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## Does the use of Social Media Have an Impact on Young Adults Body Identification?

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DOES THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA HAVE AN IMPACT ON YOUNG ADULT'S  
BODY IDENTIFICATION?

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Glycell Robledo Felix  
Ashley Olmedo  
May 2023

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## ABSTRACT

The present study investigated how social media use has an impact on Body Identification among Young Adults. Both female and male participants (N=104) from the ages 18-30 were randomly sent a link that would take them directly to a survey. The survey took approximately five minutes for the participants to complete. Participants were asked a set of questions regarding what they saw on social media that made them feel insecure about their body image. Many of the participants responded that the main content that would make them feel dissatisfied with their body on social media was about fitness, cosmetic surgery, hourglass figures, and unattainable body goals. The study demonstrated that both male and females did experience body dissatisfaction, however, females had a higher percentage. Although social media has a great influence in today's generation, more research is needed to better understand the impact of social media on body dissatisfaction.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Problem Formulation

Social media is playing an outsized role in many lives of young adults nowadays. Emerging adults from ages 18-30 averagely spend 6.63 hours on social media daily to interact with their peers and exchange feedback on their messages and posts (Vannucci et al., 2017). Social interactions over the internet or simply social media are widespread among young adults as well, where approximately 90% of young adults use the internet, and two or more social media sites daily (Perrin, 2015). Young adults and other age groups use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok as a tool for social interactions (Berryman et al., 2018). Any website that allows people to socially interact is considered a social media website, notable examples include Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter; gaming sites and virtual worlds; video sites such as YouTube; dating sites and blogs (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). These sites not only allow people to stay connected with individuals who are local and international but also provide opportunities for people to become influencers, build relationships, educate, increase their knowledge, and create or expand businesses.

There are positive influences that may be obtained from the use of social media, which is why most young adults choose to access their platforms. As common and useful that the use of social media may be, it also has a downside

which needs to be addressed. Because of the vulnerability they are experiencing with the transitional period from adolescence to adulthood, young adults are working on developing new skills towards their independence (Rounsefell et al., 2019). Young adults are also adapting to the responsibility of making positive lifestyle choices and may turn to their social media platforms to gain inspiration. With the image-based marketing tactics, influencer ambassadors and endorsements, social media may exploit young adults to body image dissatisfaction by creating a fictional perception of beauty and illusion of health (Rounsefell et al., 2019). Social media users can manage which influencers they follow and subscribe to. When young adults begin to follow and view the content influencers post, they begin to reflect and compare their self-image to the influencers. As social media began to gain popularity in the mid 2000's, it was discovered that young adult's poor mental health increased 83% from 2008 to 2018 (NSDUH, 2019). For this reason, it is important that young adults become aware of the nature of social media sites, and that not all platforms are healthy environments for them (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011).

Recent research indicates that there are frequent online expressions of offline behaviors, such as bullying, appearance shaming, and sexual experimentation, that have introduced problems such as cyberbullying, privacy issues, internet addiction, sleep deprivation, and "sexting" (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). These types of social behaviors are mechanisms that begin to trigger young adult's self-esteem and self-image. As young adults are

transitioning into the adulthood stage, they face a lot of pressure to make positive lifestyle choices to create a reputation that will gain the approval of others. They are also adapting to the biological developments, such as physical changes and hormonal changes that they experienced during their adolescent stage. Young women who are sensitive about their body image tend to have lower self-esteem and utilize social media as an outlet to develop self-distortion based on the reality of others (Richards et al., 2015). Studies have shown that young adults are aware of the impact that social media has on their body image, yet they continue to seek external validation and approval (Rounsefell et al., 2019).

Findings from this study, will help the social work profession to be able to prevent, intervene, and educate young adults about the risks that social media may bring. Bringing awareness about the type of behaviors that young adults may present when being negatively impacted by using social media, will help social workers approach the problem and develop tools and techniques to provide better services to clients. Services that social workers can provide to bring awareness about social media platforms can be individual and family therapy, behavioral services, mentorship/guidance services, peer support groups, etc. It can be social workers responsibility to promote safety and a healthy well-being for young adults who utilize social media daily. With that being said, the following question for this research project is: Are young adults who

frequently use social media more likely to get exposed to body image dissatisfaction?

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter will focus on how young adults are impacted by using social media, when navigating it often and as a negative coping tool. The subsections will include social media use amongst young adults and the probability of developing body image dissatisfaction (BID), from utilizing social media. The study will be examining the increased problems and relationship between frequent use of social media and BID. The final subsection will examine the Body Dissatisfaction Theory, which is applicable to the population in this study.

#### Social Media Use Amongst Young Adults

The use of social media has become highly relevant with young adults. As of 2021, it was found that there were 4.3 billion individuals who had access to a social media account, and there were over 90% internet users (We Are Social, 2021). According to Primack et al. (2017) individuals that have 7-11 different social media platforms tend to have 3 times higher levels of negative mental health wellness than those individuals who have access to 2 or less social media platforms. Young adults can navigate their own sites by controlling their postings, timeline, shared content, and manage their privacy settings (Perrin, 2015). It is not clearly identified how young adults are monitoring their social media usage or if they set up limits to their usage in order to secure their mental health. However, the more time young adults spend navigating social media, the more they are

exposed to being anxious about gaining followers, increasing their content, and inheriting unrealistic behaviors from influencers.

Body Image Dissatisfaction. Body image dissatisfaction (BID) is defined as the comparison between one's actual body figure and a desirable self-image (Forrest & Stuhldreher, 2007). In the early adulthood stage, young adults are adjusting to the body development that they experienced post puberty. These body changes and development can cause some young adults to question and feel insecure about their lifestyle choices which can lead to body shaming and failed self-worth (Rounsefell et al., 2019). In a study, it was confirmed that when young adults spend time looking at influencer's posts and peer posts on social media it leads to an increase in negative mood due to appearance comparison (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016). When young adults engage in appearance comparison, they begin to act upon negative emotions such as anxiety, sadness, or shame. BID appears to be more common among females with problematic use of social media (Kircaburun et al., 2018b). The use of social media becomes problematic, when users use it as a coping tool to run away from their real-life problems and falsify their authenticity. Females are more likely to follow trends, photoshop their pictures, and use filters to enhance their posts, which manipulates their realistic self-image. Moreover, young adults who utilize social media as a negative coping tool become more depressed, anxious, make negative lifestyle choices, put at risk their social relationships, health, sleep, and responsibilities (Mancuso, 2016).

Social Media Use and Body Image Dissatisfaction. There are extensive studies that focus directly on the risks that young adults may encounter when navigating social media. Although there are multiple benefits to young adults using social media, the more frequently they tend to navigate social media, the more problematic it appears to become. Therefore, this study will review the research that has been conducted on young adults who are active social media users and have possibly been exposed to body image dissatisfaction overtime. This will be followed by the study conducted on problematic social media use that was used in the research. In a study, it was found that spending more than 2 hours daily on social media may increase the chances of facing mental distress (Macmillan, 2017).

The most common social media platforms that young adults access daily are YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok (Auxier & Anderson 2021). Berryman et al. (2018) explained that most young adults engage in vague booking which indicates that most of the social media posts users post are to gain followers attention and concern. Vague booking can be seen as a form to cry for help for users that are dealing with body image dissatisfaction, depression, loneliness, general anxiety, and social anxiety (Berryman et al., 2018). When young adults become too preoccupied to find others approval and gain attention through their social media it may begin to become a problem. Overall, young adults may learn to prevent these risks by monitoring how they navigate social media and by limiting the time they spend using social media.



According to Larson (2021) social behaviors are being impacted by the amount of time that individuals are spending on social media. The more technology advances, the more social media use increases in young adults. Social media use has been part of the development of young adults that eventually it reflects on their social behaviors such as face-to-face interactions. Having face-to-face interactions is an important social skill that individuals require in order to build character and emotions that may lack through social media (Larson, 2021).

However, due to young adults being at a transitional period, dealing with BID may correlate with the use of social media. Young adults compare their self-image and physical appearance to their peers and celebrities on social media. The comparisons may cause them to begin self-objectifying and develop a focus to achieve an ideal body, become eager for peer approval, and decrease self-esteem (Rousenfell et al., 2019). These social behaviors are slowly becoming common and more difficult to monitor and prevent from causing BID.

Theory Guiding Conceptualizing. Two theories that are used to guide this research are Body Image Dissatisfaction Theory. Body image dissatisfaction as defined by Forrest and Stuhldreher (2007) is the difference between identification of one's real-life image compared to the desirable self-image that the media portrays. This theory helps assess the dissatisfaction levels of young adult's body image, which commonly occurs. Social media is filled with unrealistic body images, which prompts females to question their body image,

self- esteem, and eating habits (Altaf, 2019). Additionally, it increases our knowledge of the importance of doing mental health check-ins with social media users, to be able to alleviate the social media pressure that they may be feeling.

When young adults begin to spend long periods of time on social media, not only will it affect social behaviors, but it will also affect them physically, emotionally, and psychologically that can lead to BID (Hou et al., 2019). Young adults who are frequently using social media have a higher chance of also developing a dependency to social media.

These theories will help determine how young adults are impacted by the frequent use of social media. The theories will also help explain the powerful effects that social media can develop to young adults' perspective on body image.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

This study will help describe the impact that social media has on young adults' mental health and self-image. In addition, it will highlight that the amount of time young adults spend on social media might influence their body dissatisfaction. This chapter will provide the information on how this study will be conducted. The sections identified will be study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects, and data analysis.

#### Study Design

The purpose of this study is to identify how social media impacts young adults' self-image and to explore how social workers can help intervene in this problem. This is a descriptive research study that will specify how recent social media use influences young adults' body image dissatisfaction. The study design that would best support our research question will be quantitative study and a well-designed survey will be utilized to collect information on a sample group of young adults.

Since conducting a descriptive, quantitative approach young adults will be able to answer questions straightforwardly based on close-ended questions, rather than being distracted by lengthy wording or leading questions. The survey will allow young adults to provide their answers anonymously and securely. The information that young adults provide will help social workers to gain insight and

become aware of the symptoms to look out for to intervene or prevent young adults from being exposed to social anxiety and body dissatisfaction from social media use.

Limitations from surveys are that some participants may be confused by the wording of a question or structure of a question, which may cause the participants to provide inaccurate answers. This may also cause participants to not respond to the survey which may interrupt the sample of the study.

This study seeks to answer one basic question regarding thoughts on social media use: Are young adults who frequently use social media more likely to get exposed to body image dissatisfaction?

#### Sampling

This study will utilize a non-probability sample of young adults who have Instagram as a social media platform. Young adults between the ages 18-30, both male and female will be the targeted population. Before conducting the sampling, there will be an informational meeting via zoom to provide young adults with information about the purpose of the study. In order to gather appropriate sample data, we will aim to gather a total of 115 subjects to participate in the sample collection.

#### Data Collection and Instruments

Quantitative data will be collected via a web-based survey tool that will be sent to the young adults' Instagram. Each survey will begin with the consent form to authorize participation. It will continue with the introduction and purpose of the

study along with the description of the survey, the confidentiality clause, duration of the survey, risks that may not be anticipated, the benefits of the study, and the contact information if the participants have any questions.

The researchers will create a link that will be attached to the consent form and web-based survey. The survey link will be emailed to the young adults Instagram page which will give them easy access to fill out the survey. We will also utilize several 4-7point Likert scales to assess the question in our surveys.

The survey questions will focus on our independent variable which is social media use and the dependent variable which is body image. We will aim to measure if social media use correlates to young adults' BID. Participants will be asked to identify their engagement in social media use, and how they feel about the impact that social media may have on their BID.

The researchers will expand their targeted subjects by encouraging young adults to inform other potential candidates about the study, if there are not enough respondents. The researchers will take appropriate measures during each step to secure participants' comfort and confidentiality.

### Procedures

A flier will be created to provide the purpose and the goal of the study to the potential participants. The researchers will attach the flier to the direct private message via Instagram. The researchers will contact the participants via Instagram by sending a direct private message with details about the study. The link to the survey will be included in the direct message. The participants who

agree to participate in the study will access the link and complete the survey that will be created through Qualtrics. Prior to completing the survey, the participants will be asked to sign the informed consent form in order to authorize their participation. After the informed consent is signed, the link will direct them to the survey. The participants will have direct contact with the researchers to address any questions or concerns. The researchers will follow-up with the participants to thank them for their participation.

#### Protection of Human Subjects

The identity of all participants will be kept confidential from other individuals including the young adults' Instagram profile. When conducting the surveys, all participants will be sent a link that will give them access to the consent form, debriefing statement, and the survey. The link will be accessible through a personal electronic device such as cell phone, tablet, and/or computer. The surveys will be administered through Qualtrics which is a software provided by the University that will be password protected. Along with providing the link to the survey, the researchers will explain the purpose of the research study and their rights to confidentiality as well as the survey being anonymous. Participants will not be asked to disclose any personal information other than their gender and age.

#### Data Analysis

In our quantitative research study, the data and results of the surveys will be gathered and analyzed through SPSS Statistics Data Editor statistical

software. The results will be analyzed to correlate the relationship between our independent variable (social media use) and the dependent variable (body dissatisfaction). We will also compare means and analyze using a Chi square T-test to compare the means between our independent variable and dependent variable.

### Summary

This study will identify the probability of young adults being exposed to body image dissatisfaction from the frequent use of social media. The results given by the young adults who completed the survey will invite social workers to enhance their awareness about this social issue. Being aware of the social issue, social workers will be able to implement resources, services, intervention, and advocacy to prevent or intervene the expansion of this social issue. The quantitative methods used in this research study will simplify this process.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

The Qualtrics survey link was sent in a direct message through Instagram to 115 participants, where only 104 of those participants completed the survey. Out of the 104 participants, 71 identified as females and 33 identified as males. 18.3% of the participants were between ages 18-21, 22.1% were between ages 22-24, 31% were between ages 25-27, and 27.9% were between ages 28-30. See Table 1 for more detail.

The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS. The completed surveys were imported to SPSS, where the survey data was cleaned up and the questions and responses were coded into variables. Responses of our questions stood out from the survey which were, how frequent do you use social media? Do you compare yourself to what you see on social media? In what ways do you feel dissatisfied with your body? What did you see on social media that makes you feel this way about your body? The tables below will display the data with more detail.



Table 1. Participants Demographics

Descriptive	Full Sample n=104	%
<b><u>Gender</u></b>		
Female	71	68.3%
Male	33	31.7%
<b><u>Age</u></b>		
18-21	19	18.3
22-24	23	22.1
25-27	33	31.7
28-30	29	27.9

#### Frequent use of Social Media

Participants were asked to determine how many hours they would spend on social media daily on a 5-point scale: 0-1hour, 2-3 hours, 4-5 hours, 5-6 hours, 7+ hours. 100 out of the 104 participants answered the following question, how frequently do you access your social media account(s)? 7.7% of the participants answered that they spend 0-1 hours a day on social media. 40.4% answered that they spend 2-3 hours a day and 30.8% spend 4-5 hours a day on social media. 5.8% answered that they spend 5-6 hours a day and 11.5% spend 7+ hours a day on social media. Unfortunately, 3.8% of the participants did not answer this question. See Table 2 for more detail.

Table 2. How Frequent do Participants use Social Media

Frequency	Full Sample n=104	%
0-1 hour	8	7.7%
2-3 hours	42	40.4%
4-5 hours	32	30.8%
5-6 hours	6	5.8%
7+ hours	12	11.5%
missing	4	3.8%

The Impact Social Media has on Body Image Dissatisfaction

Participants were asked, “Have you ever felt down when you compared yourself with what you saw on your social media?” Participants who selected “yes” were directed to a question that asked, “In what ways did you feel dissatisfied with your body?” Participants were able to determine all dissatisfactions that applied to them in a 6-point scale: weight and height, body shape, attractiveness, age, femininity/masculinity, disfigurement.

Table 3a demonstrates that 83 participants answered “yes” to comparing themselves to what they saw on their social media. The other 21 participants answered that they did not compare themselves to what they saw on their social media. Table 3b demonstrates the body dissatisfactions that the participants selected. Participants were able to select all that applied to them. 54 participants

are dissatisfied with their weight and height, 59 participants are dissatisfied with their body shape, 37 participants are dissatisfied with their attractiveness, 4 participants are dissatisfied with their age, and 14 are dissatisfied with their femininity/masculinity. See tables below for detail.

Table 3a. Do You Compare Yourself to What You See on Social Media?

Frequency	Full Sample n= 104	%
Yes	83	79.8%
No	21	20.2%

Table 3b. In What Ways do Participants Feel Dissatisfied With Their Bodies?

Body Image	n
Weight and Height	54
Body Shape	59
Attractiveness	37
Age	4
Femininity/Masculinity	14
Disfigurement	10

What Participants see on Social Media

Participants were asked to answer the following question: what did you see on social media that made you feel this way about your body? The purpose of this question was to allow participants to write about their own body dissatisfactions. After analyzing the participants' responses, the responses were categorized into four different categories: motivational, unattainable physique, cosmetic and fitness. 14 out of the 104 participants expressed that they found social media to be motivational. While 41 of the participants found social media influencing individuals to desire an unattainable physique. 27 of the participants stated that social media promoted cosmetic procedures. 22 of the participants found social media influencing them to compare themselves to fitness gurus. See Table 4 for details.

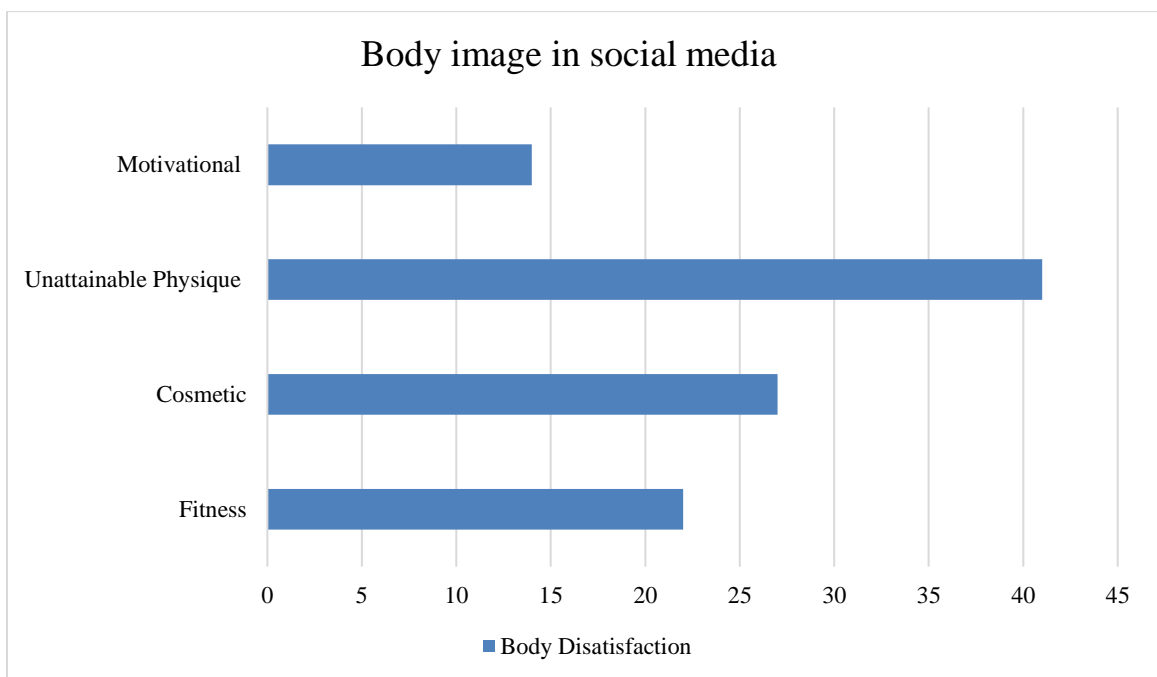


Figure 1. What did You See on Social Media That Makes You Feel This Way About Your Body?

### Correlation Between Social Media use and Body Image Dissatisfaction

Participants were asked if they have ever felt down when they compare themselves to what they see on social media as well as to how frequently they access their social media accounts. Table 4a shows that 80 participants responded Yes while 21 participants responded No to comparing themselves to what they see on social media related to body image/shape/type. The table also shows how many hours participants are spending on social media. 8 participants responded that they spend between 0-1 hours a day on social media. 43 participants responded that they spend approximately 2-3 hours on social media. 32 participants responded that they spend 4-5 hours a day on social media while 6 participants spend 5-6 hours a day. Lastly, 12 participants responded that they spend approximately 7+ hours a day on social media.

Table 4a. Does Time Spent on Social Media Influences What You See on Social Media

	Have you ever felt down when you compared yourself with what you saw on your social media related to your body image/shape/type		
How frequently do you access your social media account(s)	Yes	No	Total
0-1	5	3	8
2-3	34	9	43
4-5	26	6	32
5-6	5	1	6

	Have you ever felt down when you compared yourself with what you saw on your social media related to your body image/shape/type		
7+	10	2	12
Total	80	21	101

To determine correlation whether the amount of time young adults spend on social media might influence their body dissatisfaction, a chi square test was utilized to determine the results. Table 4b shows the value of the chi square which was determined to be 6.718a and the significance was determined to be .010. Since the significance was determined to be .010, it means that the p-value is smaller than 0.05, determining that there is correlation between both variables. With these results, we can state that young adults that spend time on social media will influence their body dissatisfaction.

Table 4b. Results of Chi-Square Test

N = 101	Value	Asymptotic Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	6.718 <sup>a</sup>	0.10

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

The participants were able to identify how frequently they used social media and to identify if what they see on social media influences how they feel about their body. For those participants who responded that social media does influence how they feel about their body, they were asked to determine what dissatisfactions did they have about their body's. Regarding what participants identified that they see on social media, they responded that the posts they see differ between being motivational, unattainable, cosmetic, or fitness. Moreover, these visuals result in participants questioning their weight/height, body shape, attractiveness, age, femininity/masculinity, and disfigurement. However, some participants reported to be motivated by the fitness pages and being able to obtain guidance on exercises and healthy lifestyle suggestions they can implement in their daily lives to increase their self-esteem and body image. The results provided both male and female young adult's perspective. Although the literature review, highlighted that it is more common for female young adults to face BID from social media use, there are some recommendations that all young adults can implement when navigating their social media platforms.

First recommendation that may be helpful is being mindful of the feed that young adults are following and searching. In previous research, it has been noticed that social media platforms tend to develop an algorithm based on trends that social media users are searching and engaging in. An additional

recommendation may be, that social media user should become selective on the followers and following that they conduct. Being mindful of who they invite to their personal social media platform is important depending on the type of environment they're trying to develop for their social media accounts. Participants identified that the followers and following that they maintain in their social media platforms, range from family/close friends, strangers, classmates, and celebrity/influencers. When social media users begin to invite stranger to follow them or vice versa, it becomes known as vague booking. As Berryman et al. (2018) explained in previous research, vague booking can be seen as attention seeking from users that are dealing with BID. Adapting healthy social media techniques can be something that can be further explored with social work guidance.

Limitations to this study were getting participants to participate in the study. When the Qualtrics survey link was sent to participants via direct message, most participants assumed that the link was a scam and were hesitant to complete the survey. Research writers had to confirm with every participant that the link was authentic, therefore participants gained trust and completed the survey. Future research can benefit from exploring a qualitative study, in order to obtain direct answers from each participant. The one-on-one interviews could be more personal and informative about every participant's perspective.

#### Recommendations for Social Workers



Social media has become the main source for young adults to connect with culture and keep up with trends. Most of the young adults that participated in the survey have been developing some sort of body dissatisfaction whether is through fitness accounts, cosmetic surgery, celebrity models, or other influences. Since social media is becoming the main source for young adults to gain satisfaction whether it is negative or positive, it is important for social workers to be culturally competent in order to connect with their young adult clients who are struggling with body dissatisfaction.

Social Workers need to familiarize themselves with the new culture trends that are being posted on social media. Since technology is rapidly advancing, it means that new social media platforms are being created which increases the possibility of body dissatisfaction among young adults. Social Workers should create interventions that encourage self-care that will help their clients who are struggling with BID. Creating interventions such as a social media cleanse, hiking, going on walks, or even unfollowing accounts can help increase body satisfaction.

Providing these types of interventions will help social workers not only to encourage their clients but empower them to develop self-determination. For Social Workers to incorporate the proper intervention, they must understand how social media is affecting their client's body dissatisfaction. For example, if the client's body dissatisfaction is having curly hair and they are comparing themselves to individuals with straight hair, the Social Worker can encourage the

client to watch videos or Instagram reels of people who have similar hair to teach them how to embrace their curly hair. On the other hand, if the client is struggling with their weight and they consume diet pills or do unhealthy diets that influencers promote to gain “quick results”, the social worker should help the client create healthy boundaries with themselves, such as encouraging them to seek medical assistance such as a nutritionist. The Social Worker can also encourage the client to do a social media cleanse by having the client limit or disconnect from their social media platforms and practice self-care by helping the client create healthy boundaries that will promote body positivity.

Lastly, Social Workers need to educate their clients by helping them understand that body dissatisfaction is not only about what they look like on the surface but how it can also affect their mental health. When Social Workers empower their clients, clients will begin to realize that social media should not be their only source of fulfillment.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, social media platforms have become part of the daily use for many young adults. Through social media platforms, individuals can connect with long distant friends or family, gather ideas for a new hobby, or keep up with the new fashion trends. Although there are good things that can come out of using social media, unfortunately, not everyone experiences positive outcomes. In this research, it is concluded that the more users are on social media, the

higher the chances are for young adults to experience body image dissatisfaction.

APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

# INFORMED CONSENT FORM



School of Social Work

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO  
5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407  
909.537.5501 | fax: 909.537.7029  
<http://socialwork.csusb.edu>

## INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are being asked to participate in is designed to examine social media use, social anxiety, and body dissatisfaction amongst young adults. This study is being conducted by Ashley Olmedo and Glycell Robledo Felix under the supervision of Dr. Erik Schott, Professor in the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the study is to examine how social media use impacts social anxiety and body dissatisfaction amongst young adults.

**DESCRIPTION:** Participants will be asked a few questions on the frequency use of social media platforms and how it has impacted their social anxiety and body dissatisfaction. Participants will also be asked some demographic questions.

**PARTICIPATION:** Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and they do not have to answer questions they do not wish to answer. You may also withdraw from participation at any time you feel any discomfort without any questions or consequences.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Participation in this study will be anonymous. Your responses will remain confidential, and data will only be reported for research purposes. All responses will be stored in a password protected computer.

**DURATION:** The expected duration of the survey will be approximately 5 to 10 minutes.

**RISKS:** Although not anticipated, there may be some discomfort in answering some of the questions. You are not required to answer and can skip the question or withdraw participation.

**BENEFITS:** There will not be any direct benefits to the participants. However, findings from the study will contribute to our knowledge in this area of research.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions concerning this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Erik Scott at [Erik.Schott@csusb.edu](mailto:Erik.Schott@csusb.edu)

**RESULTS:** Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library Scholar Works database (<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2023.

### CONFIRMATION STATEMENT:

I understand that I am giving my full consent to participate in your study. I have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

### SIGNATURE:

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B  
PARTICIPATION NEEDED RESEARCH FLYER

## PARTICIPATION NEEDED RESEARCH FLYER



School of Social Work

WE DEFINE THE *Future*

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO  
5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407  
909.537.5501 | fax: 909.537.7029  
<http://socialwork.csusb.edu>

# Participants Needed

to participate on  
a study about how social media may impact your social anxiety and body image.

This research study will be conducted by MSW Graduate Students from California State University, San Bernardino. The study's purpose is to describe how social media use may impact the mental health and body image of young adults.

### Participant Requirements:

- **Must be between the ages 18-30**
- **Have access to an Instagram account**

This survey will take 5–10-minutes to complete. Participation and responses will be anonymous and will be kept confidential.

### **To participate please visit:**

Online survey link: [https://csusb.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0CXPIQgnLyubwSq](https://csusb.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0CXPIQgnLyubwSq)

Or QR Code:



For participation inquiries and if you have any questions, please contact research investigators  
Ashley Olmedo at [003559542@coyote.csusb.edu](mailto:003559542@coyote.csusb.edu)  
Glycell Robledo Felix [007725218@coyote.csusb.edu](mailto:007725218@coyote.csusb.edu)

This study has been approved by the California State University, San Bernardino Institutional Review Board. (IRB#: FY2022-229)

APPENDIX C  
SOCIAL MEDIA USE QUALTRICS SURVEY



# SOCIAL MEDIA USE QUALTRICS SURVEY



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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO  
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<http://socialwork.csusb.edu>

## Survey

### General Demographics

1. What is your current Gender Identity?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to disclose

2. What is your age group

- 18-21
- 22-24
- 25-27
- 28-30

### Social Media-related body dissatisfaction

1. Have you ever felt down when you compared yourself with what you saw on your social media related to body image/shape/type?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please answer questions 2-3.

2. What did you see on social media that made you feel this way about your body?

3. In what ways did you feel dissatisfied with your body?

- a. Weight and height
- b. Attractiveness
- c. Body shape
- d. Age
- e. Femininity/masculinity
- f. Disfigurement

### Followers on social media

1. Who are your friends on social media? Check all that apply

- Family/ close friends
- Classmates
- Strangers
- Celebrities/ influencers

### Social media frequency of use

1. How frequent do you access your social media account(s)?
  - a. 0 hours/day
  - b. 1-3 hours/day
  - c. 4-5 hours/day
  - d. 5-6 hours/day
  - e. 7+ hours/day

**Social anxiety**

1. Do you worry about what others say about you on social media?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure
2. Do you worry about what others think about you on social media?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure
3. Are you afraid that others won't like you on social media?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure

**Making Friends**

1. Do you find it hard to make friends?
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Agree
  - e. Strongly agree

APPENDIX D  
LETTER OF APPROVAL

# LETTER OF APPROVAL

Date: 4-14-2023

**IRB #:** IRB-FY2022-229

**Title:** The impact of social media use on young adults

**Creation Date:** 2-8-2022

**End Date:**

**Status:** **Approved**

**Principal Investigator:** Erik Schott

**Review Board:** Main IRB Designated Reviewers for School of Social Work

**Sponsor:**

## Study History

<b>Submission Type</b> Initial	<b>Review Type</b> Exempt	<b>Decision</b> <b>Exempt</b>
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## Key Study Contacts

<b>Member</b> Ashley Olmedo	<b>Role</b> Co-Principal Investigator	<b>Contact</b> ashley.olmedo9542@coyote.csusb.edu
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<b>Member</b> Glycell Robledo Felix	<b>Role</b> Co-Principal Investigator	<b>Contact</b> glycell.robledofelix5218@coyote.csust
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<b>Member</b> Erik Schott	<b>Role</b> Principal Investigator	<b>Contact</b> Erik.Schott@csusb.edu
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<b>Member</b> Erik Schott	<b>Role</b> Primary Contact	<b>Contact</b> Erik.Schott@csusb.edu
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## ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES

This research project required the collaboration and equal work of two researchers. The researchers were equivalently passionate about the research topic, therefore worked together on evenly dividing the work amongst themselves. The researchers maintained open communication and coordinated dates and times to discuss timelines for revision, challenges that were faced, and to ensure that the sections of the project were ready for submission prior to due dates. Both researchers' joint efforts on developing the Qualtrics Survey and collecting data. Both researchers scheduled appointments to consult with each other, Faculty Supervisor, and obtained assistance from the resources that were offered by Student Research Department of California State University, San Bernardino. The researchers made valuable and equal contribution to the successful completion of this research project.