# The Impact Of Social Media On Body Image Perception And Its Association With Anxiety And Loneliness: A Systematic Review

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## Abstract

**Background**: A great deal of research has been conducted on the effects of social media on psychological well-being due to its pervasive influence on interpersonal interactions and self-representation. This overview draws on a number of studies looking at the intricate relationships between social media use and psychological outcomes such social anxiety, loneliness, problems with body image, and low self-esteem.

**Objective**: Using data from a wide range of academic studies, this study seeks to present an overview of the complex relationship between social media usage patterns and their psychological effects.

**Method:** The research employs an extensive literature search strategy, utilizing databases such as PsycINFO, PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Keywords include digital communication, mental health, social media, and relevant populations.

Selection criteria encompass peer-reviewed journals, empirical research articles, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and qualitative inquiries. Quality assessment criteria involve peer review, methodological strictness, transparency, appropriateness of research design, knowledge contribution, and adherence to ethical principles.

**Findings:** The statistics from the data set reveal the distribution of studies across databases. The systematic literature review includes studies employing various research methods, such as systematic reviews, quantitative research, and qualitative analyses. Findings comprised on n= 19, consistently indicate connections between social media use and adverse outcomes like body dissatisfaction, loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Mediating factors, including stress, social support, and fear of COVID-19, underscore the complexity of the relationship between social media use and mental health.

**Conclusion**: In conclusion, this abstract highlights the intricate connection between social media use and psychological health, highlighting the necessity for thorough treatments and more study to address the negative impacts of excessive social media use. It advances our understanding of the complex processes influencing people's mental health in the digital era by combining many points of view.

**Keywords**: Psychological well-being, Social media, social anxiety, loneliness, body image and self-esteem.

**Introduction**

In today's world, social media platforms are commonplace and have a variety of effects on how people view themselves and other people (Abbouyi et al., 2023). Among the many consequences, social media's influence on body image perception and its link to loneliness and anxiety are among the most often discussed topics of concern (Fioravanti et al., 2022). The goal of this review article is to provide light on the complex relationship between social media use, body image ideals, and mental health effects by thoroughly examining the amount of research on the subject.

The relationship between social media use and psychological discomfort, particularly in young adults and adolescents, is a recurring issue in the literature. In a systematic

study on the relationship between social anxiety and loneliness and social media use, O'Day and Heimberg (2021) showed how people who are lonely or socially anxious frequently engage in harmful online behaviors in an attempt to find solace and connection. (Al Ali et al., 2022; Alselaml et al., 2023)

Similar findings were made by Abbouyi et al. (2023), who highlighted the complex relationship mediated by elements like stress, perceived social support, and fear of COVID-19. They found a considerable correlation between improper social media use and symptoms of anxiety and despair. Furthermore, social media's effects go beyond mental health to include eating problems and body image issues. Research such as those conducted by Holland and Tiggemann (2016), Santarossa, and Woodruff (2017) highlight the impact of social media platforms on people's opinions of their bodies, with appearance-based social comparison serving as a mediating factor.

Fioravanti et al. (2022) go into more detail about how teenage users' body dissatisfaction can worsen due to social networking sites' exposure to excessive beauty standards. In addition, Wojtara (2022) highlights how the COVID-19 epidemic has affected people's conceptions of their bodies and the disordered behaviours that go along with it. This has changed how people use social media. On the other hand, as proven by Sun (2023), therapies like mindfulness-based smartphone apps have showed promise in reducing social anxiety and enhancing wellbeing. (Alselami et al., 2023; Alruwaili et al., 2023)

Some researches examine the possible advantages of social media, while others highlight its negative consequences. Smith et al. (2021), for example, contend that, depending on how it is used, social media technology can both negatively and positively influence young people's feeling of social well-being.

The research on social media and psychological well-being reveals a complex picture in which several contextual and individual factors interact to moderate the effects of social media. Through the integration of results from several methodological techniques, this review seeks to offer a thorough comprehension of the complex relationship between social media use and mental well-being.

**Method**

**Research objectives**
1. To investigate the relationship between social media use and depression, anxiety symptoms, loneliness, and social anxiety.
2. To look into how eating problems and body image judgements are affected by social networking sites.
3. To investigate how social media exposure to beauty standards affects people's opinions of their bodies.
4. To evaluate how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected social media use and how it affects mental health.
5. To clarify the processes by which social media use and social anxiety are related.

**Research questions**
1. How can social media use affect feelings of loneliness and social anxiety?
2. How can social media use be linked to symptoms of anxiety and depression?
3. How can social networking sites affect how people perceive their bodies and eating disorders?
4. How can exposure to beauty ideals on social media affect how people perceive their bodies?
5. How much does it affect how people feel about themselves and their bodies?

**Literature search strategies**
1) **Selection of Database**: Use extensive databases to guarantee a wide range of literature coverage, such as PsycINFO, PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Also included, scholarly publications, conference proceedings, and repositories of grey literature in order to gather a variety of viewpoints on the subject.
2) **Search terms and keywords:** Combine pertinent keywords and search phrases to capture different facets of social media and mental health, such as: Digital communication, online platforms, social media, and social networking sites Mental health, psychological well-being, loneliness, sadness, social anxiety, self-esteem, and body image.

Teens, young adults, pupils, and young people. Intervention, and apps for smartphones.

Table 1: Syntax Search.

| Selection by Data base | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Psycho info |
| 2 | PubMed |
| 3 | Google Scholar |
| 4 | Scopus |
| Selection by Keyword and search term | |
| 1 | Social Media |
| 2 | Social networking sites |
| 3 | Psychological well Bieng |
| 4 | Social anxiety |
| 5 | loneliness |
| 6 | Self-esteem |
| 7 | Body image |
| 8 | Smart phone apps |
| 9 | Pandemic effects |

Table 2: Statistics from the data set.

| Data base selection | |
|---|---|
| 1 Psych info | 30 % of the studies |
| 2 PubMed | 25% of the studies |
| 3 Scopus | 25% of the studies |
| 4 Google scholar | 20 % of the studies |

Figure 1. Statistics of data base selection.
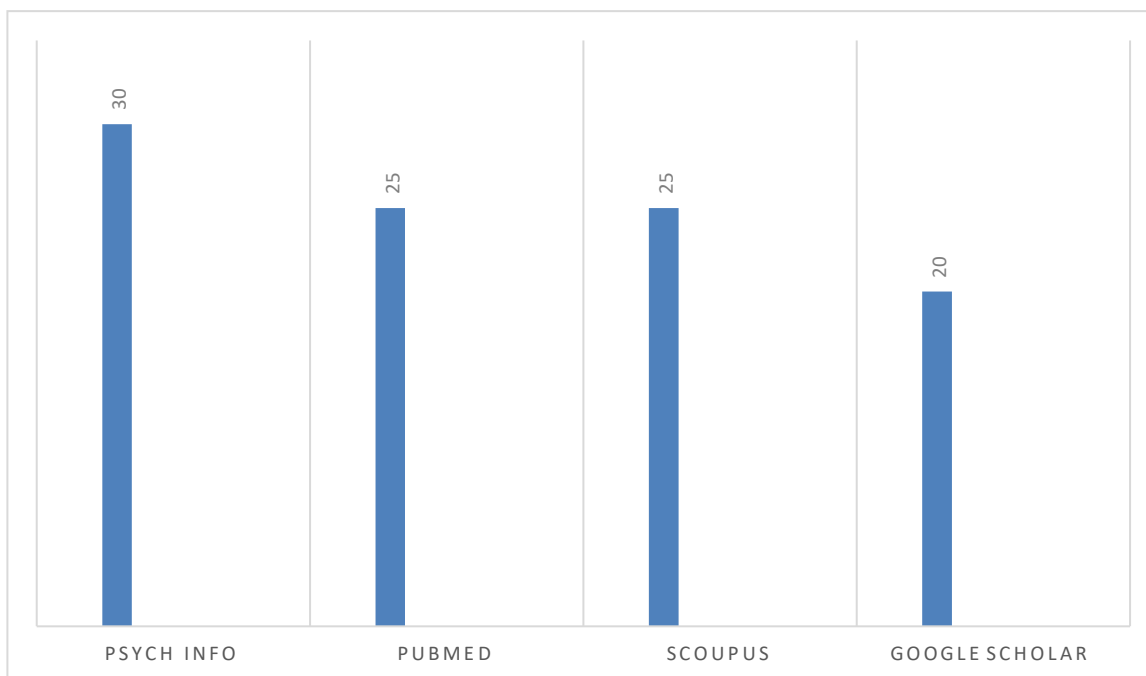
**Inclusion criteria**

1) The following requirements must be satisfied for studies to be included in this thesis:

   Publication in peer-reviewed journals: Only research that has been published in journals that undergo peer review, which guarantees a thorough review procedure and high-caliber study results, is included.

2) Empirical research articles: Papers presenting novel findings from empirical data gathering techniques are taken into consideration for publication in order to offer strong evidence.

3) Systematic reviews: Included to offer a thorough synthesis of the body of existing literature and a summary of the field's research findings are systematic reviews.

4) Meta-analyses: Included to provide quantitative insights are research that statistically integrates data from several studies to produce significant results.

5) Qualitative inquiries: To enhance the overall comprehension of the research issue, qualitative studies are added to collect complex perspectives and experiences relating to it.

**Exclusion Criteria**

Research that does not meet these requirements will not be considered: Opinion pieces:

1) Articles that express subjective opinions or viewpoints without supporting evidence from empirical studies or rigorous analysis are excluded to preserve the validity and reliability of the research.

2) Editorials: Since editorial content usually offers commentary or discussion on current issues, it is excluded because it does not contain empirical research data.

3) Non-peer-reviewed sources: Studies like dissertations, conference abstracts, and non-peer-reviewedpublications are excluded because they may not undergorigorous peer review and quality assurance.

4) Studies with irrelevant populations or outcomes:Research that focus on populations or outcomes unrelated to the research topic is excluded.

**Quality assessment**

The following standards are used to evaluate the quality of the studies that are part of this research:

1) Peer Review: The rigorous peer review process that ensures the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of research findings is applied to studies published in peer-reviewed journals. Because peer-reviewed papers are subjected to extensive inspection by subject matter experts, they carry a larger weight in the quality rating.

2) Methodological Strictness: The research methodology of the empirical research papers, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and qualitative inquiries is assessed to see how robust they are.

3) Transparency and Reproducibility: Studies that offer comprehensive explanations of their data analysis processes, research methods, and results interpretation are regarded as having higher transparency. Studies that make their data or code available for reproducibility are also regarded favourably in the quality assessment process.

4) Appropriateness of Research Design: The suitability of the research design is evaluated based on how well the study objectives align with the selected research methodology. Studies that use suitable research designs to address their research questions or hypotheses are regarded as having higher

5) Knowledge Contribution: Each study's contribution to the field's advancement of knowledge is assessed according to the importance and novelty of its conclusions. Research that provide fresh perspectives, close gaps in the body of knowledge, or refute accepted beliefs are valued more highly.

6) Respect for Ethical Principles: A crucial component of evaluating quality in research is compliance with ethical guidelines. The quality assessment method views studies that follow ethical criteria for research involving human subjects, animals, or sensitive data favorably.

Table 3: Assessment of the literature quality matrix.

| Sr # | Author | Are the selection of Studies described appropriately | Has the literature covered all relevant Studies | Does the method section describe? | Were findings clearly described? | Quality rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Emily B. O'Day, Richard G. Heimberg, (2021) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 2 | Papapanou, (2023) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
| 3 | Abbouyi et al. (2023) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 4 | Jarrar et al. (2022) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 5 | Holland et al. (2016) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |

| 6 | Khalaf al. (2019) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | Jiaqing et al. (2023) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 8 | Sun et al. (2023) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 9 | Fox et al. (2020) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 10 | Pop et al. (2022) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 11 | Vosoughi (2023) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | High |
| 12 | Smith et al. (2021) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
| 13 | Nweke et al. (2019) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
| 14 | Wojtara, M. (2022). | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
| 15 | Santarossa & Woodruf. (2017). | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
| 16 | Fioravanti et al. (2022) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
| 17 | Sharma, N. (2019). | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
| 18 | Yang, & Li. (2023). | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |

| 19 | Leonard, K. C. (2021). | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | high |
|----|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|

**Study selection**

The method used to choose studies for several studies examining the connection between psychological variables and social media use provides a thorough grasp of this intricate phenomena. Through a variety of sample groups and approaches, researchers have clarified important observations regarding the influence of social media on people's mental health and well-being.

1) **Systematic Reviews**: To compile the body of existing research, a few of the studies used systematic review techniques. Strong correlations between problematic social media use and symptoms of loneliness, depression, and anxiety were found by these reviews. They also emphasized the ways in which different psychosocial elements mediate this link, offering important new perspectives on the mechanics behind these events.

2) **Quantitative Research**: Some research investigated the complex relationships between social media use and psychological factors like loneliness, social appearance anxiety, and self-esteem using survey instruments and statistical analysis. These research offered scientific proof of the detrimental impacts of social media use on young adults' perceptions of their bodies and mental health.

Overall, the wide range of approaches and conclusions reported in these researches add to a more complex comprehension of the complex relationship between social media use and psychological health. Researchers can influence policy, interventions, and future research directions focused at encouraging healthy social media engagement patterns and supporting beneficial mental health outcomes by synthesizing evidence from several sources.

**Table** 4: selected study for systematic literature review.

| No. | Author, Year | Research | Year |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Emily B. O'Day, Richard G. Heimberg, 2021. | Social media use, social anxiety, and loneliness: A systematic review | 2021 |
| 2 | Papapanou, T. K., Darviri, C., Kanaka-Gantenbein, C., Tigani, X., Michou, M., Vlachakis, D., ... & Bacopoulou, F. (2023). | Strong Correlations between Social Appearance Anxiety, Use of Social Media, and Feelings of Loneliness in Adolescents and Young Adults | 2023 |
| 3 | Abbouyi, S., Bouazza, S., El Kinany, S., El Rhazi, K., & Zarrouq, B. (2023). | Depression and anxiety and its association with problematic social media use in the MENA region: a systematic review | 2023 |
| 4 | Jarrar, Y., Awobamise, A. O., & Nweke, G. E. (2022). | The Mediating Effect of Social Anxiety on the Relationship Between Social Media Use and Body Dissatisfaction Among University Students | 2022 |

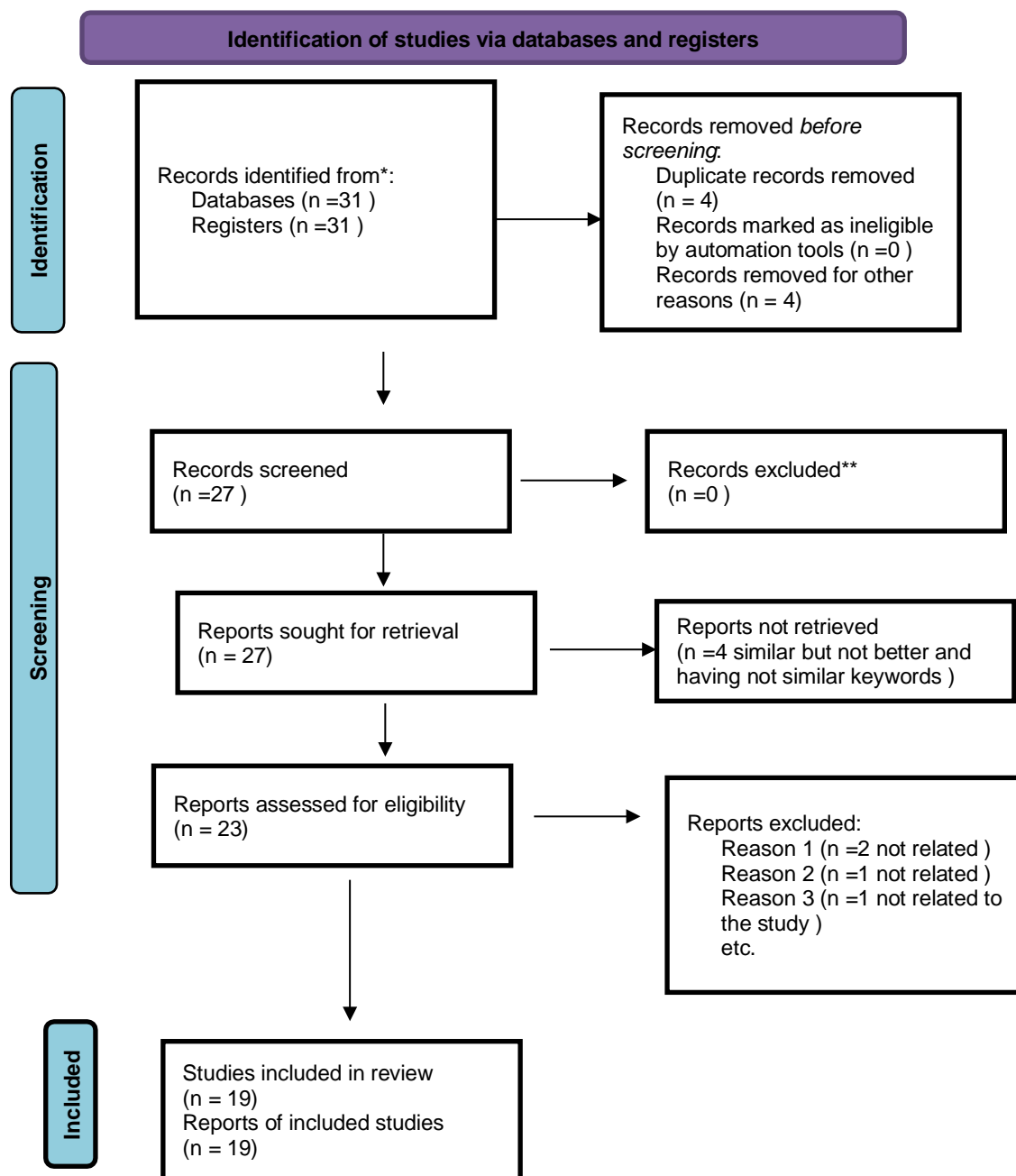| 5 | Holland, G., & Tiggemann, M. (2016). | A systematic review of the impact of the use of social networking sites on body image and disordered eating outcomes | 2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Khalaf, A. M., Alubied, A. A., Khalaf, A. M., Rifaey, A. A., Alubied, A., Khalaf, A. M., & Rifaey, A. (2023). | The Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Adolescents and Young Adults: A Systematic Review | 2023 |
| 7 | Jiaqing, X., Alivi, M. A., Mustafa, S. E., & Dharejo, N. (2023). | The Impact of Social Media on Women's Body Image Perception: A Meta-Analysis of Well-being Outcomes | 2023 |
| 8 | Sun, L. (2023). | Social media usage and students' social anxiety, loneliness and well-being: does digital mindfulness-based intervention effectively work? | 2023 |
| 9 | Fox, B. (2020). | Associations between Social Media Use and Loneliness, Body Image and Disordered Eating: A Qualitative Study of British Young Adults | 2020 |
| 10 | Pop, L. M., Iorga, M., & Iurcov, R. (2022). | Body-Esteem, Self-Esteem and Loneliness among Social Media Young Users | 2022 |
| 11 | Vosoughi Motlagh, A., Kamjou, S., & Etemaad, J. (2023). | Predicting Body Image Concerns, Social Isolation, and Mood by the Amount of Social Media Addiction | 2023 |

| 12 | Smith, D., Leonis, T., & Anandavalli, S. (2021). | Belonging and loneliness in cyberspace: impacts of social media on adolescents' well-being | 2021 |
|----|----|----|----|
| 13 | Nweke, G. E., & Jarrar, Y. (2019). | The Impact of Social Media Use on Body Image in Northern Cyprus | 2019 |
| 14 | Wojtara, M. (2022). | The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Social Media Usage and Body Image Perceptions in Young Adults | 2022 |
| 15 | Santarossa, S., & Woodruff, S. J. (2017). | #SocialMedia: Exploring the Relationship of Social Networking Sites on Body Image, Self-Esteem, and Eating Disorders | 2017 |
| 16 | Fioravanti, G., Bocci Benucci, S., Ceragioli, G., & Casale, S. (2022). | How the exposure to beauty ideals on social networking sites influences body image: A systematic review of experimental studies. | 2022 |
| 17 | Sharma, N. (2019). | The effect of social media on body image, self esteem and social appearance anxiety among young adults | 2019 |
| 18 | Yang, F., & Li, M. (2023). | Whether and how will using social media induce social anxiety? The correlational and causal evidence from Chinese society | 2023 |
| 19 | Leonard, K. C. (2021). | The impact of social media body challenges on youths' body image | 2021 |

## Results

## Identification of studies via database and registers

The studies' findings, which are presented in the table, shed important light on the connections between social media use and a number of psychological variables. Researchers have repeatedly discovered links between social media use and outcomes like body dissatisfaction, loneliness, anxiety, depression, and disordered eating behaviours, regardless of sample demographics or methodology used. Problematic social media use has become a recurring problem, and it has been connected to detrimental psychological effects on people, especially in young adults and adolescents.

Furthermore, mediating variables like stress, social support, comparisons of attractiveness, and fear of COVID-19 were found, emphasising the intricate relationship between using social media and mental health. The significance of more study and focused treatments to lessen the possible negative consequences of excessive or inappropriate use is highlighted by these findings.

**Identification of studies via databases and registers**

**Identification**

Records identified from*:
Databases (n =31 )
Registers (n =31 )

Records removed *before screening*:
Duplicate records removed (n = 4)
Records marked as ineligible by automation tools (n =0 )
Records removed for other reasons (n = 4)

**Screening**

Records screened
(n =27 )

Records excluded**
(n =0 )

Reports sought for retrieval
(n = 27)

Reports not retrieved
(n =4 similar but not better and having not similar keywords )

Reports assessed for eligibility
(n = 23)

Reports excluded:
Reason 1 (n =2 not related )
Reason 2 (n =1 not related )
Reason 3 (n =1 not related to the study )
etc.

**Included**

Studies included in review
(n = 19)
Reports of included studies
(n = 19)

## Data extraction

Using the PRISMA flow diagram as a framework, data extraction entailed methodically going over and retrieving pertinent information from the included studies in compliance with predetermined criteria. During this procedure, important variables from each study were identified, including the study methodology, participant characteristics, measurements utilized, and primary conclusions. Standardized forms or templates were used to extract

data, guaranteeing accuracy and uniformity between investigations. It is also possible that quality evaluation metrics were used to gauge the validity and rigor of the included research. By means of methodical data extraction directed by the PRISMA diagram, investigators were capable of amalgamating and scrutinizing the results, therefore augmenting a full comprehension of the subject matter being studied.

Table 6: Research matrix

| Author, Year | Aim of study | Methodology | Sample | Setting | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Emily B. O' Day, Richard G. Heimberg, 2021. | In the framework of the use of social media, social anxiety and loneliness were examined in this systematic study. | A search across multiple databases was done. | Review article. 52 articles were studied and included. | PsycINFO and PubMed databases were explored to identify studies | Socially anxious and lonely people use the internet more problematically and use social media to find comfort from others. Problematic usage of social media is linked to social anxiety and loneliness, and it seems that loneliness increases the likelihood of engaging in problematic online behaviour. |
| Papapanou, T. K., | to investigate | cross-section | 632 participant | Online survey/ | Some young individuals may |

| Darviri, C., Kanaka-Gantenbein, C., Tigani, X., Michou, M., Vlachakis, D., ... & Bacopoulou, F. (2023). | the relationships among social media use, loneliness, and social appearance anxiety in Greek youth and young adults. | al study | s, 439 women and 193 men | use of questionnare | experience a complex and vicious cycle of recurrent emotions of loneliness, social media use, and appearance worry. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abbouyi, S., Bouazza, S., El Kinany, S., El Rhazi, K., & Zarrouq, B. (2023). | investigating the relationship between symptoms of anxiety and depression and problematic social media usage | systematically review | Review article 15 articles were studied. | Review article | discovered a strong correlation between inappropriate social media use and symptoms of anxiety and despair. There is also association between the use of social media and symptoms of depression and anxiety may be mediated by stress, generalised trust, perceived social support, fear of COVID-19, and misinterpretation of COVID-19. |
| Jarrar, Y., Awobamise, A. O., & Nweke, G. E. | Social anxiety's mediation function in the link between body | cross-sectional research | 432 students | Kampala International University and Victoria Universi | Social media use and body dissatisfaction have a strong positive correlation. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (2022). | dissatisfaction and social media use | | | ty, Uganda. | |
| Holland, G., & Tiggemann, M. (2016). | media effects on body image and eating disordered | systematic review | 20 research studies were included | Review article | there is association between social network sites use and eating disorders and body image was mediated by appearance-based social comparison. It was also discovered that gender was not a moderating influence. |
| Khalaf, A. M., Alubied, A. A., Khalaf, A. M., Rifaey, A. A., Alubied, A., Khalaf, A. M., & Rifaey, A. (2023). | **To find out the** Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Adolescents and Young Adults. | Systematic Review | Different data bases are used and collect research articles. Such as PsycINFO and PubMed etc | Review article | Teenage usage of social media and smartphones is associated with an increase in suicidality, self-harming behaviours, and mental discomfort. |
| Jiaqing, X., Alivi, M. A., Mustafa, S. E., & Dharejo, N. (2023). | investigates the relationship between social media use and female body image, concentrating on the effects it | Meta analysis | Data from Scopus sources were used. | Review article | By providing a thorough assessment of the relationship between female body image on social media and usage, analysis greatly adds to the body of knowledge while highlighting the negative consequences on wellbeing and mental health. |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | has on general wellbeing. | | | |
| Sun, L. (2023). | To find out the impacts of Social media usage and students' social anxiety, loneliness and well-being: | multi-phase approach, encompassing a correlational research method, a pretest–posttest randomized controlled trial, and a qualitative case study used. | 380 participants | Zhoukou Vocational and Technical College in China. | a strong relationship between the factors being studied and social media activity. Additionally, the mindfulness-based smartphone app treatment resulted in a decrease in anxiety and an improvement in the wellbeing of the students. Interestingly, participants' opinions about using these apps were generally good. |
| Fox, B. (2020). | To find out Associations between social media use and loneliness, body image and disordered eating. | Qualitative research | 1343 participants | British | Loneliness as a mediator between SNS use, eating disorders, and body image, as well as a predictor of social media use. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pop, L. M., Iorga, M., & Iurcov, R. (2022). | To find out the relationship among Body-Esteem, Self-Esteem and Loneliness among Social Media Young Users. | Quantitative research | 540 medical students | Romania | show a connection, with gender variations, between the use of SNSs and the existence of loneliness, self-esteem, and body-esteem |
| Vosoughi Motlagh, A., Kamjou, S., & Etemaad, J. (2023). | to evaluate the degree of social media use in relation to issues with body image, social isolation, and mood. | descriptive and correlational method. | Shiraz City, Iran | 311 people. 191 women and 119 men | Social isolation can be predicted by mood and social media use, with body image issues acting as a mediating factor. People who are in bad moods may be more aware of their body image. |
| Smith, D., Leonis, T., & Anandavalli, S. (2021). | To find out the link between teenage and young adult social media use and feelings of belonging and loneliness. | Review article | Review article | Review article | Depending on how it is used, social media technology can both harm and benefit young people's sense of social well-being. |
| Nweke, G. E., & Jarrar, Y. (2019). | To find out the The Impact of Social | For this study cross- | 411 females | Cyprus | Findings gives that the increasing frequency of body dissatisfaction and its negative impacts, |

| | Media Use on Body Image | sectional quantitative correlational design was used. | | | particularly on young women, more research is needed to better understand the problem and plan health care. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wojtara, M. (2022). | To illustrate the Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Social Media Usage and Body Image Perceptions | review article | Review article | Articles were included from PubMed and Google Scholar data base. | Numerous other disordered behaviours and attitudes, such as anxiety and eating disorders, might have their roots in low self-perception and self-esteem. Promoting body-positive movements and de-stigmatizing mental illness are two effective strategies for reducing these harmful effects on young adults. |
| Santarossa, S., & Woodruff, S. J. (2017). | To explore the linkage of social networking sites on body image, self-esteem, and eating disorders | Quantitative research | 147 young adults | Canada | This study reveals the potential association of social media network system with body image, self-esteem, and eating disorders. |
| Fioravanti, G., Bocci Benucci, S., Ceragioli, G., & Casale, S. | To explore how the exposure to beauty ideals on social networking sites | Review article | 43 experimental articles were included in this study. | Review article | Young people's body dissatisfaction is largely caused by images on social networking sites that present unrealistic beauty standards, with appearance comparison processing playing a major role in this. |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| (2022). | influences body image: | | | | Further investigation is required to ascertain the enduring consequences. |
| Sharma, N. (2019). | To investigate the influences of SOCIAL MEDIA ON BODY IMAGE, SELF ESTEEM AND SOCIAL APPEARANC E ANXIETY AMONG YOUNG ADULTS | Quantita tive research | 200 participant s of age 16-25. | departm ent of Psychiat ry at Geetanj ali Medical College and Hospital, Udaipur. | Social media has a big impact on how young people regard their bodies. They elaborated that being exposed to unrealistic and idealised body standards, such as those portrayed by celebrities and influencers, can lead to poor self-perceptions and body dissatisfaction. |
| Yang, F., & Li, M. (2023). | To elaborate that Whether and how will using social media induce social anxiety | Quantita tive research | 470 undergrad uate students | China | revealed the mechanisms that mediate these interactions, deepening our understanding of how social media use causes social anxiety. |
| Leonard, K. C. (2021). | To explore Impact of Social Media Body Challenges on Youths' Body Image. | Qualitati ve analyses | 147 participant s | North Dakota State Universi ty). | Findings revealed that most young's never tired of body challenges, while almost half of the sample reveled to have negatively correlated with social media and body challenges. |

**Discussion**

The emergence of social media platforms has brought about a revolution in the ways that people communicate, interact, and consume information. Nevertheless, despite these benefits, there have been concerns raised about the possible negative effects that excessive or inappropriate use of social media may have on people's mental health and well-being. The studies listed in the table below provide important insights into this complex relationship, illuminating the different psychological factors that are influenced by social media engagement.

The paradoxical nature of social media is highlighted by the fact that, depending on individual usage patterns and motivations, it can both facilitate and exacerbate feelings of loneliness and social anxiety. A number of studies, including those by O'Day and Heimberg (2021), and Papapanou et al. (2023), have shown a significant association between social media use and feelings of loneliness and social anxiety. Socially anxious and lonely people were found to use social media more problematically, seeking comfort and connection online.

Numerous research, including those by Jarrar et al. (2022), Santarossa, and Woodruff (2017), have found a correlation between social media use and perceptions of one's physique. It has been discovered that social media exposure might lead to unfavourable body image perceptions and appearance-related anxiety in young people, especially in women. Young users' disordered eating behaviours and body dissatisfaction have been linked to unrealistic beauty standards spread on social networking platforms.

Regarding Anxiety, Depression, and Mental Health a most recent research by Abbouyi et al. (2023) and Sun (2023) showed a significant relationship between the symptoms of anxiety, depression, and general mental distress and poor social media use. The association between social media and mental health is complex, with various factors including stress, fear of COVID-19, and perceived social support being identified as mediators.

Researchers looked into the connection between social media use and psychological variables using a variety of research techniques. Systematic reviews, like the ones carried out by Holland and Tiggemann (2016) and O'Day and Heimberg (2021), synthesized the body of literature to present a thorough picture of the state of the field. Studies that included cross-sectional design, quantitative research methodology, qualitative analysis, and meta-

analyses were employed to investigate distinct facets of this intricate issue, encompassing body image perceptions, social anxiety, and loneliness.

## Limitations and implications

### Limitations

The systematic review acknowledges several limitations inherent in the research. One prominent concern is the potential presence of publication bias, wherein studies with noteworthy results are more likely to be published, potentially leading to an overrepresentation of positive findings in the literature. This bias could skew the overall understanding of the relationship between psychological factors and social media use.

Another notable limitation is the heterogeneity among the included studies in terms of approaches, participant characteristics, and outcome measures. This diversity makes synthesizing data and drawing firm conclusions, particularly in meta-analyses, challenging. The variations in methodologiesacross studies may introduce complexities in interpreting the overall findings.

The quality of evidence from the included studies varies, with some exhibiting methodological flaws such as small sample sizes, a lack of control groups, or inadequate statistical analysis. These limitations may impact the generalizability and reliability of the findings, highlighting the need for caution in drawing definitive conclusions from the existing evidence.

The cross-sectional nature of a significant portion of the included studies poses a limitation as it hinders the ability to establish temporal relationships between variables or determine causality. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the associations between psychological factors and social media use, longitudinal studies are essential to explore the directionality of these relationships over time.

Moreover, a considerable number of the included studies rely on self-report measures, introducing the possibility of response bias and social desirability bias. Participants might inaccurately report their psychological symptoms or social media use, influencing the reliability and validity of the data collected. These considerations

underscore the need for future research to address these limitations and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding psychological factors and social media use.

**Implications**

The findings of the systematic review have significant implications for clinical practice, particularly within the realms of psychology and mental health. It is crucial for clinicians to recognize the potential impact of excessive or problematic social media use on the psychological well-being of their patients. This recognition should prompt adjustments in diagnostic approaches and intervention techniques to address the emerging challenges associated with social media.

Furthermore, the identification of factors such as loneliness, social anxiety, and body dissatisfaction linked to problematic social media use underscores the importance of preventive interventions. Emphasizing healthy social media habits and addressing underlying psychological issues becomes imperative to mitigate the negative consequences identified in the review.

Educational initiatives have a vital role in addressing the issues raised by the systematic review. By raising awareness among parents, educators, and young individuals about the potential dangers of social media use, these initiatives can also provide guidance on responsible and balanced utilization of digital technology.

In terms of policy implications, the review suggests the need for legislative measures to encourage moral and responsible use of social media platforms. Policymakers should consider enacting rules and restrictions focused on safeguarding user privacy, limiting exposure to offensive material, and providing tools for promoting digital citizenship.

The systematic review also points towards prospective routes for research. Acknowledging the limitations of the current evidence, there is a clear need for more robust research to fill knowledge gaps and strengthen the existing body of evidence. Future studies should employ rigorous approaches, including longitudinal designs and objective measures of social media use, to enhance our

understanding of the intricate links between social media use and psychological well-being.

**Recommendations**

Efforts to promote digital well-being and address social media challenges should focus on multifaceted approaches. Promoting digital well-being involves providing evidence-based tools and guidelines for individuals, families, and communities, emphasizing positive online interactions, managing screen time, and cultivating healthy digital habits.

Specialized assistance and resources are crucial for vulnerable populations, including young adults, adolescents, and those with pre-existing mental health issues. Tailored support may include access to peer groups, digital literacy courses, and mental health services.

Encouraging ethical design principles in the tech sector is essential. Social media companies should prioritize users' needs by implementing features that promote positive interactions and meaningful connections, such as controls over alerts and restrictions on offensive content.

Community engagement is key to addressing social media-related issues. Involving grassroots organizations and local communities in initiatives to enhance well-being and create positive digital environments is vital. Providing community leaders with tools for discussions, workshops, and projects contributes to meaningful change and community-driven solutions.

**What this article is adding to the existing literature?**

The study provides a comprehensive overview of the relationship between social media use and various psychological factors by synthesizing findings from multiple studies. Involving diverse methodologies from 19 different authors, the compilation incorporates quantitative and qualitative insights, including systematic reviews, cross-sectional studies, qualitative research, and meta-analyses.

With a global perspective, the studies span different geographic regions, including the United States, Greece, and Uganda. The compilation, covering research from 2016 to 2023, identifies emerging trends and offers insights into new directions in the field. Notably, the compilation's studies delve into mediating elements influencing the connection between social media use and psychological consequences. These include factors like social

support, loneliness, social anxiety, and body image issues, enriching our understanding of the intricate relationship between social media and mental health.

The findings of the compilation hold implications for policy and intervention strategies aimed at promoting healthier social media usage and mitigating potential psychological harm. Overall, the study contributes valuable insights to the evolving landscape of research on social media's impact on mental health.

## What are its impacts and contributions to the Saudi context?

To grasp the implications and contributions of the studies on social media and psychological aspects, it is crucial to contextualize within Saudi Arabia's unique sociocultural and technological setting. The findings hold potential effects and additions to the Saudi context, aiding public health policy, education campaigns, and healthcare practices.

Saudi Arabia's distinctive sociocultural milieu, shaped by customs and principles, can influence how individuals interact with social media and experience mental health. The compilation's insights offer support for Saudi Arabian initiatives promoting digital literacy and responsible social media usage through education and awareness campaigns.

Furthermore, the findings have practical implications for healthcare professionals in Saudi Arabia, particularly mental health practitioners. By integrating these insights into policies and practices, the healthcare system can better address the intersection of social media and psychological well-being within the Saudi context.

## Conclusion

The research compilation on psychological variables and social media sheds light on the intricate relationship between online behavior and mental health. By synthesizing results from various approaches and international perspectives, it enhances our understanding of the potential impacts of social media use on psychological well-being.

The compilation's findings are valuable for shaping interventions and services focused on promoting digital well-being and addressing mental health issues exacerbated by social media in the unique sociocultural and technological context of Saudi Arabia. To assist individuals in navigating the digital landscape, sustaining research efforts, fostering interdisciplinary

collaboration, and advocating for evidence-based strategies are crucial.

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