

- Global Regional Review (GRR)
- URL: [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2022\(VII-II\).07](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2022(VII-II).07)



Impact of Instagram on Psychological Well-being and Body Image of Female University Students

- Vol. VII, No. II (Spring 2022)
- Pages: 71 – 82
- DOI: 10.31703/grr.2022(VII-II).07
- p-ISSN: 2616-955X
- e-ISSN: 2663-7030
- ISSN-L: 2616-955X

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Abstract: This research study aimed to understand the impact of Instagram usage on the psychological well-being and body image of female university students. In this study, a survey questionnaire was used for data. A sample of 150 female university students was selected through convenience sampling from the University of Management & Technology. The sample was equally divided among three academic programs offered in UMT e.g., BS, MA and MPhil. Moreover, cultivation theory was employed to provide a theoretical framework for a better understanding of the phenomenon and to explain the results. Findings suggested that the use of Instagram is the major cause of serious psychological issues in female university students and increased dissatisfaction among the female students regarding their own bodies. However, findings further suggest that the impact of Instagram was higher among those who spend more time on social media.

Key Words: Well-being, Instagram, Psychological Disorder, Cultivation Theory

Introduction

The current research was conducted to see the impact of Instagram on the psychological well-being and body image of female youth to analyze how women go through mental and health difficulties in their lives. As it's far visible women strain themselves out within side the worry of being neglected out, being hooked on Instagram makes them sad to themselves which leads them to a couple of troubles like anxiety, despair and also, they expand terrible frame photograph which makes them greater strain and issues all the time which leads them to terrible consuming and dozing habits. Body photograph is a notion of what human beings consider their bodies and the way appealing they experience approximately their bodily look. It is an attitude that has come to be fashion approximately the significance given to the bodily look of human beings. Our society and

social media maintain converting collective opinion approximately frame photograph which leaves human beings involved and impacting them bodily in addition to mentally.

Body image refers to how someone sees their very own frame and the way appealing they experience approximately themselves to be. Throughout our existence, human beings have given extra significance to the splendor of the human frame. Social media, society, media and the famous tradition continues converting the form of perspectives concerning frame photograph and this has an effect on how someone sees their very own frame. A constant bombardment of pics through media reasons human beings to experience dissatisfaction and uncomfortable towards their bodily appearance, which leads a range of human beings toward terrible mental well-being. It

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Citation: Nasir, N. U. A., Ayub, A., & Ahmad, M. S. (2022). Impact of Instagram on Psychological well-being and Body Image of Female University Students. *Global Regional Review*, VII(II), 71-82. [https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2022\(VII-II\).07](https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2022(VII-II).07)

impacts their day by day routine, paintings and a different component of existence. Body image is a perception that refers to the term how people mentally see their own physical appearance, which has perceptual and attitudinal components ([Sharifi, Omid & Marzban, 2016](#)) and dissatisfaction towards body image has now become a global issue because many studies with proofs revealed that women suffer from negative image towards their body in a number of countries around the world ([Zhang, 2012](#)). Psychological well-being refers to the state of being happy and satisfied. If a person is happy and satisfied in his life, it will be considered, as his psychological well-being is quite high.

A study examined the association between Instagram and the psychological well-being of its users. Non-users and Instagram users' contributors have been inspected online to a degree how a good deal of tension, loneliness, despair, frame photo and social comparison. People who spent extra time on Instagram had extra tension in comparison to those who had no account. The reason for the studies look at became to recognize the mental kingdom of Instagram customers and non-customers. Results discovered that customers of Instagram had extra anxiety and depression and that they have been extra stricken through social comparisons. Overall effects, proven that Instagram is related to mental well-being. When Instagram customers enjoy tension or start making social comparisons, it's miles all related to poorer mental outcomes. This research study helps to spread awareness of the psychological impact that Instagram can have on its users ([Mackson, Broch & Schneider, 2019](#))

Statement of the Problem

Social Media associates with the means of interaction among people in which they share, create or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. So how and what sort of effect does Instagram take on the female youth when it comes to their body image and psychological well-being

Rationale of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine and examine that do Instagram effect body image and psychological well-being of female youth due to seen addiction of social media in every other person. Instagram is a most popular social network among people. Addiction of social networks is bad for mental health. Did Instagram leave worst impact on body image and psychological well-being of female youth or has it become so normal that it has no effects or it is just taken as time pass or amusement.

Significance of the Study

This research study will help in analyzing the effects of excessive use of Instagram on Psychological well-being and body image of female university students. This study might help in spreading awareness regarding the harmful and negative effects of Instagram usage and the alarm the society to take necessary measures regarding this problem that is damaging youth.

Research Objective

- To understand the impact of Instagram on female university students.
- Analyze the harm that Instagram usage is inflecting upon the psychological well-being of female university students.
- To analyze the harm of Instagram usage is inflecting upon the body image of female university students.

Research Questions

- To what extent does Instagram usage affect the psychological well-being of female university students?
- To what extent does Instagram usage affect the body image of female university students.
- What type of impact does Instagram inflict upon female university students?

Hypothesis

- **H1:** Excessive usage of Instagram has a negative impact on the psychological

well-being of female university students.

H2: Excessive usage of Instagram has a negative impact on female university students.

Literature Review

Social media is a digital networking tool that enables its users to make and share content with the public or people they want to. Social networking sites are vast in variety like tik tok, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram etc. social media are now a major way of communication that creates a social connection between people from all over the world. Social media is beneficial in lots of approaches while it's far approximately searching for records or spreading information. However immoderate use of Instagram leads human beings to terrible intellectual health. Activities on social media are divided into corporations like awful and good. Online social media sports also are used to kill time and loneliness among children in addition to elders ([Ioo & Teng, 2017](#)).

Self-perception about our body image is connected towards attitude and emotional components. A study was conducted to see what perception social media users have towards body image and it was revealed that a huge number of people in our society are frustrated towards their appearance on social media as well as in society. Overall Results of the study revealed that body image concerns are about 3 components, 1) changes in physical appearance 2) beauty and health and 3) Impacts of Instagram were included such as consciousness towards body image ([Sharifi, Omidi & Marzban, 2016](#)).

A study examined the association between Instagram and the psychological well-being of its users. Non-users and Instagram users have been surveyed online to take a look at the event that they are afflicted by the troubles like melancholy, loneliness, tension and frame photo issues, in addition to excessive social comparisons. People who spent greater hours on Instagram suffered from melancholy and tension compared to folks that had no account. A reason for this observation changed to take a look at the effects on customers and non-customers.

Results discovered that customers of Instagram had greater tension and melancholy and that they have been located greater afflicted with the aid of using social comparisons ([Mackson, Brochu & Schneider, 2019](#)).

The research was conducted to observe what impact covid-19 had on social media applications. It was revealed that the frequency of users was increased and these applications like Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram were more used by people than usual during the lockdown. Moreover, it was found that people who use more Instagram it led them to dissatisfaction towards their physical looks. Results revealed that the desire to be thinner and eating disorders was higher among the heavy users whereas people who used Instagram occasionally were not bothered much about their looks (Roquea, Andres & Saldana, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

George Gerbner was the one who first introduced the idea of Cultivation theory. This theory focuses on the impact of mass media on people's life. Cultivation theory categorizes viewers of television in two different classes. 1) heavy viewers are those people who watch television for hours that even leads them to change their behavior permanently. 2) Light viewers they don't watch TV for much time, and their behavior don't really change, ([Saefudin & Venus, 2007](#))

Cultivation theory argues that people who spend more time watching television are more likely to get lost in the world that is mediated. The more time people spend, their point of view are more likely to be similar to what is seen on TV ([Morgan, Shanahan & Signorielle, 2014](#)).

A study was conducted to see how cultivation theory cultivates its perception among people. The study discovered that something continuously proven on T. V is what humans begin deliberating about. If the information of a few catastrophes is constantly proven on TV, humans will begin fearing victimization from catastrophe. These studies counseled that media play a vital position in cultivation, cultivating a sense of victimization and motivation of humans of

society toward denying ([Shah, Chu, Ghani, Qaiser & Hassan, 2020](#)).

A study was conducted to see what effect viewers have when they watch television and how Arabs were shown on TV. This study was done to see the clear thinking of viewers towards Arabs. It was revealed by results that viewers did not like Arabs because a negative image of them was shown on television most of the time. Hence it was proved that TV effect viewers and their perception towards Arabs and people of any other country ([Melhem & Carter, 2019](#)).

Methodology

Researchers have used quantitative methodology to conduct research and for that, researchers select the quantitative survey method.

Survey Method

A study was conducted to observe how researchers conduct survey while doing research. It turned into found out that data or data is first accrued on decided on subject, with the aid of using the use of computer questionnaire is added to humans to acquire their reaction closer to the subject. People acquire questionnaires they solution questions, after which they go back with the aid of using email. Worldwide online networks are growing because of which email survey studies are in all likelihood growing with time. This has a look at occurred to check the lit erasure on subject survey studies through email to recognize the important thing problems in the design, implementation, and reaction in the use of this medium ([Thach,1995](#)).

A study has proven that survey studies are for the individuals who are inclined to study quantitative studies techniques or studies for his or her academic and thesis purposes. It became performed for novices to put together for his or her very own survey conduction and to recognize or write approximately consequences of the survey they conduct, write their consequences as nicely because it allows them to study and interpret different people's studies ([Nardi, 2018](#)).

A study turned into carried out approximately on line facts series and gathering facts on line via email or via way of means of the global extensive net survey, that end up famous extra studies approach with time. In this, take a look at researcher defined benefits and boundaries of gathering facts online. It had information on manner that protected techniques to manipulate boundaries ([Granello & Wheaton, 2004](#)).

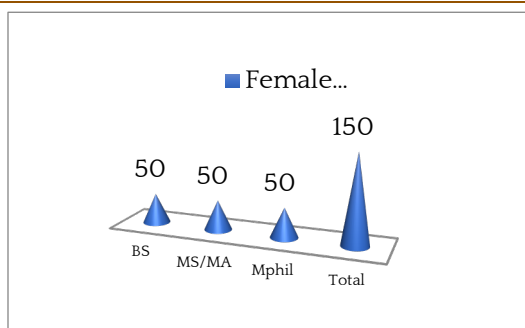
Universe

All the students of UMT are included.

Population

Students of BS, MA/MS and MPhil.

Sample



Graph 1

Description

In the sample, 150 questionnaires were distributed among the students of BS, MA/MS and MPhil of UMT. In which researchers have prepared a questionnaire consisting of structured questions starting from general and moving towards specific.

Questionnaire

18 questions were asked from the students of UMT starting from general to specific.

Unit of Analysis

For analysis, results were taken from the responses of Google form and then it was analyzed in descriptive analysis. Moreover, every category has been individually analyzed.

Data Analysis

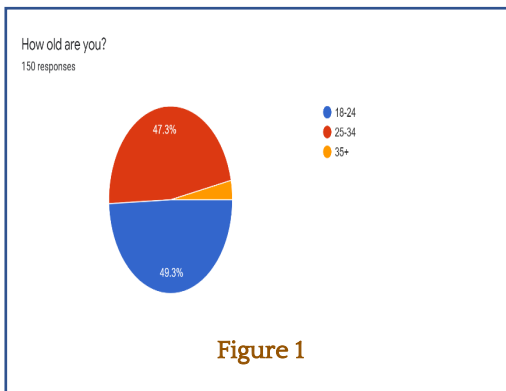
Data for this studies is analyzed in description form. Descriptive evaluation is that form of evaluation that allows man or woman to describe, summarize statistics, and to expose statistics in such optimistic manner that satisfy statistics in any condition. It is one of the maximum beneficial approaches if someone wishes to behavior statistical statistics evaluation.

A study described, the capability makes use of for descriptive evaluation for clean evaluation. It is mentioned that using language and idea formation in addition to the necessities for suitable sensory trait are taken with the aid of using a historic inspection of the primary descriptive evaluation technique. It turned into defined as one of a kind descriptive strategies which might be additionally called quantitative descriptive evaluation and spectrum method. Furthermore, it leads readers to realize it with the aid of using one-with the aid of using-one step software of descriptive evaluation (Lawless & Hymann, 2010).

A study described that descriptive analysis refers to the clear perception of behavior in natural way to collect information of environmental events possibly and in the absence-controlled experiment. Descriptive analysis involves identification of events that are related to the target response. It is also used as portion of functional assessment of problematic behavior (Sloman, 2010).

Demographics

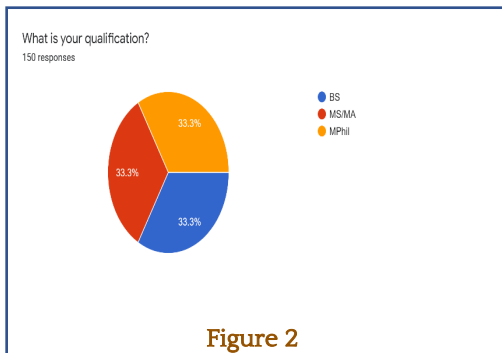
How old are you?



Description

Most of the respondents (49.3%) belonged to the age group of (18-24 years), whereas 47.3% respondents belonged to the age group of (25-34). A small minority of respondents just around 4% belonged to the age group of 35+.

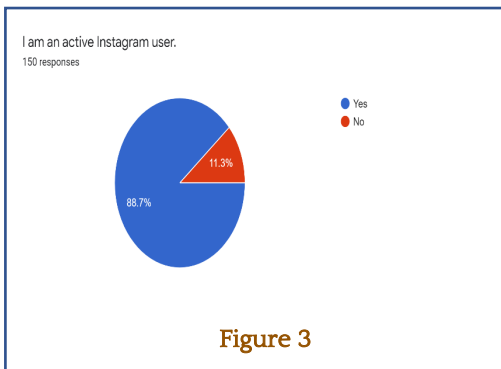
What is your qualification?



Description

A sample of 150 students was drawn from the entire population. 150 students from UMT were selected from different programs like BS, MS/MA, and M.Phil. 50 students were taken from each program and the figure exactly represents this scenario. It is showing 33.3% from each of the selected programs.

I am an active user of Instagram



Description

Most of the respondents (88.7%) tend to agree that they are active user of Instagram, whereas only (11.3%) said that they are not active users of Instagram.

Statement

Do you care how many people view or like your post?

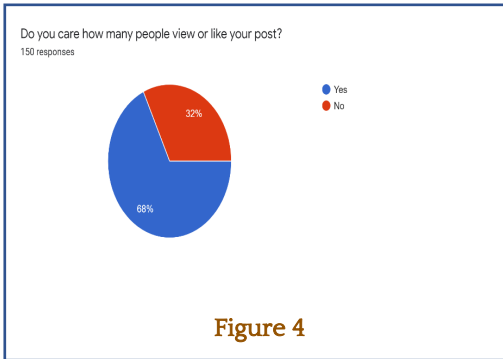


Figure 4

Description

Majority of the respondents (68%) agreed that they care how many likes and views they receive on their posts and (32%) said they do not care.

How much time you spend on Instagram daily?

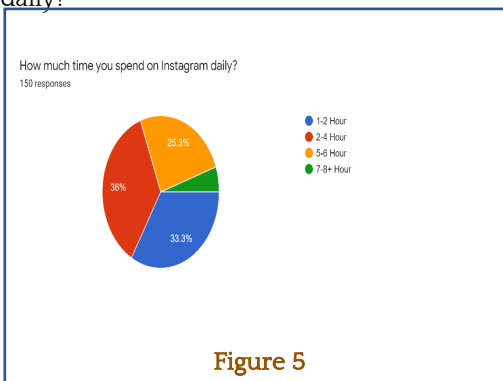


Figure 5

Description

36% of the respondents said that they spend 2-4 hour on Instagram every day, 33.3% said that they spend 1-2 Hour, whereas 25.3% said they spend 5-6 and minority (5.3%) mentioned that they spend 7-8+ hours on Instagram.

Statement

I use Instagram to talk to others when I feel Isolated

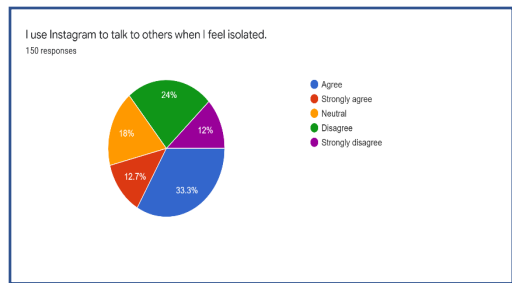


Figure 6

Description

There were mixed views from the respondents for this question. Majority of the respondents (33.3%) agree with the idea that they use Instagram to talk to others when they feel isolated whereas (24%) of the respondents disagree with the statement. 18% of them stayed neutral, whereas 12.7% respondents strongly agreed with the statement that they tend to use Instagram to talk to others when they feel isolated. Minority of 12% strongly disagree with it.

Statement

I Like to See Mostly Images of

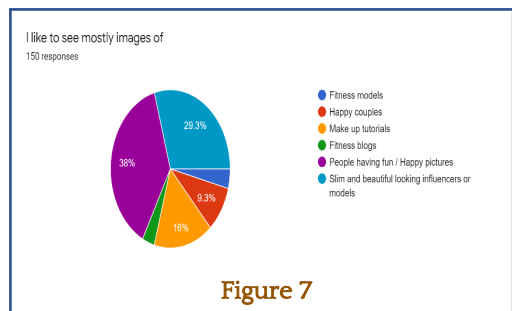


Figure 7

Description

Majority of the respondents (38%) claimed that they like to see pictures/posts of people having fun and enjoying their lives, whereas 29.3% of the respondents said they like to view images of slim and beautiful influencers, 16% said that they like to see make-up tutorials, 9.3% of the respondents stated that they like to see images of images of happy couples on Instagram. Minority of respondents (4%) stated that they like to view images of fitness models.

After using Instagram, I started counting my flaws.

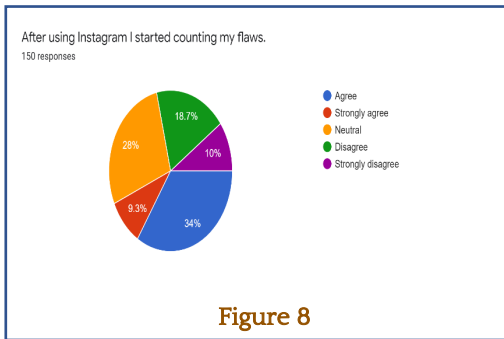


Figure 8

Description

Majority of the respondents (34%) agreed with the statement that they start counting their flaws after continuously using Instagram. 28% of them stayed neutral, 18.7% of them disagree with the statement and 10% of the respondents strongly disagree, whereas 9.3% of them strongly agree that they start counting their flaws after using Instagram.

Statement

I follow and admire slim and perfect looking models on Instagram.

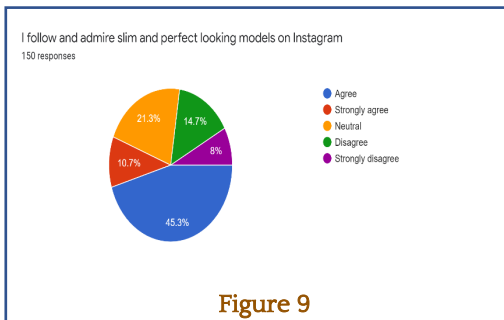


Figure 9

Description

Majority of the respondents (45.3%) agreed with the statement that they admire slim and perfect looking models on Instagram. 21.3% of them stayed neutral, 14.7% of the respondents disagreed with it where as 10.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and claimed that they admire slim and perfect looking models on Instagram and 8% of them strongly disagreed with it.

Statement

I get worried about my physical appearance while watching idealized images on Instagram.

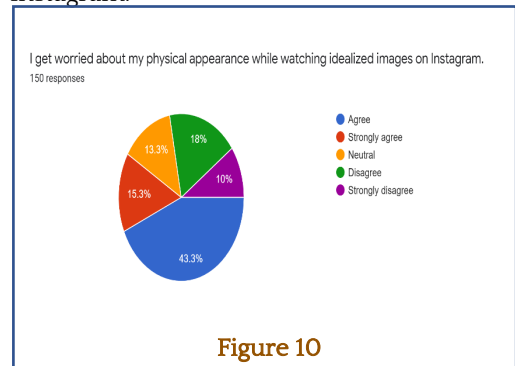


Figure 10

Description

Majority of the people (43.3%) agreed with the statement that they get worried about their physical appearance while watching idealized images on Instagram, 18% of them disagreed, 15.3% of the respondents strongly agreed where as 13.3% of them stayed neutral and minority of the respondents 10% strongly disagreed with it.

Statement

I get anxiety after seeing constant perfect slim bodies

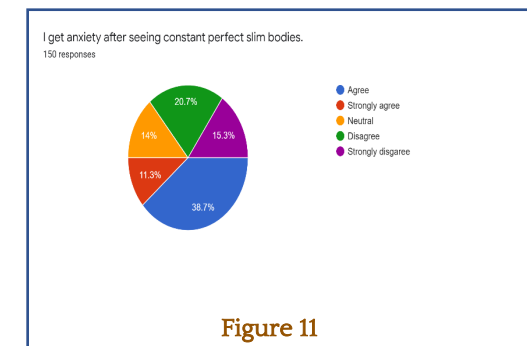


Figure 11

Description

Majority of the respondents (38.7%) agreed with the statement that they get anxiety after constantly seeing perfect slim bodies on Instagram. 20.7% disagreed with the statement, 15.3% strongly disagreed, whereas 14% of the respondents stayed neutral while

minority of (11.3%) strongly agreed with the statement.

Statement

I often think being fat makes me unattractive and less worthy.

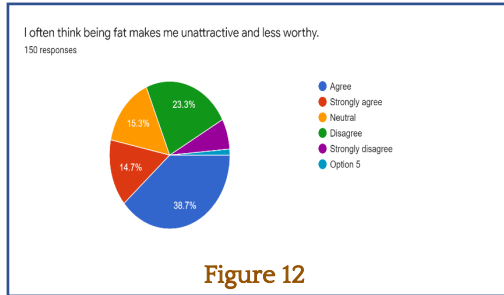


Figure 12

Description

Majority of the respondents (38.7%) agreed with the statement that they think being fat often makes them think unattractive and less worthy. 23.3% of them disagreed with the statement, 15.3% of the respondents stayed neutral whereas (14.7%) of them strongly agreed and 6.7% of them strongly disagreed with it.

Statement

I start getting anxiety seeing happy people or couples on Instagram.

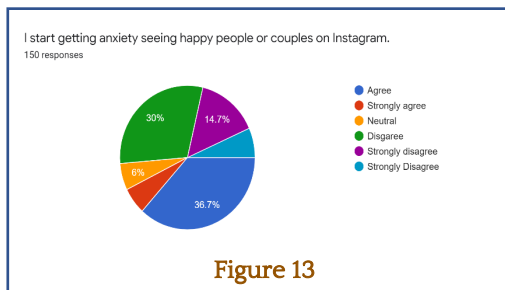


Figure 13

Description

Majority of the respondents (36.7%) agreed with the statement that they start getting anxiety seeing happy people and couples on Instagram, 30% of them disagreed with the statement. 14.7% of them strongly disagreed whereas 6.7% of them disagreed, 6% of them stayed while 6% of them strongly agreed with the statement.

Statement

I skip my meals feeling anxious for not being perfect and slim.

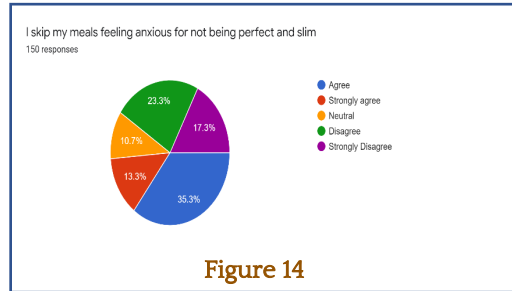


Figure 14

Description

Majority of the respondents (35.3%) agreed to the statement that they skip meals and feel anxious for not being perfect and slim like the models they see on Instagram. 23.3% of them disagreed with the statement, 17.3% of respondents strongly disagreed whereas 13.3% of the people strongly agreed with the statement that they skip meals and feel anxious while 10.7% of them stayed neutral.

Statement

I feel worried and upset for not being fit-in and slim people.

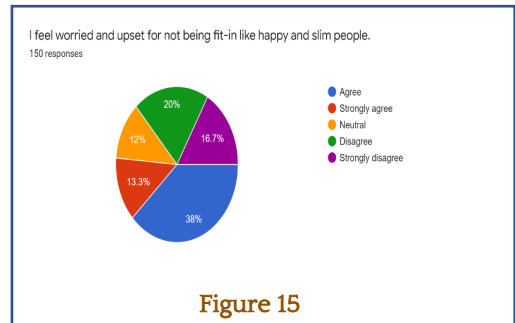


Figure 15

Description

Majority of the respondents (38%) agreed with the statement that they feel worried and upset for not fit-in like happy slim people in our society, 20% of them disagreed and 16.7% of the people strongly disagreed with the statement. Few (13.3%) of them strongly agreed with the statement that they get worried and upset for not being fit in whereas

minority (12%) of the respondents stayed neutral.

Statement

I feel worried of being missed out as no one would like me or accept me in society.

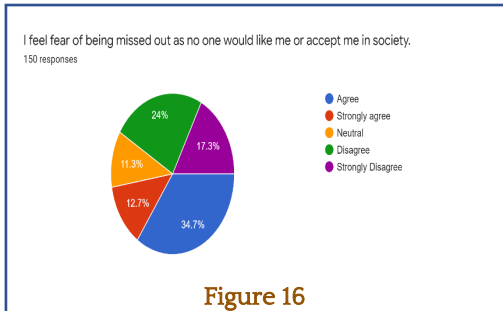


Figure 16

Description

Majority of the people (34.7%) agreed with the statement that they feel fear of being missed out, as no one would like them or accept in society, 24% of them disagreed with the statement, whereas 17.3% of respondents strongly disagreed while 12.7% of them strongly agreed that fear of missed out in society and 11.3% of them stayed neutral.

Statement

I feel confident and accepted based on the number of likes I get on a post.

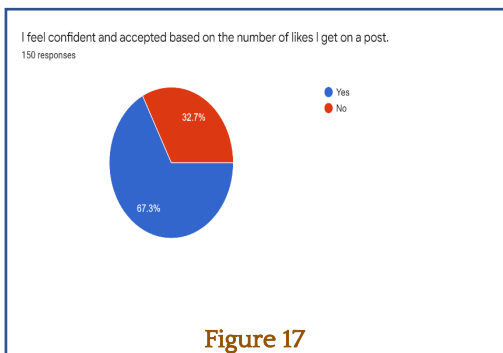


Figure 17

Description

Majority of the respondents (67.3%) said yes, agreed with ongoing problem that they feel confident and accepted by the number of likes they get on their posts on Instagram,

whereas 32.7% of respondents said no and it doesn't really bother them.

Statement

I feel like Instagram has impacted my mental health

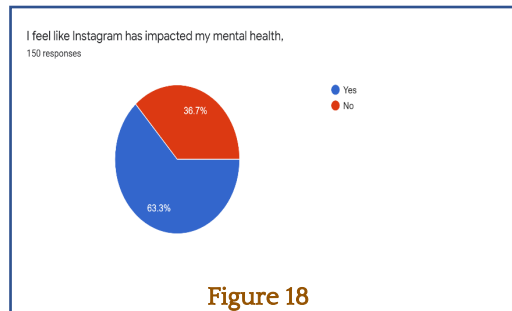


Figure 18

Description

Majority of respondents (63.3%) agreed and said yes that Instagram has affected their mental health and they are suffering, whereas 36.7% of them said no and disagreed with the statement.

Hypothesis Analy

Poor Psychological Well-being

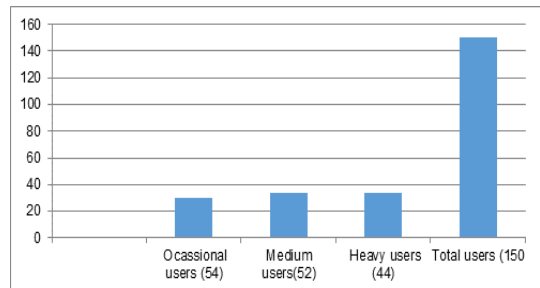


Figure 19

Description

Results revealed that every kind of user is facing poor psychological well-being, being a user of Instagram. It was manually analyzed and results shown that there are 54 of the female students were occasional user of Instagram from which 30 of them responded that their use of Instagram has affected their psychological well-being, whereas 52 responded and stated themselves as medium users of Instagram from which 34 of them

claimed that Instagram has affected their psychological well-being. Moreover, 44 of the respondents stated themselves heavy users and they use Instagram for 6-8+ hours from which 34 of them accepted that Instagram has affected them that led them to poor psychological well-being.

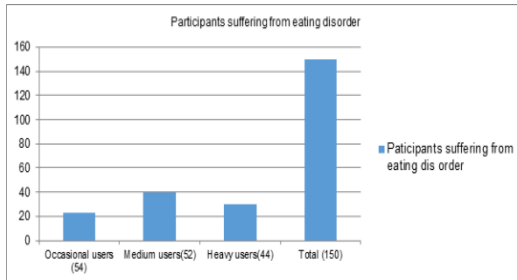


Figure 20

Description

Results approved hypothesis of our research study that using Instagram leads to eating disorder. 54 female university students stated themselves as occasional users of Instagram from which 23 of them claimed that Instagram leads to eating disorder and dissatisfaction towards their body image. 52 users stated themselves as medium users of Instagram from which 40 of them stated that viewing perfect looking people on Instagram leads to eating disorder in desire of being perfect slim looking towards society. Moreover, 44 of the female students were found heavy users of Instagram they used it for 6-8+ hours per day from which 30 of them agreed that Instagram leads to eating disorder in the concerns of body image, they said continuously viewing perfect slim and beautiful looking women on Instagram leads to dissatisfaction towards their own body which also develop habits of skipping meals and doing fade diets which also affect their internal health as well as external.

Discussion

This research study examined that impact and influence of Instagram and its content has on the psychological well-being and body image of female University students. It was a Quantitative research study conducted through survey method and Cultivation theory was employed in order to understand

the impact. Female University students who spend more time on Instagram get influenced by its content and it often influences their psychological well-being by creating anxiety and frustration among them. The survey questions were formulated based on hypothesis and later the hypothesis was proved right as well when descriptive analysis was conducted. Considering the H1: Excessive use of Instagram has a negative impact the psychological well-being of female University students. Majority of respondents accepted that they are active Instagram users and they also agreed that they care about the number of likes they receive on their post on Instagram. Majority of respondents agreed to the statement that they feel anxiety when they constantly see perfect slim bodies on Instagram. A higher percentage of respondents agreed to the statement that they start getting anxiety when they see happy people or couples on Instagram. Majority of respondents accepted that they feel confident and happy when they get more likes on their Instagram posts. Considering H2: Excessive use of Instagram has a negative impact on the body image of Female University students. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they follow and admire slim and perfect looking models on Instagram and majority of them accepted that watching idealized images on Instagram leads them to being worries about their own physical appearance. Majority of the respondents agreed that they start getting anxiety after seeing constant perfect slim bodies that leads them to dissatisfaction about their own physical appearance that majority of them think that being fat makes them unattractive and less worthy. Majority of the respondents mentioned that they start suffering from eating disorder anxious for not being perfect and slim.

Conclusion

Today in our society, social media has become a necessary daily activity. It is typically used for social interactions and access to news and information. Likewise, Instagram is a photo and video sharing social media networking application. Our society has adopted certain parameters of being fit on social media and society. These standards

have made that perfect slim bodies are what are accepted and admired the most by people in our society and being and happy all the time leads to good psychological well-being. The aim of this research study is to examine the impact of Instagram usage on the psychological well-being and body image of female university students. A quantitative research method was used, A survey was conducted and a sample of 150 respondents was selected. The sample was well divided among BS, MS/MA and M.Phil. Students, 50 respondents from each category. Cultivation theory was employed. Data from sample was collected using online Google forms. Data was presented in pie charts and later on descriptive analysis of data explained the findings.

Exposing such content on Instagram most of the time, female university students try to look like them. Results revealed that female university students often end up being anxious and stressed about their physical appearance, and they often tend to start skipping their meals while trying to look slim and beautiful. Moreover, the study found that female university students are

profoundly watching fitness blogs, models and slim and beautiful looking influencers. However, they also know that is unattainable in real life while stressing over their physical appearance and anxious, worried about their looks.

Recommendation

- i. It is important for future research to study the impact of Instagram on the psychological well-being and body image of male university students.
- ii. Instagram should normalize natural looks and body appearance.
- iii. There should not be any limitations and boundaries of being accepted by people on Instagram as well as in our society.
- iv. People should preach more about psychological well-being to save people from different mental disorders.
- v. Usage of Instagram should be limited for their users as excessive use leads individuals to a high level of anxiety, depression, loneliness, sleep problems and fear of missing out.

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