Research Paper

Comparing the Roles of Parental Influence and Social Media in Shaping Adults' Body Image Perception

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ABSTRACT

Focusing upon the psychological processes and mediators, this dissertation delves into the intricate link among social media exposure & people' opinions of their bodies. Previous studies have shown that social media has a negative impact on body image, but the exact psychological mechanisms by which this happens have received less attention. To fill this knowledge vacuum, this research uses psychological processes such as internalizing beauty standards, social comparison, and self-objectification to examine how social media exposure affects body image beliefs. Furthermore, as possible moderators of this association, we investigate individual variations in vulnerability to these processes, including age, gender, and self-esteem. To fully understand the elements impacting body image impressions in the context on social media, the study uses a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. This study's results may help in the fight against the detrimental impacts of social media for people's mental health and wellbeing and in the promotion of good body image via the creation of more tailored treatment.

Keywords: *Social Media, Body Image, Psychological Mechanisms, Social Comparison, Self-Objectification*

As people try to make sense of a world crowded with media depictions, family influences, and cultural norms, discussions around body image views have sprung up in modern culture. The rise of social media has given this conversation a fresh angle by providing a digital stage upon which one's sense of identity is both built and tested. At the same time, one's upbringing and the dynamics within one's family may impart certain beliefs and attitudes towards one's body image, and parental influence is a major component in this process. Recognizing the complex interaction between parental influence & social media, this dissertation seeks to investigate and contrast the ways in which these two powerful influences in modern society impact people's views of their own bodies. The impact of one's perspective of their own body is significant for both the individual and society as a whole.

One of the cornerstones in the formation of people's body image views is parental influence. The foundation for a child's self-perceptions is formed early on as they see and absorb their

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parents' actions, attitudes, and beliefs about their own body image. Parents' words, actions, and focus on outward appearance may have a profound effect on their children's self-perception, shaping their body image for better or worse. Individuals may learn to cope with social pressures and form positive body image beliefs in homes where there is open communication, support, & acceptance. On the other hand, people's interactions with and construction of their identities, particularly their body image, have been profoundly altered by the rise of social media. Numerous pictures, statements, and ideas about body image abound on social media, often endorsing unrealistic standards of beauty & flawlessness. Because people are constantly bombarded with meticulously staged images of beauty and success on social media, it may lead to feelings like inadequacy and self-comparison. There is a blurring of boundaries between reality and idealization due to the widespread use filters, editing tools, & digital manipulation.

Theoretical Framework

The discussion of how people see their bodies has taken on a new angle with the proliferation of social media in the last few years. Instagram, Facebook, & TikTok are just a few of the many sites that have given people unparalleled access to a wide range of body-image-related photos, messages, and stories. The promotion of idealized lifestyles of beauty standards via the curation and sharing of information by celebrities, social media influencers, and peers adds fuel to the fire of unrealistic expectations in body dissatisfaction. The impact of parents on their children's self-perceptions of their bodies has also been more discussed in recent years. The way parents behave, speak, and model attitudes about their bodies may have a profound effect on their children's perception and internalization of social beauty standards. Additionally, parenting methods, communication habits, and family dynamics may either mitigate or magnify the detrimental impacts of social influences on body image.

Although there is an increasing amount of study that looks at how parents and the media affect children's body image beliefs separately, there isn't much that compares and contrasts how these two elements work together. Developing comprehensive treatments and methods to promote good body image and mitigate the adverse impacts of societal pressures requires an understanding of the ways in which parental influence & social media overlap and interact in influencing people' opinions of their own bodies.

This research aims to add to our knowledge of the elements that impact people's self-conceptions by clarifying the complex relationship between parental influence & social media in forming perceptions of body image. In order to promote a culture that values body acceptance, diversity, & self-love in today's society, this study seeks to use empirical inquiry and analysis to guide programs and initiatives that are founded on evidence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Enhancing body image & eliminating linkages between poor self-esteem and bad eating habits and weight-related judgments may be as simple as reducing the amount of pressure that teenagers feel from their peers and family to maintain a certain physical look. (Lally, M. M. (2007)

Among female teenagers, there was a substantial association between social comparison to celebrities and BID and DT. Male BID was substantially linked to celebrity participation. Discussion centered on both theoretical and practical considerations. (Liao, Y. (2016)

Publication year and research design mitigated effects for several outcome factors. Results provide credence to the assumption that media portrayals of the thin-ideal body contribute to women's struggles with body image. (Hyde, J. S. (2008)

Perfectionism influences comparisons of one's looks, contrary to hypotheses linking it to body dissatisfaction. The results provide a replication and expansion of prior work concerning appearance comparison and offer encouragement for future testing involving the Tripartite Influence model; nevertheless, they are constrained by the requirement of various adjustments to the initially suggested models. (Coovert, M. (2002)

Neither age nor ethnicity was found to be a significant moderator for the relationships between body image and awareness or internalization and body image. We review the results and talk about their limits as well as their implications for theory, clinical practice, and future studies. (Thompson, J. K. (2005)

METHODOLOGY

Objective
- To examine the role of parental influence in shaping body image perceptions among individuals.
- To examine the impact of social media in shaping body image perceptions among individuals.
- To examine the relationship between parental influence, social media and body image perceptions among individuals.

Hypothesis
- There will be no significant impact of parental influence in shaping body image perceptions among individuals.
- There will be no significant impact of social media in shaping body image perceptions among individuals.
- There is no significant relationship between parental influence, social media and body image perceptions among individuals.

Tools
The perceived sociocultural influences on body image and body change questionnaire
There were 62 items in the original questionnaire, distributed over five scales. But the instrument was modified specifically for this study to concentrate on two scales: the Influence of the mother (13 things) and the Influence of the Father (13 items). A 6-point Likert scale was used by participants to rate their agreement with statements concerning remarks made about their personal appearance. The Influence of the mother scale demonstrated high internal consistency across its factors, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.67 to 0.82.

Social Media Use Scale
The Social Media Use Scale (SMUS) is a questionnaire that assesses social media use based on the Uses and Gratifications theory (UGT). According to the UGT, individuals utilize media to fulfill needs and achieve objectives including amusement, social engagement, and information seeking.

Body Shape Questionnaire

A self-reported assessment of body shape issues common to anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa is the Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ). The total possible score on the 34 items that make up the questionnaire ranges from 0 to 204 on a scale from 0 to 6 (most impaired) to 204 (least impaired). The Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ) has an Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) of 0.95 (95% CI: 0.93 to 0.96), indicating good test-retest reliability.

Sample

The study consisted of 104 people, both men and women. To choose the samples, a combination of purposeful and random sampling methods were applied. The age range of the participants was between the ages of 18 and 30.

Research Design

This study uses a correlational design, which aims to examine the relationship between social loafing, internal attribution and academic achievement in relation to birth order among young adults.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of all variables

	Parental Influence	Social media	Body Image Perceptions
Mean	66.50962	48.39423	49.76923
Standard Deviation	25.80095	19.28046	18.69439
N	104	104	104

Table 2: Pearson correlation between parental influence (Mother) and body image perceptions among individuals.

	Parental Influence (Mother)	Body Image Perceptions
Parental Influence (Mother)	1	
Body Image Perceptions	0.294567	1

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

Table 3: Pearson correlation between parental influence (Father) and body image perceptions among individuals.

	Parental Influence (Father)	Body Image Perceptions
Parental Influence (Father)	1	
Body Image Perceptions	0.216309	1

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

Table 4: Pearson correlation between social media and body image perceptions among individuals.

	Social media	Body Image Perceptions
Social media	1	
Body Image Perceptions	0.445885	1

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

Table 5: Impact of parental influence (Mother) on body image perceptions among individuals

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.294567
R Square	0.08677
Adjusted R Square	0.077817
Standard Error	17.95229
Observations	104

ANOVA					
	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance F*
Regression	1	3123.412	3123.412	9.691466	0.002403
Residual	102	32873.05	322.2848		
Total	103	35996.46			

Table 6: Impact of parental influence (Father) on body image perceptions among individuals

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.216309
R Square	0.04679
Adjusted R Square	0.037444
Standard Error	18.34105
Observations	104

ANOVA					
	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance F*
Regression	1	1684.259	1684.259	5.006802	0.027423
Residual	102	34312.2	336.3941		
Total	103	35996.46			

Table 7: Impact of social media on body image perceptions among individuals

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.445885
R Square	0.198813
Adjusted R Square	0.190959
Standard Error	16.81499
Observations	104

ANOVA					
	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance F*
Regression	1	7156.579	7156.579	25.31117	0.0000002
Residual	102	28839.88	282.7439		
Total	103	35996.46			

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a result, the Alternative Hypothesis (H_1), which states that there is a significant association, is accepted over the Null Hypothesis (H_0), which suggests that there is no significant relationship between parental influence (Mother) and body image judgments. Thus, the information lends credence to the idea that mothers' impact as parents does, in fact, have a notable correlation with people's judgments of their bodies.

The Null Hypothesis (H_0), which suggests that there is no meaningful connection between parental influence (Father) and views of one's physique, is rejected in light of the findings. In contrast, the Alternative Hypothesis (H_1), which proposes a noteworthy correlation between the impressions of one's body and the impact of one's parents (Father), is accepted.

There is a strong association between social media usage and body image views, contrary to the Null Hypothesis (H0), which was rejected based on the data. By contrast, we accept Alternative Hypothesis (H1), which states that there is a substantial correlation between social media use and how people see their own bodies. Based on the results, it can be concluded that social media use does, in fact, affect how people view their own bodies.

Understanding the complicated relationship between parental influence, social media use, and individuals' opinions of their own bodies was a key takeaway from the statistical studies. The descriptive data first showed how different people were when asked to rate the effect of parents, the influence of social media, and their own body image. The large standard deviations showed that there was a lot of variation in the answers, even if the average scores were moderate across all of these categories. This variation emphasizes the need of taking into account environmental influences and individual characteristics when studying problems connected to body image.

The correlation analyses revealed more about the correlations between parental influence, social media use, and body image judgments. Individuals' impressions of their own body image tend to match the amount of parental influence they experience, according to the positive connections between parental influence and body image perceptions. The positive relationship between social media use and how people view their bodies suggests that the more time people spend on these platforms, the more of an impact they have on how they view their bodies. Additionally, the results of the regression analysis showed that both parental influence and social media use had a significant effect on how people saw their own bodies. Regression coefficients and p-values that were statistically significant showed that social media use and parental influence (from either parent) significantly impact people's body image perceptions.

These results have several implications for studies, programs, and parental advice that try to help kids acquire positive body image traits while reducing the harmful effects of peer pressure. First, treatments aimed at improving body image should be taken into account both parental impact and social media use. It can be helpful to teach parents that they have a significant impact on their children's body image and to encourage open dialogue on body image in the home. Ultimately, this study adds to our knowledge of the complex interplay between parental influence, social media use, and self-perceptions of one's body. Together, academics, practitioners, and parents can tackle these concerns head-on to help people in today's culture have a healthy self-image and live happier, healthier lives.

Finally, this study's findings highlight the complicated relationship between parental influence, social media, and how people perceive their own bodies. Effective treatments to promote a healthy body image and mitigate the negative impacts of societal pressures must be developed with a thorough understanding of these dynamics.

However, few limitations of this research are Sample Bias, Self-Report Bias: The use of self-reported data may create biases, such as social desirability bias, in which individuals offer replies that they believe are socially acceptable rather than representing their genuine beliefs or actions. Measurement Limitations: The results gathered may be inaccurate or inconsistent due to the assessment instruments' lack of validity or reliability when evaluating social media exposure, parental impact, and body image judgments.

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