

The Impact of Social Networking Addiction on Body Image

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ABSTRACT

Social networking addiction is becoming more and more common, which has sparked worries about how it may affect mental health, especially body image dissatisfaction. This study looks at the connection between body image and social networking addiction in a sample of 120 people, 60 of whom are women and 60 of whom are men. According to the findings, there is a substantial negative link between body image satisfaction and social networking addiction ($r = -0.238$, $p = 0.009$), indicating that people who are more addicted to social media also typically have lower body image satisfaction. While body image satisfaction was equal for both sexes ($M = 9.98$ for males and $M = 9.87$ for females), there were gender disparities, with males reporting slightly higher social networking addiction ratings ($M = 84.48$, $SD = 27.78$) than females ($M = 77.77$, $SD = 24.28$). These results are consistent with earlier studies that found excessive usage of social media promotes body dissatisfaction, social comparison, and unrealistic beauty standards.

Keywords: *Social networking addiction, body image dissatisfaction, social media, self-objectification, social comparison, psychological well-being*

Social Networking Addiction

Social networking services (SNS) have become an essential part of daily life in today's digital world, changing how people interact, communicate, and perceive themselves. Through social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat, users can connect with others, share their experiences, and engage with a variety of digital content. Even though these platforms have numerous benefits, excessive use and compulsive participation have resulted in social networking addiction, a psychological disorder. The overpowering urge to use social media excessively, which frequently jeopardizes relationships, commitments in real life, and mental health, is the hallmark of this addiction. Sometimes referred to as problematic social media use.

Similar to other technology-related dependencies like internet and smartphone addiction, social networking addiction is becoming recognized as a behavioral addiction. A obsession with social media, an inability to regulate usage, withdrawal symptoms when access is restricted, and detrimental impacts on one's personal, academic, or professional life are common indicators of this illness. Social networking sites' sporadic reward systems, social

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validation mechanisms, and algorithm-driven engagement tactics that encourage prolonged use are major contributors to their compulsive character. These behaviors are reinforced by a cycle of quick satisfaction produced by elements such as likes, comments, shares, and push alerts.

(*Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2011,) Online platforms known as social networking sites (SNSs) let users make public profiles, interact with friends, and find people who have similar interests. SNS use has increased recently, which has sparked worries regarding addiction as a mental health condition. Through an analysis of usage patterns, motivations, user personalities, and adverse outcomes, this research review seeks to shed light on SNS addiction. It concludes that users mostly utilize social networking sites (SNSs) for social reasons, with introverts looking for social recompense and extraverts seeking social enhancement. Furthermore, characteristics like high narcissism and low conscientiousness are linked to higher consumption. Reduced participation in real-life communities, poor academic achievement, and strained relationships—all of which may be signs of addiction—are all detrimental effects of SNS use.

The psychological and societal effects of social networking addiction are highlighted by recent studies. Excessive usage of social networking sites has been linked in studies to increased stress, anxiety, depression, sleep problems, and low self-esteem. Additionally, social comparison is made worse by constant exposure to curated information and idealized online images, which leads to body dissatisfaction and a bad self-image, particularly in young people and teenagers. Concerns over body image and unattainable beauty standards have increased as a result of the rise of influencer culture and beauty trends on websites like Instagram and TikTok.

A behavioral dependency characterized by obsessive and excessive usage of social media platforms, social networking addiction can have negative psychological, social, and functional repercussions. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which suggests that people use social media to meet needs including entertainment, social engagement, and self-presentation, might be used to investigate this phenomenon. As explained by Problematic Internet Use Theory and Cognitive-Behavioral Theory (CBT), these needs can, however, result in addiction when they become excessive and counterproductive. These theories highlight the role that cognitive distortions, maladaptive coping mechanisms, and reinforcement mechanisms play in maintaining an addiction. Additionally, according to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), unmet psychological requirements for competence, connection, and autonomy may be the root cause of social media addiction. Continuous social media use, motivated by instant feedback (likes, comments, and shares), creates a vicious cycle of compulsive behavior that leads to symptoms like mood swings, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse—all of which are components of addiction according to Griffiths' Six Components Model of Addiction.

Body Image

A complicated psychological notion, body image refers to how individuals perceive, consider, and feel about their physical attributes. It encompasses both subjective and objective evaluations of a person's physical attributes, including weight, size, shape, and attractiveness. Body image is a dynamic and ever-evolving concept that is influenced by a complex interplay of individual experiences, cultural norms, media representations, and societal expectations. While a poor body image can lead to low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and eating

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disorders, a positive body image is associated with self-acceptance, confidence, and general well-being.

Because of the media's and social media's overwhelming influence, body image issues have become more common in today's culture. The pressure to live up to socially prescribed standards of beauty has increased due to the promotion of unattainable beauty standards, which are commonly displayed through manipulated photos, filters, and influencer culture. Because people frequently compare their appearance to digitally controlled and mostly unachievable photos, social comparison, particularly among teenagers and young adults, exacerbates body dissatisfaction and self-criticism. According to research, a high level of exposure to digitally altered content causes distorted self-perceptions, anxiety connected to appearance, and body image issues.

The concept of body image is ingrained in psychological theories that show how people evaluate themselves through social influences, such as the Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) and the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954). According to the Social Comparison Theory, people compare themselves to others to assess their worth and beauty, which commonly leads to feelings of inadequacy. According to objectification theory, people—women in particular—absorb appearance-focused ideas from outside sources and view their bodies as objects that can be assessed and judged. These theories help explain why issues with body image have increased in the current digital era, when constant exposure to filtered and idealized photos on social media platforms reinforces unattainable beauty standards.

(Sonia David, Dr. Uma Warriar, 2021) The review explores the state of the art in the field of research on teenage body image problems, pointing out a knowledge gap about the different aspects of body image. The study focuses on three main areas by examining literature from 2018 to 2021 using databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and ScienceDirect: comorbidity, body image dissatisfaction, and the prevalence of body image problems. Furthermore, it assesses the variables and procedures used in 34 chosen investigations. The results highlight the need for more research on body image in light of adolescents' changing experiences and suggest the creation of theoretical frameworks to advance knowledge in this area.

Dissatisfaction with one's body has significant psychological and social repercussions that impact one's self-worth, mental health, and general quality of life. Furthermore, research indicates that those who have a negative body image may become socially isolated, lose confidence, and be more vulnerable to peer pressure and cyberbullying.

The Gendered-Specific Impact of Social Networking Addiction on Body Image

Social networking addiction has a substantial, albeit distinct, impact on body image across genders, with individuals dealing with a range of demands, beauty standards, and difficulties with self-perception. Although appearance-related problems affect both men and women, the details of these problems are influenced by cultural norms, media portrayals, and societal expectations. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat are essential in promoting behaviors focused on social comparison, creating gender-specific body ideals, and upholding unattainable beauty standards. These challenges are made worse by the compulsive nature of social media use, which makes users more vulnerable to mental health problems, self-objectification, and body dissatisfaction.

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The Effects on Women and Adolescent Girls

Women are among the groups most vulnerable to the negative effects of social networking on body image, particularly young women and adolescent girls. Social media's prevalent representation of thin, toned, and seemingly perfect female figures creates a standard of beauty that many people find challenging to meet. By increasing exposure to carefully chosen, edited, and frequently digitally enhanced photos, social networking addiction intensifies this pressure and strengthens the link between beauty and self-worth as well as body dissatisfaction.

- **Social Comparison and Beauty Standards:** Women frequently compare their bodies to those of celebrities, models, and influencers on social media, according to the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954). Negative self-perception and body dissatisfaction are fostered by the ubiquity of Photoshopped and unrealistic beauty depictions. Increased exposure to fitness and beauty-related content on social media has been linked in studies to eating disorder tendencies, anxiety, and low self-esteem.
- **Self-Objectification and the "Male Gaze":** The Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) shows how women adapt to social demands to be evaluated based on their appearance all the time. Self-objectification is facilitated by social networking sites, which make women view their bodies as things that other people can examine and consume. Women are more likely to engage in body surveillance, excessive self-scrutiny, and unhappiness with their natural forms as a result of the number of likes, comments, and followers, which promote appearance-centered validation.
- **The Impact of Filters, Editing Applications, and Influencer Trends:** Women now have an unattainable beauty standard due to the widespread use of photo-editing software, beauty filters, and AI-enhanced photos. According to research, adolescent girls who use filters and editing tools regularly are more likely to experience body image issues and feel unsatisfied with their unaltered appearance. Influencer culture also perpetuates unrealistic body expectations by endorsing dieting, fitness fads, cosmetic treatments, and weight-loss goods.

The Influence on Males and Young Boys

Despite the fact that body image problems have historically been associated with women, men's impressions of their bodies have recently been more impacted by the rise of social networking addiction. Men's and teenage boys' body dissatisfaction, muscle dysmorphia, and compulsive fitness activities have increased as a result of social networking sites' (SNS) portrayal of hyper-masculine, muscular, and athletic male physiques.

- **The Emergence of the "Muscular Ideal":** Men are expected to have strong, lean, and athletic bodies, while women are under pressure to be toned and slender. Social media celebrities, fitness influencers, and male models frequently have extremely strong bodies with little body fat, setting a norm for physical appearance that is difficult to achieve on one's own. Men now feel the need to build muscle to be accepted by others and be viewed as handsome, which has led to a rise in social comparisons based on muscle.
- **Muscle Dysmorphia and the Urge to "Bulk Up":** Muscle dysmorphia, sometimes known as "bigorexia," is a growing issue among young men who utilize strict dieting, extreme exercise, and sometimes steroids to attain an overly masculine physique. The promotion of extreme bodybuilding, fitness culture, and gym-centric lifestyles by social media platforms—especially Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok—reinforces the idea that having a muscular body is essential for success and masculinity. According to research, males who closely follow fitness gurus are more likely to have compulsive gym attendance and body dissatisfaction.

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- The Influence of Influencer Culture and Fitness Trends: Men are more likely to follow fitness, lifestyle, and self-improvement figures than women, who typically engage with beauty and fashion influencers. Male body image has become unrealistic due to the rise of male fitness gurus who promote strict diets, muscle-building supplements, and strenuous exercise. The pressure to meet these standards can lead to restrictive eating, excessive exercise, and mental health problems since men feel inadequate when they don't have the "perfect figure."

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Addiction to social networking has a major effect on body image, particularly among young people. Overuse exposes users to unattainable beauty standards, which can result in disordered eating patterns, low self-esteem, and body dissatisfaction. This study examines psychological theories, empirical research, and new developments in the field. It looks at moderating factors including gender, self-esteem, and psychological susceptibility as well as mechanisms like social comparison, appearance feedback, and beauty standards. Some earlier research on the subject of social media and body image, both in India and abroad, is listed below:

D. Kuss & M. Griffiths (2011), Social networking sites (SNSs) are online communities where members can share interests, make profiles, and communicate with friends in real life. They are now a worldwide consumer phenomenon, and anecdotal evidence indicates that addiction might be a mental health issue. By describing usage patterns, motivations, personalities, negative repercussions, potential addiction, specificity, and comorbidity, this literature review seeks to offer empirical insight into SNS addiction. The findings indicate that social networking sites are mostly utilized for social reasons, with introverts using them for restitution and extraverts for social enhancement.

Bhawini Vasudeva (2013), This study examines whether there is a gender difference in the effects of body image dissatisfaction on self-esteem. The Body Shape Questionnaire and the Rosenberg self-esteem measure are used in this study, which has 220 participants. The findings indicate a negative relationship between self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction. While men's self-esteem scores are higher, women's mean scores are higher.

Ryding, C. F. & Kuss, D. J. (2019), Passive and appearance-focused SNS use are especially important in body image dissatisfaction, according to a systematic search of 40 studies. Comparisons based on appearance were also discovered to be a powerful mediator. Regular use of social networking sites has been linked to an increased risk of developing body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), underscoring the need to comprehend the connection between SNS use and body image.

Hogue & Mills (2019), According to the study, young adult women's poor body image can worsen when they interact with attractive female peers on social media. Participants' negative body image increased when they interacted with an attractive peer, but not when they interacted with a family member. This implies that young adult women's body image issues may be exacerbated by upward appearance comparisons on social media.

Eve Knowles et al. (2021), Instagram's Psychosocial Effect on Women's Body Image. The impact of Instagram on young women's body image is the main topic of this study. The sociopsychological effects of Instagram on women's perceptions of their bodies are the focus of this study. Qualitative semi-structured interviews with young girls between the ages of 11

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and 25 will be used. To shield young female populations from the detrimental impacts of Instagram on body image, the results will be examined using an interpretive phenomenological analysis framework and shared with different stakeholders.

Rafael Delgado-Rodríguez et al. (2022), This study investigates the relationship between addiction to social networking sites (SNS) and body dissatisfaction (BD) via two mediators: internalization of beauty ideals and awareness of appearance pressures. A serial mediation model that controlled for body mass index (BMI) was evaluated on a sample of 368 female college students. The findings demonstrated that the connection between SNS addiction and BD was separately mediated by awareness and internalization. Addiction to social networking sites also raised awareness of appearance pressures, which in turn led to a deeper internalization of beauty standards and, eventually, BD. These results underline how sociocultural influences influence body image issues and show the indirect connections between SNS addiction and BD. SNS addiction → Awareness → BD; SNS addiction → Internalization → BD; SNS addiction → Awareness → Internalization → BD.

R. Mehta, L. Sharma (2023), According to the study, medical students in Delhi, India's eating habits and impressions of their bodies are greatly influenced by the media. In cross-sectional research of 370 students, it was discovered that 21.1% had disordered eating attitudes and 35.4% had problematic body image judgments. Models and athletes were the main suppliers of standards of beauty, demonstrating the impact of the media. It was discovered that men were more vulnerable to media impact. According to the findings, media outlets should be held accountable for avoiding false body ideals and launching preventative and instructional programs to encourage better eating habits and body image perceptions.

T. Dwivedi and A. Chavan (2023), Frequent usage of social media can have a detrimental effect on one's sense of value, mental health, and self-esteem, which can result in disordered eating patterns and problems with one's self-image. Social media can become addictive, according to research conducted between 2012 and 2022, particularly for people who have behavioral issues like gambling or gaming. Depression, psychological distress, and a drop in self-confidence might result from this. Spending time on social media can also have an impact on someone's self-esteem because it can be interpreted as a form of validation, which can change how they see themselves.

Laurence Blanchard (2023), The relationship between teenage mental health, including body image, self-esteem, stress, and nutritional consequences, and social media use is examined in this systematic study. Social media use was found to be significantly positively correlated with anxiety, disordered eating patterns, body dissatisfaction, and depressive symptoms in 21 research. Moderators included anxiety, self-esteem, and body image. The report recommends legislative measures to lessen adverse impacts on teenage eating habits and body image. Future studies should examine measurement techniques, influencer roles, causal pathways, and effects connected to equity.

S. Sharma and P. Sharma (2023), Adolescent mental illness is a health issue that has gotten worse since the 2019 coronavirus epidemic. According to a study done in India, teens between the ages of 14 and 23 who use social media excessively report feeling more stressed, anxious, and depressed. Additionally, the study found that teens frequently participate in obsessive behaviors that interfere with their sleep and negatively impact their general health. The results emphasize the necessity of actions to lessen social media's negative effects and support Indian adolescents' mental health.

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Niharika Sharma (2024), The study investigates how social media affects young people's perceptions of their bodies and finds that exposure to celebrities' and influencers' unattainable body standards causes social anxiety and body dissatisfaction. Because digitally altered photographs are so common, they serve to perpetuate skewed body norms and reduce awareness of the diversity of the natural body. Promoting wellbeing and a good body image requires addressing these detrimental impacts.

Kaur, P., & Sharma, S. (2024), The study looks into the negative relationship between body satisfaction and exposure to body images in the media. It was discovered that the experimental group experienced higher levels of body dissatisfaction and the control group experienced lower levels as a result of being exposed to Instagram photos representing hegemonic beauty ideals. The study also discovered that the association between exposure content and body dissatisfaction was impacted by the internalization of gender-specific beauty standards and upward social comparisons. The results point to the necessity of psychoeducational initiatives to address critical engagement with social media representations of beauty norms and advocate body diversity as a substitute for positive body satisfaction material.

Mironica A, Popescu C, George D, et al. (2024), According to a comprehensive evaluation of 25 research, 60% of young adult men and 70% of young adult women express unhappiness with their bodies, which increases the likelihood that they may seek surgery. Beauty impressions are further shaped by societal standards, celebrity influence, and social media's emphasis on visual aesthetics. Nonetheless, ethical issues around deceptive advertising, unattainable beauty standards, and patient privacy continue to exist, highlighting the necessity of tactics to support positive body image and wise decision-making in the digital era.

Nayan Sinha, Pradeep S. Patil, Imyarila Longkumer, and Yatika Chadha (2024), This review examines the prevalence of body image dissatisfaction (BID) in rural India, focusing on cultural quirks and a range of age groups. It highlights the necessity of integrated mental health interventions by highlighting the connection between BID and psychiatric comorbidities such as anxiety and depression. To encourage healthy body image and mental well-being, the evaluation recommends community-driven initiatives, culturally appropriate mental health policy, and focused healthcare training. It seeks to create all-encompassing plans for stronger, healthier communities.

Nancy Yang & Bernard Crespi (2025), By establishing virtual environments where conventional social signs are separated, social media has completely changed how people connect. This comprehensive review investigates its effects on mental illnesses that affect the social brain, namely psychotic spectrum disorders and self-identity disorders like eating disorders, body dysmorphic disorder, and narcissism. By facilitating a modified and frequently skewed self-perception, social media may worsen mentalistic and somatic delusions, according to a new conceptual model called *Delusion Amplification by Social Media*. People who are socially isolated in real life and have an inconsistent self-concept may use social media to create and maintain a false sense of who they are. Furthermore, by interfering with shared reality testing and obfuscating the distinction between self and others, social media's disembodied and isolative qualities may exacerbate psychotic spectrum diseases.

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Palak Singhal (2025), Social media sites like Facebook and Instagram promote idealized pictures of strong, manly bodies for men and slender proportions for women, making it harder for people to value their bodies in the digital era. The purpose of this study was to evaluate young adults' body image in about their use of social media and their anxiety about receiving a poor review. The findings indicated that fear of a negative appraisal and body image were negatively correlated, with males and females exhibiting different levels of fear and body image.

Rationale

The way people communicate has changed as a result of social networking sites, which both promote friendships and expose users to an excessive amount of romanticized imagery. Important questions concerning social networking addiction's effects on body image are brought up by the steady stream of meticulously chosen content and obsessive usage patterns. A vital component of mental health and self-esteem is body image, especially for young adults who use social media the most. Overuse of social networking sites promotes comparisons with unachievable beauty standards, which can result in unhealthy behaviors such as disordered eating, distorted self-perceptions, and body dissatisfaction. Research on the intricate relationship between social networking addiction and body image is still lacking, despite the problem's growing prevalence. By examining the magnitude of this influence, this study aims to close this gap and provide guidance for tactics that support responsible internet use and a positive body image.

METHOD OF STUDY

Objective:

To evaluate how social networking addiction affects people's perceptions of their bodies.

Hypothesis:

- **H1:** Higher social networking addiction leads to more negative body image.
- **H2:** Women are more affected by social media addiction in terms of body image than males are.

Variables:

There are two variables:

1. **Social Networking Addiction:** The excessive and compulsive use of social media platforms that disrupts daily life and results in psychological suffering, decreased productivity, and impaired social functioning.
2. **Body Image:** The way a person feels, thinks, and perceives their physical appearance. It includes behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements such as body satisfaction, physical attribute-related self-esteem, and the impact of cultural and societal beauty standards.

Tools:

- **Social Networking Addiction Scale:** Shahnawaz et al. created the 21-item Social Networking Addiction Scale (SNAS) in 2020. It is based on Griffiths' six-factor theory of addictive behavior and evaluates social media addiction using salience, mood modulation, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse. A 5-point Likert scale, with "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" as the extremes, is used to answer each question. The scale can be used to evaluate the degree of social network addiction in

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people as well as to investigate the dangers and possible predictors of this type of addiction.

- **Body Image Satisfaction Scale:** The Body Image Satisfaction Rating Scale is adapted from The Body-Image Questionnaire (BIQ), An Extension, and measures a person's level of satisfaction with their perception and body image based on several body image evaluation dimensions. It includes several items that assess behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements of body image. It uses a 5-point Likert scale, with "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" as the extremes, to gauge body image satisfaction and assess self-perception, body image concerns, and the psychological effects of body image on overall wellbeing.

Sample:

120 young adults from Amity University participated in the study. Convenience sampling was used to select the participants.

Research Design:

The research is conducted using a quantitative approach. Data is collected from participants at a single moment in time using standardised self-report questionnaires.

Procedure:

To examine the relationship between young adults' body image and social networking addiction, this study used a quantitative methodology. Print survey forms with standardized items like the Body Image Satisfaction Scale (BISS) and the Social Networking Addiction Scale (SNAS) were used to gather data. Convenience sampling was used to select participants, and hand recording of replies was done. Microsoft Excel was used to organize and evaluate the responses after the data was collected. Correlational analysis and descriptive statistics were employed to investigate the connections among the variables. Using the p-value, the correlation's statistical significance was ascertained.

RESULT

The analysis conducted in this chapter aims to confirm the hypothesis that was discussed in the section on hypotheses in the previous chapter. Here, the variables are A1: Social Networking Addiction, A2: Body Image.

Table 1: Shows the Descriptive Data for the Variables

VARIABLE	N	GENDER	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
Social Networking Addiction	60	Male	84.4833	27.78397
	60	Female	77.7667	24.27831
Body Image Satisfaction	60	Male	9.9833	9.08620
	60	Female	9.8667	9.0656

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for Social Networking Addiction and Body Image Satisfaction across gender groups. There were 120 individuals in the sample, 60 of whom were men and 60 of whom were women. Males were more likely than females to be addicted was 84.88 (SD = 27.78) for the males and 77.77 (SD = 24.28) for females. The mean score for body image satisfaction was 9.87 (SD = 9.07) for the females and 9.98 (SD= 9.09) for males. With minor differences in standard deviation, the similarity in mean scores suggests that both sexes expressed equal degrees of contentment with their bodies. These results imply

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that there are few gender variations in body image satisfaction, but they do point to possible gender-based differences in social networking addiction. The statistical significance of these differences will be investigated by additional inferential analysis.

Table 2: Shows the Correlation between Social Networking Addiction and Body Image

		Body Image	Social Networking Addiction
Body Image	Pearson Correlation	1	-.238
	Sig. (2 Tailed)		0.009
	N	120	120
Social Networking Addiction	Pearson Correlation	-.238	1
	Sig. (2 Tailed)	0.009	
	N	120	120

Table 2 shows the Correlation between Social Networking Addiction and Body Image. A statistical test known as the Pearson correlation was used to determine whether or not there is a relationship between body image satisfaction and social networking addiction. The results indicated a negative relationship ($r = -0.238$, $p = 0.009$), meaning that body image satisfaction tends to decrease as social networking addiction increases. This result is statistically significant because the p-value (0.009) is less than 0.05. To put it simply, the data suggests that people who spend more time on social media may feel less satisfied with their body image, but the strength of this relationship is small, suggesting that other factors may also be at play.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study shed light on the connection between body image and social networking addiction, emphasizing the possible harm that excessive social media use may do to people's body satisfaction. The findings show a statistically significant negative relationship between body image and social networking addiction ($r = -0.238$, $p = 0.009$), indicating that body image satisfaction tends to decline as social networking addiction rises. The correlation value is somewhat low, though, suggesting that although there is a relationship, views of body image may also be influenced by factors other than social networking use.

The study also looked at gender disparities. Males had a somewhat higher mean score for social networking addiction ($M = 84.48$, $SD = 27.78$) than females ($M = 77.77$, $SD = 24.28$). This result might indicate that the sample's male participants reported higher degrees of social media dependence or participation. Gender did not significantly influence body image satisfaction in this particular sample, though, since the mean scores for body image satisfaction were almost the same for males ($M = 9.98$, $SD = 9.09$) and females ($M = 9.87$, $SD = 9.07$).

The widespread exposure to idealized beauty standards on social media platforms could be one reason for the unfavorable relationship between body image and social networking addiction. Unrealistic body ideals are frequently promoted by social networking sites, especially those with visual content like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat. This increases social comparison and unhappiness with one's looks. Regular exposure to photos that have been filtered and altered could lead to skewed judgments of one's body and reinforce negative self-perceptions.

CONCLUSION

The impact of social networking addiction on body image was the focus of this study, which found a substantial negative association between the two variables ($r = -0.238$, $p = 0.009$). The findings imply that, although the degree of this association is still moderate, lower body image satisfaction is linked to higher levels of social networking addiction. Gender variations in addiction to social networking were also noted, with men reporting slightly greater levels of addiction ($M = 84.48$, $SD = 27.78$) than women ($M = 77.77$, $SD = 24.28$). Nonetheless, the two genders' body image satisfaction scores were almost the same ($M = 9.98$ for men and $M = 9.87$ for women), suggesting that social networking addiction has a comparable impact on body image for both sexes.

The findings support existing literature suggesting that social media platforms contribute to negative body image perceptions through mechanisms such as social comparison, exposure to unrealistic beauty standards, and appearance-focused content. However, the relatively weak correlation suggests that other psychological and environmental factors also play a role in shaping body image. While social networking addiction may contribute to body dissatisfaction, it is not the sole determinant, and future research should explore additional moderating variables.

Limitations:

- **Sample Size and Generalizability:** Although the study's sample size of 120 participants is adequate for statistical analysis, it might not be typical of the general population. To increase generalizability, larger and more varied samples should be used in future research.
- **Self-Report Bias:** The study used self-reported measures for body image satisfaction and social networking addiction, which could be skewed by self-assessment or social desirability bias. It's possible that participants overreported or underreported their perceptions of their bodies and social media use.
- **Cross-Sectional Design:** Because of the study's cross-sectional design, it was not possible to determine a causal link between body image and social networking addiction. To find out if a social networking addiction causes body dissatisfaction over time, a longitudinal study might be more useful.
- **Lack of Content-Specific Analysis:** Social media content types (e.g., fitness content, beauty influencers, peer interactions) were not distinguished in the study. Body image may be more strongly impacted by some content than by others.
- **Limited Examination of Psychological Variables:** Although the study concentrated on the relationship between body image and social networking addiction, it neglected to investigate mediating factors that might have an impact on the relationship that was observed, such as personality traits, social comparison tendencies, or self-esteem.

Implications:

The study's conclusions have a number of significant ramifications for people, mental health providers, and legislators:

- **Education and Awareness:** Because social networking addiction and body image are negatively correlated, educational initiatives should raise awareness of the possible dangers of excessive social media use, especially with regard to unattainable beauty standards and body dissatisfaction.
- **Healthy Social Media Use Interventions:** Mental health professionals can create interventions that promote social media use that is balanced and aware. Techniques like

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self-compassion exercises, digital detox programs, and cognitive restructuring can help lessen the negative impacts of excessive social media use.

- **Social Media Policies:** By encouraging body diversity, enforcing content warnings for photos that have been altered or filtered, and minimizing algorithmic reinforcement of unattainable beauty standards, social networking sites can help minimize harmful content.
- **Parental and Educational Guidance:** Parents and schools should teach children about the possible effects of social media on body image and self-esteem while promoting critical thinking about the information they access online.
- **Mental Health Screening and Support:** Since mental health conditions like anxiety and depression are associated with body dissatisfaction, screening people who use social media excessively for body image issues may aid in early diagnosis and treatment.

Suggestions For Future Research

- **Longitudinal Studies:** To investigate the long-term impacts of social networking addiction on body image, future research should use longitudinal designs. This would make it easier to identify causal links and ascertain whether extended use of social media causes long-term body dissatisfaction.
- **Incorporating Psychological Mediators and Moderators:** To learn more about how social networking addiction affects body image, future research should examine other factors like self-esteem, perfectionism, social comparison tendencies, and appearance-based rejection sensitivity.
- **Comparative Analysis Across Different Social Media Platforms:** Future studies could look into how different social media platforms affect body image in different ways because they encourage different kinds of content (for example, Instagram prioritizes pictures whereas Twitter is text-based).
- **Analyzing Content-Specific Effects:** To identify the social media elements that most contribute to body dissatisfaction, future studies should examine the effects of particular social media content types, such as advertisements, peer-generated content, and influencers in the fitness and beauty industries.
- **Gender-Specific and Cultural Variations:** Future studies should examine if different social influences have distinct effects on men and women, even though this study found few gender differences in body image satisfaction. Furthermore, cross-cultural research may shed light on how cultural norms affect the connection between body image and social networking addiction.
- **Intervention-Based Research:** Future research should test the effectiveness of interventions designed to reduce the negative effects of social networking addiction on body image. Experimental studies could assess whether limiting social media usage, promoting body-positive content, or implementing cognitive-behavioral strategies can improve body image satisfaction.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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