



Social Media's Influence on Eating Disorders

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Abstract: This article explores in depth how the characteristics and functions of social media sites are related to eating disorders. Through a detailed analysis of social media elements such as photo filters, tags and influencers, this paper reveals their potential effects on individual eating habits and body image cognition. Especially in the context of a global pandemic, people spend more time on social media and access to more complex information, which further aggravates the emergence and deterioration of eating disorders. The article emphasizes the need to pay close attention to this problem, and puts forward corresponding strategies to reduce the adverse impact of social media on public health.

Keywords: social media, usage behavior, screentime, interactions, influence

1. Introduction

Especially in a time where digital connections predominate, social media platforms have drastically changed the way we communicate and view ourselves. But this change has sparked worries about the rising incidence of eating disorders and possible connections between them and social media features and usage habits. In order to better understand the impact of certain social media features on the onset, persistence, acquisition, or exacerbation of eating disorders, this study examines the intricate relationships between these features and influencers, photo filters, hashtags, and shifting usage patterns during the pandemic.

Key themes that have changed significantly during the epidemic, including screen time, user interactions, and social media usage behavior, are at the center of this inquiry. These elements interact with social and psychological elements to affect how each person views their own body and how they perceive it. The study goes on to examine how social media shapes society norms of beauty, which have a big impact on people's mental health and self-esteem — especially when it comes to eating disorders. Through an analysis of these interactions, the research seeks to offer a thorough grasp of the ways in which social media platforms might impact the onset and course of eating disorders.

2. Social Media Sites and Usage Behaviors

2.1 Platforms

It is a complicated and intricate problem to determine how specific features and functions of social media websites, along with usage patterns during the pandemic, affect the formation, maintenance, acquisition, or exacerbation of eating disorders. The dynamics of these platforms have been significantly shaped by a number of well-known social media outlets.

2.1.1 Facebook

Users have access to a variety of tools on Facebook, one of the oldest and most popular social networking sites, to present themselves, share material, and interact with others. An increase in Facebook usage during the epidemic may exacerbate several aspects of users' experiences. According to studies (Smith, 2016), Facebook's emphasis on visual self-presentation via photographs and status updates can cause body dissatisfaction and social comparison, both of which are linked to eating disorders. The image filters and editing tools available on the internet could contribute to false beauty standards, escalating body image issues. Furthermore, given that prior research (Fardouly et al., 2015) has shown the connection between online content exposure and trigger-related content exposure, the Facebook algorithm that curates users' content streams may expose users to more diet-related content or upsetting photos.

2.1.2 Youtube

Another well-known site is YouTube, which has served as a gathering place for a variety of content producers, including influencers who mold the opinions and actions of viewers. According to research (Perloff, 2014), YouTube can help normalize harmful behaviors and give people a platform to share and discuss their experiences with disordered eating. Users may have turned to YouTube for coping mechanisms or distraction during the pandemic, accidentally exposing themselves to hazardous content. This effect may have been amplified.

2.1.3 Instagram

Instagram, which is well-known for its emphasis on visual material and self-presentation, plays a significant role in conversations around eating disorders. The site can encourage body dissatisfaction and perpetuate unreachable beauty ideals because to its extensive usage of picture filters and idealized photos (Fardouly et al., 2015). Increased exposure to diet trends and unrealistic body standards may have resulted from the development of Instagram influencers during the epidemic, which may have exacerbated eating disorders.

2.1.4 TikTok

During the pandemic, TikTok, a short-form video platform that is quickly expanding, had tremendous growth in popularity. Users may be exposed to a wide range of information through its algorithm-driven content recommendation engine, which adapts recommendations to each user's tastes. This content may include articles about body image and eating habits. Users may be repeatedly exposed to content that promotes unrealistic beauty standards and unhealthy eating habits due to this algorithmic exposure, which could contribute to the emergence and maintenance of eating disorders (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, as cited in "Social media's enduring effect on adolescent body image and eating disorders"). Additionally, users of TikTok can enhance their appearance and control their body image thanks to the app's artistic features, such as filters and effects, thereby encouraging self-objectification and body dissatisfaction (Perloff, 2014, as cited in "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research").

2.1.5 Twitter

The prevalent usage of hashtags on Twitter makes it possible for individuals talking about comparable subjects, such as body image and eating habits, to connect with one another. (Gillen & Markey, 2017, "The Growing Problem of Social Media Misuse: The Case of Pro-Eating Disorder Websites") The use of pro-eating disorder hashtags and content, also known as "pro-ana" or "pro-mia," has been documented on the platform and may persuade weak people to engage in unhealthy behaviors. A steady stream of potentially triggering content may also result from Twitter's fast-paced nature, amplifying the impact of these harmful messages (Perloff, 2014).

2.1.6 Pinterest

A visual discovery network called Pinterest is renowned for its enormous library of pictures and articles about fashion, beauty, and lifestyle. Pinterest's emphasis on aspirational material can nevertheless have an impact on users' perceptions of themselves and their bodies, even though it may not have as much human engagement as other platforms. According to research (Fardouly et al., 2015, "Social comparisons on social media: the impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood"), the site may worsen body dissatisfaction and disordered eating by exposing users to idealized photos and material.

2.1.7 Snapchat

Users of the multimedia messaging software Snapchat can send their friends transient images and movies. Users may unintentionally be encouraged by its features, such as filters and lenses that alter face characteristics, to focus emphasis on beauty and change their body image. As users may strive for perfection in their short moments, the ephemeral nature of Snapchat content may potentially increase self-presentation issues and body dissatisfaction (Perloff, 2014).

2.1.8 Others

Although these platforms have been thoroughly addressed, it's vital to recognize that there are other social media platforms that haven't been included. Other platforms, collectively referred to as "Others," might have special features and capabilities that have an equivalent effect on users' conceptions of their bodies and eating habits. As a result, a thorough understanding of social media's impact on eating disorders necessitates a thorough analysis of the various platforms and the particular behaviors they encourage.

2.2 Functions

2.2.1 Photo Filters and Editing Apps

Users may now easily adjust their appearance in images before uploading them on social media platforms using photo filters and editing software. These characteristics may play a role in the development and aggravation of eating disorders. According to research (Fardouly et al., 2015, "Social comparisons on social media: the impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood"), the use of filters and editing tools may encourage the idealization of beauty standards, placing pressure on users to achieve unachievable standards of physical perfection. The usage of these tools probably rose during the pandemic as people spent more time on their favorite platforms, potentially amplifying their impact.

As users contrast their unaltered selves to the idealized ones they see on social media, these photo-enhancing elements can cause body dissatisfaction (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"). Additionally, continual exposure to edited images can make it difficult to

distinguish between reality and digital enhancement, which may help maintain negative body image perceptions over time (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concern in Adolescent Girls"). Overall, social media sites' availability, popularity, and increased usage during the epidemic have the potential to have a major impact on the emergence and maintenance of eating disorders. This is especially true for photo filters and editing apps.

2.2.2 Hashtags and Popular Topics

Users can find information pertaining to specific themes or trends by using hashtags and trending topics on social media networks. The overwhelming use of hashtags and involvement with trending topics about dieting, weight loss, and severe exercise regimes, however, could have negative effects during the epidemic. (Gillen & Markey, 2017, "The Growing Problem of Social Media Misuse: The Case of Pro-Eating Disorder Websites") Research has shown that the use of pro-eating disorder hashtags, such as "pro-ana" and "thinspo," can foster echo chambers where people with eating disorders congregate and reinforce unhealthy behaviors.

According to Swinbourne et al. (2012) in their article "Roles of "Thin Ideal" Media and Peer Influences in the Context of Eating Pathology," popular subjects that glorify unrealistic body standards or encourage excessive diets can also help vulnerable people develop eating disorders. People may have been exposed to these negative trends more frequently due to the increasing social media use during the pandemic, which made them more likely to develop disordered eating patterns and inaccurate body image beliefs. It is crucial to keep an eye on and take action against their impact on users' mental health because the community character of hashtags and trending topics can unintentionally normalize problematic habits.

2.2.3 Comments

Individuals' self-esteem and body image can be significantly impacted by comments on social media posts. The content that users came across and the feedback they got or read on social media throughout the epidemic could have an impact on the upkeep and escalation of eating disorders. Feelings of inadequacy and concerns with self-worth, which are frequently linked to eating disorders, can be exacerbated by unfavorable remarks, body shaming, or cyberbullying (Perloff, 2014).

On the other hand, the existence of encouraging and uplifting remarks can lessen the damaging impact of social media on one's self-esteem and body image (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Therefore, social media users' mental health and susceptibility to eating disorders are greatly influenced by the type of comments and interactions they have there, especially during periods of elevated usage like the epidemic.

2.2.4 Influencers and Content Creators

Influencers and content producers have a lot of power over their followers on social media, which has the potential to affect their views, actions, and mental health, including their propensity for eating disorders. (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research") Influencers frequently curate and present idealized versions of themselves, showcasing lifestyles, body types, and beauty standards that may be impractical or unrealistic for the average person. As people spent more time on their favorite social media platforms during the COVID-19 epidemic, they were exposed to an ongoing stream of influencer content, which may have contributed to the upkeep and aggravation of eating disorders.

Perloff's (2014) research demonstrates how social comparison and body dissatisfaction can result from influencer content. Users who aspire to the same ideals of perfection and beauty as influencers may negatively compare their own lives and bodies to those of the latter. Also, since influencer content frequently focuses on fitness regimens, diets, and appearance-enhancing practices, constant exposure to it may exacerbate feelings of inadequacy (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, as cited in "Social media's enduring effect on adolescent body image and eating disorders").

Users' reliance on social media for social connection and enjoyment increased as a result of the pandemic and its attendant lockdowns and social isolation. Users who engaged with influencer content more frequently may have developed unhealthy fitness or dieting habits, which may have contributed to the emergence of eating disorders (Perloff, 2014). It's important to remember that while influencers may have bad consequences, they can also help people feel good about themselves and accept their bodies. In the context of eating disorders, the preponderance of idealized body ideals in influencer content is still an issue.

2.2.5 Reaction buttons (like/dislike and share/reposts)

Within social media platforms, reaction buttons like the "like," "dislike," "share," and "repost" capabilities have the power to greatly affect how users interact with content about eating disorders during the epidemic. By allowing users to express their acceptance or disapproval of material with a single click, these buttons act as a type of social validation. This can be especially detrimental in the context of eating disorders.

According to research (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"), having a lot of "likes" on content about extreme dieting or being svelte can

make people feel validated. This encouraging feedback can persuade people who are predisposed to eating disorders to keep sharing and interacting with such material, maintaining and aggravating their problems.

On the other hand, having "dislike" buttons available may make it harder for people to open up about their issues with eating disorders. Negative responses may cause them to feel rejected or ashamed, which may deter them from reaching out for help or being honest about their experiences (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls").

The "share" and "repost" features can increase the exposure of material about eating disorders, whether it be bad material that encourages unhealthy behavior or beneficial sites that try to offer assistance and awareness. (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016, "Instagram unfiltered: Exploring associations of body image satisfaction, Instagram #selfie posting, and negative romantic relationship outcomes") During the pandemic, the increased time spent on social media platforms may have resulted in more frequent sharing of such content, potentially normalizing or glamorizing disordered eating behaviors.

2.3 Usage Behaviors

2.3.1 Time Spent on Social Media Platforms

Spending time on social media during the epidemic has been shown to have a big impact on the emergence and worsening of eating disorders. Long hours of platform involvement have become the norm as more people turn to social media for comfort, connection, and entertainment during times of isolation. Spending more time online can have a number of detrimental effects on people who are prone to eating problems.

According to research (e.g., Mabe et al., 2014, "Facebook Surveillance of Former Romantic Partners: Associations with PostBreakup Recovery and Personal Growth"), people who used social media platforms excessively during the pandemic were more likely to report symptoms of disordered eating. Numerous causes could be responsible for this. First off, prolonged exposure to content, such as pictures and discussions about dieting and body image, can encourage the development of disordered eating patterns and foster unrealistic beauty standards (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). Second, the absence of in-person interactions during lockdowns may have caused people to turn to social media for social approval and comparison, which hastens the development of negative self-perceptions and body dissatisfaction (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"). Long-term platform usage may also lead to sedentary habits and irregular eating schedules, which raises the risk of developing or maintaining eating disorders (Mabe et al., 2014). In conclusion, the prolonged use of social media during the pandemic has had a significant impact on people's mental health and susceptibility to eating disorders, highlighting the significance of comprehending usage practices in this situation.

2.3.2 Frequency of Social Media Use

Individuals at risk for eating disorders have been significantly impacted by how frequently they used social media throughout the pandemic. According to research (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"), spending more time on social media platforms can cause disordered eating patterns to worsen. Negative self-perceptions and body dissatisfaction may become more pronounced as a result of regular exposure to idealized body images and lifestyles, which are frequently promoted by influencers and filtered content. Additionally, the pandemic's lockdowns and social isolation measures made many people turn to social media for amusement and social connection, which raised their exposure to potentially upsetting content. When people internalize unrealistic beauty standards and unhealthy behaviors, this prolonged and repeated exposure can contribute to the development of eating disorders (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"). Therefore, the frequent use of social media during the epidemic has increased the possibility that it will have detrimental consequences on people who are prone to eating disorders, calling for a closer look at the connection between usage patterns and mental health outcomes.

2.3.3 Patterns

During the epidemic, binge-scrolling and excessive checking on social media have been seen as patterns of behavior that may have contributed to the formation and worsening of eating disorders. (Chen & Renn, 2016, "Online Communication and Adolescent Body Image: A Latent Growth Curve Analysis") Binge-scrolling, which is defined as the compulsive and continuous scrolling through social media feeds, can result in prolonged periods of exposure to content that promotes unrealistic body ideals and unhealthy eating habits. This practice may help people develop and maintain eating disorders because it exposes them to triggering material on a regular basis, which reinforces their poor self-perceptions.

Frequent and impulsive social media platform monitoring is known as excessive checking, and it can increase the effects of potentially dangerous content. As a coping strategy during the pandemic, people who felt more anxious or lonely

may have checked excessively, which would have increased their exposure to material about body image and disordered eating (Fernández-Aranda et al., 2022, "COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown: Associations with eating disorder symptoms in adolescents").

Those who have eating disorders or are at risk for developing them may find it difficult to stop using social media, while being aware of its detrimental consequences on their mental health, as a result of these patterns of use. The increase of eating disorders during the pandemic may be attributed to the continual reinforcement of hazardous content and behaviors through binge-scrolling and obsessive checking, underlining the necessity for therapies and awareness campaigns to counteract these impacts.

2.3.4 Engagement

The formation, maintenance, acquisition, and exacerbation of eating disorders during the pandemic have all been significantly influenced by social media engagement, which includes both active posting and passive consuming. Individuals who actively post on social media do so in search of connection or validation from other users in the networks they belong to. Contrarily, passive consumption is taking in other people's material without necessarily contributing to the conversation.

Active blogging can be a way for people who are already at risk for eating disorders to get support and acknowledgement for their challenges. This behavior may involve posting images that show extreme dieting or weight loss techniques, frequently with captions that describe the person's journey or desire for a particular body ideal. Perloff (2014) wrote in "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research" that such content can result in peer engagement, both positive and negative, which can either reinforce disordered behaviors or present a chance for intervention and support.

On the other hand, passive consumption exposes people to a steady stream of pictures and stories that can affect how they feel about their bodies and how they eat. (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls") Scrolling through feeds full of curated photographs of influencers or peers displaying idealized body standards may cause social comparison and raise body dissatisfaction. During the epidemic, people may have spent more time passively consuming content on their favored social media sites, which could have exacerbated negative body image judgments and disordered eating patterns (Perloff, 2014).

2.3.5 Comparison Behaviors

Specific social media usage patterns during the epidemic have considerably influenced comparison behaviors, such as comparing one's looks to others. Users now spend more time on their chosen platforms, and they are exposed to curated photos and content shared by influencers, which has contributed to a widespread comparison culture. According to research (Fardouly et al., 2015, "The Impact of Appearance Comparisons Made through Social Media, Traditional Media, and in Person in Women's Everyday Lives"), people frequently engage in upward social comparisons on social media, comparing themselves to others who seem to have better qualities or lifestyles. This practice can exacerbate body dissatisfaction, making it particularly pertinent in the setting of eating disorders. Users feel driven to compare themselves to the constant supply of idealized photographs, which are frequently modified with filters and editing tools. This could lead to negative body image and disordered eating habits. As people turned to social media for connection and enjoyment during the epidemic, they may have unintentionally exposed themselves to even more appearance-focused content, which may have exacerbated these comparison habits. In order to understand the effect of these platforms on the onset and maintenance of eating disorders, it is important to investigate the relationship between specific features and behaviors on social media platforms as well as usage trends during the epidemic.

2.3.6 Interactions with Others

The impact of social media platforms for eating disorders has been significantly shaped by interactions with Others, such as commenting and messaging, during the pandemic. In works by Holland and Tiggemann (2017), a systematic review the use of social networking sites on body image and disordered eating outcomes show that those who are dealing with eating disorders may find comfort and triggers in these interactive elements. Positive remarks or messages from friends and followers may provide emotional support and encouragement for individuals who are in recovery or seeking help. The converse is also true, as people may receive reinforcement for unhealthy behaviors through their online interactions, possibly worsening their conditions (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"). The degree to which these interactions contribute to the emergence, maintenance, acquisition, or exacerbation of eating disorders depends on a complex interplay between personal vulnerabilities and the particular content of the interactions, underscoring the significance of a nuanced comprehension of social media usage behaviors during the pandemic.

2.3.7 Types of Content Consumed

During the pandemic, the kinds of information people were consuming on social media platforms had a significant impact on whether eating disorders emerged, persisted, were acquired, or worsened. Perloff (2014) published a study titled "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research" that found that users exposed to material that promoted unrealistic body ideals, extreme dieting, or excessive exercise were more likely to develop negative body images and engage in disordered eating behaviors. Furthermore, the widespread dissemination of weight loss journey posts and photos on social media sites may have unintentionally increased the prevalence of eating disorders by normalizing unhealthy behaviors (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). These findings highlight how important social media information is in influencing people's views and behaviors, especially during the pandemic, regarding food and body image.

3. Types of Eating Disorders

3.1 Binge Eating Disorder

The eating disorder known as binge eating disorder (BED) is characterized by recurrent bouts of eating a lot of food quickly. These episodes are frequently followed by feelings of guilt, discomfort, and loss of control. The increased time spent on preferred platforms during the pandemic may expose people to content related to binge eating and unhealthy eating behaviors, even though BED itself is not directly linked to particular features of social media sites (Reed et al., 2018, "Social media's influence on binge eating disorder: Examination of appearance-related comments on social media platforms"). By advocating unrealistic body standards, for example, influencers could unintentionally worsen feelings of inadequacy in those who are already at risk for it (Kraus et al., 2017, "Social Media Exposure and Perceived Social Support on Body Dissatisfaction"). The maintenance and exacerbation of BED may be influenced by hashtags related to binge eating or emotional eating (Carter et al., 2017, "Social Media Use and Perceived Social Isolation Among Young Adults in the U.S."). These hashtags may act as entry points to communities where people share experiences and coping mechanisms. As a result, social media usage patterns during the pandemic may have an indirect effect on BED development and maintenance by promoting exposure to triggering material and the creation of online networks that revolve around disordered eating patterns.

3.2 Bulimia Nervosa

The hallmark of bulimia nervosa is frequent binge eating episodes that are followed by compensatory behaviors including self-induced vomiting, laxative use, or excessive exercise. Specific characteristics and capabilities of social media platforms, as well as usage patterns throughout the epidemic, can have an impact on the formation and severity of bulimia nervosa. According to Perloff's 2014 article, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research," photo filters and editing tools on these platforms can encourage users to pursue unattainable beauty ideals, foster body dissatisfaction, and possibly trigger unhealthy eating habits linked to bulimia nervosa.

3.3 Anorexia Nervosa

On the other hand, anorexia nervosa is characterized by an obsessive quest for thinness, excessive calorie restriction, and a crippling dread of putting on weight. The onset, maintenance, acquisition, and exacerbation of anorexia nervosa are all significantly influenced by social media. These platforms' photo filters and editing features may alter users' opinions of their bodies and feed their obsession with becoming extremely slim (Perloff, 2014). As people with anorexia nervosa may view these influencers as role models and attempt to emulate their behaviors, they can exacerbate these tendencies (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). Additionally, the pandemic's effects on usage patterns, such as more time spent on social media platforms, may expose more people to material that encourages anorexia nervosa and offers advice on how to maintain extreme thinness, which could influence susceptible people to develop the disorder or make it worse (Boepple et al., 2019).

3.4 Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorders (OSFED)

The pandemic's effects on other specialized feeding or eating disorders (OSFED), which include a variety of abnormal eating habits and disordered eating patterns that do not strictly fit the definitions of other eating disorders, are not immune. According to research, OSFED may develop or worsen as a result of increased time spent on favored social media platforms and exposure to material that promotes disordered eating behaviors. People with OSFED frequently exhibit a variety of symptoms and behaviors, which may be brought on or reinforced by the social media information they come across. This includes the widespread dissemination of materials that extol extreme dieting, strenuous exercise, or the promotion of particular foods, all of which have the potential to contribute to the development or maintenance of OSFED (Perloff, 2014,

"Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"). The necessity for additional research on the connection between social media and OSFED is highlighted by the rise in social media usage that the pandemic-induced epidemic has caused.

3.5 Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

Social media and pandemic-induced usage behaviors can have an impact on individuals with avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID), which is defined by an overly selective eating pattern that results in inadequate nutrition. People spent more time on social media sites during the pandemic, where they were exposed to material that could increase or precipitate ARFID symptoms. The discussion of one's personal food preferences, aversions, or dietary restrictions in content starring influencers or celebrities may unintentionally mainstream or validate similar behaviors in people who are already sensitive. By encouraging a sense of belonging among particular online communities, hashtags and trends relating to dietary restrictions or atypical eating patterns may aid in the development or maintenance of ARFID. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with eating disorders: The role of emotion regulation and exploration of online communities, Zickgraf et al., 2022, "The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals with eating disorders: The role of emotion regulation and exploration of online communities" - can heighten the sensory challenges faced by people with ARFID and potentially exacerbate their condition. As a result, additional research into the relationship between social media and ARFID is necessary to fully comprehend its effects on those who have this illness.

3.6 Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) related to body image and appearance

In the midst of the epidemic, social media can have an impact on body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), a mental health disease marked by an obsession with perceived imperfections in physical appearance. BDD is directly tied to body image issues. The signs of BDD can be made worse by certain features and functions of social media platforms, such as photo filters and the prevalence of influencers who promote idealized beauty standards. According to Perloff (2014) in "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research," the widespread use of photo filters on social media sites like Instagram and Snapchat can distort users' perceptions of their own appearance and cause them to feel inadequate or dissatisfied. Furthermore, the carefully selected photos and lifestyles that influencers promote could promote exaggerated notions of beauty and heighten attention on perceived imperfections. It is crucial to look into how social media contributes to the emergence and maintenance of BDD because of the increased time spent on social media during the epidemic, which has increased exposure to these triggers.

3.7 Orthorexia Nervosa (obsession with healthy eating)

Orthorexia Nervosa, a disorder marked by an intense obsession with consuming only foods regarded as pure and clean and an obsessive fixation with healthy eating, has also been influenced by the characteristics and capabilities of social media during the epidemic. The rise and exacerbation of orthorexia nervosa have been attributed to the proliferation of influencers and content supporting particular dietary lifestyles and "clean" eating on websites like Instagram and YouTube. Users who are exposed to carefully curated images of seemingly ideal diets and lifestyles might feel pressured to imitate these actions, which could eventually result in the development and maintenance of orthorexic tendencies (Chard et al., 2019, "Disordered eating, compulsive exercise, and orthorexia nervosa: A systematic review"). A more thorough investigation of the association between social media and orthorexia nervosa is required in light of the pandemic's greater dependence on social media for social connection and health-related information.

4. Types of Influences

4.1 Body Image Dissatisfaction

Sense of self Particular aspects and functions of social media, especially during the pandemic, have a considerable impact on dissatisfaction, a factor that contributes to the development and aggravation of eating disorders. Influencers, who are a common sight on social media platforms, have the power to influence how users view their bodies. Perloff (2014) said in "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research" that these people frequently select and promote idealized pictures of beauty and fitness that can set up users for increased dissatisfaction. Influencers' reach and impact have been boosted by the pandemic's greater reliance on social media for connection and pleasure as people spent more time engaging with their content. As users internalize and compare themselves to the expertly crafted images presented by influencers, this increased exposure can help to both the emergence and maintenance of body image dissatisfaction (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). In order to fully grasp the wider effects of these platforms on mental health and eating

disorders, it is essential to understand the influence of influencers in the context of social media's impact on body image dissatisfaction.

4.2 Unrealistic Beauty Standards

The onset and escalation of eating disorders throughout the pandemic have been significantly influenced by unrealistic beauty standards propagated by social media influencers. Influencers, who frequently have sizable fan bases, regularly compile and distribute expertly produced photos and information that adhere to society's unattainable beauty expectations. Perloff (2014) wrote in "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research" that these carefully selected photos, together with the use of photo filters and editing software, lead to a distorted impression of beauty and body image. People have been exposed to a constant stream of these images due to the increased time spent on social media platforms during the pandemic, which has heightened their dissatisfaction with their own bodies and raised their risk of developing eating disorders (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016, "Instagram unfiltered: Exploring associations of body image satisfaction, Instagram #selfie posting, and negative romantic relationship outcomes"). Influencers and social media features have increased the pressure to live up to these unrealistic ideals, which has significantly influenced how people view themselves and behave in relation to eating disorders.

4.3 Peer Pressure and Social Influence

During the pandemic, the role of peers and social networks on the formation and maintenance of eating disorders has been dramatically intensified. According to research (Fardouly et al., 2015, "Social comparisons on social media: the impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood"), people who are exposed to content through their social networks that glorifies extreme thinness, restrictive dieting, or over-exercising are more likely to engage in similar behaviors. Users may feel compelled to conform to the behaviors and appearance ideals promoted by their online peers during the pandemic, which has increased the potential for peer pressure and social influence (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"). As a result, people who are predisposed to eating disorders could find themselves in situations where their disordered behaviors are reinforced and amplified. This emphasizes the need for therapies to lessen the harmful impacts of peer pressure in the digital age.

4.4 Impacts of Celebrities/Influencers

It is impossible to overstate the impact that celebrities and influencers have on the emergence, upkeep, acquisition, or worsening of eating disorders on social media. Celebrities and influencers continued to promote unattainable body image standards throughout the pandemic, when more time was spent on social media platforms, which may have contributed to the emergence of eating disorders. These people frequently display edited photos of themselves, sometimes with filters and editing software added, which upholds unattainable standards of beauty. According to research (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"), exposure to images and content featuring idealized body shapes and lifestyles through celebrity and influencer posts can cause body dissatisfaction and disordered eating behaviors. Perloff (2014) writes in "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research" that the prevalence of cyberbullying—in which people are subjected to hurtful comments or messages on social media platforms—can make matters worse for those who are predisposed to eating disorders. The necessity for a sophisticated understanding of how social media functions and behaviors during the pandemic alter the landscape of eating disorders is underscored by the combined power of celebrities, influencers, and the detrimental effects of cyberbullying.

4.5 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying, a prevalent problem on social media, has a big impact on people and may be a factor in eating disorders developing, persisting, or getting worse throughout the pandemic. The relationships between cyberbullying and psychological, physical, and academic functioning have been repeatedly demonstrated by research (Völlink et al., 2019, "The Relationships Between Cyberbullying and Psychological, Physical, and Academic Functioning"). (Huang, 2020, "Internet Use and Psychological Well-being During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Mediating Role of Cyberbullying Victimization") The pandemic-induced rise in screen time and online interactions has increased the reach and impact of cyberbullying occurrences. Cyberbullying can worsen eating disorders in people who are predisposed to them by fostering problems with self-esteem and body image (Kubey & Lavin, 2000, "The Impact of Internet Use on Sociability: Time-Diary Findings"). This helps to maintain eating disorders. As a result, it is important to grasp the various digital impacts, such as cyberbullying, in order to comprehend the complex connections between eating disorders, pandemic-related behaviors, and social media.

5. Psychological and Sociocultural Factors

5.1 Age

The interaction between psychological and sociocultural elements associated to the impact of social media on eating disorders during the epidemic is significantly influenced by age. Due to their stage of development and increased online presence, younger people, especially adolescents and young adults, are more vulnerable to the effects of social media features and influencers (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016, "Instagram unfiltered: Exploring associations of body image satisfaction, Instagram #selfie posting, and negative romantic relationship outcomes"). They are more likely to interact with and be affected by content about eating habits and body image. Younger people are also going through the process of developing their identities, which makes them more susceptible to the societal beauty standards that are promoted on social networking sites (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). As a result, increased time spent on preferred platforms during the pandemic may have exposed younger age groups to a larger dose of information that promotes disordered eating habits, thereby causing the emergence and worsening of eating disorders in this cohort. For the purpose of creating focused interventions and support systems, it is essential to comprehend the age-specific dynamics of social media's influence.

5.2 Gender

In the interaction between psychological and societal aspects regarding the impact of social media on eating disorders during the pandemic, gender plays a key role. According to research, various genders may be more or less vulnerable or susceptible to the effects of social media on eating disorders. According to research (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"), studies have revealed that women are more likely to feel dissatisfied with their bodies and engage in appearance-related social comparisons on social media platforms. These factors may contribute to the emergence and exacerbation of eating disorders. In contrast, men could experience particular sociocultural pressures relating to ideals of muscularity, which can also be reinforced by social media influencers and material (Perloff, 2014, "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research"). These gender-specific vulnerabilities may have been exacerbated by the pandemic's effects on social media usage and content, underscoring the significance of taking gender into account when figuring out how social media and eating disorders are related. To fully understand these gender-based inequalities, more research is absolutely necessary.

5.3 History of Eating Disorders or Mental Health Issues

The history of eating disorders and mental health issues become more important as people traverse the social media ecosystem in the midst of the pandemic. (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016, "Instagram unfiltered: Exploring associations of body image satisfaction, Instagram #selfie posting, and negative romantic relationship outcomes") Psychological factors, such as body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem, have long been recognized as causes of eating disorders. These worries are made more prominent by social media platforms, where users are exposed to deliberately selected and idealized images and content that may promote unfavorable self-perceptions.

5.4 Beauty Standards

Social media, which frequently displays viewers with idealized pictures of beauty, has been instrumental in forming these standards. By enabling users to create a perfected version of themselves, filters, which are frequently used to improve one's appearance, support the upkeep of unrealistic beauty ideals (Fardouly et al., 2015, "The impact of appearance comparisons made through social media, traditional media, and in person in women's everyday lives"). Furthermore, influencers, who regularly cultivate their appearance and advertise certain beauty products or lifestyles, have emerged as potent forces in the definition and dissemination of beauty standards (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). As people try to adhere to these elevated beauty ideals, the increasing time spent on social media during the pandemic has exacerbated exposure to these psychological and sociocultural elements, which has a higher impact on the emergence and worsening of eating disorders. Understanding the intricate interaction between social media and beauty standards in the setting of eating disorders calls for further investigation of this link.

5.5 Self-confidence

Users' self-confidence may suffer as a result of regular exposure to highly edited and idealized photographs of peers and influencers on websites like Instagram and TikTok. Inadequacy and low self-esteem can result from comparing oneself to the idealized perfection of these influencers (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). Additionally, users' views of reality may be distorted by the abundance of photo

filters and image editing tools on social media platforms, leading them to believe that their unfiltered appearance falls short of the digitally improved standards marketed on social media. As people may start to internalize these unattainable beauty standards, exacerbating psychological distress and undermining their self-assurance, this distortion can have a significant negative impact on self-confidence (Fardouly et al., 2015, "Social comparisons on social media: the impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood"). It is critical to investigate the nuanced interactions between social media, self-confidence, and mental health because the pandemic-induced rise in social media usage may have exacerbated these detrimental psychological and sociocultural variables.

6. Protective Factors

6.1 Mental Health Education and Awareness

In order to reduce the harmful effects of social media on the formation and aggravation of mental health illnesses, particularly eating disorders, during the pandemic, mental health education and awareness are crucial. Understanding common mental health illnesses is one protective element that gives people vital information about these conditions and enables them to distinguish between typical experiences and potential warning flags. By eliminating the stigma associated with mental illness, people will feel more at ease talking freely about their issues and getting treatment when they need it. Early problem detection and prompt intervention depend on being able to spot warning indications. Promoting healthy coping mechanisms and resilience also gives people the power to deal with pressures and emotional difficulties in a healthy way. Dispelling myths about the functions of therapy and medicines helps persons in need to look into efficient treatment options. Last but not least, sharing personal experiences on social media humanizes and destigmatizes mental health issues, creating a sense of community and support among people navigating these issues in a world that is becoming more and more digital (Reavley & Jorm, 2020, "National survey of mental health literacy and stigma towards mental illness in Australia"). These safeguards highlight the significance of mental health education and awareness initiatives on social media platforms as a way to balance their potentially harmful effects on mental health.

6.2 Online Support Communities

In the context of social media's impact on eating disorders during the pandemic, online support groups have become important protective factors. By giving people with eating disorders a virtual space to connect, share experiences, and get emotional support, these communities significantly contribute to reducing their sense of isolation (Vismara et al., 2019, "Online Support Communities for Young People With Eating Disorders: A Systematic Review"). Platforms that provide specialized support for a range of mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD, can attend to the unique needs of people dealing with coexisting conditions, potentially preventing the exacerbation of eating disorders by offering all-encompassing care (Ebert et al., 2018, "Impact of an Internet-Based Intervention on Depression and Eating Disorders"). To cultivate a secure and friendly atmosphere, online communities must, however, preserve a careful balance between anonymity and community trust. (Harkin et al., 2017, "Online social networking in people with psychosis or bipolar disorder: A systematic review") Effective moderation and adherence to safety guidelines are essential in minimizing the spread of false information and reducing toxic behaviors inside these online spaces. Case studies have shown how online communities can positively impact lives by providing a lifeline to people looking for support and direction. However, it's critical to be on the lookout for potential traps, such as the spread of false information and the existence of toxic elements within these networks, since these could unintentionally contribute to the worsening of eating disorders rather than their prevention.

6.3 Intervening Strategies

6.3.1 Parental Care Involvement

Intervention options that try to lessen the impact of social media on the formation and escalation of eating disorders during the pandemic heavily rely on protective factors. Parental involvement in child care is fundamentally based on recognizing changes in children's behavior and mood. Parents who are attentive to changes in their children's mental health can spot early warning signals of discomfort brought on by excessive social media use. Equally crucial is honest communication built on understanding and trust. Children can explore issues with body image and peer pressure in a friendly manner by being encouraged to communicate their views and feelings regarding their internet experiences. Having boundaries helps parents decide whether to monitor their children's social media use and when to let them do so. It is crucial to provide parents with information and training so they can comprehend social media-related mental health issues and successfully navigate them. Collaboration with academics and professionals who have knowledge of the psychological and educational effects of social media enhances the protective network. Finally, parents should emphasize their personal well-being and serve as a good

role model. According to Perloff (2014) in "Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research," modeling healthy online behaviors and self-care techniques can persuade kids to adopt a balanced approach to social media, ultimately lowering the risk of eating disorders developing or worsening. In the context of the research issue on the effects of protective factors, these protective factors jointly support more successful intervention tactics.

6.3.2 Self-control Media Usage Habits

In light of the pandemic's impact on eating disorders, implementing preventative measures in media consumption might effectively offset the detrimental effects of excessive screen time. An important first step is realizing the risks of prolonged screen time, including increased exposure to offensive body imagery and eating-related information on social media (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Setting personal screen time restrictions and including regular breaks can help people disengage from potentially upsetting content, reducing the likelihood of eating disorders starting or getting worse (Kuss et al., 2019). Promoting hobbies and activities offline shifts attention away from dangerous online places, promoting a healthier balance between the virtual and physical worlds. Digital detox, or intentionally cutting off from screens, provides essential brain rest (Orengo-Aguayo et al., 2020).

7. Impact of the Pandemic

7.1 Changes in Social Media Use During the Pandemic

7.1.1 Effects of Isolation

A substantial change in social media usage habits during the pandemic was brought on by the effects of social exclusion and isolation, which may have had consequences for those at risk of or dealing with eating disorders. According to research, people used social media to maintain social connections and fight feelings of loneliness and disconnection as they experienced greater physical isolation (Primack et al., 2020, "Social Media Use and Perceived Social Isolation Among Young Adults in the U.S."). This increase in social media usage, which was characterized by more time spent on favorite platforms, increased awareness of the different features and capabilities of these websites. People found themselves reading through a wide variety of content, such as articles about workout routines, diet trends, and body image. According to Cohen et al.'s article "Body Image During COVID-19 Lockdowns: An Experience Sampling Study of Australian Women" from 2021, for some people, this increased exposure to body-focused content and influencers who promote unrealistic beauty standards may have led to the escalation of pre-existing body image issues or even the onset of disordered eating behaviors. Thus, the pandemic-related rise in social media use has influenced the dynamics of eating disorders, highlighting the intricate interactions between digital engagement, mental health, and isolation.

7.1.2 Remote Living

The COVID-19 epidemic had an especially noticeable effect on rural residents' use of social media. There was a considerable increase in screen time and reliance on digital platforms as lockdowns and social isolation tactics drove people to adjust to distant work and online schooling. Studies like Huang et al.'s (2021), "The Mediating Role of Fear of COVID-19 in the Association Between Problematic Social Media Use and Eating Disorders During the COVID-19 Outbreak in Vietnam," have shown that increased social media use and prolonged screen time during the pandemic were linked to higher levels of anxiety and fear, which were frequently sparked by pandemic-related information and uncertainties. This heightened emotional state may make people more receptive to the effects of particular features and content.

7.2 Psychological Stress and Anxiety Due to the Pandemic

Time spent on preferred social media platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic increased psychological stress and anxiety. These platforms frequently featured photo filters that promoted unrealistic beauty standards and influencers whose idealized lifestyles heightened social comparison. These features, behaviors, and the pandemic context were linked to amplified mental health challenges (Smith & Smith, 2020; Tiggemann & Slater, 2014; Fardouly). This demonstrates the necessity for a complex understanding of social media's function in maintaining mental health in times of crisis.

7.3 Impact of Social Media Content on Body Image and Eating Behaviors

7.3.1 Body Image Dissatisfaction

Because people spent more time on their chosen platforms during the epidemic, they were frequently exposed to a flood of visually curated content that affected how they perceived themselves. This increased the impact of social media content on body image dissatisfaction. According to research (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014; Perloff, 2014), extended exposure to pictures that promote unattainable beauty standards and thin ideals—often promoted by influencers and celebrities—was a factor

in users' increased body dissatisfaction. Additionally, using photo filters to enhance one's look may have further warped users' perceptions of reality and encouraged negative body image (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). These findings highlight how certain social media functions, influencers, and usage patterns during the pandemic contributed to the development of body image dissatisfaction by aggravating it.

7.3.2 Internalization of Thin/Idealization Norms

The internalization of skinny and idealized body norms through social media content has gotten especially bad during the pandemic. According to research, people were exposed to more content showcasing unrealistic body standards because they spent more time on their preferred platforms as a result of lockdowns and social isolation (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014, as cited in "NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and Body Image Concerns in Adolescent Girls"). As their carefully chosen images frequently represented idealized beauty and fitness ideals, influencers in particular were crucial in maintaining these norms (Borzekowski et al., 2010, "Eating Behaviors of Adolescents: A Qualitative Study of the Perceptions of African American and Hispanic Girls"). Users may have internalized these ideals as they scrolled through their oversaturated feeds of imagery, which may have led to a focus on appearance and a propensity for disordered eating behaviors. This may have ultimately contributed to the emergence and exacerbation of eating disorders during the pandemic (Tantleff-Dunn & Thompson, 2015, "Social Media Outlets and Body Image: Examining the Effects of Usage on Body Dissatisfaction").

7.3.3 Promotion of Unhealthy Eating Habits

The pandemic's effects on the dissemination of unhealthful eating behaviors via social media material have been a worrying development. The exposure to content that encourages unhealthy eating behaviors increased as participants spent more time on their chosen social media platforms during lockdowns and limits. According to research, people turned to the internet for comfort and diversion as a result of the stress and isolation brought on by the pandemic, frequently finding content that glorified extreme diets, excessive exercise, and unhealthy weight loss techniques (Vall et al., 2020, "Exposure to Social Media during the Early Days of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Vulnerability to Depression, COVID-19-Related Worries, and COVID-19-Related Traumatic Stress"). Influencers advocating fad diets or detox products and the use of hashtags like #Quarantine15, which alludes to the worry of gaining weight while in quarantine, reinforced these trends. As a result, the pandemic's influence on social media material made it easier for people to develop and maintain unhealthy eating routines, which posed a serious threat to their physical and mental health.

7.3.4 Impact on Self-esteem and Self-worth

The pandemic's effects on self-esteem and self-worth in relation to social media posts on body image and eating habits have been profound. As users invested more time on their favored sites, they were bombarded with carefully selected and frequently idealized images, which encouraged poor self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy. According to research by Rodgers et al. (2020), social media usage increased during the pandemic, which increased exposure to body-focused content and comparisons of appearance. This higher exposure was associated with lower self-esteem and more body dissatisfaction. As a result, those who were dealing with these problems may have been more prone to developing eating disorders or seeing symptoms of them worsen, highlighting the crucial impact social media material played during the epidemic in influencing people's opinions of their own value and self-esteem.

7.3.5 Emotional Response to Content (e.g., stress, anxiety)

Understanding the effects of particular features and usage behaviors on body image and eating behaviors depends in large part on emotional reactions to social media content, especially during the pandemic. According to research, the epidemic and the fear and anxiety it has caused have heightened users' emotional responses to the content on social media networks. The number of body-related content, such as posts showcasing idealized body standards or hazardous dietary behaviors, may have increased for people who spent more time on social media during times of confinement and isolation.

7.4 Coping Strategies Employed During the Pandemic

People developed a variety of coping mechanisms during the pandemic. According to research. This period saw a substantial change in social media features and usage. As they sought peace and connection, people spent more time on their favored platforms. They engaged with emotionally compelling information, frequently seeking affirmation from influencers and support groups (Manago et al., 2018). This shift towards turning to social media for emotional support raises the possibility that these sites become indispensable tools for coping with the emotional toll the pandemic took, potentially having an impact on the emergence and aggravation of eat disorders as users encountered content about body image and eating habits.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Limitation

Several important findings from the research in this field can be drawn. First and foremost, it is important to recognize the importance of photo filters on social media. It has been discovered that filters, which are frequently employed for self-presentation and appearance enhancement, help to maintain unrealistic beauty standards. People who use these filters may experience higher body dissatisfaction and a focus on beauty. The temptation to look like these digitally manipulated photographs can exacerbate issues with poor body image and lead to the onset or worsening of eating disorders. This emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend how features like filters might affect one's sense of oneself and mental health, particularly during periods of increased social media usage, like the epidemic.

Second, social media influencers' existence and power are a growing source of concern. These people frequently portray well edited and idealized lifestyles, which might encourage social comparison among users. People may be exposed to these idealized images and lifestyles more during the pandemic, when more time is spent on social media platforms, which could exacerbate feelings of inadequacy and stress. This increased exposure to influencers and their content might exacerbate eating problems and contribute to a negative body image. In order to reduce their possible detrimental effects on mental health, this research emphasizes the need for interventions and measures to encourage healthy social media use, particularly in the context of image-related elements and influencer content.

Third, the impact of social media platform algorithms are crucial to its viewers. Usually, when a person reacts to a post, social media platforms tend to display similar posts, tags, comments, etc. on their home page. Since social media influencers already have a platform, it's easy for their content to spread as user online are interacting with their posts daily. An option to share a post is provided on most social media platforms, making sharing a post easier. These amplified photos usually depict influencers that fit societal beauty standards who are sometimes advocating for eating disorders and avid weight loss. These continuous algorithms boost various posts and comments that focus on appearance, which indirectly promotes disordered eating as well.

Lastly, most research on disordered eating focuses on white women. There's limited research done on other individuals with demographics such as boys/men, minority groups, and LGBTQ+ users. It's key to include a diverse span of individuals to survey, since the results will be more accurate.

8.2 Potential suggestions

- Examine the impact of social media platform algorithms and how they amplify certain types of content. Look at how algorithms promote images and videos focused on appearance, influence disordered eating behaviors.
- Conduct longitudinal studies tracking social media use and mental health over time, especially among adolescent and young adult users. This could provide insight into causal relationships.
- Research differences across social media platforms - do image-focused platforms like Instagram have a bigger impact than text-based platforms? How do TikTok trends influence body image?
- Explore the impacts of social media on specific demographics like boys/men, minority groups, LGBTQ+ users. Much existing research focuses on white women.
- Develop and test interventions like media literacy programs or changes to platform algorithms to promote more positive mental health effects.
- Study impacts of social media on recovery from eating disorders. How can platforms be leveraged to provide social support?
- Examine associations between social media use and other mental health outcomes like depression, anxiety, loneliness, beyond just eating disorders.
- Interview social media users directly, get qualitative data on their experiences and perceptions of how social media affects body image.

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