SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE, SELF-ESTEEM, AND BODY IMAGE
DISSATISFACTION

Investigating the Relationship Between Social Media Usage, Self-Esteem and Body Image Dissatisfaction; Gender Differences

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Abstract

Aims: The current study aimed to investigate the relationship between social media usage, self-esteem (SE), and body image dissatisfaction (BID), while also inspecting gender differences within self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction variables. **Method:** A total of 143 participants over the age of 18 completed a questionnaire which was distributed through social media. The questionnaire consisted of questions related to social media addiction, using the Bergan Social Media Addiction scale, self-esteem (SE) using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, and body esteem (BE) using the Body Esteem scale. **Results:** It was determined from a linear regression analysis that social media scores did significantly predict self-esteem scores but did not significantly predict body esteem scores. Secondly, a Mann U Witney test was conducted to compare body esteem scores among males and females. The results concluded that there was no significant difference between males and females body esteem scores. Finally, an independent t-test was conducted to compare self-esteem scores among males and females. In addition to the body esteem scores, no significant difference was found among males and females self-esteem scores. Limitations and implications for this study are later discussed.

Introduction

In recent years, research around body-image and self-esteem have become increasingly popular. This is predominantly due to the drastic rise in eating disorders worldwide (Santarossa & Woodruff, 2017). Abnormal eating behaviours have been significantly linked to body-image dissatisfaction (BID) (Anton, Perri, & Riley, 2000; Polivy & Herman, 2004). Body image dissatisfaction (BID) refers to one's negative thoughts and feelings about one's body in relation to theirbody size, shape, and weight (Grogan, 2016). BID can result in severe mental health issues, which can have serious potentially life-threatening effects, such an anorexia (Santarossa & Woodruff, 2017). BID acts as a major predictor for eating disorders (Cooley & Toray, 2001), which highlights the importance and severity of the issue being discussed. Low self-esteem has been found to be a significant predictor of BID (Etcoff, Orbach, Scott, & D'Agostino, 2004). Self-esteem refers to the beliefs one has about oneself (Taylor et al., 2007). Body image and self-esteem are vital components towards one's overall psychological well-being and happiness (Anton, Perri, & Riley, 2000; Polivy & Herman, 2004).

Young people have expressed their views on the negative effects social media has on people's mental health (O'Reilly et al., 2018). They stated that stress, low self-esteem, depression, and suicidal ideation were all side effects of social media usage (O'Reilly et al., 2018). Although other factors may have contributed to these side effects, they stated that social media usage was the primary cause these negative side effects. They declared that low self-esteem was a result of the substantial number of photo-shopped images (O'Reilly et al., 2018). This relates to the unrealistic expectations social media holds. For generations, the idea of beauty

portrayed by the media, has been virtually impossible to achieve (Derenne & Beresin, 2006).

Social media sites such as Instagram and Snapchat have built-in filters and photo editing

qualities, so one can soften wrinkles, erase any spots or blemishes, and enlarge eyes or lips

before uploading and sharing their selfie to the media (Chen et al., 2019). The increased use of

photoshop and editing has resulted in a drastic rise among individuals to desirecosmetic surgery

(Chen et al., 2019). It has also led cosmetic surgeons to create the psychological phenomenon

called Snapchat dysmorphia (Chen et al., 2019). This psychological phenomenon refers to

individuals presenting cosmetic surgeons with filtered and photoshopped images of themselves,

to show their desired look that they hope surgical changes will allow them to achieve.

Photoshopped and filtered images have a significant influence on individuals' self-esteem,

quality of life as well as, contributing to higher body dissatisfaction and which may potentially

lead to body dysmorphic disorder (Chen et al., 2019). In addition to this, 1,710 participants took

part in a survey in the U.S investigating how many individuals edit their selfies. The results

revealed that over 50% of the participants regularly use filters and edit their photos before

uploading their selfies (Chae, 2017). Photoshopped images are creating unrealistic unattainable

beauty standards, which the average person cannot achieve, as they are unnatural (Paxton,

Wertheim, Masters & McLean, 2015). Photoshopped images are portrayed as something that can

be achieved., this misconception leaves people striving for perfection which lowers their self-

esteem, increases body image dissatisfaction, and potentially results in serious health problems

such as eating disorders (Paxton, Wertheim, Masters & McLean, 2015). Earlier research has

discovered that because of this, social media usage has had a profound effect on BID, SE, and

eating disorder concerns (Santarossa & Woodruff, 2017).

Over the last few years, the use of social media has increased tremendously. The percentage of adults in the United States using social media has increased from 5% in 2005, to 79% actively using social media in 2019 (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). The significant rise in social media usage has contributed to an increase to8 5% of people suffering from low self-esteem (Alton, 2017) and well as 80% of women and 34% of men being dissatisfied with their body image (Gallivan, 2014). Although this literature review discusses depression, psychological well-being, suicidal ideation and eating disorders along with BID and SE, the study will primarily be focusing on the potential effects social media usage has on people's levels of self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction. The other factors are being discussed to emphasise the variety of severe negative effects social media can potentially cause by creating BID and low self-esteem among many people. In addition to this, it highlights the essential need for knowledge about the effects prolonged social media usage has on individuals. Several studies have used the 'Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale', 'The Bergan Social Media Addiction Scale' and 'The Body Esteem scale' and found significant reliable results, which are generalisable to the population (Martín-Albo, Núñez, Navarro & Grijalvo, 2007; Monacis, de Palo, Griffiths & Sinatra, 2017; Gatti, Ionio, Traficante & Confalonieri, 2014). The content of this review will include information on social media; how social media effects body image dissatisfaction; the gender differences in relation to self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction; and how social media affects individual's self-esteem.

Social Media

Social media is conceivably more popular and persuasive than ever before (Kuss &
Griffiths, 2011). This is predominantly due to the availability of modern forms of media, such as
many social networking sites, for example, Instagram (Fardouly and Vartanian, 2016). Overuse
of social media has become increasingly popular among both men and women (Kuss & Griffiths,
2011). The overuse of social media refers to when an individual excessively logs in and out of
different social networking sites (Sampathirao Prabhakararao, 2016). Excessive use of social
media has been considered a behavioural addiction (Sampathirao Prabhakararao, 2016). This is
classified as an addiction when the inability to use social media significantly affects the
individual's life, including relationships, social life and school or work (Sampathirao
Prabhakararao, 2016). In 2020, 3.81 billion people worldwide frequently used social media
(Dean, 2020). This has increased to almost double since 2015, having 2.07 billion users (Dean,
2020). In 2020, the average individual had 8.6 social media accounts, rising from 4.8 accounts in
2014 (Dean, 2020). Many correlational studies have revealed a link between social media usage
and BID (Shannon, Mills & Hogue, 2017). Longitudinal studies have also discovered that this
association appears to be increasing over time (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016).

Social Media and Body Image Dissatisfaction

Social media reinforces an unrealistic and unhealthy drive for thinness and perfection in
relation to body image, which acts as a factor towards people's self-esteem (SE) and body image
dissatisfaction (BID) (Grabe, Ward & Hyde, 2008). Social media usage has been shown to
significantly influence people's body image (Lee, Lee, Choi, Kim & Han, 2014). In 2008, a

meta-analysis of experimental and correlational studies was conducted to investigate the effects

that social media usage has on women's body image dissatisfaction. The findings supported the

hypothesis that increased social media usage consisting of media images of thin ideal, led to

body image dissatisfaction among women (Grabe, Ward & Hyde, 2008). A strength of this study

is the inclusion of an experimental design and a correlational design.

Vartanian et al. (2001) discovered that social media is the strongest predictor for overall

body satisfaction among women (Green & Pritchard, 2003). Men were also influenced by the

media but not as much. To support Vartanian's statement, a study conducted in 2003 investigated

the predictors of body image dissatisfaction. The study consisted of 139 adults, all from diverse

backgrounds with ages ranging from 19 to 68. The results concluded that social media had a

significant influence on women's body image dissatisfaction but did not predict body image

dissatisfaction among men (Green & Pritchard, 2003). The great deal of variability in the sample

size, results in accurate, generalisable outcomes. Furthermore, a study conducted in 2005,

established that women who were exposed to images containingthe attractive fashion models,

experienced a significant increase in body image dissatisfaction (Birkeland et al., 2005).

In contrast to most other studies, this longitudinal study showed a reduction in BID over

10 years, despite weight gain among women. In the years 1982 – 1992, Heatherton, Nichols,

Mahamedi, and Keel conducted a 10-year longitudinal study on 1200 men and women, in which

they analysed BID trends. The results showed that, regardless of the significant weight gain over

the 10-year period among women, only a small percentage of them viewed themselves as over-

weight (32%) in 1992, compared to the (42%) of women in 1982. Furthermore, an additional 10-

year longitudinal study was conducted on this sample, and it was revealed that women in 1992, despite their weight gain, had a reduced drive to be thin or want to diet. They exhibited a decrease in BID and viewed themselves in a more positive light. Contrasting to this, only minor differences were found in men between 1982-1992 (Cash & Morrow, 2004). This study had a large sample size (n=1200), and thus, the results are more reliable and accurate. However, data was only collected twice within the 10-year period, and this could pose as a potential weakness in the reliability of the results. This acts as a limitation within the study, as the changes experienced by participants may have been a natural developmental change, that happens with age, as there is a difference between a 20-year-old and 30-year-old mindset (Feingold & Mazzella, 1998; Striegel-Moore & Franko, 2002; Whitbourne & Skultety, 2002). This study's decrease in BID and drive for thinness could perhaps be due to the non-existence of social media. Despite the fact that other forms of media existed, such has magazines and television, they were not as accessible and influential as social media found on our smartphones, are today (Bandura, 2002a, 2002b). Although this study did not include social media as a predictor of BID, the results are reliable and supply valid information on how women were not always dissatisfied with their weight. Through the decades, body types have differed tremendously (Martin, 2010). In the 1900's, the thin ideal body image was not as much of a trend as it is in today's world (Martin, 2010). The BMI of 'Miss America' has decreased significantly in the last 80 years (Martin, 2010). In the 1920's the BMI of 'Miss America' winners were approximately 22. In the 2000's, the BMI of the winners had decreased to the lowest ever, being 16.9. This was classified as being underweight by the world health organization (Martin, 2010). The thin ideal body image was once only advertised and viewable through magazines and television advertisements. Now,

individuals have access to this sort of advertising anytime with the use of smartphones. Information can be retrieved easily, effortlessly, and quickly, which makes it extremely easy for individuals to be exposed to advertisements or media images which may cause lack of self-esteem or body image dissatisfaction. Throughout the years, the pressure for women to be thin is increasing (Pounders, 2018). This is partially due to the driving influential force social media has on individuals in recent years (Pounders, 2018).

The relationship between social media and body image is widely known and researched. Many theories have tried to explain this relationship, one being 'The Social Comparison Theory' (Festinger, 1954). The Social Comparison Theory suggests that individuals have an urge to discover their progress and quality of life by comparing themselves to others. This theory consists of two social comparisons: upward social comparisons, where an individual compares themselves to someone who they believe is better than themselves, and downward social comparison where individuals compare themselves to someone who they believe is worse off than themselves. Previous research has adapted and adjusted some of the contents of Festinger's (1954) theory. Although the social comparison theory suggests that individuals are more likely to compare themselves to people who are like themselves, this statement is not entirely true. Women have been found to compare themselves to unrealistic, thin media images just as often as they compare themselves to others like themselves (Engeln-Maddox, 2005; Strahan, Wilson, Cressman, & Buote, 2006). Physical appearance social comparisons have extreme psychological effects on individuals, such as body image dissatisfaction, low self-esteem and eating disorders (Myers & Crowther, 2009). Women were also found to regularly make appearance related social comparisons, especially upward social comparisons, which damages one's self-esteem and can

have detrimental effects on one's psychological wellbeing (Strahan et al., 2006). Browsing

through social media websites such as Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and Pinterest may result in an

individual being exposed to 'thinspiration' images, which promotes body image dissatisfaction

and therefore promotes eating disorders (Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016). Although this

study will not be measuring social comparison, it provides vital information on how individuals

make social comparisons on social media and how these consistent comparisons can result in low

self-esteem and BID. It also provides us with information regarding gender differences and

social comparison, and therefore low self-esteem and BID. These previous findings helped form

the research question and hypothesis within this paper, stating there will be a gender difference

in relation to self-esteem and body-image dissatisfaction (BID) scores.

Gender Differences in Levels of Self-Esteem, Body Image Dissatisfaction and The Media

For many years, the sex differences in relation to body image and self-esteem have been

widely known and documented (Lowery et al., 2005). Furthermore, previous research has

discovered that women frequently tend to have lower self-esteem and higher body image

dissatisfaction compared to males (Muth & Cash, 1997). Women tend to obsess over their looks

and struggle with negative body image more commonly than men do (Muth & Cash, 1997).

Studies have shown that on average women show higher body image dissatisfaction compared to

men (Green & Pritchard, 2003). Scholars have discovered that in the Western culture, for

decades, the ideal body has been changing significantly, becoming thinner and thinner (Luff &

Gray, 2009). The media tends to display female bodies which are significantly below-average

weight (Luff & Gray, 2009). This primarily affects women. A study conducted in 2007

investigated the effects of gender and media influences on eating behaviours and body image

during adolescence. Results showed that females were of higher risk of abnormal eating

behaviours compared to males (Ata, Bryant Ludden & Lally, 2007). A possible weakness of this

study is the small sample size of 177 participants. This could potentially result in the results

being less reliable and generalisable to the entire population. In addition to this, in 2015, a study

discovered that women have lower body image satisfaction and a greater drive for thinness in

comparison to men (Kristine, 2015). These two previous studies have found that women more so

than men, have more issues relating to abnormal eating behaviours, BID, and a greater drive for

thinness due to the influence of the media. In contrast to this, one study investigated the effects

of ideal media images have on men. Pop culture of the United States puts great prominence and

significance of muscularity on men. Prior research has discovered that males who feel pressure

from the media have decreased body-image satisfaction (Agliata & Tantleff–Dunn, 2004),

decreased self-esteem (Muris, Meesters, van de Blom & Mayer, 2005), and decreased body

esteem (Barlett et al., 2005). This can be assessed by presenting male participants with ideal

images of muscular men or asking them questions regarding the media, self-esteem, and body

image (Barlett, 2008). These results conclude that men's self-esteem and body image satisfaction

is also affected by the media, although, the majority of research discovered that women are more

affected than men by this, as they tend to have lower levels of self-esteem (SE) and higher body-

image dissatisfaction (BID) compared to men (Cho & Lee, 2013). Due to previous findings, this

current study aims to predict that there will be a gender difference in SE scores and BID scores.

Along with BID, previous studies have also identified social media usage to be a significant

predictor of low self-esteem (Andreassen, Pallasen, & Griffiths, 2017; Valkenburg, Peter, &

Schouten, 2006).

Social Media and Self-Esteem

Prior research has identified a negative relationship between social media usage and self-

esteem (Huang, 2017; Liu & Baumeister, 2016). To investigate these results, a study conducted in

2017, investigated the effects of social media usage on self-esteem levels. It was discovered that

an increase in individual's social media usage resulted in a decrease in self-esteem levels. It was

concluded that one hour spent on Facebook resulted in a 5.574 decrease in the self-esteem score

of the individual (Jan, Soomro & Ahmad, 2017). There are, however, some potential weaknesses

in this study. For example, the sample size is quite small (n=150), and the participants were

recruited from the institute of business management only. Therefore, the results can only be

applied to a specific demographic of the general population, resulting in poor generalisability.

Gender differences have been identified while researching the effects social media usage has on

individuals. A study conducted in 2016 investigated the effects social media usage had on people's

self-esteem. The results showed that girls had significantly lower levels of self-esteem compared

to the boys (Guðmundsdóttir, 2017). A strength of the study was the extremely large sample size

of 2,021 students. On the contrary, a recent study conducted in 2020 among 859 Chinese

adolescents, discovered that the significant relationship between low self-esteem and internet

addiction was unexpectedly more prevalent within the male sample compared to the female

sample. This is an unexpected finding as the majority of studies show that females are more prone

to experiencing the negative side effects of social media usage, such as BID and low self-esteem. Two strengths within this study include the large sample size and the fact that the study was conducted just last year, meaning the findings are recent and up to date and therefore potentially more reliable than studies conducted many years ago (Mo, Chan, Wang & Lau, 2020). Time spent on social media also appears to have a direct relationship with body image dissatisfaction (Cohen & Blaszczynski, 2015).

Research has shown that body image dissatisfaction (BID) has predicted low levels of self-esteem (Tiggemann, 2005). In 2017, a cross-sectional study was conducted to investigate the relationship between social media and self-esteem. 2,039 participants took part and results concluded that those who frequently engaged on social media reported having lower self-esteem. Due to the large sample size, results are generalisable and reliable (Ingólfsdóttir, 2017). Another study which supports these findings, discovered that amongst university students, those who used social media more often had lower self-esteem compared to those who did not use social media often. This is because studies have shown that those who use social media, generally believe that those they see on social media are better than themselves (Chou & Edge, 2012). This explains why those who use social media more often experience lower self-esteem and BID. However, not all research primarily focuses the negative effects social media usage can have on individuals.

Despite several studies demonstrating a relationship between social media usage, and self-esteem and BID, some research findings state that social media usage has positive effects on self-esteem and well-being (Baker & White, 2011; Cash et al., 2013; Cerna & Smahel, 2009; Fanti et al., 2012; Gross et al., 2004; Jelenchick et al., 2013; Lee, 2009; Leung, 2011; Parris et

al., 2012; Sarriera et al., 2012; Sticca et al., 2012; Wilson et al., 2010). However, in contrast to this, studies among men and women continuously show how social media usage has a significant effect on both men and women's body image satisfaction (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016). Research has discovered that those who spend more time on Facebook are more likely to suffer from BID and a drive for thinness (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016). Due to earlier research, this current study aims to predict that those who spend more time on social media will have higher BID and lower self-esteem scores. This paper also aims to review the potential negative effects that social media usage has on people's self-esteem and body image satisfaction.

Although there are many strengths within previous research, there are some gaps which should be addressed. Gaps within the research include a shortage of studies being conducted on adults. The majority of studies focus on adolescents, failing to consider how social media usage impacts adults' self-esteem and body-image dissatisfaction. To address this gap within the literature, only people over the age of 18 can participate in the questionnaire for this study. There will be no age limit provided, so therefore, data can be collected from a variety of ages. Another gap within the literature, refers to how studies primarily focus only on how women are affected by social media. Men are also affected and influenced by the media, so it is important to include them and compare the gender difference if there is any. Although some studies have included men within their research, more need to do so. More research and testing needs to be conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the negative effects that social media has on people's psychological well-being. The drastic rise in social media usage calls attention to the urgent need for more

research to be conducted around the topic of social media (Poushter, Bishop & Chwe, 2018). This study aims to shine a light on the potential negative effects social media usage has on people.

Social media statistics state that each year there is a +10% annual increase in social media users (Hawi & Samaha, 2016). Due to these rising statistics, it is crucial that research in this area needs to be conducted to discover what effects social media usage has on the entire population's psychological well-being. Social media has the potential to have long-lasting negative effects on people, which is why it is urgent to continue to conduct research and broaden our knowledge on the topic (Jan, Soomro & Ahmad, 2017). Prior research has discovered a link between social media usage and low self-esteem (Steinfield et al., 2008). A pattern appears to exist between high social media usage and low self-esteem. Several studies have identified a significant relationship between low self-esteem and suicidal ideation and attempts (Brubeck & Beer, 1992; Cole, Protinsky, & Cross, 1992; De Man & Leduc, 1995; de Man, Leduc, & Labr6che-Gauthier, 1992, 1993; Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Seeley, 1994; Shagle & Barber, 1993, 1995). Suicide is an extremely serious public health problem (Knox, Conwell & Caine, 2004). Since 1999, suicide rates have increased by an additional 30% in the United States (US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016). This distressing statistic emphasises the urgent need and importance for research to be conducted in relation to the negative effects of social media, as lives could potentially be lost due to its negative side effects. Due to the life-threatening risk factors low self-esteem holds, it highlights the significance of the issue and explains why it must be investigated (Błachnio et al., 2016; Faraon & Kaipainen, 2014; Schwartz, 2010).

Gaps within the research consist of a shortage of studies being conducted on adults. The majority of studies focus on adolescents, failing to consider how social media usage impacts adults' self-esteem and BID. To address this gap within the literature review, only people over 18 can participate within the questionnaire for this study. There will be no age limit provided so therefore data can be collected from a variety of ages. Another gap within the literature refers to how studies primarily focus on how women are affected by social media. Men are also affected and influenced by the media, so it is important to include them and compare the gender difference, if there is any. To address this gap within the literature, both males and females will be taking part within the study. Although some studies have included men within their research, more need to do so. More research and testing need to be conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the negative effects social media has on people's psychological wellbeing. This study aims to educate and share knowledge on the serve negative effects social media usage has on individual's body image dissatisfaction and self-esteem, which affects ones overall mental health.

The Current Study

The current study aims to investigate if, and how much, social media usage affects people's psychological well-being in relation to their self-esteem and body image. If this is the case, the study aims to investigate the factors which may influence this, i.e., gender and time spent on social media. Two research questions and two hypotheses are being investigated within this study. Research question 1 states: 'Do scores on the social media addiction scale predict scores on measures of self-esteem (SE) and body image dissatisfaction (BID)?' We hypothesise,

based on prior literature that 'Scores on the social media addiction scale will predict BID scores

and SE scores.' The predictor variable for this hypothesis is social media addiction scores, and

the criterion variable is BID and self-esteem scores. Research question 2 states: 'Will there be a

difference between males and females on measures of self-esteem and body image

dissatisfaction?'. For the second hypothesis, participants will be divided into two groups based

on their gender, (i) female (ii) male. The second hypothesis states that 'There will be a difference

between male and female scores in BID and self-esteem.' The independent variable for this

hypothesis is gender. The dependent variable for this hypothesis is BID scores and self-esteem

scores.

Methodology

Participants

The sample of the current study consists of 184 adults (Males: $n = 41$; Females: $n = 143$). This sample size was calculated using the G* Power analysis for linear regression analysis and an Independent T-Test analysis. The G*Power analysis revealed that the sample size suitable for this research study to be n=150, therefore the minimum sample size had to be 150. Participants came from all over Ireland, with ages ranging from 18 to 77 years. The average age of participants was 21. Non-probability convivence and snowball sampling strategies were used to recruit participants, as participants were recruited online, via social media websites. The study relied heavily on participants' willingness to participate. Snowball sampling was used as all existing participants were asked to recruit other participants to take part in the questionnaire.

Materials

The study's questionnaire consisted of two demographic questions and three standardised scales using google forms. On a laptop, google forms allowed all the data to be collected from participants using online surveys. The demographic questions were related to age and gender of the participants.

Social Media Usage, Self-Esteem, and Body-Image Dissatisfaction

The following questions were asked to assess the potential effects social media usage has on individual's self-esteem and body-image dissatisfaction; 'Do scores on the social media

addiction scale predict scores on measures of self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction?' and 'Will there be a difference between males and females on measures of self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction?.' Items were measured using three standardised scales:', 'The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale', and 'The Body-Esteem Scale'.

The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale

'The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale' BSMAS) (Griffiths, 2005) is a six-item self-report scale (i.e., salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse; Griffiths, 2005) which is an effective tool for assessing one's potential risk of being addicted to the internet (Lin Brostrom, Nilsen, Griffiths & Pakpour, 2017). Questions are answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Very rarely)* to 5 (*Very Often*). Scores range from 6-30. Any score over 19 represents social media addiction issues. The higher the score, the higher the severity of the social media addiction (Wong et al., 2020). Questions are stated such as "How often during the last year have you felt an urge to use social media more and more?" (Monacis, de Palo, Griffiths & Sinatra, 2017). The cronbach's alpha was s ($\alpha = .76$) indicating an appropriate level of internal consistency. Findings have shown that the BSMAS is a robust tool which can be used in future research. This supports the reliability and validity of the BSMAS (Monacis, de Palo, Griffiths & Sinatra, 2017).

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

'The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale' (Rosenberg, 1965) is one of the most widely used self-report measures, used to measure attitudes towards the self (Sinclair et al., 2010). It includes

10 items; 5 positively worded statements and 5 negatively worded statements (Goldsmith,1986).

It consists of a 4-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. It uses a scale

from 0-30, where a score less than 15 may indicate low self-esteem (Park & Park, 2019). An

example of a question within the scale is 'I feel that I have several good qualities. Strongly

Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree.' Scoring: Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Give

"Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4

points. Once these scores are reversed, sum up all scores. The cronbach's alpha was s ($\alpha = .83$)

which indicates a high level of internal consistency for the scale within this sample. 'The

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale' has shown to have prominent levels of reliability and validity

(Martín-Albo, Núñez, Navarro & Grijalvo, 2007).

The Body-Esteem Scale

'The Body Esteem Scale' (Franzio & Shields, 1984) is an updated version of the Body-

Cathexis Scale (Secourd & Jourard, 1953). This questionnaire is set up for adolescents and adults.

The scale consists of 35 body parts, all being rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (have

strong negative feelings), 2 (have moderate negative feelings), 3 (have no feeling one way or the

other), 4 (have moderate positive feelings), to 5 (have strong positive feelings) (Frost, Franzoi,

Oswald & Shields, n.d.). Total scores range from 32 to 165 (Cecil & Stanley, 1997). It has 3 sub-

scales: BE-weight (weight satisfaction), BE-appearance (general feelings about appearance), BE-

attribution (general feelings about other people's appearance and body) (Mendelson, Mendelson

& White, 2001). An example would be 'thighs: you either have; strong negative feelings; moderate

negative feelings; no feeling one way or the other; moderate positive feelings; or strong positive

feelings towards your thighs.' The cronbachs alpha for this scale was (α = .62). Several studies

have expressed and displayed the reliability and validity for the body esteem scale among adults

and adolescents (Cecil & Stanley, 1997; Gatti, Ionio, Traficante & Confalonieri, 2014).

Design

A cross sectional design is the most appropriate methodology for examining the effects

social media usage has on people's self-esteem and body image. The study was also a

quantitative research study, using survey research to collect data. Cross-sectional designs comes

with many benefits as they are fast and inexpensive. They are inexpensive due to data being

obtained by surveys and questionnaires. Gathering data from questionnaires and surveys allows

the researcher to obtain a large amount of data in a brief period of time (Kesmodel, 2018).

Although a potential weakness of a cross-sectional design is the possibility of non-response bias

from participants. Participants may skip questions or provide a bias answer within their survey or

questionnaire. A within-subjects design was used for research question 1 which states 'Do scores

on the social media addiction scale predict scores on measures of self-esteem and body image

dissatisfaction?'. The predictor variable for hypothesis 1 is social media addiction scores, and the

criterion variable is BID and SE scores. The independent variable for hypothesis 2 is gender and

the dependent variable is BID scores and SE scores.

Procedure

All data was collected using an online questionnaire. The link to this questionnaire was

shared on the researcher's social media accounts i.e., Instagram and Facebook. An individual

who wished to take part could click this link to access the survey. Participants were brought to a

Google Doc's page. Before the questionnaire begins, participants seen a brief summary of the

information sheet (See Appendix 4). This summary included reasons why the study is being

conducted, the importance of the study, benefits of the study, basic instructions of what

participants must do to complete the questionnaire, and finally, informing participants that their

questionnaire is confidential, and that their identity will remain anonymous. To confirm that

participants were over the age 18 they will click a checkbox. Consent was obtained from the

participants by them clicking this checkbox.

Age and gender are the two types of demographic data which was collected, by

presenting the two multiple choice questions at the beginning of the questionnaire. Participants

answered a series of multiple-choice questions based on these three standardised scales; (i) 'The

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale' (see appendix 1) to measure self-esteem, (ii) 'The Bergen Social

Media Addiction Scale' (BSMAS) (see appendix 2) to measure how much time is spent on social

media, (iii) 'The Body Esteem Scale' (see appendix 3) to measure perceptions of body image.

'The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale' is a self-report measure. It includes a 4-point scale ranging

from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. It uses a scale from 0-30, where a score less than 15

may indicate low self-esteem (Park & Park, 2019). 'The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale'

(BSMAS) is a six-item self-report scale, which is an effective tool for assessing one's potential

risk of being addicted to the internet (Lin Brostrom, Nilsen, Griffiths & Pakpour, 2017). 'The

Body Esteem Scale' is a questionnaire set up for adolescents and adults. It has 3 subscales: BE-

weight (weight satisfaction), BE-appearance (general feelings about appearance), BE-attribution

(general feelings about other people's appearance and body) (Mendelson, Mendelson & White,

2001). The questionnaire took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Ethical Considerations

This project was approved by NCI (National College of Ireland) ethics. All data was

gathered in accordance with the NCI ethical guidelines. The questionnaire was set up so that the

participants had to click 'next' to prove that he/she had read the consent form and agreed to take

part (See appendix 5). Once the 'next' button was selected the participant was redirected straight

to the research questionnaire page, to start the questionnaire. The questionnaire and questions

within the questionnaire were not visible until the participant had agreed to voluntarily

participate within the research, by clicking the button.

There was a small risk that participants could feel emotionally distressed during the

questionnaire. If that occured, participants had the right to withdraw from the study and call a

helpline which was provided within the debriefing sheet. The debriefing sheet was presented at

the end of the questionnaire (See appendix 6). The debriefing sheet consisted of the researcher's

email address in case anyone had any questions they wished to ask, and helplines to call if they

became distressed. All dataremains confidential unless the law requires disclosure. All data was

treated with the strictest confidence. This was done by using number codes to link the participant

to the questionnaire., names and addresses of participants were not asked nor wasthe IP address

collected., all information about the participants was destroyed once entered into the researcher's

computer. All data is stored in a password protected electrical file on the researcher's computer.

The data was handled, stored, and transferred in a way that ensured that security and privacy

were maintained. Only the researcher and supervisor had access to the data.The data would only

have been disclosed to a relevant third party in a situation where they felt that the participant was

in risk of harm, danger or was breaking the law.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were conducted for all variables. The current data was collected

from a sample of 184 participants (n = 184). 77.3% of the sample were females *(n* = 143)*, and

22.2% of the sample were males (n = 41). There are three descriptive variables including, self-

esteem total scores, body esteem total scores and social media addiction total scores. The mean,

standard deviation, and range were all obtained and displayed in the table below, labelled table 1.

Tests of normality was carried out on all the variables and revealed that all the variables were

normally distributed, except the body esteem scores. The body esteem scores were non-normally

distributed as they violated the assumptions of normality (p value = .00), therefore a Mann

Whitney U Test was carried out.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for continuous variables

Variable	*M* [95% CI]	*SD*	Range
Self-esteem total scores	27.59[26.49, 28.69]	7.56	36
Body esteem total scores	97.83[91.42, 104.23]	44.04	464
Social media addiction total scores	18.91[18.14, 19.68]	5.28	23

Inferential Statistics

A simple linear regression was carried out to test if social media scores (SMA) predicted body esteem scores. The results of the regression indicated that the model was not statistically significant $F(1, 182) = .06$, $p = .810$. It was found that social media addiction scores did not predict body esteem scores.

A second linear regression was carried out to test if social media addiction scores (SMA) predicted self-esteem scores. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 10.7% of the variance and that the model was statistically significant $F(1, 182) = 21.876$, $p = <.001$. It was found that social media addiction scores did predict self-esteem scores.

Table 2

Template for linear regression table

Variable	R^2	B	SE	β	t	p
Model	**.11***					
Social media addiction scores		-.47	.10	-.33	-4.68	.00

A Mann Whitney U Test was conducted to compare body esteem scores between males and females. There was no significant difference in the body esteem scores between males (*Md* =111.0, *n* = 41) and females (*Md* = 99.0., *n* = 143), *U* = 2449, *z* = -1.60, *p* = .109.

Finally, preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality; self-esteem scores and body esteem scores were normally distributed. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare self-esteem scores between males and females. There was no significant difference in self-esteem scores between males (*M* = 28.18, *SD* = 7.46) and females (*M* = 27.41, *SD* = 7.61), *t* (182) = .575, *p* = .57.

To summarise, social media addiction scores did significantly predict self-esteem scores, which partially supports the first hypothesis, but did not significantly predict body esteem scores. There was no significant difference between male and female self-esteem scores and body esteem scores, which did not support the second hypothesis.

Discussion

The current study aimed to investigate the potential relationship between social media addiction, self-esteem, and body esteem scores. The study also aimed to investigate gender differences within self-esteem and body esteem scores. The study intended to provide a greater understanding on the potential negative effects social media usage has on an individual's mental health. Prior results have discovered positive correlations between social media usage, body image dissatisfaction (BID) and low self-esteem (SE) (Santarossa & Woodruff, 2017). Social media usage has also been found to decrease SE, satisfaction with life, happiness, and increase depression and BID (Santarossa & Woodruff, 2017). In relation to gender differences, multiple findings have discovered that females tend to have higher BID and lower SE compared to males (Bleidorn et al., 2016; Feingold & Mazzella, 1998; Kling, Hyde, Showers & Buswell, 1999). Two hypotheses were constructed within this research to address the aim of the study.

Hypothesis 1

Based on prior research, it was hypothesised that social media addiction scores would predict self-esteem and BID scores. This was investigated using a linear regression. The overall model was non-significant. Although despite this, social media addiction scores did significantly predict self-esteem scores. This is consistent with prior research, which states that social media usage has significant effects on an individual's self-esteem. This data contributes a clearer understanding of the relationship between social media use and self-esteem. A study conducted in 2017, which supports the claim of the hypothesis, discovered that a strong relationship existed

between social media usage and self-esteem. Results established that an increased use of social media resulted in a decrease in self-esteem (Jan, Soomro & Ahmad, 2017). Moreover, Guven (2019) identified a strong relationship between social media usage and self-esteem, social media usage being a significant predictor of self-esteem (Guven, 2019). This partially supports hypothesis 1. Social media scores did not significantly predict BE scores. This was an unexpected result and conflicts with previous findings. Ryding & Kuss (2020) discovered that frequent social media usage, particularly appearance focused social media use, is a strong predictor for BID and a potential risk factor for body dysmorphic disorder (Ryding & Kuss, 2020). This could be due to mythological differences, as this study and many others include different social media features and apps, rather than just accounting for how frequently individuals use social media. Furthermore, studies that found a positive correlation between social media usage and BID, also focused on more specific social media activities, such as viewing and uploading selfies (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016). This aspect of social media usage was not included within this study but has been found to be highly troublesome in relation to body image issues (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016).

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis stated that there will be a gender difference in male and female scores in BID and SE. Firstly, a Mann Whitney U Test was conducted to compare body esteem (BE) scores among males and females. The Mann Whitney U Test was carried out as the original t-test was not normally distributed. The results concluded that there was no significant difference between male and female BE scores. These findings do not support the hypothesis and are not

consistent with prior literature. These results challenge and go against several researchers, stating

that women suffer more than men in relation to body image dissatisfaction and that this

dissatisfaction has a significant negative influence on their lives compared to men (Brennan,

Lalonde & Bain, 2010). The participants within this study were equally balanced (Males: $n = 98$;

Females: $n = 97$), which may have accounted for the significant results detecting a gender

difference. For these reasons, the results within this study were unexpected. Although, the

generalisability of these results is limited by the over representation of women within the sample

(Males: $n = 41$; Females: $n = 143$). The lack of generalisability within these results may have

contributed to the results being non-significant and not supporting previous findings. Secondly,

an independent t-test was conducted to compare self-esteem (SE) scores among males and

females. Results concluded that there was no significant difference in SE scores between males

and females. This result was also unanticipated and did not support the hypothesis. The results

contradict the claims of Bleidorn et al., (2016) which clearly state that a significant gender

difference exists, with males repeatedly reporting higher levels of self-esteem compared to

women (Bleidorn et al., 2016). In addition to this, it does not support past studies which

consistently state that gender gaps do exist, with males generally having higher levels of SE

compared to females. A longitudinal study which consisted of a large sample size of 7,552

undergraduate students, discovered that yet again men had significantly higher self-esteem

compared to women (Sprecher, Brooks & Avogo, 2013). Although, interestingly, this result is

supported by a previous study conducted in 2011. The study concluded that there were no

significant differences between male and female' self-esteem, despite anticipating that there

would be (Marcic & Kobel Grum, 2011). Perhaps these results are similar to the results obtained

within this study, as females are yet again overrepresented compared to the males within the sample of participants (Males: $n = 110$; Females: $n = 229$). The over representation of women and underrepresentation of men within the sample of participants in this study may explain why the results were not significant and did not support the hypothesis. This over representation of females contributing to online surveys compared to men (Curtin et al 2000; Moore & Tarnai, 2002; Singer et al., 2000) within the study, affects the generalisability and reliability of the results. Other factors which may have affected the generalisability of the results is the fact that, generally, more women and younger people are more likely to take part in the survey, then older people (Goyder, 1986; Moore & Tarnai, 2002).

Limitations

There are some limitations which should be considered when interpreting the results from the current study. Absence of support for the body esteem relation within hypothesis 1, and all of hypothesis 2 could be explained by some of these limitations. Firstly, the scales utilized within the study may have not measured the variables as accurately as possible. Specifically, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale only consists of 10 questions and the Bergan Social Media Addiction scale only consisted of 6 questions. Although both scales have good reliability and validity, they do not entail enough specific details to completely understand and gain a realistic perception of oneself and the extent of one's social media addiction. Future research could elaborate on these scales, creating a more in-depth scale which measures a wider variety of variables, and therefore providing more information and accurate results. Although in saying

this, the third scale utilized within the study, the Body Esteem scale, consisted of enough details to measure the variables as accurately as possible as the scale consisted of 35 detailed questions.

Secondly, all of the scales utilized within the study relied heavily on self-report measures which acts as a limitation within the study. Self-report measures are classified as a limitation, as they are prone to many issues. The main issue with self-report measures is the possibility of receiving invalid answers, as participants may not always answer truthfully (Demetriou, Ozer & Essau, 2015). One issue of self-report measures is self-deception enhancement. Self-deception enhancement refers to an individual who has an unconscious distorted opinion of themselves, which results in biased, inaccurate answers based on this distortion (Demetriou, Ozer & Essau, 2015). Another issue with self-report measures is acquiescence, also known as response bias. This refers to an individual's tendency to respond in a particular way, regardless of the question (Demetriou, Ozer & Essau, 2015). Acquiescence is when a participant answers yes to all answers, or no to all answers, regardless of the questions being asked. It is possible that conducting an experimental research design in controlled laboratories may create more accurate, reliable results. In addition to this, more longitudinal studies need to be conducted to investigate the possible long-term effects of social media usage. Also, including both males and females of all ages within future research is crucial, as the majority of research on this topic is conducted among young adolescent females.

Thirdly, the lack of male participants within this study acts a limitation as it creates a gender imbalance. The current sample consisted of 41 male participants and 143 female participants. As prior literature has emphasised and highlighted, males typically have higher

levels of self-esteem and lower levels of BID compared to females, perhaps having a more balanced sample would have produced different, more accurate results.

Fourthly, the results obtained within the current study were based on a cross sectional design, hence no casual relationships were identified. Cross sectional studies are prone to non-response bias (Sedgwick, 2014). This occurs if participants who agree to take part within the study differ from those who do not, which results in the sample not being representative of the population (Sedgwick, 2014).

A strength of this study was the variety of ages within the sample of participants, as they ranged from 18 to 77 years. The mean age for participants was 25 years. This acts as a strength within the study as it is providing a variety of ages which makes the results more generalisable to the general population. It is also crucial to investigate adults' opinions about social media use, SE and BID, as the majority of research solely focuses on adolescents, which limits the results as this topic effects people of all ages. Another strength of this study was the sample size. The G* power analysis suggested a minimum of $n=$ 150 participants to conduct this study. Fortunately, 184 participants took part within the study which exceeded the required amount.

Practical Implications

A vast amount of research is being conducted in relation to the negative effects social media usage potentially has on individual's mental health. Based on the findings within this study, the primary focus is on how social media usage significantly predicted self-esteem scores among males and females. Thus, the practical implications for this study are that the negative

effects of social media usage should be addressed to reduce the amount of mental health issues among individuals. Social media usage is positively related to low self-esteem (Andreassen, Pallesen & Griffiths, 2017). From a societal point of view, stricter regulations in relation to the media and self-esteem should be assessed. Perhaps apps such as Snapchat and Instagram could reconsider the photo filters they have available for use on their websites. These filters are having profound effects on people's self-esteem and body image, as they create airbrushed looking skin, enlarging the lips, eyes and even slimming jawlines and noses (Barker, 2020). These filters may seem harmless, but filters like these are adding to society's issues by increasing low self-esteem, body image dissatisfaction, and people's obsession with perfection. Many studies have discovered how these filters negatively affect people's mental health (Cruz, 2019; Barker, 2020; Valéria Sándor, 2020). Therefore, social networking sites such as Instagram and Snapchat should re-evaluate their decision to have these filters, as it is having detrimental effects on many people's wellbeing. Moreover, social media is growing at a rapid rate and because of this, it is impossible to attempt to keep all children, teens, and adults away from social media completely. However, it is possible that parents, teachers, and lecturers could play an active role in educating younger generations in relation to self-esteem, and the impact excessive social media use can have, on people's mental health. Additionally, workshops and campaigns should be run to raise awareness and educate people about the negative effects social media usage can have, and how to avoid them. Furthermore, there are implications from a societal perspective., The Health Service Executive (HSE) may consider reviewing and editing their current guidelines on social media use, as they provide no information relating to the potential influence social media can have on one's mental health and wellbeing. The guidelines should provide knowledgeable

information on how social media usage can influence SE;, how to prevent this, and general

methods of improving one's own SE. This would act as a benefit to the public as the HSE could

enhance and expand on the information guidelines regarding social media use, which would

educate the public, and provide awareness in relation to the potential effects that the media can

have on people's mental health. Due to the consistent findings of low SE in relation to social

media use, the current guidelines provided by the HSE should be evaluated and improved to

attempt to reduce the amount of people experiencing low SE. Finally, on a personal level, those

who regularly use social media should attempt to limit their time spent on the media, along with

being aware of the content they are exposing themselves too, considering how this may affect

their mental health. To sum up the implications for this study, the recommendations provided

could make a significant difference to many peoples overall mental health and wellbeing and

decrease some of the negative effects social media usage can provoke.

Conclusion

Overall, taking everything into consideration, this study elaborates on the relationship between social media use, self-esteem, and body image dissatisfaction. Research question 1 stated 'Do scores on the social media addiction scale predict scores on measures of self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction?'. Results concluded that scores on the social media addiction scale did significantly predict self-esteem scores but did not significantly predict body image dissatisfaction scores. Research question 2 stated 'Will there be a difference between males and females on measures of self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction?'. Although inconsistent with prior research, results concluded that there was no difference between males and females measures of self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction. However, the sample of participants consisted mostly of females ($n = 143$) compared to males ($n = 41$), affecting the reliability of this result. Research question 1 partially supports existing literature and strengthens prior findings on how self-esteem is influenced by social media. Although this study failed to demonstrate that a relationship exists between social media use and BID, and that gender differences exist in relation to SE and BID. There are several implications which may have contributed to these non-significant results as discussed previously. Perhaps focusing on specific social networking sites such as Instagram or Pinterest, rather than just social media usage in general, may provide more accurate results in relation to BID. Certain social networking sites are more appearance focused then others (Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016). It could be plausible that only image-based media may be having significant effects on individuals BID. Previous research has demonstrated relationships between BID and usage of certain apps such as Instagram, Facebook, or Pinterest

(Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016; Hicks & Brown, 2016; Yurdagül, Kircaburun, Emirtekin, Wang & Griffiths, 2019). For this reason, future studies should consider different social networking sites, and how important social media is to individuals rather than how often they engage with it. Future research ought to implement more longitudinal studies to investigate potential long-term effects of social media usage, as little studies investigate this. This may also benefit the development of preventative measures to avoid or reduce negative consequences such as low SE and BID. Self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction are complex issues which are consistently changing. Hence, it is crucial to continuously conduct research on these topics to keep the public aware of the severe negative effects that these complex issues can have.

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Appendices

Appendix 1
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Scale: Instructions Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

2. At times I think I am no good at all. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

6. I certainly feel useless at times. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree,Strongly Disagree

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, StronglyDisagree

Scoring: Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Give "Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4 points. Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.

Appendix 2
The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS)

Please indicate how strongly you agree and disagree with these statements

1. You spend a lot of time thinking about social media or planning how to use it. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

2. You feel an urge to use social media more and more. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

3. You use social media in order to forget about personal problems. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

4. You have tried to cut down on the use of social media without success. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

5. You become restless or troubled if you are prohibited from using social media. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

6. You use social media so much that it has had a negative impact on your job/studies. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

Appendix 3
The Body-Esteem Scale (Franzoi & Shields, 1984)

Instructions: On this page are listed several body parts and functions. Please read each item and indicate how you feel about this part or function of your own body using the following scale: 1 = Have strong negative feelings 2 = Have moderate negative feelings 3 = Have no feeling one way or the other 4 = Have moderate positive feelings 5 = Have strong positive feelings.

A factor analysis indicated that three factors emerged for males and females. These factors are (1) Physical Attractiveness (PA) for males or Sexual Attractiveness (SA) for females, (2) Upper Body Strength (UBS) for males or Weight Concern (WC) for females and (3) Physical Condition (PC) for both males and females. Means for these three factors can be computed for males and females but please note that these means cannot be compared because they are not based on the same items. Also note that two items load on two factors for males. The information under the Factor Loading heading should be deleted before the test is given - the information is provided for experimenters who wish to analyse the three factors separately. To determine a subject's score for a particular subscale of the Body Esteem Scale, simply add up the individual scores for items on the subscale. For example, for female sexual attractiveness, you would add up the subject's ratings of the items comprising the sexual attractiveness subscale (13 items).

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The scale ranges from *I have strong negative feelings* to *I have strong positive feelings*.

I have ...

Item	strong negative feelings	moderate negative feelings	no feeling one way or the other	moderate positive feelings	strong positive feelings
body scent					
appetite					
nose					
physical stamina					
reflexes					
lips					
muscular strength					
waist					
energy level					
thighs					
ears					
biceps					
chin					
body build					

physical coordination					
buttocks					
agility					
width of shoulders					
arms					
chest or breasts					
appearance of eyes					
cheeks/cheekbones					
hips					
legs					
figure or physique					
sex drive					
feet					
sex organs					
appearance of stomach					
health					
sex activities					
body hair					

physical condition					
face					
weight					

Appendix 4
Participant Information Sheet

Thank you for considering in taking part within this study. You are invited to participate in a research study that will form the basis for an undergraduate thesis. Please read the information provided below before making your decision to participate within the study.

Why is this study being conducted?

As part of my psychology undergraduate degree at the School of Business, National College of Ireland. I am required to conduct a research study. The study is concerned with how social media usage effects people's self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction. The study will be focusing on gender differences in relation to self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction, and whether those who spend more time on social media are more effected by these negative psychological effects.

What does the study consist of?

Should you choose to participate, you will be first asked your gender and age. You will then be presented with a series of self-report multiple choice questions from the standardised scales: Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, to measure levels of self-esteem, The Bergen Social Media Addiction scale, to measure how often one uses social media and the Body-Esteem scale, to measure one's general attitude towards their physical appearance and body image. The questionnaire is relatively short and will take a maximum of 10 minutes.

Why is it important to conduct this study?

Due to the significant increase in social media usage, it will be beneficial for many to understand and gain knowledge on the potential negative effect this device has on our psychological well-being. Considering the amount of time majority of people in this generation spend on their phone daily, it is crucial for people to become more aware of how this device affects us.

Participation must be voluntary

Participation within this study must be voluntary. There is no obligation to participate. If you do choose to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time. The questionnaire will not be available until you click the button below agreeing that you wish to voluntarily participate. All information you provide will remain confidential. Your identity will be kept anonymous throughout the study. IP address will not be collected throughout the study meaning that the data you provide will not be able to be tracked back to you.

Can one withdraw from the study?

You may withdraw from the study at any time throughout the questionnaire. No penalties will occur if one wishes to withdraw from the study.

Where will the data be stored?

All the anonymous data will be stored on the researcher's computer under a password protected electrical file. The only people who will have access to the data will be the researcher and their supervisor.

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE, SELF-ESTEEM, AND BODY IMAGE
DISSATISFACTION

We do not intend to cause any psychological distress among participants. However, some of the topics and questions being discussed are personal and sensitive. Although it is very unlikely, should you experience any psychological distress when participating within the study, you can choose not the answer the question or withdraw from the study. Helplines and websites will be provided on the debriefing form which will be displayed at the end of the questionnaire if one is feeling distressed and wishes to seek help.

This study has obtained approval from the NCI Psychology Ethics Filter Committee.

If you have any queries in regards the study, please do not hesitate to contact me: emalonelawless@icloud.com

Appendix 5
Consent Form

In agreeing to participate in this research I understand the following:

This research is being conducted by Ellen Malone Lawless, an undergraduate student at the School of Business, National College of Ireland.

The method proposed for this research project has been approved in principle by the Departmental Ethics Committee, which means that the Committee does not have concerns about the procedure itself as detailed by the student. It is, however, the above-named student's responsibility to adhere to ethical guidelines in their dealings with participants and the collection and handling of data.

If I have any concerns about participation, I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw at any stage.

I have been informed as to the general nature of the study and agree voluntarily to participate.

There are no known expected discomforts or risks associated with participation.

All data will be anonymous and will be treated confidentially. The data from all participants will be compiled, analyzed, and submitted in a report to the Psychology Department in the School of Business. No participant's data will be identified by name at any stage of the data analysis or in the final report.

At the conclusion of my participation, any questions or concerns I have will be fully addressed.

I may withdraw from this study at any time, however, once I press the submit button, I cannot withdraw my data.

If you consent to participate within this study, please click next.

Appendix 6
Debriefing Form

Thank you so much to everyone who participated within the study. The aim of the study was to investigate the potential influence social media usage has on self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction among males and females over the age of 18.

If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact myself at emalonelawless@icloud.com as I am more than happy to answer any questions anyone might have in relation to the study, or you may contact my supervisor Conor Nolan at conor.nolan@ncirl.ie.

If you require any additional support here are some contact details for some helplines.
BODYWISE helpline 01 2107906 & alex@bodywhys.ie

www.getselfhelp.co.uk - information and resources relating to self-esteem

www.life-with-confidence.com - an excellent resource containing information on how to boost your confidence and self-esteem.

Please do not hesitate to contact anyone for support. Thank you for participating.

Appendix 7
Questionnaire

Please indicate your gender

❑ Male

❑ Female

Please type in your age

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Scale: Instructions Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about

yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. Overall, I am satisfied with myself. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

2. At times I think I am no good at all. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that I have several good qualities. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

4. I can do things as well as most other people. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly

Disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

6. I certainly feel useless at times. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS)

Please indicate how strongly you agree and disagree with these statements

11. You spend a lot of time thinking about social media or planning how to use it. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

12. You feel an urge to use social media more and more. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

13. You use social media in order to forget about personal problems. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

14. You have tried to cut down on the use of social media without success. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

15. You become restless or troubled if you are prohibited from using social media. Strongly

agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

16. You use social media so much that it has had a negative impact on your job/studies. Strongly

agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

The Body Esteem Scale

On this page are listed a number of body parts and functions.
Please read each item and indicate how you feel about this part or function of your own body
using the following scale.
The scale ranges from *I have strong negative feelings* to *I have strong positive feelings*.

I have ...

Item	strong negative feelings	moderate negative feelings	no feeling one way or the other	moderate positive feelings	strong positive feelings
body scent					
appetite					
nose					
physical stamina					
reflexes					
lips					

muscular strength					
waist					
energy level					
thighs					
ears					
biceps					
chin					
body build					
physical coordination					
buttocks					
agility					
width of shoulders					
arms					
chest or breasts					
appearance of eyes					
cheeks/cheekbones					
hips					
legs					

figure or physique				
sex drive				
feet				
sex organs				
appearance of stomach				
health				
sex activities				
body hair				
physical condition				
face				
weight				