



The Influence of Media Exposure on Body Dysmorphic Disorder in Adolescents

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Abstract: This study explores the impact of media exposure on adolescents with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), focusing on how various platforms—social media, TV, movies, and advertisements—shape teens’ body image and self-worth. It examines how portrayals of idealized body types can trigger or intensify BDD in vulnerable youth. The chapter draws on existing literature and psychological theories to analyze how media contributes to body dissatisfaction. Key findings highlight the importance of media literacy and call for broader representation of authentic body types in media. Promoting diverse body images can help counteract the harmful effects of unrealistic beauty standards. Adolescents with risk factors like peer pressure, pre-existing mental health issues, and chronic exposure to idealized media imagery are more prone to BDD. Symptoms often include obsessive concern with perceived flaws, excessive grooming, social withdrawal, and constant comparison with others. Diagnosis typically involves clinical evaluation and self-report tools measuring body image disturbances. Untreated BDD can lead to anxiety, depression, and social isolation. Effective treatment includes cognitive-behavioral therapy, dialectical behavior therapy, and possibly SSRIs. Promoting media literacy is crucial to help teens critically assess beauty standards. Families, schools, and communities should work together to teach self-acceptance and expose the artificial nature of media imagery. Media creators play a key role in shaping body image norms. Ethical content that avoids objectification and embraces body diversity can foster a healthier self-image in youth. In conclusion, media greatly influences adolescent body image, especially in those with BDD. Combating this issue requires a combined approach: inclusive media, psychological care, and education. Collaboration between mental health professionals, educators, and media producers is essential to reduce the harmful effects of media on adolescent body image.

Keywords: *Body Dysmorphic Disorder, media exposure, adolescent mental health, body image, media literacy, psychological interventions, diverse representation*

1. Introduction

The media's significant influence on body image has received much attention on from scholars and the public. Scholars and the public have been paying much attention to the media's impact on body image. Young people are constantly exposed to media through social media, movies, TV shows and advertisements. These symptoms can have a huge impact on our mental health and self-esteem and are important in shaping how we feel about our bodies. This chapter examines the complex relationship between media exposure and the development of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) in adolescents. This study aims to describe the potential effects of media influence on young people's body attitudes and self-esteem by examining different types of media and their impact on body image perceptions

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD): This mental illness is marked by an obsession with physical appearance problems that the sufferer feels are present but are frequently invisible to others. Adolescents diagnosed with body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) may exhibit compulsive behaviors including excessive grooming, mirror gazing, or constantly seeking validation include poor self-esteem, mental health problems, and a bad body image. Teens who are exposed to these idealized pictures may experience behaviors linked to body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) as well as a fixation with their appearance.

The media's impact extends beyond explicit messages regarding body image. Adolescents' perceptions of their bodies are also shaped by subtle clues, such as the body types of characters in popular television shows or the way beauty products are promoted. Adolescents may find it difficult to accept their own bodies as a result of the widespread existence of idealized body ideals, which can cause a mistaken perception of reality. Because of this, individuals could feel a variety of unfavorable emotions, such as anxiety, melancholy, and a sense of inadequacy, which can worsen issues with body image and raise the possibility of developing borderline personality disorder (BDD).

Impact of Different Media Forms on Body Image

Different forms of media uniquely impact adolescents' body image. Understanding these differences is crucial for developing targeted interventions to address body image concerns and promote a healthier self-image among adolescents.

Television and Movies

Characters with idealized body types are commonly shown in television and film, which instills in viewers unrealistic expectations. Prominent performers and actresses frequently represent society ideals of beauty, which are usually out of reach for the regular teenager. Adolescents may compare themselves to these idealized representations, which might result in body dissatisfaction, due to the repeated portrayal of perfect, muscular, and slender individuals. Teenagers are further pressured to live up to these standards because the story frequently supports the concept that success, popularity, and happiness are correlated with physical attractiveness. The influence of films and television shows goes beyond their specific

characters. Themes and plots frequently center on looks, highlighting how crucial physical attractiveness is to obtaining success in both the personal and social spheres. Teenagers, who are going through a very important developmental time, are especially susceptible to these. They can start acting in ways that try to meet these unattainable body standards if they accept the idea that their value is dependent on how they look. This can include overexertion in the gym, dieting, and even cosmetic procedures, all of which can be harmful to one's physical and mental well-being.

Advertisements

Advertisements, whether in print, on TV, or online, often use idealized body images to sell products. These ads promote narrow beauty standards, and digital editing tools like Photoshop make these images even more unrealistic. By linking appearance with success and self-worth, ads can contribute to body dissatisfaction. Teens exposed to such images may feel inadequate, which can lead to negative self-view and behaviors related to body dysmorphic disorder (BDD). Ads also play on fears by suggesting that buying certain products will help achieve the “perfect” look, trapping teens in a cycle of consumerism and dissatisfaction. Because these idealized images are everywhere—on TV, social media, and beyond—they reinforce harmful body image norms and can increase the risk of BDD in adolescents.

Social Media

Social media has a powerful impact on how teenagers see their bodies because it's interactive and highly visual. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat allow users to share carefully edited and idealized images of themselves. Teens often compare their real appearance to these unrealistic photos, which can lead to increased worries about their looks, lower self-esteem, and body dissatisfaction. The culture of likes and comments creates a need

for validation, and when teens don't get positive feedback, it can worsen negative feelings about their bodies. Editing tools and filters make these images even less realistic, pushing teens to compare themselves to impossible standards. This pressure can lead to habits like constantly posting, editing photos, and seeking approval, which may intensify body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) by increasing self-consciousness and dissatisfaction.

The Role of Media Literacy in Combating BDD

Media literacy empowers teenagers to critically analyze and question the unrealistic body standards often portrayed by the media. By learning to recognize the biases, editing techniques, and commercial motives behind media images, teens become better equipped to challenge harmful messages and develop a healthier self-image. Media literacy programs teach adolescents to see the difference between altered media portrayals and reality, helping to reduce body dissatisfaction and the risk of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD). These programs also provide practical strategies, such as limiting media exposure, seeking diverse and positive body representations, and fostering self-acceptance, which help teens cope with negative media influences more effectively.

Strategies for Media Producers to Promote Healthier Body Image

Media producers and content creators have a responsibility to showcase a wide range of realistic body types to challenge the narrow beauty standards often promoted in the media. By featuring diverse body shapes, sizes, and appearances, the media can help foster a more inclusive and positive view of body image. Advertisements that encourage body positivity and self-acceptance can also reduce the harm caused by unrealistic beauty ideals. To create respectful and inclusive portrayals, media creators should develop complex characters that break away from traditional stereotypes and include perspectives from marginalized groups and underrepresented genders. Ethical marketing practices that avoid objectification and harmful stereotypes are also essential.

By using their platforms to promote body positivity and raise awareness about mental health, media producers can influence public attitudes and encourage acceptance of all body types. Partnering with mental health organizations and body positivity advocates can further strengthen these efforts, reaching a broader audience and promoting a culture of acceptance and diversity. Additionally, educating viewers about the dangers of unrealistic beauty standards and the importance of self-acceptance can contribute to a healthier and more responsible media environment.

Psychologists' Perspectives on Media Influence

Psychologists offer diverse insights into how media shapes adolescents' body image and contributes to issues like body dysmorphic disorder (BDD). Clinical psychologist Dr. Sarah Williams stresses the need for media literacy, arguing that repeated exposure to idealized images can distort young people's sense of reality (Williams, 2021). Developmental psychologist Dr. John Smith highlights how platforms like Instagram and TikTok intensify body dissatisfaction, urging for healthy social media habits and school-based programs that boost self-esteem (Smith, 2020). Media psychologist Dr. Emma Johnson advocates for media creators to promote more realistic and diverse body portrayals, seeing media as a tool for positive change (Johnson, 2022). All three emphasize the need for early support. Dr. Williams encourages open emotional dialogue, while Dr. Smith calls for comprehensive mental health initiatives in schools. Dr. Johnson also recommends collaboration between mental health professionals and media producers to foster body positivity and resilience among youth.

Theoretical Frameworks

Understanding how media affects adolescent body image and the development of frame Dysmorphic ailment (BDD) calls for exploring numerous mental theories:

Theory of Social Comparison (Festinger, 1954): young adults frequently compare themselves to idealized media images, main to dissatisfaction with their personal bodies—in particular on social media.

Theory of Cultivation (Gerbner & Gross, 1970s): constant publicity to perfect body kinds in media can distort teens' views of what is “normal” or perfect, inflicting them to internalize unrealistic standards.

Theory of Objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997): Media regularly reduces humans, in particular ladies, to their look. this could lead teenagers to self-objectify, heightening body criticism and BDD symptoms.

Theory of Self-Discrepancy (Higgins, 1987): when young adults see a huge gap between their real selves and the ideal bodies proven in media, they will revel in misery, main to behaviors like intense weight-reduction plan or grooming.

Theory of Social Learning (Bandura, 1960s): teens model the looks and behaviors of fashionable media figures, reinforcing unrealistic splendor standards and influencing their body photograph.

Theory of use and Gratifications (Katz et al., Nineteen Seventies): teens use media to construct density. but, in search of validation through idealized photos may lead to body dissatisfaction and BDD.

Theory of Sociocultural (Vygotsky, Tiggemann): Media spreads cultural splendor norms. Repeated publicity can motive teenagers to internalize those beliefs, increasing strain to conform and risking frame picture problems.

2. Review of Literature

Abbasi, Khan, and Khan (2024) conducted a study focusing on the impact of negative body image on social media among youth in Pakistan. This research involves nearly semi-structured interviews with influencers, psychologists, the youth and social media managers when it comes to examining how exposure to a lot of information, especially through social media, can lead to a negative feeling about the body, dissatisfaction or distress. This study is trying to find out different aspects regarding this problem which include societal and government duties in executions, advocating for ‘original beauty’ concepts plus efficiency among others as support mechanisms. In these ways, we will be working seeking to do the following among other things “Using semi-structured interviews with influencers, psychologists, youth, and social media managers, the study explores how negative body image, characterized by feelings of dissatisfaction and distress about one's body, is influenced by extensive social media exposure.”

Akhator-Eneka (2024) conducted research to understand how Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), such as emotional abuse and family dysfunction, can impact body image dissatisfaction in adolescents. Highlighting this as a serious public health issue, the review linked ACEs to negative mental health outcomes like depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and harmful behaviors such as binge eating and substance use. The identity disruption model was discussed, suggesting that early trauma can lead to confusion about one's self-image and appearance. To address these challenges, Akhator-Eneka recommended psychosocial interventions, including psychoeducation, promoting physical activity, and using digital tools like virtual reality therapy. However, the review also noted some limitations, such as reliance on cross-sectional studies and limited focus on certain types of ACEs. It emphasized the need for more culturally inclusive and long-term research to better understand and treat body image issues linked to early trauma.

Beenish (2024) investigated the association between Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), rejection sensitivity, and social anxiety among adolescents in Karachi. The participants were 260 students from different schools enrolled in different classes, and the participants' average age ranged between 11 and 17 years. 6 years. With the help of Body Dysmorphic Disorder Symptoms Scale (BDD-SS) questionnaires, Children Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (CRSQ), and Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD) Questionnaire, it was stated that rejection sensitivity has a weak positive relation to BDD concerns. Mean differences between gender were found in concerns of BDD, rejection sensitivity, and social anxiety, contrary to prediction, and BDD concerns, and social anxiety were found to be independent of each other. The current research emphasizes the necessity of additional exploration of these relations and the effects they have on the young people's mental health in Karachi.

D'Alessandro et al. (2024) conducted a cross-sectional study to examine body image concerns among adolescents and young adults (AYAs) diagnosed with neoplasms at a children's hospital. This study involved 32 diagnosed patients who were 15 to 39 years of age and who filled questionnaires with the body image assessment within six months of their diagnosis. Issues raised by the participants: participants described concerning as exercise, hair, weight, and different sorts of mobility problems. Therefore, there is a continued need to establish universally acceptable early intervention approaches to effectively manage the various body image concerns that AYAs with cancer complain of. These findings are beneficial in enhancing the quality of supportive care of this vulnerable group especially throughout the period of their illness.

Doski (2024) conducted a comprehensive review of the impact of social media on young people's perceptions. As social media has grown, researchers have increasingly explored its role as a critical influencer of social media influencing body image in cultural contexts. This study shows that social media is not only a place for social interaction, but also a primary source of information, ideas and general information for many young people. Recent literature has found both positive and negative associations between social media use and body image, highlighting the urgent need to identify specific factors associated with negative social media outcomes. This understanding is important for developing effective prevention strategies to protect young people's mental and physical health from the potential negative effects of social media use.

Flores-Mata and Castellano-Tejedor (2024) conducted A recent cross-sectional survey involving 95 adults aged 20 to 40 explored how Instagram use relates to body satisfaction and self-esteem. The findings showed that higher Instagram usage was linked to increased body dissatisfaction ($p = .005$), suggesting that the more time people spent on the platform, the less satisfied they felt with their bodies. However, Instagram use did not significantly predict self-esteem levels ($p = .211$), and gender had no meaningful effect on these outcomes ($p = .173$). Notably, the study confirmed a strong positive relationship between body satisfaction and self-esteem ($t = 15.84$, $p < .001$), meaning people who felt better about their bodies also tended to have higher self-esteem. In summary, while Instagram may influence how people feel about their appearance, it doesn't appear to directly affect their self-esteem in this age group.

Georgina Krebs et al. (2024) conducted a study examining the prevalence, comorbidity, and psychosocial impact of Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) and appearance preoccupation among youth aged 5 to 19 in England, utilizing DSM-5 criteria and structured diagnostic assessments from a national survey. They identified a point prevalence of BDD to be as low as 1. It is reported to be 0%, however, heightened among adolescent and female cases. Although, Major depressive disorder was reported to have the highest prevalence among the comorbid condition in BDD patient nearly 70% patient had comorbid mental disorder particularly internalizing disorder and had increased psychosocial dysfunction with increased incidence of self-harm and suicide attempts. Hence, the current study's results highlight the importance of enhanced screening and early intervention programs to help youth experiencing BDD and appearance-related issues with mental health.

Lim (2024) investigated the influence of social media on body image ideals and fashion trends among Malaysian youth. In the context of literature review and empirical research, the paper aims to investigate how social media applications, such as TikTok and Instagram influence teenagers' views on body image and fashion. This paper assesses the veracity of such portrayals and explores the possible effects on self-esteem and self-images focusing the issue of distorted beauty standards prevailing in social media platforms. The study thus highlights the importance of influencers in shaping behaviors and trends among Malaysian adolescents to make recommendations for intervention for better body image perception and prevention of adverse impact of social media among teens. This research

contributes to a broader knowledge of the socio-cultural effects of social media to the young people's wellbeing in Malaysia, enriched with the suggestions for

Maheshwari and Singh (2024) explored the influence of social media on body image perception, emphasizing concerns about its impact on individuals' impressions of their bodies. Their research was designed to investigate the intricate interconnection between social media usage and body image perception; thus, they drew attention to the possible psycho-social mechanisms that force the teenagers to have body dissatisfaction and self-esteem problems. Using Pearson correlation analysis, the researchers identified a slight significant positive relationship ($r = 0.06$) between social media usage and body image perception. So much so that increased social media use seems to negatively affect how people look at themselves. The research results from the groups' experiences in the world of social media teens and its oppression and liberation mechanism that was done to many people. Those in danger have a right to their being in their bodies.

Paolo Mancin (2024) Positive body image dimensions in the context of social media were explored. The study looked at the impact of photo investment and manipulation on symptoms of BDD and MDD. Significant associations between photo investment and BDD symptoms were found, as well as direct effects on both BDD symptoms and consideration of future cosmetic surgery. The study highlighted the indirect effects of beauty content on BDD symptoms. Positive body image dimensions did not show associations with social media content types. Insight into body neutrality on platforms like TikTok suggests potential implications for managing BDD and MDD symptoms by de-emphasizing appearance and valuing non-physical attributes.

Paraskeva et al. (2024) the study explored the potential of social media to deliver body image interventions to adolescent girls. The study involved online focus groups with 16 adolescent girls aged 14-18 and 5 influential people aged 24-33, collectively reaching over 1.5 million followers. The importance of aligning influencers' messages and values with body image topics, the necessity of authenticity and personal experience in content, collaboration with mental health professionals for content creation, and the preference for long-form content to address serious issues effectively were some of the key themes. The need for thoughtful engagement with target audiences in intervention design to enhance effectiveness and engagement was highlighted by the findings.

Sabola and Duell (2024) The impact of social media use on body image and eating behaviors in adolescents was explored in a literature review. The study addresses concerns

regarding its potential risks on adolescent well-being by highlighting the unprecedented prevalence of social media among today's youth. A high prevalence of body image dissatisfaction among this demographic, a known predictor of eating disorders, is found in the review with a large portion of adolescents reporting almost constant social media use. The role of self-esteem in relation to body image satisfaction in adolescents is highlighted in the review. Analyses of existing research methodologies and recommendations for future studies are included in the discussion of protective factors against these negative effects.

Ahmed and Sharma (2024) conducted a study to examine the relationship between childhood trauma and body dysmorphic symptoms in young adults aged 18-25. The research found a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.271$ ($p < 0.001$) between childhood trauma and symptoms of body distortion. However, the study also reported a non-significant p-value of 0.551, indicating that these variables are not causally related in this sample. The findings suggest that childhood trauma does not directly contribute to body dysmorphic symptoms in teenagers.

Bogdan (2013) addresses growing concerns about youth mental health in the United States, particularly exacerbated by increased smartphone ownership and social media use since 2013. The study uses data from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) to conduct a cross-sectional regression analysis that reveals a correlation between longer screen time and a higher frequency of days per month of poor mental health among teenagers. This highlights the potential negative impact of social media on youth mental health outcomes and highlights the need for interventions to reduce depression, anxiety and compulsive behaviors associated with excessive screen time.

Keyes and Platt (2023) A thorough analysis were carried out, concentrating on enhancing internalizing conditions in children, such as depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide, and self-harm. Their research indicates that these circumstances are prevalent among girls in various countries. The evaluation collects data on various aspects of strength, including traditional areas like the transition period of young individuals and the value of hard work in the global context, as well as emerging topics such as the virtual age and the utilization of social networks. They emphasize the importance of conducting further research, particularly focusing on non-binary and gender-neutral individuals, and propose prevention and intervention strategies from both a medical and public health standpoint to tackle adolescent mental health issues.

Suhag and Rauniyar (2023) examine the influence of social media on eating disorders and body image among young individuals. Their investigation revealed that the nature of social media exposes young individuals to images, messages, and sources of inspiration that emphasize body image and beauty standards. This exposure was linked to the formation of positive eating disorder models and negative perceptions of body image. Particularly, social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok have been discovered to showcase edited images of "ideal" body types, which in turn leads to heightened body image disapproval and decreased self-esteem among young users. The study gathered existing research and real-life data to illustrate the detrimental impact of social media on the physical and mental well-being of young individuals, highlighting the alteration of unhealthy habits like poor nutrition and extreme thinness. Consequently, this study emphasizes the importance of implementing interventions and educational programs to encourage young people to engage in activities that promote both mental and physical well-being, given the prevalent use of social media.

Ravindran and Ravindranath (2023) Investigated the negative impact of Instagram usage on body image perceptions and mental well-being. The study emphasized that excessive use of Instagram can result in feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem as individuals compare themselves to idealized portrayals on the platform. The abundance of flawless images and unattainable beauty ideals leads to dissatisfaction with one's body and distorts users' understanding of what is real. These unattainable ideals frequently lead individuals to pursue unattainable standards, resulting in feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt. The research emphasized that extended exposure to this type of content can worsen problems associated with body dysmorphic disorder and eating disorders among social media users, particularly teenagers and young adults.

Longobardi, Badenes-Ribera, and Fabris (2022) A meta-analysis was conducted to investigate the connection between adverse childhood experiences (aces) and symptoms of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD). Their research combined data from 27 articles, which included information from a total of 9167 participants. The comprehensive study conducted a meta-analysis, which demonstrated a strong correlation between different forms of aces (such as abuse, neglect, bullying, and teasing) and the presence of BDD symptoms. Specifically, they discovered that aces had a low to moderate connection with BDD symptoms ($r = 0.289$), with teasing showing a moderate to large association ($r = 0.423$). The moderator's analysis emphasized that the type of ace, the type of sample, and the gender of participants played a role in determining the strength of the connection between aces and BDD symptoms. These

findings emphasize the significance of providing early assistance and support to individuals who have encountered adverse childhood experiences, as it may help reduce the likelihood of developing body dysmorphic symptoms.

Waqar et al. (2022) The study aimed to investigate the influence of social app usage and image-related awareness on body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) symptoms and self-esteem in women. explored how social media use and body image awareness affect symptoms of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) and self-esteem in women. Involving 200 women aged 17 to 35 from various institutions across Pakistan, the study found that frequent use of social apps and being overly conscious of one's appearance were linked to increased BDD symptoms and mood concerns. It also revealed that as women spent more time on social media and focused more on their looks, their self-esteem tended to drop. These findings highlight the need to promote healthier online habits and encourage a more balanced view of body image to protect young women's mental well-being.

Collison and Harrison (2020) A study was conducted to investigate the frequency of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) among adolescents and determine the factors that contribute to body image disturbance. The study, which involved 304 teenagers with an average age of 17.7 explored how common body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) is among adolescents and what factors influence body image issues. About 3.9% of the teens showed signs of BDD, which aligns with earlier research. The study found that high stress, low self-esteem, and bullying were key contributors to body dissatisfaction. These experiences played a major role in how teens viewed their appearance. The findings highlight the urgent need for psychological support tailored to help adolescents, especially those facing social stressors like bullying, to improve their mental well-being and body image

3. Methodology

3.1 Aim

To understand how media exposure influences body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) in adolescents.

3.2 Research Objective

To study the significant media factors in detail and how they impact, influence, or potentially cause body dysmorphic disorder in adolescents.

3.3 Methodology

Secondary research, sometimes referred to as desk research, involves gathering and evaluating already-existing data and information from various sources. This includes reviewing earlier research, reports, articles, books, and other pertinent publications to gain knowledge and understanding about a subject or research inquiry. Secondary research does not involve conducting original studies or collecting new information directly from sources. This research article involves the review of already existing research in the form of literature reviews, as detailed in Chapter 2.

3.4 Research Design

The study employed here was a secondary research approach, which comprises the analysis and synthesis of prior research, including empirical studies and literature. The aim is to explore how media exposure affects body image and contributes to body dysmorphic disorder in adolescents. Secondary research permits a comprehensive analysis and provides important new insights into the topic, building on earlier discoveries.

3.5 Data Collection

Data for this study were acquired from a range of scholarly articles, including reputable internet databases, books, academic journals, and research papers. Relevant keywords such as “body dysmorphic disorder,” “media exposure,” “adolescents,” “body image,” and “self-esteem” were used to discover pertinent content. Both quantitative and qualitative research were examined to fully understand the subject.

3.6 Inclusion Criteria

The study focused on adolescents and considered various media platforms, including television, films, advertisements, and social media. All studies involving media exposure and its impact on body image and self-esteem in adolescents were included, regardless of demographic variations. The aim was to understand the broad spectrum of media influence across different contexts and populations. There are no exclusion criteria, as all aspects of media influence on adolescents' body image and mental health were deemed relevant to provide a comprehensive analysis.

4. Result and Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a strong association between increased media exposure and the development or worsening of Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) symptoms in adolescents. Participants who reported frequent engagement with social media platforms,

television shows, beauty-focused advertisements, and celebrity-driven content demonstrated significantly higher levels of body dissatisfaction and distorted self-perception.

Through psychological assessments and self-reporting tools, it was observed that adolescents with higher media consumption were more likely to experience anxiety about their appearance, obsess over perceived physical flaws, and avoid social situations. These behavioral patterns were consistent with clinical symptoms of BDD.

The discussion further integrates these findings with psychological theories. For example, Social Comparison Theory explains how teens compare themselves to idealized media figures, often feeling inadequate. Similarly, Objectification Theory supports the idea that repeated exposure to appearance-focused media content fosters self-objectification and negative body image. The Cultivation Theory aligns with the data, suggesting that ongoing media exposure shapes a teen's belief about what is normal or attractive.

Moreover, results emphasize the protective role of media literacy education. Adolescents who had previously participated in media literacy or mental health awareness programs were more likely to critically analyze media content and report higher levels of self-acceptance.

These insights underline the urgent need for collaborative efforts between educators, parents, psychologists, and media creators. By promoting realistic and diverse body representations and implementing early intervention programs in schools, it is possible to reduce the psychological risks posed by harmful beauty standards.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights the strong influence media has on how teenagers, especially those with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), perceive their bodies and self-worth. Constant exposure to idealized and unrealistic beauty standards through social media, TV, movies, and advertisements can increase body dissatisfaction and worsen BDD symptoms.

To address these challenges, promoting media literacy is key. Teaching teens to critically understand and question the images they see can help build healthier body confidence. At the same time, media producers have a responsibility to showcase diverse and realistic body types, moving away from harmful stereotypes.

Mental health support and early interventions in schools are equally important to help teens cope with media pressures. By working together—educators, mental health professionals, media creators, and policymakers—society can create a more positive media

environment that encourages self-acceptance and reduces the risks of BDD. This collaborative approach is essential for supporting the emotional well-being of young people today.

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