Effects of Body Positivity: Social Media and Body (Dis)satisfaction Among Women

Destiny Morales, Dr. Edward Selby
Department of Psychology
Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey

Introduction

Research Questions:
How does social media effect the development of eating disordered behaviors in women?
How does body positivity correlate with body dissatisfaction among women?

Body positivity is continuing to rise throughout social media.
Body positivity is a social movement that advocates for loving all types of bodies no matter the shape or size.
I am proposing that body positivity positively correlates with body dissatisfaction.

Methodology

Participants
500 women participants
Enrolled in a General Psychology course
Receiving 3 RPU’s

Procedures
Participants are provided with consent forms
Answering questionnaires over REDcap
Provided handout with mental health resources

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank God and Gracepoint Church for keeping me grounded and hopeful. Thank you to my faculty advisor Edward Selby for providing me with continuous support, guidance, and more knowledge in the field. Thank you to the Ronald E. McNair staff for the challenging me to become a better person, student, and researcher. Thank you to my family and friends for the constant motivation.

Selected References


Implications

Inform:
The creation of programs for young girls and eating disorder treatments that include the act of loving your body and yourself as more than a body. This can be used to instill body satisfaction.

Anticipated Results

Body positivity social media content is associated with body dissatisfaction for women.
When women see body positive images that do not resemble themselves, they have lower levels of body satisfaction.
Those who use social media more often will have higher levels of body dissatisfaction.
There will be a positive correlation between self-objectification and body dissatisfaction.

Participants
500 women

Enrolled in a General Psychology course

Receiving 3 RPU’s

Social Media Comparisons

Self-Objectification

Sociocultural Factors

Positive Reinforcement

Health Information and Capitalization

• People are using the anchoring-and-adjustment heuristic to compare themselves to others
• People are comparing themselves to inaccurate representations
• Positive self-representation = positive wellbeing
• The Body Positive Movement focuses on how the body looks which causes women to be more focused on their body image
• People gain positive reinforcement for unhealthy behaviors and ideals through likes, comments, social support, and controlling eating or exercise habits
• Social media is making it harder for people to decipher between healthy and unhealthy behaviors
• Capitalization through the Body Positive Movement is providing the perception that only skinny is healthy