Scrolling for Self-Worth: Analyzing Body Dysmorphia Disorder in the Digital Age:
A Systematic Review

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Social Work

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to all the women who, like us, have struggled with the complexities of social media and its impact on self-esteem and body image. As two women in our 30s, we wanted to better understand our struggles with social media and self-esteem, particularly influenced by platforms like Instagram. Through this research, we hope to shed light on the complex relationship between social media and body dysmorphia and offer insights that may motivate women to be kinder and easier on themselves while navigating social media in this digital age in a healthy manner.
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Abstract

Scrolling for Self-Worth: Analyzing Body Dysmorphia Disorder in the Digital Age: A Systematic Review

By

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Master of Social Work

Study Purpose: This study aims to explore how Instagram use impacts Body Dysmorphia Disorder (BDD) in young women aged 18-35 through an extensive review of the literature.

Methods: This systematic review analyzed 15 peer-reviewed articles to investigate the relationship between body dysmorphia and social media use.

Findings: The findings showed a significant link between social media use and body image concerns in young women, highlighting the influence of appearance-focused activities and social comparisons. Additionally, it was shown that family, community, and media were key factors in shaping body image perceptions and the development of body dysmorphic symptoms.

Discussion: This study highlights the need for social work interventions that address the relationship between social media use and body image concerns among diverse populations.

Keywords: Young women, Instagram, body image, social media, Abraham Maslow, social comparison, uses and gratifications, Snapchat Dysmorphia, beauty standards
Problem Statement and Research Purpose

Research Problem

Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) is not a new issue. It has existed for a long time. However, the rise of social media has exacerbated and amplified the problem. Instagram is a popular platform available to millions worldwide. Instagram launched in 2010 with its focus on sharing visual posts and videos, unlike other social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, which require pictures in addition to text. When Instagram launched in 2010, the options for filters were limited to just a few presets; now, in 2023, we have hundreds of apps, such as Face Tune app, that promote retouching using a variety of filters where one can edit almost every part of a picture encouraging unattainable, unrealistic body expectations, in addition to fostering unhealthy diet products and fads diet (Waters, 2021).

Dhir and Tsai (2017) argue that the Uses and Gratification Theory allows people to use social media to satisfy psychological needs. They posit that Instagram's instant gratification further contributes to body satisfaction and well-being in adolescents and young adult women. In light of recent studies, it is suggested that heightened exposure of women to unrealistic body ideals on Instagram may lead to increased pressure to attain "the perfect body," potentially contributing to rising rates of body dysmorphia among women.

Pedalino and Camerini (2022) argued that while body image issues were already present among women aged 18-35, social media apps like Instagram exacerbate the problem for those already prone to making comparisons. Pedalino and Camerini’s study implies that platforms promoting visual sharing may inadvertently foster a culture of comparison and social status, which can be harmful, especially for individuals already prone to body image issues like body dysmorphia. Given the consistent opportunities for self-comparison and the widespread
availability of these apps to millions, we are concerned about their impact on body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) in women aged 18-35.

**Research Purpose and Questions**

This study has two purposes: to explore the relationship between Instagram exposure and exacerbated body dysmorphia among young adult women aged 18-35. Previous research has suggested that users following predominantly appearance-focused accounts on Instagram, such as models and fitness bloggers, may experience heightened preoccupation with their appearance (Cohen et al., 2017). Additionally, this study aimed to examine how the accounts women follow and are exposed to on Instagram impacted their perceptions of body image within this demographic. Focusing on women aged 18-35 is particularly relevant due to their vulnerability to the effects of social media on body image. It is important to note that this study represents a comprehensive investigation. Through a systematic review of existing literature, this research aims to identify data, common themes, patterns, and insights related to body dysmorphia as influenced by social media, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of this crucial issue. For example, a study by Fardouly et al. (2015) found that participants who spent 10 minutes on Facebook reported a more negative mood than those on a control website. Furthermore, women with a strong tendency to compare their appearance experienced more significant facial, hair, and skin discrepancies after using Facebook (Fardouly et al., 2015).

**Research Question(s)**

1. To what extent does exposure to Instagram influence body dysmorphic concerns among young women 18-35? Considering Instagram interaction, such as viewing, posting, commenting, and likes (instant gratification), and the relationship to the development of body dysmorphia in women 18-35.
2. What is the role of family, community, and the media in creating body image?
3. What role does social comparison on social media play in developing and exacerbating body dysmorphic symptoms, considering the evolution of social media over the years?
4. How does social media's excessive use (spending a considerable amount of time well beyond what is necessary or healthy, neglecting responsibilities, interference with real life, decreased productivity) relate to mental health disturbances?

**Significance of the Study**

In the digital age, the use of social media, particularly Instagram, has significantly intensified the challenges young women face regarding body image issues. This study highlights why research is essential, as it shows mental health issues are even more significant among young women using social media. Rubin and Babbie (2017, p. 147) suggest social work research aims to evaluate social policies, programs, and interventions. Understanding the specific impact of Instagram on BDD among women aged 18-35 is crucial for developing interventions and support services within social work practice. By identifying how Instagram influences body image perceptions and behaviors, social workers can develop specific interventions that will promote healthy body image and reduce the risk of body dysmorphia in this demographic. Early interventions play an important role in preventing the progression of body dysmorphia and improving overall mental well-being. Additionally, social workers can address social and environmental factors that contribute to body image concerns among young women by providing support and education on healthy social media consumption. Social workers can empower women aged 18-35 to navigate social media in ways that promote positive body image and mental health.
Literature Review

Body Dysmorphia

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), also known as body dysmorphia and formerly known as dysmorphophobia, is a psychological condition and consists of the following diagnostic criteria: preoccupation with one or more perceived defects or flaws, performing repetitive behaviors (e.g., mirror checking, excessive grooming, skin picking, reassurance seeking, consistent appearance comparing to others), and physical appearance causing distress, or impairment in (social, occupation, or other areas of functioning) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). BDD affects individuals across all demographics, with women being more likely to seek treatment. Research showed that both men and women suffer from BDD; 40% of people with BDD are men, and about 60% are women (Phillips, 2023). Recent studies suggested exposure to social media, particularly platforms like Instagram, has been linked to increased feelings of dissatisfaction with one's body, as well as contributing to addiction to social media platforms and exacerbating conditions associated with BDD, such as depression and eating disorders (Laughter et al., 2023). This emphasizes the importance of comprehending the impact of BDD on mental health.

Social Media's Impact on Body Image and Dysmorphia

Social media, especially platforms like Instagram, have attracted significant research attention due to their impact on body image and self-perception, particularly among young adult women aged 18-35. This section provides a comprehensive overview of the existing literature on the relationship between social media use and body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), particularly how exposure to unrealistic body ideals on platforms influences self-perception and body satisfaction.
Existing research emphasizes concerns raised by social media applications, including Snapchat and Instagram, regarding their potential impact on individuals' body image and choices regarding cosmetic procedures. These studies have led to the term "Snapchat Dysmorphia," reflecting how these platforms influence users' perceptions of their physical appearance (Ramphul & Mejias, 2018). Studies show how social media platforms provide users with filters that significantly alter their physical appearance, producing images that align with idealized beauty standards. These alterations have been associated with users expressing a desire to look like their filtered images. Plastic surgeons have reported that clients frequently request changes that closely resemble the filtered images on these platforms (Ramphul & Mejias, 2018).

Research has shown that social media often presents users with perfect looks, thanks to filters and editing tools, setting unrealistic beauty standards. Consequently, this leads users to body dissatisfaction and lower self-confidence (Pedersen, 2023). This section reviews the current state of knowledge by analyzing the findings and insights from prior studies that have examined the connection between social media and body image issues, emphasizing the relationship between social media and body image, particularly among young adult women aged 18-35.

**Impact of Influencer Accounts**

Influencer accounts on social media can significantly shape young women's perceptions of their bodies. These influences are often due to the idealized body images presented on these platforms. Some key points include comparison and body dissatisfaction, as young women often compare themselves to influencers who project idealized body images on platforms like Instagram. These key points can lead to body dissatisfaction and lower self-esteem (Perloff, 2014). There is also a promotion of unrealistic beauty standards where influencers frequently endorse products and lifestyles that align with narrow beauty standards, reinforcing that
achieving such standards is essential for success and happiness (Aparicio-Martinez et al., 2015). Following influencers, young women may encounter cyberbullying or face harsh criticism regarding their appearance, which can exacerbate body image issues (Keery, 2004). Influencers often promote unhealthy dieting or extreme exercise regimens, leading young women to engage in potentially harmful health behaviors to achieve the desired appearance (McLean, 2019). Advertisements featuring enticing titles like "11 Easy Ways to Get Your Best Brows Ever, 13 Secrets to Long, Thick, Shiny Hair, or Ways to Lose Weight Fast" on platforms like Instagram promote unrealistic beauty standards, suggesting how individuals should look and maintain their appearance. This perpetuates the idea of flawlessness despite the reality of imperfections in everyone's bodies (Raj et al., 2022).

Additionally, the use of photo-enhancing filters by influencers may distort reality, making it challenging for young women to differentiate between authentic and digitally altered images (Fardouly et al., 2015). Influencers who openly discussed and endorsed cosmetic procedures may encourage young women to consider such interventions to achieve the desired appearance (Aardoom et al., 2013). These sources provide insights into how influencer accounts on social media can impact young women's perceptions of their bodies. It is important to note that not all influencers have adverse effects, and some promote body positivity and self-acceptance. However, the prevalence of idealized body images and beauty standards on these platforms has raised concerns about their influence on body image and self-esteem.

Social Comparison Theory

Social comparison theory presumes that individuals evaluated themselves by comparing their abilities, opinions, and qualities to those of others (Halliwell, 2012). This theory is relevant to social media, particularly body image and self-esteem, as exposure to idealized images can
lead to unfavorable social comparisons. There are various ways in which social comparison theory applies to social media and its impact on body image, including negatively comparing oneself to others. *Upward social comparison*, where individuals compare themselves to others they perceive as superior, can lead to negative body image. Seeing idealized body images on social media can trigger feelings of inadequacy and lower self-esteem (Aparicio-Martinez et al., 2015).

Through social comparison theory, individuals compared their worth based on comparing others. *Downward social comparison*, where individuals compare themselves to others they perceive as less attractive, can temporarily boost self-esteem. Social media users may use such comparisons to feel better about their bodies (Fardouly et al., 2015). The *idealized self-presentation* on social media platforms, where users showcase their best images, can create unrealistic beauty standards. As many individuals can access apps to create curated and edited images, it is not easy to differentiate what is real and what is not. This fosters social comparison as individuals measure their appearance against these perfected online personas (Perloff, 2014).

*Body Image Dissatisfaction and Comparison* with frequent exposure to images that conform to societal ideals of beauty on social media can lead to body image dissatisfaction. It prompted individuals to engage in behaviors aimed at achieving these unrealistic beauty standards (Fardouly et al., 2015). Other factors considered were analyzing Social Comparison Theory, cyberbullying, and Negative Body Image. Social media can be a platform for body shaming and cyberbullying, exacerbating negative body image. This underscores the relationship between online social comparison and body image disturbance (Perloff, 2014). Often, individuals feel pressured to conform to these unrealistic body standards to survive in a world where social media tends to define their social status.
Moreover, social comparison on social media can significantly impact self-esteem. *Upward social comparison* often leads to lower self-esteem, while *downward social comparison* can provide short-lived boosts in self-esteem (Kim et al., 2021). The prevalence of idealized images on social media platforms and the resulting social comparisons play a substantial role in shaping how individuals perceive their bodies and self-esteem.

**Uses and Gratifications Theory**

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) explains why people are motivated to use social media, especially platforms like Instagram. This theory suggests that individuals actively engage and use social media to fulfill multiple psychological needs, such as entertainment, exposure escape, social connection, self-presentation, and information seeking (Hossain, 2019). Research suggests that Instagram users utilize Instagram's platform, which combines visual content with social interactions, to express themselves, connect with others, and seek validation (Ghatak & Singh, 2019). Social media's ability to create social interactions and validations aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs for self-actualization, where social media helps meet that desire for acceptance, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging (Minnihan, 2018). Moreover, Instagram's features, including profile creation and tailored content, facilitate users' self-expression and receive feedback through likes, comments, and followers, which in turn fulfills gratification needs.

The effects of user engagement, such as browsing, posting, likes, comments, and followers (external validation), can be linked to Maslow's hierarchy of needs by fulfilling belongingness and esteem/body satisfaction, a feeling of self-fulfillment as seen in the fifth level of the pyramid, self-actualization (Joshi et al., 2023). The number of likes or positive feedback on a post may be a confirmation of one's appearance and value; alternatively, the absence of
validation or negative feedback can amplify negative self-perceptions and trigger feelings of inadequacy (Houghton et al., 2019). The cycle for validation and the desire for likes can increase compulsive behaviors, such as frequently monitoring their social media profiles or seeking validation from external sources (Zucker, 2021).

Instagram's ability to meet the emotional needs of users challenges researchers to understand and research its impact on body satisfaction and the relationship between social media and individual happiness (Lu & Lin, 2022). Prolonged exposure to social media, such as Instagram, is consistent with the dopamine loop. This neurological mechanism rewards the brain with pleasurable sensations when an individual receives a like, follow, or positive comment, increasing feelings of belonging and self-esteem. The dopamine loop operates within the brain's reward pathway, reinforcing behaviors associated with pleasure and reward. For some users, Instagram increases dopamine levels. Therefore, when a user receives a like, new follow, or positive comment that fulfills the validation needed, their brain receives a flood of dopamine and sends it along the reward pathways (Health, n.d). Understanding how this neurological process interacts with social media engagement provides insights into the addictive nature of platforms like Instagram and their effects on an individual's mental health concerning body satisfaction.

Research on Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the dopamine loop theory provides insights into how Instagram meets psychological needs and influences user behavior. Additional studies examining Instagram's impact on body satisfaction offer a better understanding of the app's implications on mental health and body image perception. By integrating these perspectives, we can understand the complexity of Instagram use and its effects on psychological and physical health.
Methods

Information Sources and Search Strategy

Researchers used various academic databases and search strategies to identify studies on the relationship between BDD and social media. Academic Databases include PubMed, a comprehensive database for medical and psychological research. PsycINFO focuses on psychology and related fields, making it a valuable resource for studies on BDD. Google Scholar can broadly search academic sources, including articles, theses, and conference papers. ScienceDirect offers access to a wide range of scientific articles and journals. JSTOR will provide access to a vast collection of academic journals and articles. Lastly, academic Search Premier can be described as a multidisciplinary database that includes psychology and medical journals.

Through search strategy, a combination of relevant keywords and phrases were used to find the most pertinent studies. Primary search keywords such as "body dysmorphia" and "social media" can pertain to the study. Additionally, expanding terms using synonyms and related terms will expand the research. Synonyms for "body dysmorphia" can include "body dysmorphic disorder," "BDD," or "body image dissatisfaction." Other terms can be used to expand on "social media," such as "online platforms," "social networking," and specific platform verbiage such as "Instagram." Combining the keywords and synonyms in various ways using Boolean operators like "AND," "OR," and "NOT." Such as "body dysmorphia AND social media," "BDD AND Instagram," and "body image dissatisfaction OR social networking."

Employing these strategies and searching reputable academic databases, studies, and research articles that explore the relationship between body dysmorphia and social media can be found.
Selection Process

Researchers followed a step-by-step selection process based on predetermined criteria. This process included defining inclusion and exclusion criteria, which included finding studies published and available to the public, using studies focusing on women aged 18-35, including peer-reviewed journal articles, and focusing on studies that specifically address the relationship between BDD and social media. The exclusion criteria will consist of studies not published in English, studies that only mention body dysmorphia or social media briefly without exploring their relationship, and conference abstracts, posters, or non-peer-reviewed sources. The selection process included a literature search, initial screening, full-text review, and data extraction and synthesis.

Through the intensive literature search, 125 articles were found and reviewed. The initial screening process reviewed the titles and abstracts of the 125 articles resulting from the literature search. In the initial screening, 110 were excluded in order to keep the study focused and relevant, and 15 were included in the process. Additionally, 15 of the initial 125 articles met all the inclusion criteria based on the initial screening to be included. Through the inclusion process, the participants involved in these studies were diverse in terms of age, gender, and clinical backgrounds where applicable. It took into account the range of societal influences by including studies around the world, including The USA, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Italy. Language was not a barrier, as English articles were chosen to coincide with the literature review. The full-text review process included carefully evaluating the data of the 15 included articles through key findings, methodology, sample size, and any relevant statistics. The 15 peer-reviewed articles that were chosen utilized research methods and a span of 20 years, the oldest article beginning in 2004 leading to the most recent in 2023 in an attempt to find the most
current research. Organizing and synthesizing the information from 15 peer-reviewed articles helped to identify common themes, patterns, or gaps in the literature. The goal was to streamline the literature review by only including studies that directly contributed to understanding and contextualizing BDD and social media to ensure a meaningful synthesis of existing literature on BDD and Social Media.
Findings

Study Characteristics

This systematic review contained 15 peer-reviewed articles, each offering valuable contributions to understanding the relationship between body dysmorphia and social media. This study spans as early as 2004 to 2023; these studies contain diverse methodologies, including Pearson correlation, systematic reviews, experimental design, hierarchical moderated multiple regression analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), single-shot, cross-sectional design, spearman's rho, and ordinal logistic regression measured on a Likert scales, open-ended questions, theoretical framework, and research agenda to guide methodology, and a commentary piece that contributes to the academic field. These peer-reviewed articles feature many characteristics, ranging from methods to participant location. Below, we summarized the key characteristics of the selected studies, providing a comprehensive overview of the research articles collected.

To what extent does exposure to Instagram influence body dysmorphic concerns among young women 18-35? Considering Instagram interaction, such as viewing, posting, commenting, and likes (instant gratification), and the relationship to the development of body dysmorphia in women 18-35.

Three out of fifteen studies indicate that seeing body images on Instagram frequently, along with factors like comparing oneself to others and paying attention to metrics, might lead to worries about body dysmorphia among women aged 18-35. A study on Australian women recorded the number of times they accessed/checked their accounts daily on a 7-point scale, which found that most of the participants claimed they had an Instagram account, and over half (57.5%) admitted to checking the app at least 3-5 times (Cohen & Slater, 2017). In another
study, participants completed pre- and post-exposure state measures of negative mood and body image in addition to a 5-point scale; participants were asked to rate how different they would like to be from their reality, which resulted that women who frequently compare their appearances on Facebook tend to develop a stronger desire to alter facial, hair, and skin-related feature (Fardouly, 2015), leading to the development of body dysmorphia in women. The third study responded to a better understanding of core human needs, experiences, and SNS usage; key findings resulted in the use of Facebook satisfied human needs of safety, belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization, leading to the continued use of social media in order to fulfill a basic human need (Houghton et al., 2020).

What is the role of family, community, and the media in creating body image?

Four of fifteen studies thoroughly explained the role of family, community, and the media and its creation of body image. Through the Tripartite influence model of body image and eating disturbance, there are three proposed influences on the affected body image, including peers, parents, and media. It was concluded that the comparison of appearance and internalization showed a relationship between parental influence and body dissatisfaction (Keery et al., 2004). Beauty standards also vary from culture to culture. For example, Asian cultures have an ideal beauty standard of oval face shape, larger eyes, and smaller features, whereas Caucasian beauty standards include thin figures and higher cheekbones, whereas social media leads to unrealistic body image ideals (Laughter et al., 2023). It also examined how Generation Z and Millennials engage in Instagram stories. It is connected with emotions and psychological dependency, which resulted in participants indicating that they check Instagram “several times a day” and considered Instagram stories to be a self-enhancement tool, a way to
explore content such as services and products, as well as keep up with influencers and celebrities (Lu & Lin, 2022). The fourth study found a negative association with browsing through Instagram, leading to lower body appreciation and increased social comparison with social media and community members such as influencers (Pedalino & Camerini, 2022).

What role does social comparison on social media play in developing and exacerbating body dysmorphic symptoms? Considering the evolution of social media over the years.

The use of social media platforms such as Instagram can have an impact on the development and worsening of body dysmorphia symptoms, as stated in three out of fifteen studies used. As individuals are constantly exposed to curated and idealized images, they tend to compare themselves to the fostered beauty standards (Perloff, 2014). This constant comparison can lead to feelings of inadequacy, dissatisfaction with one's body, and increased awareness of perceived flaws that may not actually exist. As social media evolves, “People are changing their physical appearances and virtual representations to stay up with the new medium of technology and gain more followers” (Raj et al., 2022, p. 3725). Through a third study focused on selfies, it was found that the evolution of technology has led to selfie-editing practices being made more accessible. Selfie editing is crucial to reaching an ideal self-presentation in order to impress one's peers, “…selfie editing was used as a means to manage insecurity and low self-esteem” (McLean, 2019, p. 516). Engaging in this cycle of comparing oneself to others on social media can worsen symptoms and negatively affect mental well-being and self-esteem.
How does social media’s excessive use (spending a considerable amount of time well beyond what is necessary or healthy, neglecting responsibilities, interference with real life, decreased productivity) relate to mental health disturbances?

Five out of fifteen included studies concluded social media use and how it is related to mental health. In Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory, there are five levels that describe the fulfillment of human needs, including physiological, safety, love and belonging, ES (need for recognition), and self-actualization (Ghatak & Singh, 2019). The feeling of inadequacy and low self-esteem has shown a rising concern for plastic surgeons, as patients are requesting surgeons to make them look exactly like one of their filtered pictures, where the doctor politely declined and referred the patient to counseling (Ramphul & Mejias, 2018). A third study found that “Using specific social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram was correlated with repetitive negative thinking and lower self-esteem, which resulted in decreased well-being in the young adult population” (Joshi et al., 2023, p. 2). This is exacerbated by constant comparison with others on social media platforms, increasing a need for validation through likes and comments, which can further contribute to feelings of inadequacy and decreased well-being.

Hossain (2019) study highlighted the importance of understanding how Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) plays a significant role in shaping users' motivations and behaviors on platforms like Facebook, which is consistent with our research question on how social media's excessive use is related to mental health well-being. Dhir and Tsai's (2017) study outlines the understanding of why people use social media so much, especially on platforms like Facebook. Research findings demonstrate that spending too much time on social media, driven by desires like entertainment, can harm mental health, as seen in the link between certain platforms and lower self-esteem.
Discussion

The findings of this study highlight how social media affects how young women feel about their bodies. Research shows that platforms such as Instagram can exacerbate feelings of body dissatisfaction among women, particularly users who begin to compare themselves with others. Moreover, it was observed that societal influences from family, peers, and the media further shape women's body image perceptions, with social media increasing these influences. These findings are meaningful to social work as they identify implications for social work practice; social workers can integrate these findings and develop targeted interventions to minimize the negative impact of social media on body image perceptions and mental health among young women, ensuring inclusivity and respect for diverse cultural backgrounds.

The findings of this study align with previous research, which has also documented the association between social media use and body image concerns among various demographic groups. For example, findings regarding the impact of social comparison on body dysmorphic symptoms are consistent with existing literature highlighting the harmful effects of upward social comparison on mental health. However, this study contributes to the literature by focusing specifically on Instagram, which has received less research attention than platforms like Facebook and Snapchat. This research highlights the contribution of addressing gaps in the literature regarding the impact of different social media platforms on body image and related concerns, particularly within the context of evolving social media platforms and cultural diversity in beauty standards.

Implications for Social Work

Our study findings recommend several implications for social work practice, policy, education, and research. The study findings highlighted that societal influences
from family, peers, and the media further shape young women's body image perceptions, with social media amplifying these influences. In light of these findings, social workers should prioritize the development of culturally sensitive interventions tailored to address the unique needs and experiences of these diverse populations affected by body image concerns and social media use. These interventions should be conducted by ongoing research and collaboration with professionals from diverse backgrounds to ensure their effectiveness and relevance. It is important to examine how social media dramatically influences and promotes body satisfaction, which in turn perpetuates beauty standards. This can involve social workers employing approaches that facilitate support groups or implementing programs that promote healthy body image and build resilience against societal pressures commonly found on social media platforms. Additionally, social workers can advocate their efforts in focusing on promoting media education programs in schools and communities to empower individuals to engage with media messages and foster positive self-esteem.

Lastly, our findings highlight the importance of addressing factors such as systemic racism and oppression that contribute to body image issues and social inequalities. Social work education programs should integrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive frameworks to prepare future practitioners to navigate these complex social dynamics effectively. Through counseling, advocacy efforts, or community outreach initiatives, social workers can significantly contribute towards fostering relationships between individuals and their perception of their bodies and the influence of media.
Limitations

The findings of this study should consider a few limitations due to the methodologies and scope of the analyzed studies. This study predominantly focuses on young women; its reviewed research limits the generalizability of findings to other demographic groups, such as men or older adults, whose experiences with social media and body image concerns may differ significantly. Additionally, many of the studies utilized cross-sectional designs that only provide data from a single point in time, making it difficult to determine any other relationships between social media use and body image concerns. The absence of longitudinal data is another limitation, the ability to track changes in body image and social media use patterns over time, potentially missing patterns over time that may not be apparent when examining data from a single time point.

Consequently, most studies relied on self-reported measures, particularly regarding social media usage and mental health, allowing response biases or inaccuracies to be possible. Participants may underreport or overreport their social media habits, leading to skewed results and potentially misleading conclusions. Furthermore, the location of several studies were conducted in areas such as Australia, India, and the United Kingdom, which can raise questions about the applicability of findings to other cultural settings with distinct socio-cultural norms and beauty ideals. This cultural variability can be affected by the complexity of beauty standards, which vary significantly across ethnic groups, such as Asian, Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic, reflecting diverse perceptions of attractiveness and body image. These cultural differences demonstrate the need for a more culturally sensitive approach to body image research and highlight the importance of considering diverse cultural perspectives in understanding the impact of social media on body image concerns.
Conclusion

In summary, this literature review highlights the relationship between body dysmorphia and social media, particularly among women aged 18-35. The exposure of idealized body images on platforms like Instagram influences unrealistic beauty standards and exacerbates feelings of dissatisfaction and inadequacy among users. The culture of comparison promoted by social media amplifies these challenges, leading to heightened body dysmorphic concerns and reduced self-esteem. The comprehensive research and data collected show that addressing these issues requires a significant awareness to understand the relationship between social media and body image perceptions.

This literature review highlights the contributions of social workers in addressing the need to develop targeted interventions that promote positive body image and reduce the effects of social media platforms on individuals' mental health. Social work practitioners are crucial in advocating for media literacy programs and culturally competent interventions that empower individuals to navigate social media healthily and responsibly. Additionally, it demonstrates how more research is essential for increasing our understanding of the long-term effects of social media on body dysmorphia as it evolves and developing approaches to support individuals' mental health in the digital age.
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and redefined beauty standards. *The Unedit.*


Appendix A

Flow Diagram of Study Selection Process
(Moher et al., 2009)

Identification of studies via databases and registers

Identification
Records identified from*
Databases (n = )
(PubMed= 18)
(PsychInfo= 25)
(Google Scholar= 32)
(Science Direct= 17)
(JSTOR= 18)
(Google Search = 15)
Registers (n = 125)

Records removed before screening:
Duplicate records removed (n = 10)
Identified duplicates
Records marked as ineligible by automation tools (n = 95) ineligible due to access restriction
Records removed for other reasons (n =5) Non-English articles

Records screened (n = 125)

Records excluded** (n = 110)

Screening
Reports sought for retrieval (n = 110)

Reports not retrieved (n = 100)

Reports assessed for eligibility (n = 100)

Reports excluded:
Reason 1 (n =15) Lack of relevant research
Reason 2 (n =10) Insufficient data or information
Reason 3 (n =5)Access restrictions
Reason 4 (n =5) Wrong demographic

Included
Studies included in review (n = 15)
Reports of included studies (n = 10)
Appendix B

Concept Map on Body Dysmorphia Disorder (BDD)