Body Image During Quarantine; Generational Effects of Social Media Pressure on Body Appearance Perception

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Introduction

Body image changes during the Sibegpeand is partially shaped by external social influences. These influences range from friends and family to cultural factors, such as the body ideal promoted by the media. Dysfunctional body image or body image dissatisfaction are drivers of the discrepancy between evaluation judgments (self-perception) about the body and its physical characteristics (true weight, obesity, and body fat).

The emergence of virtual forms of social interaction afforded by social media digital tools has introduced novel ways in which the external pressures can influence body image formation. Social media use is associated with body image problems, disordered eating behaviors, and changes in the body in younger generations (Bogles et al., 2018).

Over the past year, the novel COVID-19 pandemic has partially contributed to stress and pressure on individuals, especially young women in their social interactions with friends and online media. These social interactions have changed how we relate to our bodies in fundamental ways and have transformed our social interactions in virtual and traditional media, as a result, has partially isolated us from social pressures introduced by their face-to-face body interactions.

Methods

Participants: 957 subjects (528 females, 439 males, 11 other gender; M = 30.42 years old, SD = 11.20 years). Respondents that completed the whole study (n=827) were sorted into groups depending on their gender identity and age.

| Generation | Gender | Age | BMI | Social media daily usage |
|------------|--------|-----|-----|--------------------------|
| GenZ        | Males  | 109 | 177 | 21.67 (1.84) | 23.84 (1.93) | 4.08 (0.88) |
|             | Females| 218 | 158 | 21.68 (3.85) | 24.05 (6.57) | 3.40 (0.88) |
| GenY        | Males  | 30  | 51  | 21.68 (2.52) | 25.80 (4.72) | 3.36 (0.88) |
|             | Females| 728 | 36  | 21.68 (3.85) | 24.05 (6.57) | 3.40 (0.88) |

Results

Social Pressure

Muscular experience more family pressure as follows: Males: (p < 0.001), and females: (p < 0.001). Hand scales experience more peer pressure than females: (p < 0.001), and male scales experience more direct pressure than peer pressure: (p < 0.001). Muscular experience more social media pressure than females: (p < 0.001), and females experience more pressure than direct pressure: (p < 0.001).

Body ideal by Generation

Muscular significant effects for gender (p < 0.001), and type of body ideal (p < 0.001), with an opposite trend in males and females. Females experienced more pressure on a generally dissatisfied body ideal. Male: significant effects for gender (p < 0.001), and type of body ideal (p < 0.001), and the interaction between gender and type of body ideal (p < 0.001). Muscle experienced more pressure to have a muscular body and feminine experienced pressure to have a generally dissatisfied body ideal.

Discussion

Socializing through a virtual self-body image during the pandemic had a different impact on men's and women's body image. Post-pandemic studies should explore if this effect holds up with the return to normal face-to-face social interactions (without masks) and physical activity.

Social pressures and body-ideal appearance showed distinct effects on individuals' body image depending on their gender and age. Effects during adolescents should be investigated in future studies.

Media pressure affected body image satisfaction significantly more than other kinds of social pressure across genders and generations particularly for young males.

We should take into consideration how social media affects individuals, distinctly based on their gender and age. This would help us develop tools to promote realistic body images, encourage healthier behaviors, and help ameliorate their negative effects on how we construe our body image.

Thanks!!!