

Influence of Facebook on Body Image and Disordered Eating in Kazakhstan and the United States

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UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

- Objectification* - The view of oneself develops into self-objectification: third-person awareness.
- Facebook may continue to reinforce an “ideal self” that does not represent the individual but instead maintains a façade as an object rather than a person.
- 91% of college women regularly diet and the average age of onset of eating disorders is during the college years.

METHOD

UNITED STATES

- Ps recruited via campus announcements, student organizations, and email distribution lists and self-selected to complete survey.
 - A random sample of 2,400 undergraduate and graduate students were invited to participate
- Ps were incentivized with a chance to win one of 15 gift cards valued at \$25.
- Survey was hosted through Qualtrics

KAZAKHSTAN

- Ps completed the survey in a face-to-face setting by trained field survey coordinators.
 - A random sample of 550 undergraduate and graduate students completed the survey however only 298 surveys contained complete data.
- No incentives were extended to the Ps.

SURVEY

- Facebook use
 - Frequency of visits to site and time spent there
 - Typical activities
 - Relative time spent on activities
- Eating habits and body image
 - Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ)
 - Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26[®])
- Demographic questions
 - Current weight and ideal weight
 - Age, ethnicity, and class standing

RESULTS

Table 2: Results of all moderator analyses

H1a: BSQ scores	R ²	ΔR ²	Beta	p
Step 1	0.159			0.000
	0.284			0.000
Time on Facebook			-0.010	0.755
			-0.209	0.000
Desired weight loss			-0.401	0.000
			0.0289	0.000
Step 2	0.163	0.001		0.290
	0.310	0.030		0.005*
Interaction			0.139	0.290
			0.008	0.000*
H2a: EAT-26 [®] scores	R ²	ΔR ²	Beta	p
Step 1	0.036			0.000
	0.323			0.000
Time on Facebook			0.044	0.210
			-0.190	0.000
Desired weight loss			-0.192	0.000
			0.016	0.000
Step 2	0.048	0.009		0.005*
	0.327	0.008		0.148
Interaction			0.387	0.005*
			0.004	0.016
H3a: comparing self to others	R ²	ΔR ²	Beta	p
Step 1	0.012			0.002
	0.041			0.009
Time on Facebook			0.091	0.033
			0.396	0.866
Desired weight loss			0.006	0.053
			-0.739	0.261
Step 2	0.016	0.005		0.034*
	0.068	0.032		0.013
Interaction			-0.295	0.034*
			-0.212	0.220
H4a: attention to physical appearance	R ²	ΔR ²	Beta	p
Step 1	0.042			0.000
	-0.007			0.677
Time on Facebook			0.136	0.000
			0.136	0.002
Desired weight loss			-0.004	0.020
			-0.001	0.852
Step 2	0.042	0.001		0.396
	-0.012	0.001		0.756
Interaction			-0.001	0.455
			0.002	0.532
H5a: feeling negative after viewing posts	R ²	ΔR ²	Beta	p
Step 1	0.041			0.000
	0.035			0.204
Time on Facebook			0.130	0.001
			0.112	0.031
Desired weight loss			0.013	0.000
			0.039	0.000
Step 2	0.042	0.001		0.435
	0.051	0.033		0.015*
Interaction			-0.001	0.446
			0.012	0.000*

*Significant moderation effect

Table 1: Zero-order correlations between all variables of interest

	1.	2.	3.
1. Days on Facebook in a week	1.00		
2. Desired weight loss	0.015 0.003	1.00	
3. BSQ scores	-0.016 -0.514**	-0.381** 0.164*	1.00
4. EAT-26 [®] scores	0.028 -0.557**	-0.152** 0.140	0.769** 0.866**
5. Comparing to others	0.078* -0.164*	0.090** 0.154*	-0.629** 0.552**
6. Paying attention to physical appearance	0.183** 0.063	-0.091** -0.018	-0.270** 0.021
7. Feeling negative after viewing posts and photos	0.107** 0.011	0.172** 0.134	-0.635** 0.439**
Mean	6.089 4.946	19.152 6.020	4.184 2.386
Standard deviation	1.628 2.125	25.607 14.989	1.143 1.225

p < .05*

p < .01**

CONCLUSION

In general, the validated measures seemed to perform better in KZ while the author created measures seemed to perform better in the USA.

Implications

- Theoretical - Findings support the use of objectification theory in the context of social media and body image.
 - Social media seems to provide ample ground for college women to objectify one another, especially for those women that want to lose weight.
- Practical – Public health professionals have evidence of how social media relates to body image
 - The images posted on social media may represent an “ideal self” making comparisons much more painful

Table 3: Summary of Regression Results

Hypothesis
1. Days on Facebook predicts BSQ scores
1a. Desired weight change moderate
2. Days on Facebook predicts EAT-26 [®] scores
2a. Desired weight change moderate
3. Days on Facebook predicts attention to physical appearance
3a. Desired weight change moderate
4. Days on Facebook predicts negative feelings after viewing posts and photos
4a. Desired weight change moderate
5. Days on Facebook predicts comparing to others
5a. Desired weight change moderate