

Effect of Mass Media on Body Image and Self-Esteem of Teenage Girls

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates whether mass media (social media) affects the body image and self-esteem of teenage girls. For most people, the beauty or covetable feminine body image of teenage girls is defined by a charming face and thin body shape commonly known as zero figures. But this definition of beauty cannot be true always because it is based on the experience of seeing which is not all-encompassing. The whole beauty of the girls can be defined by the combination of all the experiences, as experiences of seeing, listening, touching, and all others in which we are perceived by an individual. Social media is the major source to share information among individuals. This paper provides the effects of social media on the body image and self-esteem of teenage girls. This study targets teenage girls because physical attractiveness is especially important to them, and a thin and beautiful idealized image in social media plays a significant role in influencing their self-confidence. Further, a data-driven model using artificial intelligence (AI) is suggested for future challenges.

KEYWORDS

AI, Body-Image, Self-Esteem, Social Media, Teenage Girls

INTRODUCTION

Today's teens use technology in a variety of ways from texting and tweeting to chatting, playing online and posting on a variety of online sites. So, these young generations get much influenced by all these types of mass media. Mass media is one of the factors that influence a young girl's feminine body shape or feminine figure. Young girls are becoming aware of their body image or figure through the image of models in advertisements. Most of the researchers are trying to find out the composite effect of mass media, body image and self-esteem on teenage girls.

Overweightness, obesity rates and Body Mass Index (BMI) have dramatically increased over the past few decades and this represents a health epidemic in India as well as in other parts of the world. Abnormal body weight and shape, unhealthy dietary and mass media have adverse effects on body formation as well as on the health of young girls. Mass media (print media, broadcast media,

outdoor media or the internet) tries to convey the message regarding the current trend of fashion in our socio-cultural milieu. It has a great impact on the body image and self-esteem of a teenage girl.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mass Media

Mass Media is a technological advancement that intends to reach a mass audience. Newspapers, magazines, radio, television and the Internet are traditional channels, to collect information on political and social issues, culture, and news. The cultural message that was found to be suggestive in some magazines was that women spend time and engage in behaviors that render them being more physically attractive. Television and internet audiences are larger than any other mass media. In the context of television, social media (Internet) and magazines, individuals are subjected to photographs from numerous media outlets. While not all advertising images are similar and some commercials show ordinary individuals in daily situations, most advertisements feature a skewed or intentional depiction of individuals and their lives (Richins, 1995). For a very small percentage of individuals, the degree of appearance and physical attractiveness presented in the media is a factor. Moreover, the use of technology and special effects makes it possible to render pictures beautiful and better than real life. In promoting comparisons between women, these irrational and determined images play a major role, which has led to a drastic shift in the perceptions of each image (Blowers et al., 2003). In this way, for women, especially young women and young people, images in the media are an issue. Looking at the slender and attractive models in the ads causes self-doubt and disappointment regarding their bodies and faces for many young people and can lower their self-esteem (Freedman, 1984).

Body Image

The image of the body relates to how individuals perceive themselves as they see their image in the mirror. Individuals may have a favorable or adverse body form. A healthy state of the body image is one that individuals support regardless of their weight or shape of the body.

What do you see when you look in the mirror? Is it being perceived positively or negatively? Are you happy or sad with the way you look? Ugh, my hair looks horrible! I think I need to lose a little weight. My figure looks fabulous! These are all comments that we, as individuals, have said to ourselves at one point or another, and they all relate to body image.

Negative body image is when people believe that because they are not pleased with the way their bodies look, they need to enhance their bodies.

Figure 1. Woman looking at body image in mirror



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