

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA EXPOSURE ON SOCIAL COMPARISON, BODY ESTEEM AND DECISION TO UNDERGO AESTHETIC PROCEDURES

A Research Project

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I dedicate this thesis to my cherished family, whose unwavering support and encouragement have been the cornerstone of my journey. To my father, Babar Tanvir Soharwardi, your belief in me and my capabilities has always been a source of strength and motivation. Your wisdom and guidance have helped shape my path, and for that, I am profoundly grateful.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

APPROVAL SHEET…….……...ii

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICATION……...iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT……...iv

DEDICATION…….v

ABSTRACT…….1

INTRODUCTION……...…….2

METHOD…….11

PARTICIPANTS…….

MEASURES……

PROCEDURES……

RESULTS……16

DICUSSION……32

REFERENCES……...…….44

APPENDICES…….48

List of Tables

Table No.	Table Title	Page No.
1a	Demographic Characteristics of Participants	17
1b	Demographic Characteristics of Participants related to Aesthetic Procedures	18
2	Psychometric properties	19
3	Assessment of Social Media Use Scale	20
4a	Assessment of Social Comparison Scale	21
4b	Assessment of Social Comparison Scale	22
5a	Assessment of Body Esteem Scale	23
5b	Assessment of Body Esteem Scale	24
6a	Assessment of Cosmetic Procedure Screening Questionnaire	25
6b	Assessment of Cosmetic Procedure Screening Questionnaire	26
6c	Assessment of Cosmetic Procedure Screening Questionnaire	27
6d	Assessment of Cosmetic Procedure Screening Questionnaire	28
6e	Assessment of Cosmetic Procedure Screening Questionnaire	29
7	Regression Coefficient Table of Social Media Use and Social Comparison	30
8	Regression Coefficient Table of Social Media Use and Body Esteem	30
9	Pearson's Correlation Table showing Relationship between Social Media Use and likelihood to Undergo Cosmetic Procedures	30
10	Pearson's Correlation Table showing Relationship between Social Media Use and likelihood to Undergo Cosmetic Procedures	31
11	Independent sample t-test table showing that social comparison and Body Esteem would differ in individuals based on Gender.	31

List of Abbreviations

Acronyms	Abbreviation
SNS	Social Networking Sites
FOMO	Fear of Missing Out
BDD	Body Dysmorphic Disorder
SCO	Social Comparison Orientation
COPS	Cosmetic Procedure Screening

ABSTRACT

This current quantitative research investigated the impact of social media use on social comparison and its subsequent effects on individuals' perceptions of their body esteem and their likelihood of opting for aesthetic procedures. For testing these constructs, the data was gathered from 400 university students from public and private sector university females using non-probability sampling technique. Four hypotheses were tested including 1) Social media usage would be a predictor of social comparison 2) Social media usage would be a predictor of Body Esteem, 3) There would be a positive relationship between social media use and the probability to undergo aesthetic procedure and 4) Social Comparison and Body esteem would differ in individuals based on their gender. The data was collected using a self-designed demographic sheet and questions based on IOWA-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measures (INCOM), Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale (BFAS), Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BESAA), and Cosmetic Procedure Screening Questionnaire. The gathered data was analyzed using SPSS V22. The findings of the study revealed that there is Social Media use is a significant positive predictor of Social Comparison ($F (1, 406) = 12.743$, $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.030$) and Body Esteem ($F (1, 407) = 4.276$, $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.039$). A weak positive relationship ($r = 0.198$, $p < 0.05$) was found between social media use and the probability of undergoing cosmetic procedures. Significant differences ($p < .01$) in body esteem were found in males and females indicating that females have higher body esteem in comparison to males. Thus, this research has theoretical significance as it contributes to empirical evidence with respect to the existing literature on the topic.

Keywords: Social media use, Body esteem, Body satisfaction, Social comparison, Young adults, Aesthetic procedures