The Use of Social Media on Body Image and Eating Behaviours

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Abstract

Today's social media can be seen as more interactive than more traditional mass media. This has led to concerns about its effects on user's mindset as almost every individual with a capable device can post, like, comment and share pictures online. This thesis aims to comprehend the effects social media can have on its user's mindset about body image. Disturbing one's body image can furthermore lead to behavioral changes in eating habits and in its extreme to eating disorders. This is highly important subject to understand given how largely newer social media has integrated into our society. The research is based on literature review of prior studies and no own empirical research was conducted. Reviewing the prior research resulted in a good broad look to what leads to harmful social media use, what comes out of it, and how can we ease the effects of it.

Keywords
Body image, social media, social networking sites, social grooming, eating disorder

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Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Aim and motivation of the study

The availability of social media has led to it being integral part of our everyday life (Bue, 2020). Perrin and Andersson (2019) stated that in the U.S., nearly 90% of people have ownership of social media account in some platform (as cited in Bue, 2020). This use of social media has made it important to study potential relationships between young men's and women's social media use and its effects on body image (Kim & Chock, 2015).

Prior studies have largely focused on young women's use of social media and its effects on women's eating behaviour and body image concerns. It has been found that general use of social networking sites (SNS), such as browsing platforms, does not implicate significant effects on body image and eating behaviour, but the active use of SNS does (Cohen, Newton-John, & Slater, 2018). Cohen et. al. (2018) found that greater investment in selfie taking led up to increased body dissatisfaction and bulimia symptomatology.

This thesis focuses mostly on women's social media use and its effects on women's body image and eating behaviour. It also tries to understand at some level how social media use can affect one's psychic wellbeing. Due to lack of prior research on men's use of social media, studying the effects of social media on men's behaviour is minimal in this thesis.

Aim of this thesis is to find correlations of using social media and its effects on one's body image and eating behaviour. In addition, it tries to understand in some level the psychological effects of social media use in a broader sense. Motivation for this research comes from relevance of this topic in nowadays world. In addition, personal motivation can be seen in making of this thesis. Thesis relies solely on prior study and there will not be any empirical research conducted.

1.2 Research questions

The questions this thesis aims to answer are correlated with people's body image and eating behaviours. The main questions this thesis seeks to find answers to are how social media affects people's body image and how worsen body image affects people's eating behaviour. By answering these questions, we get better understanding of the subject and thus get practical implications for future.

1.3 Concepts

This subchapter is meant to clarify some of the most used concepts in this thesis. These are social media, social grooming, augmented reality, body image, traditional mass media, fitspirational content, and eating disorder.

Social media / Social networking sites (SNS) are platforms where people can create personal profiles and share, comment view, and like content that is generated by other peers. Example social networking sites are Facebook and Instagram (Perloff, 2014; as cited in Cohen, Newton-John & Slater, 2018).

Social grooming is user's active participation in social media. Social media use is roughly divided into two sections in this thesis; active use and passive use. Active use can be seen as the more influential use for user's body image as it includes liking, posting, commenting, and sharing content in social media (Utz & Beukebook, 2011).

Augmented reality (AR) is a newer way of using photo manipulation in a real time. Augmented reality can be used as a face filter while taking photos or during calls on social media (Javornik et. al., 2022).

Body image is combination of thoughts about your own body. Body image can differentiate between positive and negative, and it is influenced by internal and external factors. External factors can come from social environment (National Eating Disorder Collaboration, n.d.).

Traditional mass media include radio, television, print, and billboards (Megha Shah, 2020).

Fitspirational content is athletic or fit-ideal imaginary on social media. Its purpose is to drive social media users for healthy lifestyle (Sumter, Cingel, & Antonis, 2018).

Eating Disorder is mental disorder in which people's relationship with food, exercising, body image or their general perception of themselves have negative impact on their health. Eating disorders generate negative feelings about oneself and may cause self-hatred, anxiety, and depression (mieli.fi, 2021).

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Reviewing the prior literature resulted in a comprehensive look into the use of social networking sites and its effects on user's body image and eating behaviors. Many good studies were found that supported the hypotheses of how social media can be seen to be harmful to user's body image and eating behavior. The thesis is built up as a comprehensive look into social media usage. It takes into account why social media is so studied nowadays, how is social media studied in prior research, what kind of self-evaluation is happening on social media, how ways of using social media affects differently user's body image and eating behavior, why photo manipulating is happening on social media, differences between women versus men on social media usage, what is needed to ease the effects of social media, and positive sides of social media. In the end there are discussion, conclusions, and lastly references.

2.   Research methods

This thesis does not conduct any empirical research of its own and is solely based on prior research and thus is a literature review. Prior research was mainly acquired by using Scopus. Scopus was used for its clear search engine and easy to use search limits. Through Scopus I was capable to search mostly *Computer Science* related documents, but the subject being multidisciplinary some psychology related documents were also included. This was easily done as Scopus provides highly usable field of science selector. Google Search Engine was used only if clarification of concept was needed. Other search engines, such as Google Scholar, were used when Scopus did not provide access to the wanted document.

Searching in Scopus was conducted mainly by using phrases such as "social media", "body image", "photo editing", and "negative effects". Given results were mostly limited by subject to "Computer Science", but also some results from psychology were included. Some of the search used in Scopus: "social media" AND "body image" | "social media" AND "negative effects" | "social media" AND "women" AND "body image" | "social media" AND "men" AND "body image" | "social media" AND "eating disorders". The given documents did not need limiting the year, because social media is a relatively new concept.

3.   Prior research

Prior research concerning this thesis focuses on how social media affects one's body image, eating behavior, and into some limit possible mental health issues. Prior studies have found many indicators of the negative effects of social media especially on younger women. To have more broader view of the subject, few study taking into account men's behavioral changes stemming from social media usage are reviewed in the thesis.

Structure of this section is as follows; first we get understanding of what kind of social media is being studied in this thesis. Next subchapter focuses on the reasons why today's social media is so heavily studied. Third subchapter gives brief information on how prior research has conducted their studies on the subject. Fourth subchapter focuses on how self-evaluation happens in social media to get better understanding why social media can affect peoples' body image and eating habits. Subchapter five introduces different ways of using social media and their differences on one's mindset. Following subchapters study why people manipulate their photos in social media, how social media usage differs between women and men, how the negative effects of social media on users' behavior can be eased, and lastly positive sides of social media use on body image is studied.

3.1 What is the social media studied in prior research

Marengo, Longobardi, Fabris, and Settanni (2018) divides social media into highly visual social media and low visual social media (as cited in Bue, 2020). Bue (2020) states that sites such as Twitter and Facebook are considered to be low visual social media, because they are based a lot more on textual content than highly visual social media such as Instagram and Snapchat. This is important to understand because studies have focused on these highly visual social media sites, such as Instagram, for the reason that they can be entirely photo-based, and this can lead to more frequent engagement in appearance-related behavior amongst users (Bue, 2020). Facebook is also included in the studies for its massive user base (Kim, 2018; Kim & Chock, 2015).

3.2 Reasons for studying newer social media

Social networking sites have gained massive user base since they started appearing into our everyday lives, Facebook having 2.75 billion monthly users and Instagram having 1 billion monthly users (Statista, 2020; as cited in Faelens, et. al., 2021). Given this risen use of social media among young adults, it has become more important to study its effects on women's and men's body image concerns (Kim & Chock, 2015). Grabe, Ward, and Hyde (2008) states that social media tends to represent idealized and specific beauty ideals among women and men which in turn leads to self-comparisons against social media images (as cited in Kim & Chock, 2015).

The social media available today is also more interactive than traditional social media, such as tv and radio, allowing its users to search for specific content and engage with it if necessary (Kim & chock, 2015). Utz and Beukeboom (2011) characterize active social media use as social grooming, which refers to maintaining social media relationships by liking, viewing, commenting, and sharing peer's content. This kind of behavior can be seen to be more affecting to user's body image and eating behavior than only browsing social networking sites (Kim & Chock, 2015). Cohen, Newton-John, and Slater (2018) supported this argument by stating that social networking site (SNS) selfie activity was

considered more highly associated with body image and eating concerns than overall social media browsing.

3.3 How prior research has studied this phenomenon

As stated in introduction, prior research has mainly focused on women's social media use and its effects on their body image and eating concerns. Prior research mainly used questionnaires, interviews, and surveys to study social media usage among young women (Cohen et. al., 2017; Sumter et. al., 2018). Some research was found conducting either cross sectional study including both men and women or focused only on men (Boursier, Gioia, & Griffiths, (2020); Griffiths, Murray, Krug, McLean, 2018). Standing out from other research, Bue (2020) used interestingly eye-tracking methods to study social media effects on women's body image concerns. This allowed Bue (2020) to observe how women viewed other peer's pictures posted on social media and how they evaluated their own body parts to others. This kind of evaluating behavior can be seen studied in numerous other studies, such as Vendemia and DeAndrea (2018).

3.4 Self-evaluating behavior in social media

Bue (2020) studied how women evaluated self-reported attractive and unattractive body parts on peer's pictures on social media. Bue (2020) focused the study solely on Instagram because it is considered to be highly visual platform. This for the fact that Instagram use is based on posting pictures and videos. One cannot post anything on Instagram without picture or video. Bue (2020) gets her theoretical background for social media use from basic human instincts, such as how human has a fundamental need to belong somewhere and compare themselves socially to other peers (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Festinger, 1954; as cited in Bue, 2020). Based on these theories humans have a need to evaluate social standing and performance, when missing an objective reference point for evaluation (Bue, 2020).

Bue (2020) presents that this evaluation to others can happen in three different directions; it can be upward comparison, lateral comparison, and downward comparison. Upward comparison is when social media users see themselves as doing worse than the one they are comparing to, lateral comparison happens when social media user sees himself/herself at a comparable level to the person viewed in social media, and downwards comparison can be seen as social media user seeing himself/herself doing better than the one under observation (Bue, 2020). These kind of comparisons can lead to negative or positive outcomes. Upward comparison is usually seen to be harmful for viewer as when lateral- and downwards comparison can be seen having positive results to viewer (Gibbons & Gerrard, 1989; Myers, Ridolfi, Crowther, & Ciesla, 2012; as cited in Bue, 2020). Kim & Chock (2015) found out that when comparing themselves to ideal models (upward comparison), viewers are less likely to be satisfied with themselves. In her research Bue (2020) found out that people with good body image of themselves focused less on self-reported unattractive body areas whereas people with worsen body image focused same amount on unattractive as attractive body areas. It was found out that having higher body dissatisfaction can lead up to an individual focusing more on unattractive body regions, creating circle of rising body dissatisfaction (Bue, 2020).

Vendemia and DeAndrea (2018) focused their research on female selfies on social media. In alignment with Bue's (2020) research on how women evaluated themselves with other peer's social media content, Vendemia and DeAndrea (2018) studied how female

participants evaluated other's social media selfies. What was found problematic in newer mass social media sites was that photos taken can be highly edited and manipulated, which can lead to idealizing a false body image to a very broad audience (Vendemia & DeAndrea, 2018). What Vendemia and DeAndrea (2018) found interestingly was that the source of the image taken affected the way participants evaluated the photo; when the photo was taken by one's offline peer it was evaluated more harshly and described as less intelligent etc. than the one taken by model. The reason for this was that viewers thought professional models were sharing their pictures for motivational reasons rather than to make others jealous (Vendemia & DeAndrea, 2018).

Boursier et. al., (2020) studied both adolescent women's and men's behavior in social networking sites finding that social media use allows individuals who are dissatisfied with their own body image to strategically modify their self-presentation online. Boursier et. al., (2020) focused their study on how this kind of behavior can lead to problematic social media use, finding that girls reported higher level of appearance anxiety in social media compared to boys. Interestingly Dempsey, Looney, McNamara, Michalek, and Hennessy (2022) found out in their research that male young adults displayed higher levels of personal stigma, which means one's prejudice and discrimination towards other peer, when compared to females. This men's higher level of personal stigma towards peer's content could be studied further to better understand the effects of this in social media.

3.5 Ways of using social media affects differently user's behavior

Kim (2018) stated that first we need to specify the use context of social media when exploring relationships between social media use and body image concerns. Many of the prior studies found out that simple exposure, such as browsing social networking sites, did not have much an impact on user's body image or eating concerns (Cohen et. al., 2018; Kim & Chock, 2015; Kim, 2018). This has been in contrast with prior studies, which have claimed that simple social networking site browsing affects viewers body image and eating habits (Cohen et. al., 2018). Kim and Chock (2015) studied phenomenon called "social grooming" and in Cohen et. al., (2018) research focused on how taking selfies affected women's body image and eating concerns. Both of these studies came to conclusion that it is the active social media use, such as posting, liking, and commenting, which effects user's body image and eating behavior rather than simple social media time exposure. Supporting both of these studies Kim (2018) also found out that it was Facebook use for social grooming rather than use for profile maintenance that was associated with body weight satisfaction and drive for thinness.

Another point of view of using social media differently was that it made difference if user was following appearance-based social media content or appearance-neutral social media content (Cohen, Newton-John, & Slater, 2017). Cohen et. al., (2017) found out that following appearance-focused accounts on Instagram was associated with body image concerns and drive for thinness.

3.6 Why people manipulate their photos in social media thus leading to higher risks of body dissatisfaction

People's born nature to feel like belonging somewhere influence social networking site users to more alter their pictures to receive acceptance from others (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell, & Schreindorfer, 2013; as cited in Lowe-Calverley & Grieve, 2018). Lowe-Calverley and Grieve (2018) found out that people's behavior on social media is highly influenced by

the people who they consider important for themselves and thus seeks their acceptance, which in turn can lead to posting modified pictures online. Interestingly narcissism was not highly contributing to the photo manipulating, although it was pointed out that narcissism is becoming more normative in society through social media usage when reaching for perfection in one's social media appearance (Lowe-Calverley & Grieve, 2018). Findings from Kim's (2018) research indicated that those who more frequently edited photos engaged more in manner to compare themselves to others in social media, thus contributing to negative images of their own bodies. Supporting Kim's (2018) study Lee and Lee (2021) found out that women who edit their appearance in social media content are more likely to compare themselves to ideals. In addition, Verrastro et. al., (2020) came to the conclusion that adolescents who edited their pictures in social media had absorbed the stereotype of idealized beauty standards by Instagram and felt more uncomfortable and anxious about their body image.

Newer way of manipulating photos is using augmented reality (AR) filters, which are filters that person can use to modify their appearance in social media. This AR can lead to people having both negative and positive outcomes of it. If augmented reality was used to picture ideal self-presentation, it reduced self-acceptance whereas using augmented reality just for fun or as a conversation starter increased self-acceptance (Javornik et. al., 2022).

3.7   Social media use among women vs. men

As said earlier in the thesis, most of the prior research has focused solely on women's behavior on social media. Compared to boys, girls involved in Boursier et. al., (2020) study spent more hours per day on social media, shared more selfies online, and more frequently had a selfie as a profile picture in social media. In addition, Boursier et. al., (2020) stated that girls reported having higher levels of social appearance anxiety than boys, which might indicate for the fact that the present study focuses more on studying women's behavior in social networking sites. Females are generally found to be experiencing higher body dissatisfaction than males, which in turn can lead to more photo manipulating (Grogan, 2016; as cited in Lowe-Calverley & Grieve, 2018). Kim and Chock (2015) also found out that women engage more in social grooming compared to men thus leading to higher chance of self-objectification, appearance comparison and drive for thinness.

Even though prior studies have heavily focused on women, some of them have also done cross-sectional studies between men and women and some of them only on men (Griffiths et. al., 2018; Boursier et. al., 2020; Gultzow, Guidry, Schneider, Hoving, 2020). Studies have shown that compared to women young adult males experienced higher levels of personal stigma, that is individual's own level of prejudice and discrimination towards other peer, in context of social media (Dempsey et. al., 2022). Which in turn can lead to evaluation of himself and others in social media. Verrastro's et. al., (2020) research showed that young boys are also influenced by Instagram and unrealistic body images, leading up to having negative consequences to their body image and self-acceptance. Interestingly Boursier et. al., (2020) found out that male participants indicated more that sexual fantasies, excitement, and feelings were important aspects of selfies compared to girls. In addition, Kim & Chock (2015) found out that men are more likely to exaggerate their physical attractiveness on online dating sites.

3.8 What is needed to ease the negative effects of social media on body image

Many studies have provided solutions on how the negative effects of social media could be minimized (Cohen et. al., 2018; Vendemia & DrAndrea, 2018; Hayes, Stolk-Cooke, Muench, 2015; Verrastro et. al., 2020). Vendemia and DeAndrea (2018) state that informing viewer that photo is modified and edited can help reduce the negative influence it can have on viewers mindset. The consequence of this could be that it could lead to users avoiding using the social networking sites (Vendemia & DeAndrea, 2018), and thus avoided by social media site developers. Boursier et. al. (2020) research results indicated that interventions promoting teen's awareness about social media and its possible negative effects on viewers mindset are needed to help them manage their appearance concerns. In alignment with Boursier et. al. (2020), Verrastro et. al. (2020) suggest that school programs starting in middle school should inform younger audience about the risks connected to social media. In addition, social media developers should start implementing strategies to inform social networking site users about the possible risks, such as photo editing, to inspire more body healthy imaginary (Verrastro et. al., 2020).

A study done by Fardouly and Rapee (2019) studied women viewing makeup and no-makeup pictures and its effects on participants body image, more correctly on facial area. It was discovered that viewing no-makeup images reduced the negative impact of idealized images on women's facial appearance satisfaction. As a result, it could be utilized to view some number of no-makeup selfies on social media to reduce the negative effects of viewing idealized images. Posting and viewing more natural, no-makeup, content on social media can be seen as a way to reduce the negative impact of social media content of idealized body images (Fardouly & Rapee, 2019).

3.9 Not all social media is bad

Saunders, Eaton, and Aguilar (2020) conducted highly interesting study about using social media selfie-activity in eating disorder recovery. They found out that selfies in eating disorder recovery had both positive and negative outcomes. Negative outcomes could stem from pictures that illustrated objectifying content whereas positive outcomes came from selfies that had more humanizing content. By humanizing content, it is meant that picture promotes health, a willingness to be seen, and boost self-esteem. These kind of selfies could be seen as promoting health and wellbeing to ones in recovery thus having positive effects on the recovery process (Saunders et. al., 2020). This humanizing content in social media can be seen as body positive content that may have potential to improve one's body image (Vandenbosch, Fardouly, & Tiggemann, 2022).

4. Discussion

4.1 Summary of prior research

Aim of this study was to find out what kind of effects social media have on user's body image and eating behaviours. In this thesis I tried to get as comprehensive view on the subject as possible; what is the user's evaluation process that leads into body image concerns, taking into account different ways of using social media, social media usage differences between men and women, why photo manipulating is happening and how it effects body image, how these negative effects of social media could be eased, and lastly the positive sides of social media on body image. All the prior research introduced and reviewed in the thesis answers these questions from different point of views.

Reviewing the prior literature, I quickly noticed that there was a big amount of information overlapping concerning the subject. Many of the studies were based on the same theoretical background and aimed to answer the same questions. Research mostly happened among young women, and it aimed to answer questions about social media usage on more visual platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook.

Prior research gave me a good understanding concerning the subject this thesis aimed to study. What was found most tragically effecting body image was that overall social media time exposure did not have much effect on user's mindset. In contrast social media user activity, such as social media grooming, affected highly users view of his/her body appearance (Cohen et. al, 2018; Kim & Chock, 2015). Interestingly Cohen et. al., (2018) found out that social media selfie activity had occasionally positive relationship with body satisfaction, although might be explained with the fact that people with higher body satisfaction post more selfies and receive more positive feedback. This can be seen as circle that enforces itself in both body satisfaction and body dissatisfaction. People who have higher body dissatisfaction post less selfies and spent more time selecting their pictures posted online thus leading to lowering body satisfaction (Cohen et. al., 2018).

The prior research also answered the question about how lowering body image and self-acceptance influenced eating behavior. It was found out that body image concerns led to greater drive for thinness and thus leading to having characteristics of eating disorder symptoms and concerns about gaining weight (Kim & Chock, 2015). It was also found out that the users who post fitspirational, that is athletic or fit-ideal imaginary content, on social media report higher scores for bulimia (Faelens et. al., 2021).

As this thesis has pointed out numerous of times, prior studies have focused almost solely on women's behavior on social media. There was a lot of good arguments supporting the fact that women need more research than men in this subject. Many of the studies pointed out that women spent more time on social media grooming, women invest more effort and time into posting pictures, and women more often have selfies as social media profile picture than men. Women also tend to feel more anxious related to social media than men, thus leading to more photo manipulation resulting to concerns about body image and eating behaviors. (Boursier et. al., 2020; Lowe-Calverley & Grieve, 2018; Kim & Chock, 2015). Some research gave more broader view on the subject accounting both women and men, for example Boursier et. al., (2020), or only men, for example Griffiths et. al., (2018). Even in Griffiths' et. al., (2018) research the focus was on 'sexual minority men', which leaves out huge number of men from the study.

To support my research about social media effects on body image more broadly, I aimed to gain literature from photo manipulating behavior as it has big influence on how people view others pictures online. It is important to take into account photo manipulation when studying nowadays social media as platforms like Instagram and Snapchat give users with minimal experience on photo editing the possibility to edit their photos in a second. Prior research supported the idea that people who edit their photos and spend more time choosing their pictures have worsen body image and increased bulimia symptomology (Cohen et. al., 2018).

This thesis also included studying positive use of social media on user's body image to gain more insight into social media usage. I found out good research studying women in eating disorder recovery and how selfies on social media could help them recover (Saunders et. al., 2020). It was found out that selfies that were humanizing could help the recovery. Other studies supported the idea of using humanizing selfies generally to help ease the negative effects of social media use (Vandenbosch, Fardouly, & Tiggemann, 2022).

4.2 Practical implications

Practical implications that could be used from this thesis are as follows. First, social media developers could indicate to people which pictures are manipulated (Verrastro et. al., 2020). This could relieve peoples believes about "ideal" body image and ease its negative effects on them. Secondly, schools could start programs informing students about social media risks (Verrastro et. al., 2020). These kinds of interventions are needed as social media is becoming more and more integrated into our society. In addition, every one of us can do something to help ease the negative effects of social media use by posting more natural and humanizing content into social media (Fardouly & Rapee, 2019). Also spreading information about social media use risks, for example to friends, is a big step towards creating more supportive communication in social media and helping those suffering from body image and eating concerns.

4.3 Implications for researchers

For the future studies this thesis can work as a great starting point as it has broad view on the subject. Researchers can use this thesis to get first glimpse to the subject and have an idea of what it includes. This thesis provides a good amount of point of views from which the researcher can start going more deeper into the selected topic. For example, after reading the thesis some may want more thoroughly study social media usage on men's body image or get ideas on studying the positive sides of social media on body image as it is mostly studied for its negative sides.

5.   Conclusions

5.1 Results found from the literature review

Social media today is much more interactive than traditional mass media back in the days. This brings up both positive and negative sides of using it, and main concern is social media's effects on younger people's mindset. Risen concern, which can be seen in numerous studies, has been taken under study implicating that social media use has affected especially young women's body image and eating habits. This for the reason that newer social media lets any individual with capable device to post anything online possibly idealizing and internalizing beauty ideas. For the everyday developing society, it is hard to fully comprehend social media as a whole and many studies pointed out the fact that studies on different social media platforms are needed. Present study mainly focuses on two platforms, most of the time on Facebook and Instagram, which are main priority at the moment for their extremely high user base. In addition, specifically Instagram is considered as a highly visual social media platform which means that it emphasises users' appearance.

What resulted from studying the prior research was that social media use has clear negative effects on body image and eating concerns, especially among young women. Social media time exposure in itself does not have significant relationship with body dissatisfaction, but social grooming can be harmful to one's body image. This was found out for example in Cohen et. al., (2017) research that indicated social media selfie activities were associated with body dissatisfaction and bulimia symptomology. Studies also showed that both men and women were affected by social media (Boursier et. al., 2020). What was interesting to find was research done by Saunders et. al., (2020) which indicated that selfies could be possibly used in eating disorder recovery to positively support the process, showing contrary results to other studies. This can work as an indicator for possibly using social media to create positive and humanizing effects.

5.2 Limitations and future research

Limitations concerning the subject were known and thus this thesis is only a good starting point for future research. For instance, social media use on user's body image and eating behavior requires much more psychological point of view than this thesis can give. Thus, research including cross-scientific point of view is needed to comprehend social media usage more widely. In addition, prior research concerning men was minimal vs women. This is a clear indicator that research studying men's social media use must be conducted to have better insight into social media's effects on user's body image and eating behavior. In addition, studies focusing on only couple of social media platforms, mostly on Instagram and Facebook, can be seen as a highly limiting factor.

This thesis gave good implications for future research. First, future research needs to be broadened into various of different social media platforms. Only in that way can the effects of social media be better understood. For example, dating apps are becoming more and more normative in our society and are heavily influencing user's self-appearance as they are highly visual platforms that are based on users' self-presentation. Secondly, men's behavior in social media need further and deeper research. Prior research focusing solely on women cannot be generalized to men, because men's and women's behavior in social media various. For example, women indicated experiencing higher anxiety

concerning social media, but men more generally exaggerated their physical attractiveness in dating apps and showed more personal stigma in social media (Boursier et. al., 2020; Kim & Chock, 2015; Dempsey et. al., 2022).

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