled in psychology course as participants. The sample was ethnically composed of White/Caucasian, African American/Black, Hispanic/Latina and other race/ethnicity participants. Self-reported how frequently they encountered ASMC. Additionally, they shared their general social media usage and self-objectification levels (also known as body surveillance), body comparison, body esteem, and depressive symptoms. Women had frequent ASMC at high rates; for instance, around three-quarters did so. Furthermore, while simultaneously controlling for time spent on social media, the results of two path analyses revealed that higher ASMC was significantly associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms and body surveillance in addition to greater levels of body comparison, body esteem, and body surveillance.

(Brown & Tiggemann, 2016) The purpose of the current study was to empirically examine how beautiful celebrity and peer pictures affect women's perceptions of their bodies. 138 female undergraduate students from Flinders University in South Australia participated. These students, who were randomly allocated to see either a group of celebrity photographs, a set of similarly beautiful unidentified peer images, or a control set of vacation images, ranged in age from 18 to 30. All pictures were from open Instagram profiles. Visual analogue scales (VAS), the State Appearance Comparison Scale, and the 17-item Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS) were the scales employed. In comparison to vacation photographs,

exposure to celebrity and peer images enhanced negative mood and body dissatisfaction, with no discernible difference between the two. By comparing states' outward appearances, this impact was mediated. Additionally, the increasing impact of celebrity pictures on body dissatisfaction was mitigated by celebrity devotion. According to the findings, exposure to beautiful celebrity and peer photos may be harmful to women's perceptions of their bodies.

(Tiggemann et al., 2018) The aim of this research was to test the concept that women's body dissatisfaction is influenced by the amount of likes that follow Instagram photographs.220 female undergraduates from Flinders University, ages 18 to 30, participated in the study. Participants in the procedure had to fill out questionnaires on their usage of social media and pre-exposure mood, physique, and face dissatisfaction VAS measurements. Next, four sets of test Instagram photos were shown to the participants. Participants were asked to score the image's general quality so order to make sure they were paying attention to the photos. Participants completed the post-exposure VAS in addition to assessments of state appearance and like comparison after being exposed to the Instagram photographs. Finally, the recollection and Instagram use tests were performed by the subjects. The results showed that looking to thin-ideal photographs led to higher unhappiness with the body and face than looking at regular photos. The overall number of likes had no effect on face discontent, but it did have a beneficial effect on physical unhappiness and appearance comparison. Instagram participation had no impact on reducing these effects, however likes were associated with increasing face dissatisfaction and appearance comparison. The results demonstrate how body image may be influenced by social media's particularly social interactional aspects, such as likes.

(Tiggemann et al., 2020) The goal of the current study was to experimentally investigate how young women's opinions of their bodies were impacted by body-positive feedback on Instagram photos. The participants consisted of 384 women between the ages of 18 and 30 who were randomly assigned to see Instagram pictures with slim or average-sized women with either body-positive captions or no captions. The stimuli were two groups of 15 Instagram photos of either average-sized or thin-ideal women. Each photograph in the condition with the message "Love your body, even if the world is telling you not to #bodypositivity" was followed by a different body-positive caption The participants were given a list of social networking websites, as well as were asked to rate how often they used each one. Visual analogue scales (VAS) were used to gauge the state of attitude and body dissatisfaction before and after observing the Instagram photos. The state body appreciation was measured using the visual analogue scales both prior to and following seeing the Instagram pictures. The participants' involvement in appearance comparison while looking at the photographs was gauged using the State Appearance Comparison Scale. To assess how much each participant had internalized the slim ideal, the thin/Low Body Fat subscale of the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire was utilized. Contrary to predictions, the body positive captions had no effect on either body dissatisfaction or body admiration. The type of picture had a substantial impact, with typical photos producing less body dissatisfaction and more body admiration than thin ones. Body-affirming remarks on average pictures enhanced body appreciation while decreased it when they were combined with thin images, according to a substantial three-way interaction, which was shown to be the case for women who firmly internalized the thin-ideal. According to the research, an Instagram post's visual content has a greater impact on body image than any words that may be included with it. It is arguably more advantageous to highlight a greater diversity of female bodies on social media in order to encourage body contentment and appreciation.

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(Vall-Roqué et al., 2021) The goal of this study was to determine how the COVID-19 lockout affects the use of social networking sites and determine whether SNS use is associated with low self-esteem and a negative body image. 2601 Spanish women between the ages of 14 and 35 responded to questionnaires that examined their use of social networking sites, sense of self, desire for thinness, and body dissatisfaction. Both at the end of the survey and just before it closed, respondents to the poll were asked about their use of SNS. During the lockdown, all evaluated (Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook) were used more often, and a statistically significant increase was seen in the proportion of women accessing appearance-focused Instagram accounts. Additionally, there were strong correlations between regular Instagram use and body dissatisfaction, the need to lose weight, and low self-esteem in younger generations (14–24), as well as between regular Instagram use and the need to lose weight in older individuals (25–35). Following Instagram accounts that place a focus on appearance was only linked to a desire for thinness in the older group (25–35) and dissatisfaction with one's body in the younger age group. Both utilizing the platform more regularly and following Instagram accounts that place a heavy emphasis on appearance highly predicted higher levels of drive for thinness.

(Raymer, n.d, 2015). This study attempts to look into the relationship between online social networking sites like Facebook and the levels of self-esteem among college students. Previous research has linked an increase in online activity to less in-person encounters with friends, family, and coworkers, which contributes to feelings of loneliness and hopelessness. To investigate the effect of Facebook participation on self-esteem, undergraduate students were asked to participate in an online, anonymously survey involving the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Body Esteem Scale, the Facebook Activity Scale, and the Eating Attitudes Test-26. The data were analyzed using the independent samples T-test and the bivariate correlation test. Women are more likely than males to spend more time on Facebook as well as have more Facebook friends, according to data gathering statistics. Results also showed that women are more driven to be slender than men are and that they are less satisfied with their bodies.

(Steinsbekk et al., 2021). The current study explores the potential associations between a period of four years of self-oriented social media usage, such as maintaining one's own page with photographs and updates, and other-oriented social media use, such as like and remarking on other people's postings, with written permission The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) version 4-16 was used as a screening tool to identify children with emotional and behavioral issues in the in the Trondheim Early Secure Study (TESS), which tracked psychological and mental health development over time in children born in the years 2003 and 2004 . Social media consumption was evaluated starting at age 10, hence this research is based on information gathered at ages 10, 12, and 14. The participants were asked about their use of certain social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter as well as their usage habits. The frequency with which users post photographs and create material on their personal social media accounts each month was utilized to determine whether users primarily use social media for self-promotion. Questions concerning how frequently users "like" and comment on other people's status updates and photos were used to gauge users' use of other-oriented social media. Self-esteem in terms of looks, at age 10 was assessed using the Self-Description Questionnaire (SDQ-I) physical appearance subscale, but at ages 12 and 14, the Revised Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA-R) physical appearance subscale was used. Utilizing a Random Intercept Cross-lagged Panel Model, we found that increasing other-oriented social media

use between the ages of 12 and 14 predicted declining appearance self-esteem only in females. There was no indication of a connection between appearance self-esteem and social media use, and self-centered social media use had no impact on it either.

(Hawi & Samaha, 2017) The investigation examines the links among social media dependency, self-worth, and life satisfaction. A total of 396 respondents filled out the online survey, to do this, a generic questionnaire called the Social Media Addiction Questionnaire (SMAQ), which was created from the Facebook Intrusion Questionnaire, was used. Respondents to an online survey were asked to answer questions on their demographics, as well as the SMAQ, Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale. In addition to assessing the SMAQ's psychometric properties, data investigations included Pearson correlations among the variables, regression analysis, and modelling of structural equations. The results showed that a one-factor SMAQ model had good psychometric properties and great internal consistency. Compulsive social media use exhibited a negative link with self-esteem but positively correlated with life pleasure. Path analysis also showed that self-esteem acted as a mediator in the association between social media addiction and life satisfaction.

(Vogel et al., 2015) The current group of studies set intended to investigate the link between Facebook use, social comparison orientation, and detrimental psychological effects. Study 1's primary goal was to look at the connection between social media use and a focus on social comparison. The study involved 145 undergraduate students from a Midwestern American college 106 of them were female. We evaluated two related dimensions, the intensity of use and psychological engagement, to gauge Facebook usage. The Iowa Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM) was developed to evaluate individual variations in social comparison orientation. In investigation 1b, 275 undergraduate students 157 were females from the basic psychology subject area at a different major Midwestern university took part. First, the same scale mentioned earlier in Study 1a was used to gauge psychological engagement with Facebook. Second, we employed the Facebook Intensity Scale to gauge the level of Facebook use. The purpose of After it was shown in Study 1 that Facebook use was likely to be higher among those high in SCO, the purpose of Study 2 was to ascertain if the impact of visiting Facebook on self-evaluation and affect were different for those high versus low in SCO. The 120 student participants from the same university as Study 1a (92 of whom were women) were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions: Facebook Experimental, Facebook Control, or Non-Facebook Control. Participants spent five minutes looking at the friend's Facebook profile, analysing the information to determine the friend's posting patterns and personality features.

(Lee & Lee, 2021) In this study, we explored the moderating effects of photo-editing behavior in the relationships between these variables, as well as the internalization of the ideal body and appearance comparison as mediators of the link between appearance-related picture activity on social media and body satisfaction. 385 An online survey was completed by young South Korean female social media members between the ages of 20 and 30. Measures included the Appearance-Related Photo Activity scale, the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire-Appearance Evaluation scale, the Internalization-General Attractiveness subscale from the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-4-revised, and questions about Photo-Editing Behavior. The findings showed that the amount of appearance-related social media photo activity is linked to higher levels of internalization and appearance comparison, which can lower body satisfaction. The

findings also showed that depending on the degree of picture-editing behavior, associations among appearance-related photo activity on social media, internalization, and appearance comparison vary. In particular, the group exhibiting a high degree of picture-editing behavior showed stronger positive connections between appearance-related photo activity on social media and internalization, as well as between internalization and appearance comparison.

(Alfonso-Fuertes et al., 2022) The goal of the study is to examine the connections between Instagram use, including daily usage time and the types of content seen, and self-esteem, the propensity for physical comparisons, and contentment with body image. We included 585 people in this cross-sectional study, ranging in age from 18 to 40. People who wanted to take part but had an intimate knowledge of eating problems or had already received a mental diagnosis were not allowed to. The assessment tools included the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, the Physical Appearance Comparison Scale-Revised (PACS-R), the Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ), and a questionnaire designed specifically for this study by the research team that collected sociodemographic information and Instagram use variables. We discovered statistically significant variations in the three groups' results on the Rosenberg, PACS-R, and BSQ self-esteem tests. Participants who used Instagram more often had more body dissatisfaction, more physical appearance comparisons, and poorer self-esteem. Furthermore, there were no variations between those who predominantly saw professional material and those who mostly consumed fashion and beauty, sport, and nutrition information when we analyzed the association between the scores obtained on the various scales and the categories of content viewed.

(Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2020) The purpose of this study was to conduct an experimental investigation into how exposure to "Instagram vs. reality" photographs affected women's enjoyment and unhappiness with their bodies. 305 women between the ages of 18 and 30 made up the participant population. They were randomly allocated to see each of the three types of Instagram photographs: the "Instagram vs. reality" images, the "ideal" side alone, or the "real" side alone. Utilizing 3-item State Appearance Comparison Scales, visual analogue scales (VASs) were utilized to gauge state body dissatisfaction before and after seeing the Instagram photographs. The 'Instagram vs reality' and genuine photographs, as expected, led to less body dissatisfaction than the ideal images. Additionally, compared to the ideal photographs, the negative impacts of appearance comparison were considerably less pronounced for the "Instagram vs reality" and genuine images. Real postings and "Instagram vs. reality" have the potential to increase women's body happiness, but additional study is required to determine their long-term effects.

(Jang et al., 2016) In the current study, relationships between Facebook use, Facebook's social comparison orientation, or SCOF, and psychological outcomes including interpreted social support and mental health were investigated. Additionally, the function of self-esteem and impression management as precursors of social comparison orientation on Facebook was investigated. The study discovered a favorable correlation between the usage of Facebook and SCOF using 313 college students as its sample. However, there was no significant correlation between Facebook usage and social comparison orientation in terms of mental health. Facebook use was favorably connected with perceived social support. Additionally, the study discovered a detrimental relationship between and mental health. Social comparison orientation on Facebook did not, however, substantially correlate with

reported social support. Finally, there was a favorable correlation between SCOF and both self-esteem and impression management.

(Faranda & Roberts, 2019) This study examined the distinction between comparison orientation (the propensity to compare) and direction (the direction in which comparisons are made) on Facebook and offline, as well as the predictive value of these comparisons for depression symptoms. an arbitrary population of 181 adults who were between the ages of 18 and 25. completed a survey evaluating Facebook use, comparisons, and depression symptoms online. Participants reported stronger negative comparison inclinations on Facebook, according to paired samples t-tests, and higher comparison tendencies offline. According to hierarchical multiple regression, Facebook orientation along with direction did not predict any substantial unique variation in depression symptoms, while the offline approach and negative trajectory did. A general desire to compare in both environments may be the cause of depressed symptoms, according to the findings, which also suggest that Facebook comparison inclinations merely replicate offline comparison tendencies.

(Haferkamp & Krämer, 2011) This study focuses on how online profiles affect their recipients, against the backdrop of Festinger's Social Comparison Theory. In order to offer participants with digital online representations of either physically beautiful or ugly people and profiles of individuals with either high or poor professional achievement, two online experiments and qualitative interviews were undertaken. Although qualitative interviews initially provided little reason to believe that online profiles would serve as a foundation for comparison procedures, experiment findings showed otherwise. According to the first study, those who see gorgeous users' profiles have a more unfavorable perception of their bodies than people who view less attractive users' profiles. In the second research, male participants who viewed profiles of successful men estimated a greater gap between their present job position and an ideal vita than did men who viewed accounts of less prosperous people.

(Ozimek & Bierhoff, 2016) The purpose of this research study is to confirm the negative correlation between age and Facebook activity. Additionally, the idea that interest in social comparisons mediates the inverse relationship between age and Facebook activity is investigated on the basis of the premise that motivation in social comparisons declines with age. An inventory for determining social comparison orientation, demographic inquiries, and information on Facebook use were all included in the online questionnaire. Based on 335 participants, the results. They confirm the inverse relationship between age and Facebook activity frequency as well as the mediation of this relationship by comparison orientation. The evolutionary hypothesis is used to interpret these outcomes. This study provides fresh perspectives on the mediating function of social comparisons regarding the association between Facebook use and age.

(Vogel et al., 2014) The current collection of research aimed to investigate the effects on the self-esteem of contact with social media-based social comparison data that is both ongoing and intermittent. In two investigations, we evaluated this theory, The correlational study looked at the relationship between steadfast Facebook use and trait self-esteem in order to evaluate the hypothesized meditational paradigm. 145 undergraduate students from a Midwestern American institution participated in the study, 106 of them were female. We gathered data on participant usage patterns to evaluate Facebook use. We posed two questions to participants in order to gauge their propensity for upward and downward comparisons on Facebook. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was utilized to evaluate traits

of self-worth. The results actually showed that Facebook users had lower trait self-esteem, which was mediated by higher exposure to favorable social comparisons on social media. Experiment study 2 was designed to evaluate the impact of brief Facebook use on state self-esteem by manipulating the mediator social comparison on Facebook. Participants were 128 college students, 94 of whom were female, they took three minutes to read the website and were told to keep in mind information about the intended person. To assess momentary changes in self-esteem, we used the State Self-Esteem Scale. Respondents also provided important domain-specific evaluations of both themselves and the targeted person, rating their attractiveness, health, fitness, likeability, and popularity, in addition to our core measure of state self-esteem. Given that they were the most important for our adjustment, these characteristics were chosen. The results demonstrated that participants' state self-esteem and relative self-evaluations were less favorable when the intended person's profile included upward comparison information (such as a high-activity social network, and good habits), compared to when the target person's profile contained downward comparison data (such as a low activity social network, detrimental habits. The findings of Study 2 showed that after making brief social comparisons on Facebook, participants high in SCO had worsened self-perceptions, lower self-esteem, and more negative affect balance than their low-SCO counterparts. For participants performing control activities, the effects of SCO were not as significant or persistent.

(Schmuck et al., 2019) Therefore, this research examined the relationships between mobile SNS use, positive social comparison, self-esteem, and wellbeing. The study made use of longitudinal data from a two-wave panel survey. In Germany, survey data was gathered twice during the months of March/April 2018 and July/August 2018 (i.e., across a four-month period). Regarding gender, age, and education, a quota sample method was used. If a person had a smartphone with internet access and had used an SNS on it at least once before enrolling in our study, they were eligible to participate. As a consequence, 833 people participated in our study at Time 1 and 461 people participated at Time 2. Participants' ages ranged from 16 to 65. On a 6-point scale from "1 never" to "6 several times during the day," respondents stated how frequently they utilized SNSs on their cellphones. We modified a Lee (2014) scale to quantify upward social comparison on SNSs. Four items from the Rosenberg scale were used to gauge the self-esteem notion. On a 5-point Likert scale based on the Satisfaction with Life scale, wellbeing was evaluated. Results showed that whereas Instagram usage directly negatively impacted well-being over time, The usage of Facebook suggested upward social comparison, that over time hurt people's sense of self-worth and well-being. We also found evidence for reciprocal relationships between upward social comparison on social networking sites and self-esteem in a longitudinal scenario, in addition to well-being.

(Li, 2019) The study examines how envy and self-efficacy interact with depressed symptoms and upward social comparison on SNSs. Based on data gathered from 934 Chinese high school students, a moderated mediation model was constructed and experimentally investigated. The framework includes self-efficacy, signs of depression, enviousness, and upward social comparison on SNSs. Even though self-efficacy controlled both the immediate impact of upward social comparison on social networking sites on indications of depression and the mediating effect of enviousness in that relationship, a structural equation modeling analysis shows that enviousness almost mediates the correlation among upward social comparison on social networking sites and indications of depression.

Social Networking Usage and Appearance Related Social Media Consciousness among Emerging Adults

(Lee, 2014) The current study uses a sample of college students to analyses social comparison behavior on social networking sites, particularly Facebook. An online survey was used to gather information from a sample of 199 undergraduate students at Michigan State University who were enrolled in two communication courses. 38% women and 62% men made up the sample. The respondents' ages varied from 18 to 23. Questions were posed to determine the frequency of social comparison on Facebook, the likelihood that comparison may make you feel down, the number of friends on Facebook, and the expectation of other people's responses. Additional scales utilized include, Ellison et al.'s (2007) five questions were used to measure a person's level of Facebook use. Orientation towards social comparison measure created by Gibbons and Bunk (1999). Campbell et al. (1996) created twelve 5-point Likert scale measures to evaluate a person's self-concept. We utilized twelve 5-point Likert scale items created by Carleton, Norton, and Asmundson (2007) to evaluate a person's intolerance for uncertainty. To gauge an individual's degree of anxiety, nine 5-point Likert scale items developed by Costello and Comrey (1967) were employed. Seven items of the Rosenberg self-esteem scale were used to estimate self-esteem, and A scale created by Feinstein et al. (1975) was used to measure both private and public self-consciousness. They discovered that a person's social comparison frequency on Facebook is determined by their personality traits, namely their social comparison orientation, self-uncertainty, esteem, and consciousness. Facebook social comparison frequency and Facebook use intensity are found to be positively correlated. Additionally, we discover a correlation between the frequency of experiencing a bad emotion from comparison and the frequency of social comparison on Facebook. The study also reports further findings.

(Pop et al., 2021) This study sought to determine the association between social media use, perceived health, and the degree of body image satisfaction among first-year medical university students. Peer pressure and social media were also factors in body image. A survey was made available online to first-year medical students. Through open-ended questions, the questionnaire gathered sociodemographic and anthropometric information as well as information regarding students' perceptions of healthy lifestyles, the value of having a flawless body image, and their degree of happiness with their physical appearance. Data on the usage of social networks and how they influence students' opinions about their own body image was gathered through questions concentrating on their relationship with body image and the use of social media. The Body Consciousness Scale was also used for obtaining psychometric data. 77 students took part in total. We discovered that 64.90% of students studying medicine had a normal weight. According to students, a hectic schedule and the insufficient time to prepare nutritious meals, a lack of motivation, and a lack of resources were the primary obstacles to leading a healthy lifestyle. In both the Private Body Consciousness and Public Body Consciousness scores, women performed better. Physical exercise, eating fruits and vegetables, drinking water, and getting enough sleep were the essential components of a healthy lifestyle.

Hypotheses
H_0 - There is no significant relationship between social media use and ARSMC among emerging adults.
H_{01} - There is significant relationship between social media use and ARSMC among emerging adults.
H_{02}: There is no significant gender difference in ARSMC among emerging adults.

H_{03}: There is no significant gender difference in social networking usage among emerging adults.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

To assess the level of social networking usage and Appearance related social media consciousness among emerging adults.

Objective

1. To find the relationship between social media use and ARSMC among emerging adults.
2. To find whether there is a difference among males and females in their level social media use.
3. To find whether there is a difference among males and females in their level ARSMC.

Sample and its selection

In statistics, a population is any group of predetermined human or entities that are not humans, such as objects, locations, higher education institutions, historical periods, wages, etc., that are pertinent to the research. The population is made up of the bigger subject groups to whom scholars want to apply their findings. A population is defined as a set of people or things that share at least one trait that sets them apart from other categories (Hittleman & Simon, 1997). The target audience of the current study was taken into consideration to be emerging Adults.

The collection of data across the whole population is difficult and time-consuming as well. As a result, the researchers frequently choose samples from the community that accurately reflect the entire population. As a result, choosing a sample is a crucial part of performing a study of research. From all around the nation, the researcher chose 109 emerging adults between the ages of 18 and 29 (53 men and 56 women).

Technique of Sampling

The population considered for the present study is heterogeneous with respect to gender. The most typical kind of non-probabilistic sampling that is convenience sampling was used in the study, as it required choosing people who were readily accessible to the researcher and available.
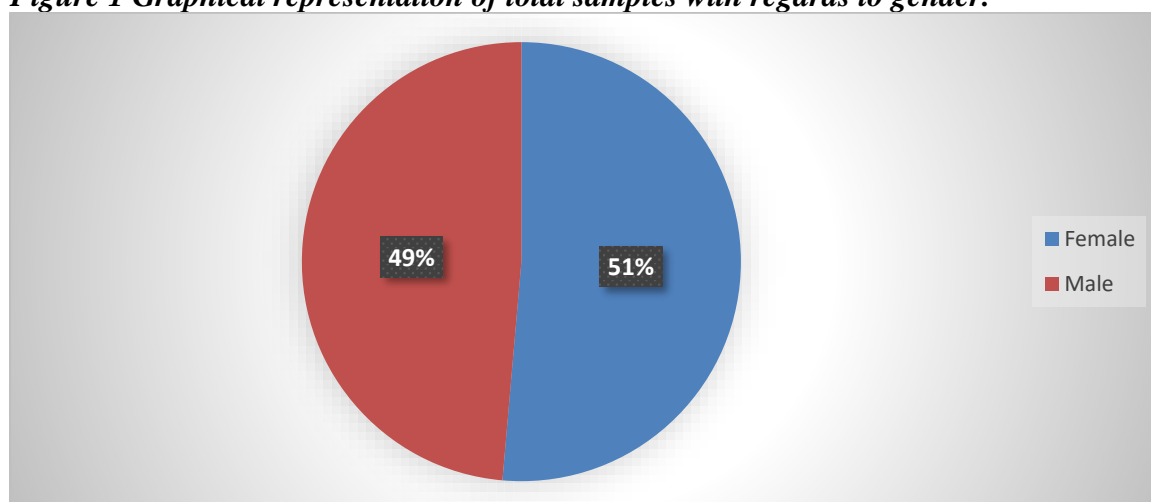
Table 1 Break-up of sample by gender

S. No.	Gender	N.
1.	Female	56
2.	Male	53
	Total	109

Table 1 shows the total sample to be of 109 individuals. Of these 56 were female and the other 53 were male. The graphical representation of the breakup of samples is given in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Graphical representation of total samples with regards to gender.

Description of tools

- **Demographic Details**

  Demographic details like age, gender, number of years of social media and types of social media used were collected based on the topic of study. Details of criteria for participation included an Emerging adult (18 – 29) of any gender studying in any university in India.

- **Social networking usage**

  Social networking usage is a 19-item questionnaire that measures social networking or social media use based on five factors, they are education which has seven items, Entertainment has four items, socialization with six items, informativeness with three items and the last one with four items is constraints. Each of these statements was aligned to be replied on Likert scale of 5 with the anchor ratings: Always as 5, Often as 4, Sometimes as 3, Rarely as 2, and never as 1.

  Reliability Analysis: The internal consistency of the items is evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The predictability coefficient Alpha often falls between 0 and 1, according to Gliem & Gilem (2003). According to George & Mallery's (2003) explanation of Cronbach's alpha, anything "above 0.80 is acceptable." Therefore, the current social networking scale Cronbach's alpha (=.830) suggests strong internal reliability. Therefore, according to our reliability study, the social networking usage assessment is consistent within itself.

  Validity: The educational, socialization, recreation, and informativeness aspects of social networking usage all showed greater amounts of positive correlations with the overall social networking usage rating, according to Pearson's coefficient of correlation, which was utilized to determine the amount of significance between factors. The interaction between these variables and the overall scores—is found to range from.593 to.894 as reported by Overbeek, Scholte, de Kemp, and Engels in 2007—suggest convergent validity of the social networking usage assessment.

- **The Appearance-Related Social Media Consciousness Scale**

  A testing instrument for measuring an individual's knowledge and consciousness of appearance-related information on social media platforms is called the Appearance-Related Social Media Consciousness Scale (ASMC Scale). It evaluates the degree to which users of social media participate in appearance-related behaviors, thoughts, and feelings. The ASMC Scale normally comprises of 13 questions that participants

score on a Likert scale to indicate how much they support or disagree with every assertion. The measure seeks to capture many elements of appearance consciousness on social media, such as comparing one's looks to others, seeking approval from likes and comments, and feeling under pressure to adhere to beauty standards.

Reliability and validity It is vital to understand the subjective social media views of adolescents because teenagers today regularly use social media (Rideout & Robb, 2018). Young women are particularly socialized to compare their physical appearance to conventional beauty standards and to associate physical attractiveness with self-worth (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; McKinley & Hyde, 1996). Social media presumably exacerbates these mental, emotional, and behavioral experiences due to its high levels of graphical quantifiability, convenience, publicness, and permanence (Nesi et al.) Furthermore, the whole spectrum of ASMC experiences has not yet been fully accounted for by existing metrics tracking social media appearance-related behaviors (such McLean et al. teenage boys' and girls' ASMC Scale scores are confirmed to be accurate and dependable.

Procedure

A web-based poll involving 117 people from the general public who were studying in different universities in India. Residing in India, between the ages of 18 and 29, and using social media were required for inclusion. Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and other social media sites were used to find participants, as well as the researcher's personal contacts. Researchers wanted to know how social media use affected people's inclination to compare themselves to others' appearances and their sense of self-worth, according to study advertising. Before completing the questionnaire measures, participants provided their informed consent. They were not paid for their participation. Amity Institute of Psychology & Allied Sciences, Noida, gave its approval to the study.

Statistical Analysis

Participants were divided based on gender, Female and male, which comprised individuals that were aged from 18 to 29 years who are also called emerging adults. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistics (Frequency, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) were used for assessing the sociodemographic, social networking usage variables and Appearance related social media consciousness. Tests for normality was done to check if the data was normally distributed. Correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between social media use and ARSMC. Student's t-tests were conducted to explore gender difference in social media use and ARSMC.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The process of interpretation is a showcase of results. The data collected, even if adequate, valid and reliable, serves no purpose unless it is systematized, tabulated, scientifically analyzed, intelligently interpreted and rationally concluded (Aggarwal, 1996). The process of interpretation is essentially one of the stating what the result shows. It calls for a critical examination of the result of one's analysis in the light of all limitations of the data gathering process.

The purpose of the present study was to find the relationship between social networking usage and appearance related social media consciousness among emerging adults in India. The sample of the study consist of 109 participants (53 male and 56 female Emerging adults) who are between the age group of 18 to 29, from various universities all over India.

For the collection of the data, The Social networking usage questionnaire (Gupta & Bashir, 2018) and the appearance related social media consciousness scale (Choukas-Bradley et al., 2020b) were employed.

Preliminary Analysis
Preliminary analysis would consist of the central measures of the variables.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistics	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
Age	109	11.0	18.0	29.0	23.569	0.2267	2.3663	5.599
ARSMC	109	78	13	91	48.00	1.696	17.704	313.444
Social Networking Usage	109	65	30	95	64.90	1.279	13.358	178.443

As shown in the above table, the mean age of the sample is 23.57 years.

The mean score of ARSMC is 48 and for social media is 64.90 with a standard deviation 17.70 and 13.35 respectively. The variance for ARSMC is 313.444 and social networking usage is 178.443. The standard error of mean for ARSMC is 1.69 and for social media is 1.27 which shows the that the scores on social networking usage are closely distributed around the population mean compared to ASRMC.

Figure 2
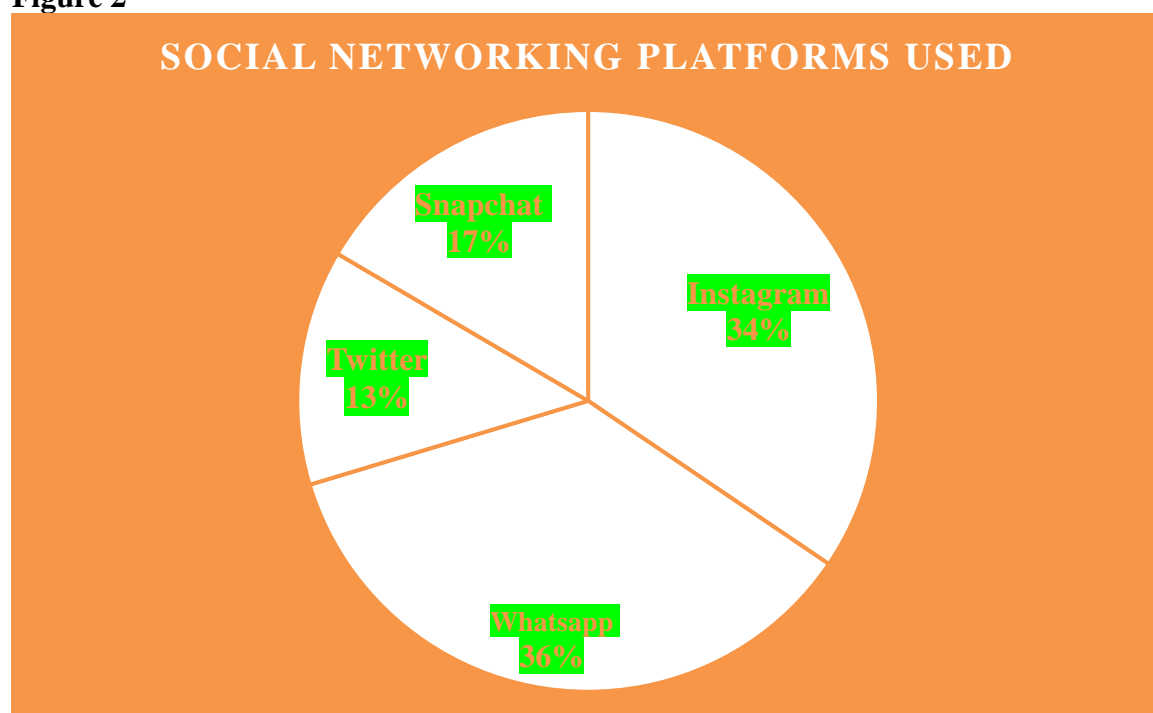
According to Figure 2 we can understand that the most used social Networking platforms are WhatsApp and Instagram.

Extended Analysis

Table 3 Displays the tests of normality for ARSMC and Social networking Usage

	Shapiro-Wilk		
Variables	**Statistics**	**Df**	**Sig.**
ARSMC	0.983	109	0.172
Social Networking Usage	0.987	109	0.388

Table 3 shows the tests of normality for ARSMC and Social Networking Usage using Shapiro – Wilk's test. The results were found to be $W (df = 109) = 0.983, p = 0.388$ for ARSMC, $W (df = 109) = 0.987, p = 0.172$ for social networking usage. The results confirm that the population is normally distributed for ARSMC and Social networking usage.

Table 4 Pearson's correlation on ARSMC and Social Networking Usage.

	ARSMC
Social networking Usage	0.446**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows Pearson's Correlation on ARSMC and Social Networking Usage. The results were found to be $r_s = 0.446$, n = 109, and $p = 0.000$. There is a significant positive relationship between ARSMC and Social Networking Usage, and moderate in strength.

Table 5 Mean and Standard deviation

		ARSMC		**Social networking usage**	
Gender	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Female	56	46. 23	15.931	65.79	12.530
Male	53	49.87	19.382	63.96	14.241

Table 6 Equality of variances and gender difference for social networking Usage and ARSMC.

	Test of equality		$t-$test for equality of means		
	F	Sig	t	Df	Sig (2- tailed)
ARSMC	3.348	0.070	-1.067	100.795	0.289
Social media use	1.307	0.255	0.711	107	0.479

Levene's test showed that the variance for ARSMC use were not equal, F (107) = 3.348, $p = 0.070$. As shown the above table 5 and 6, there was no significant difference for gender, t (100.79) =1.067, p=0.289, despite males (M=49.87 SD=19.382) attaining higher scores on ARSMC than females (M=46.23, SD=15.93). Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant gender difference in ARSMC among emerging adults is retained.

Levene's test showed that the variances for social networking usage were equal, F(107) =1.307, $p= 0.255$. Also, it is seen that there was no significant difference for gender, $t(107) = 0.711$, $p = 0.479$, despite females (M=65.79 SD=12.53) attaining higher scores on social

media use than males (M=63.96, SD=14.241). Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant gender difference in social networking usage emerging adults is retained.

DISCUSSION

The social media use and appearance-related social media consciousness (ASMC) construct is a unique one that this thesis proposes. It captures the propensity of emerging adults' thoughts and behaviors to reflect continuous awareness of whether they would appear appealing to a social media audience based on the amount of usage. The results suggests that the selected sample, on average, tend to prioritize or value their social networking usage more than their focus on appearance consciousness on social media. This could indicate that individuals place greater importance on maintaining social connections, engaging in online interactions, or being part of virtual communities rather than solely focusing on their social media appearance. While Females use social media more than male participants the ARSMC is more among men. "Capture and share the world's wonderful moments" is the slogan of Instagram, the world's largest image social media platform, and also the dominant visual communication concept in today's society. (Ma & Fan, 2022). The most used social networking site or application in the study was found to be WhatsApp and Instagram. Similarly, data was observed in several studies like (Pop et al., 2021) and (Öztürk & Öztürk, 2022) there were participants who actively used Instagram more compared to other platforms. Based on the normality test we can conclude that the data is been sampled from a distribution that is close to the normal gaussian ideal. As the sample were university student's majority of them fall under the emerging adult age range. There is a significant positive relationship between ARSMC and SNU. Several studies have found the same, according to findings by (Samra et al., 2022) Higher Problematic social media use scores were associated with unfavorable social media comparisons of oneself to others. Likewise in a study by (Özalp & Akbulut, 2022) A significant explanatory value was found for psychological symptoms (depression, anxiety, and stress), gender (female), and having an art education in relation to appearance-related social media consciousness. In the case of Facebook, (Jang et al., 2016) discovered a favorable correlation between the usage of Facebook and Social comparison orientation in Facebook. In a Post covid study by (Vall-Roqué et al., 2021) Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook were all utilized more often during the lockdown, and a statistically significant increase was observed in the percentage of women visiting appearance-focused Instagram profiles. (Schmuck et al., 2019) Also proved that there are relationships between upward social comparison on social networking sites. A mediation-based study was done by (Vogel et al., 2014) The results showed that Facebook users had lower trait self-esteem, which was mediated by higher exposure to favorable social comparisons on social media. A photo based social media use study was conducted by (Lee & Lee, 2021) which also revealed the amount of appearance-related social media photo activity is linked to higher levels of internalization and appearance comparison. Levene's test was employed to assess the equality of variances between male and female subjects in terms of ARSMC and social networking usage. The test indicated that the variance for ARSMC was not equal between the genders, while it was equal for social networking usage. Although male subjects scored higher on average for ARSMC and females scored higher on average for social networking usage. A paper by (Raymer, n.d, 2015) also found that Women are more likely than males to spend more time on Facebook as well as have more Facebook friends, Similar findings were observed by (Samra et al., 2022) and among teenagers by (Maheux et al., 2022). The t-test indicated that there was no significant difference in gender for both ARSMC and social networking usage.

Consequently, the result supports the hypotheses H_{02} and H_{03} which found that there is no significant gender difference in ARSMC and social networking usage among emerging adults. Most study related to Appearance consciousness, Appearance comparison, social media behavior, use and consciousness were done majorly among females. There are very few studies on males on similar topics. Also, with the rise in social movement for body positivity leading to more acceptance, regardless of one's size, sex, stature, or skin tone has majorly benefited women. (Fardouly et al., 2023) But most studies did not consider the possibility of male population engaging in Appearance consciousness, Appearance comparison, social media behavior, use and consciousness. This study permeates this research gap. Our findings proves that there is no significant gender difference in ARSMC and social networking usage among emerging adults. Based on review of literature, Male participants in the second study of (Haferkamp & Krämer, 2011) who were confronted with profiles of successful males, showed a higher perceived discrepancy between their current career status. (Lee, 2014) discovered that a person's social comparison frequency on Facebook is determined by their personality traits, namely their social comparison orientation, self-uncertainty, esteem, and consciousness. (Öztürk & Öztürk, 2022). Study that utilizes ARSMC scale social media awareness of appearance did not differ by gender. A strong correlation between students' degrees of social media knowledge and how frequently they utilize social media platforms was discovered. To conclude, there is no significant difference in gender for both ARSMC and social networking usage, these findings contribute to our understanding of the relationship between social media use and appearance-related social media consciousness among emerging adult.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Aim of the study was to assess the level of social networking usage and Appearance related social media consciousness among emerging adults. The objective was to the examine the relationship between social media use and appearance-related social media consciousness (ASMC). The analysis of the data using various statistical tests provided several key findings, the selected sample data accurately represented the population. There is moderate positive correlation between social networking usage and ARSMC, indicating that as social media usage increases, the level of appearance-related social media consciousness tends to increase as well. Finally, no significant difference in gender for both ARSMC and social networking usage. Overall, these findings contribute to our understanding of the relationship between social media use and appearance-related social media consciousness among emerging adults, suggesting that while social media usage and ASMC are moderately correlated, gender does not significantly influence these variables.

Limitations

- Lack of Additional Variables: The analysis focused solely on the relationship between social networking usage, appearance-related social media consciousness, and gender. Other potential factors, such as body image, cultural background, or self-esteem, were not mentioned. These variables could influence the relationship and can be considered in future studies.
- Longitudinal studies that follow participants over time would provide more robust evidence for understanding temporal associations.
- The social networking usage tool was limited to university students. Other tools to better understand social networking usage can be used in further studies.

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How to cite this article: Varghese, A. & Waraich, S. B. (2023). Social Networking Usage and Appearance Related Social Media Consciousness among Emerging Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *11(2),* 2402-2425. DIP:18.01.240.20231102, DOI:10.25215/1102.240