

The American University in Cairo
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**INSTAGRAM USE AND YOUNG WOMEN'S BODY IMAGE AND SELF-
OBJECTIFICATION IN EGYPT.**

A Thesis Submitted by

Sara Tarek Sayed Mohamed Hussein

to the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication

under the supervision of

Dr. Naila Hamdy

(December 2020)

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Acknowledgements

Finally speaking as I'm writing now my last words in my thesis with all the long moments of ups and downs, successes and failures, happiness and sadness. It is so far the year I will recognize and cherish the most in my life, and finally I can say now I have completed a huge chapter of my life and I finished my master's degree at AUC, the place I can call it my second home.

I would like to thank the following people, without whom I would not have been able to complete this research project, and without whom I would not have made it through my master's degree.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis advisor Dr. Naila Hamdy for her dedicated support and guidance during this research project, and for her encouragement and being by my side in my entire journey and since my undergraduate years at AUC. I've learnt a lot of things from her, wisdom, credibility and professionalism, many other values to be counted.

Thank you, sincerely from the bottom of my heart Dr. Naila.

I want to thank my readers Dr. Shahira Fahmy and Dr. Rasha Allam for offering their precious time to read my thesis, providing useful insights and an added unique value to the research. It is my honor and pleasure.

To my beautiful family, the pillars of my life, I would have never done all of that without the encouragement, help, love and support from my awesome parents, my dad Tarek Sayed and my mum Noha El-Shazley as well as my little sister Salma, thank you for making me the person who I am today. Thank you for being patient on my stress, loud voice, cries and anger sometimes. Without you I'm nothing, thank you for encouraging and challenging me to pursue my dreams no matter how difficult they might have been or proved to be. There are no words can describe how much you mean to me, love you so much my beautiful family.

Last but not least, I would also like to thank all my friends, Basma Mostafa, Nouran Tahoun, Yousra Osama, Hussam Ashraf, my school friends and my friends at work for their love and constant support and for being by my side through this long endeavor that has been crucial to my success so far.

Finally, I'd love to thank everyone who prayed for me to pass any obstacles in my life. At the end I will say that this is the strongest year of my existence Alhamdulillah and looking forward to start a new chapter of my life.

Cordially,

Sara Tarek Hussein

Abstract

The present study investigates the effect of Instagram use on young Egyptian women's body image and how it is related to self-objectification. The aim of this research is to understand how Instagram usage affects women's body image and makes them dissatisfied with their bodies; besides, it also tests how the comments women receive on their Instagram accounts affect them positively or negatively, and how the more hours they spend on Instagram, the more pressure they face to acquire a better body shape. Additionally, it examines the direct relationship between feministic beliefs and body surveillance and self-objectification. Moreover, self-objectification and Cultivation theories have been applied in this study to understand the relationship between Instagram use and body image. A convenience sample was used and a total of 440 young Egyptian women aged between 18 to above 40 years old have completed an online survey that measured Instagram use and body image concerns as well as self-objectification.

The findings showed that using photo-editing tools was not associated with body dissatisfaction. Additionally, a lack of significant moderation was found for the relationship between time spent on Instagram and body dissatisfaction. Finally, the results revealed that self-objectification and body surveillance tend to be higher than the feministic beliefs; this means that young women will evaluate themselves and their bodies more.

Keywords: *Egypt, Instagram, body image, self-objectification, cultivation, young Egyptian women, survey*

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Chapter One: Introduction

The media play a critical role in promoting an ideal body shape and size across different populations. Both women and men's body images are often influenced by the unattainable and unrealistic physiological characteristics that are delivered by the different types of media. As a result, perpetuation of the ideal body along with the desire to have a specific body shape has led to many concerns that include body dissatisfaction (Huang et al., 2020).

Media features differ not only in the media but also, in audience perceptions of the images that are presented by the situational factors of a specific media vehicle. For example, exposure to images of bodies that are embedded in magazines, as compared to television, were found to be associated with body dissatisfaction among young girls, although mass media, such as magazines, television programs, movies and music videos were predominantly employed and they concentrated on mass media effects. Furthermore, the sub-types within different media types also differ significantly from each other in their ways of portraying the body and frequencies of exposure; for example, television programs often present celebrities and models with an ideal body shape, while music videos present the body through dancing and movement (Huang et al., 2020).

Internet presence in our societies has increased over the last decades; it's a virtual world that has started to change our experiences. We use Internet services to shop online, read maps, find information, watch TV channels, and to connect with others by using social networking sites (SNSs) (Alaslani & Alandejani, 2020).

Social media technologies have grown considerably and nowadays; they offer access to a lot of social networking sites. Social media are designed to promote the sharing of user-generated content, as well as participation and communication on a large scale. These social networking sites not only allow users to create their own profiles, post photos, videos and any information they

want, but they can also browse the posts and interact with other users. In addition, they allow users to choose when and how they will interact with others (Campbell-Phillips & Halder, 2019). Those social networking sites include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest and YouTube. Several research studies have been conducted to show the effects of traditional media, such as television and magazines, on body image, but there is a shortage still in research to relate how using social media can affect either positively or negatively people's perception of body images as well as self-objectification.

Over time, the ideal image for the individuals that appeared in the media has changed. The media promoted this ideal through programs that portray the successful and beautiful as thin. Many researchers relate the internalization of the thin ideal that is found in the media to eating disorders and body dissatisfaction. This internalization makes adolescents constantly pressured to be thin and, most of the time, leads them to social comparisons. Nowadays, most of the messages that are communicated through the social media are about appearance ideals; adolescents use social media platforms to view photos of others or to post photos of themselves (de Vries et al., 2019).

Body image concerns are widely spread across the globe, especially among women. Many studies have suggested that it has become normative for women to be unhappy with their physical appearance and weight (Fardouly & Holland, 2018). Egypt is rarely studied, and in general, it is considered to have low incidences of body image problems; so, in this research, we will focus on young Egyptian women.

Social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram can offer a constant stream of carefully curated messages and images to promote the thin ideal body. One example is Instagram which is a photo-based social media platform with more than 800 million global users who share an average of 95 million videos and photos per day, and it is popular among young women who are 18 to 29

years old. The primary use of Instagram is for sharing and posting images; researchers have indicated that Instagram might be more detrimental to women's appearance concerns than other social networking sites, such as Facebook, that contain more varied content (Butkowski et al., 2019).

From a theoretical perspective, this study uses Cultivation Theory as a main theory, and self-objectification as a sub-theory to support the study; this was to investigate the effect of Instagram use on young Egyptian women's body image and self-objectification. Therefore, it is important to examine the relation between Instagram usage and women's appearance-related beliefs and concerns and how it affects them either positively or negatively.

Researchers have explained that women engage in appearance comparisons and internalize the media's unrealistic appearance ideals; this results in dissatisfaction with their own bodies. Objectification Theory (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997) illustrated another point of view to understand the relationship between media images and body image problems. According to the Objectification Theory, the media sexual objectification of women trains women to view their own bodies as objects and to be evaluated based on appearance; this is known as self-objectification. Both self-objectification and body dissatisfaction have been related to negative consequences, and this includes depression, disordered eating, and sexual dysfunction. In support of this theory, significant literature has illustrated that the exposure to thin-ideal images of women in the media, such as television and magazines can lead to body dissatisfaction, self-objectification, increased thin-ideal internalization and disordered eating behaviors in women (Cohen, Fardouly, Newton-John & Slater, 2019).

According to the Objectification Theory, it was identified that repeated sexual objectification experiences encourage people to endorse the unrealistic body shape ideals that are portrayed in the

media. To illustrate, self-objectification is theorized to lead to appearance anxiety and body shame, which could then motivate dietary restraint, in an attempt to lose body fat and weight in order to appear more consistent with the male lean muscular ideal and female thin ideal standards (Dakanalis et al. 2015).

When we come to the sociocultural model, originally focused on traditional media and face-to-face communication, for example, TV and magazines, even though the messages that were about appearance ideals are now communicated through social media, but before, traditional media played an important role, as Cultivation Theory is applicable to the effect of TV on body image, so we can apply this theory too on social media and how they affect body image (Miller and Behm-Morawitz, 2020).

Cultivation Theory was originally designed to examine TV consumption; this theory originated in the 60's, then it developed and expanded by Gerbner & Gross in 1976. Both of them suggested that heavy TV viewers are more likely than light TV viewers to see the world in a way that aligns with what is depicted on TV. Cultivation Theory compares light and heavy viewership to find a cultivation margin or differential of difference between those who respond with television answers and those who do not (Miller and Behm-Morawitz, 2020).

Early cultivation work was focused on violence and crime; however, more recent work started to examine other attitudes and content. For example, research showed that heavier consumption of reality TV is related to body image problems, idealization of romantic relationships, and gender role beliefs. On the other hand, in the contemporary era, Cultivation Theory started to be applied, beyond TV, to include other areas such as music, video games, and newspapers. Although researchers started to investigate how social media can cultivate attitudes and how they affect body

image, more investigations using this theoretical framework are still needed (Miller and Behm-Morawitz, 2020).

Physical appearance plays one of the most important roles on most of the social media platforms. Adolescents post images of themselves and view photos of others and have reported that they experience pressure to look perfect on the social networking sites as they select and edit their posts. Moreover, males and females who spend more time on social media receive more feedback about their appearance. In addition, they also receive comments about their own bodies on social media as adolescents carefully view the edited photos of their social media connections such as their friends, friends of friends, influencers, and celebrities (de Vries et al., 2019).

When we come to the Significance statement, this study lends itself well to both empirical support as well as theoretical foundation to the argument that highly visual social networking sites, like Instagram, constitute a meaningful cultivation system for body-related behaviors and attitudes among young women. Therefore, studying the impacts of social media on body image can help in preventing the negative outcomes.

This study investigated the effect of Instagram, the photo-based platform, on young Egyptian women's body image because women use social media platforms more and they are more likely to struggle with body dissatisfaction than men. There have been no studies published before that focused on self-objectification and Cultivation Theories and body image in Egypt on young women through Instagram use, so the aim of this research is to take a closer look at the effect of Instagram use on young Egyptian women's body image and how it is related to self-objectification, and how women get dissatisfied and ashamed of their bodies, and how the comments they receive on their Instagram content affect them positively or negatively and how they put pressure on them to acquire a better body shape. We will focus on Instagram because it is still relatively a new tool

and its effects on body image and self-objectification on especially young women is still not clear. Moreover, there have been many studies focusing on Cultivation Theory as applicable to blogs and television, so in this research we will apply it on Instagram use.

Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction to the thesis. Chapter two provides the literature of the research where topics such as media and body image, the negative and positive body image, objectification, self-objectification and its relation to body image, the effect of social networking sites on body image and how Instagram use is related to body image, and finally the role of feminist beliefs and their relation to body image are introduced. Chapter three explains the theoretical framework of the research and combined two theories; Cultivation and self-objectification Theories. The chapter explains the effect of Cultivation Theory and its effect on body image, and the relationship between cultivation, social networking sites and how they are associated to body image. Also self-objectification was used and explained the relation between social networking sites, self-objectification and body surveillance. Chapter four explains the research questions, hypotheses and measurements that are in this study. Chapter five provides the method used in this study, while Chapter six provides the results and findings in this study. Finally, Chapter seven provides the discussion and concludes this thesis by summarizing the main findings, focusing on practical implications, limitations of the study and proposing recommendations for future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Media and Body Image

Mass media are always treated as one unified entity; They consist of many different forms, such as, TV, music videos, magazines, computer games, and the Internet. Each type of these media has different characteristics and can differ in the way they present the thin beauty ideal. For example, magazines always show images of the thin ideal, embedded in the articles about beauty, diet, celebrities, fitness, and fashion. In contrast, music videos show the bodily ideals through dancing and sexualized characters that are accompanied by meaningful songs (Bell & Dittmar, 2011), and so on. It all differs from one media type to another.

The media were described as one of the most powerful promoters of the unrealistic body ideals that are unachievable by healthy means. On the other hand, nowadays, media consumers are overwhelmed with images of extremely idealized and thin figures on social media and television, and in advertising campaigns in public transportation, in streets and other public places. A study reported that the American consumer gets exposed, on average, to 3000 advertisements every day (Danthinne, Giorgianni, & Rodgers, 2020).

The features of the media distinguish not only the media, but also audience perceptions of the images that are presented by the situational factors of a specific media type. For example, exposure to the images of bodies that are embedded in magazines as compared to television use, was found to be more associated with body dissatisfaction among young females. Furthermore, mass media such as magazines, television programs, and movies were predominantly employed as a stimuli that are concentrated on mass media effects. Besides, the other types of media differ significantly from each other in their ways of portraying the body and the frequencies of exposure. For example, television programs often present celebrities and characters with an ideal body, while music videos

present bodies through movements. On the other hand, the newly emerging media, such as social media, play an important role in bringing negative body image; this through social comparison with celebrities or peers across different age groups (Huang et al., 2020).

The average weight of female figures in advertisements has become lower since the 1950s, while contemporary advertisements nowadays feature extremely toned and thin models; this creates an unrealistic and unattainable standard. Several studies have provided experimental, longitudinal, and correlational evidence for the relationship between exposure to the thin ideal images and increase in body dissatisfaction among young women and female adolescents, especially for those with body image concerns (Danthinne, Giorgianni, & Rodgers, 2020).

Body image is an essential contributor to physical and mental health, and body dissatisfaction was identified as a risk factor for severe pathologies such as depression and eating disorders as well as smoking. High rates of body dissatisfaction were found within the general population, especially among young women and female adolescents and an estimate of body dissatisfaction that was ranging from 13.4–31.8% to 69–84% was reported. These high rates leading to body dissatisfaction are to be viewed as a public health concern, with an increased interest in identifying successful preventive strategies at the population level (Danthinne, Giorgianni, & Rodgers, 2020).

With the vast exposure of the younger people to the media, we can identify that the perception of a thin ideal in the oriental cultures e.g., in Egypt, prevails among both males and females, in the media such as in TV advertisements, magazines, movies, and social networking sites influence body dissatisfaction by both internalization of thin body images and appearance (Mostafa et al., 2018).

As Egypt is a representative of the Arab world, its geographic location in the Middle East and the middle of the Arab world, its historical roots as well as its recent phases of economic liberalization, and women's education, all this makes it an interesting place to base this research. While it is best known for its Pyramids and its ancient civilization, Egypt has played an important role in the Arab region in modern times due to its strategic location. Located at the corner of both Asia and Africa, it is considered the entertainment capital of Northern Africa and the Middle East (Ragab, 2007).

Throughout the ages, from the time of the Pharaohs, Islam and modern Egyptian history have shaped women's general image in society and personal body image as well. Since Pharaonic times, Egyptian history has shown how women were prominent in both political and the public life. For example, Nefertiti, the wife of the great Egyptian King, was known for her beauty, her power and her slim bust, while Cleopatra, Egypt's Queen, had to use her sexuality to influence men of the era. Historic records illustrated how she was obsessed with her look and her weight, and it was described how she had favorite diets of pearls that are dissolved in wine and how she took milk baths (Ragab, 2007).

Previous studies indicated that exposure to Western eating habits and the Western media have posed the risk of increasing weight consciousness on eating disorders for Egyptian women. Research has shown that the body image problems and the disordered eating behaviors in the past decades resulted from the abundance of the attractive portrayal of the thin models shown in the media. On the other hand, the influx of Western culture and globalization as well as the media around the world have contributed to the development of eating disorders in Egypt (Ragab, 2007). Recent meta-analysis suggested that the mass media, which portray the largely thin unattainable beauty ideals play an important role in fueling women's body dissatisfaction. This is associated

with a lot of negative outcomes, such as increased interest in cosmetic surgeries, lower academic performance and depression (Fardouly & Holland, 2018). On the other hand, having a negative body image can lead to the development of eating disorders. Some websites are dedicated to eating disorders, such as anorexia and encourage people to engage in health-harming behaviors in order to be thin. Studies have found that, just visiting those websites might lead to more negative self-images and to an increase in the desire to be thin (Bardone-Cone & Cass, 2007).

Researchers explored that the concept of body dissatisfaction is one aspect of the broader concept of body image, and allows people to have a negative attitude towards their own physical appearance. Body dissatisfaction increases during adolescence, especially with adolescent girls that have reported high levels of body dissatisfaction (de Vries et al., 2019). Researchers have also affirmed that the internalization of the slim body figure is a psychological process of taking sociocultural body ideals as one's own personal standard and this psychological process usually leads to body dissatisfaction, since imitating those thin ideals is almost unachievable (Mostafa et al., 2018).

According to the sociocultural model, studies showed that adolescents receive many messages about what their bodies should look like from different sources such as, their peers, their parents, and the media. These messages can include, for example, that they should be muscular and thin. Those adolescents internalize these appearance ideals as their standards for their own body and they will compare themselves against these ideals, and if their appearance does not match the internalized ideals, this will result in body dissatisfaction (de Vries et al., 2019).

Research has found that the pressure to gain muscles or to lose weight that adolescents experience from the media, parents, and peers is positively related to their body dissatisfaction. The comparison with these ideals and the internalization of appearance ideals were shown to mediate

the effects of sociocultural messages on the appearance of body dissatisfaction (de Vries et al., 2019).

Early adolescents who experience inconsistency between their actual and their ideal body might be motivated to improve their appearance because body image is one of the most important aspects of their self-concept. On the other hand, they might engage in social comparison and body surveillance with media models to deal with body dissatisfaction and to improve their physical appearance. To elaborate more, sometimes they monitor their bodies in order to understand how their body stands relative to their desired ideal body image, so it is essential to understand the relation that links media internalization to body dissatisfaction among early adolescents (Rousseau & Eggermont, 2018).

Messages in the media emphasize rigid standards of physical beauty. This includes extreme thinness, and this occurs alongside the messages that highlight the need to stand against the growth of obesity problems in Western societies and in the U.S., which exacerbates and contributes to women's focus on their bodies. Women are always overwhelmed with tricks, suggestions and recommendations that presumably help control, maintain or reduce weight, although some of this advice may be appropriate and useful for some sub-groups of the population (Mercurio & Rima, 2011).

Beauty and fashion magazines have been accused of disseminating the thin ideal. A content analysis of 69 American women's magazines showed that 94% of them displayed images of thin-idealized celebrities or models on the cover. By failing to present a diverse range of body types, fashion magazines have promoted thinness as both the insidious and the desired prevailing norm for women. Therefore, it is no surprise that thin-idealized images that are featured in fashion

magazines can stimulate body image disturbance in women and girls (Harper, & Tiggemann, 2008).

Previous experimental research has reported that the exposure to more traditional types of media such as magazines can increase body image concerns in young women, given that young women nowadays are turning to Internet sources rather than to traditional media, and now people are able to be more selective with the content they are viewing online, so we need to examine the effect that this medium is having on women's body image (Fardouly et al., 2015).

2.1.1 Negative and Positive Body Image

Negative body image is described as poor body esteem, body shame, or body dissatisfaction that affects many young people's lives as it is related to low overall well-being, depression, disordered eating, and low self-esteem. The most critical time for body image problems happens during adolescence, as this phase carries many changes in life which might be emotional, social, cognitive, as well as biological and other changes in their physical bodies. A few studies have demonstrated that adolescents experience a huge increase in negative body image in early adolescence, and they maintain their negative body image throughout adolescence until adulthood. As body image in adulthood usually remains stable, those findings indicated that the adolescent years are very critical for many people in shaping their body image, which they will subsequently carry with them into their adulthood (Gattario & Frisén, 2019).

For many years, it was assumed that a positive body image was the opposite of a negative body image and many factors were assumed to promote a positive body image in a very simple way since it was the opposite of a negative body image. However, recent studies about positive body images have found evidence that this picture might be too simple. The few studies that explored

the thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, and experiences of individuals with a positive body image have been helpful in describing the positive body image. The studies featured it as body appreciation, body acceptance, functionality appreciation, inner positivity, and conceptualizing beauty broadly. Studies still have not explicitly examined people's journey towards positive body images, and they have not considered the factors that might help in turning a negative into a positive body image (Gattario & Frisén, 2019).

Recently, research on body images has started to get more attention to the experience of a positive body image. Researchers have done a scale on Body Appreciation consisting of four essential qualities of positive body image: body acceptance, holding positive evaluations of the body, protecting the body by rejecting unrealistic appearance ideals and respecting and attending to bodily needs. Elaborating more on body appreciation is not the body satisfaction experience. However, it is a way of orientating cognitive processing and valuing one's body. To promote and protect a positive view of the body, the difference between body dissatisfaction and body appreciation has been supported empirically (Halliwell, 2013).

Research has found that there is a correlation between body appreciation and low levels of consumption of appearance-focused media. On the other hand, it was reported that it was negatively correlated with the internalization of sociocultural ideals. Moreover, a qualitative study suggested that adolescent females with positive body images are highly critical of unrealistic appearance ideals in the media. However, nowadays, no experimental research has examined the fact that women with positive body images are protected from negative messages that revolve around appearance in the media (Halliwell, 2013).

Other studies have demonstrated that body appreciation plays an important role against the negative impacts of media exposure. In accordance to that, it was found that body appreciation appears to be a useful target for interventions that aim, to not only reduce women's vulnerability to body dissatisfaction but also, to promote a positive body image and its related positive physical and psychological health benefits (Cohen et al., 2019).

Researchers have affirmed that, in order to improve body appreciation, it is important to provide females with broader conceptualizations of beauty and to encourage them to surround themselves with social networks that boost appreciation and respect for one's own body (Cohen et al., 2019).

2.2 Objectification, Self-objectification and its Relation to Media and Body Image

Objectification Theory provides a useful framework in understanding the behavioral and psychological consequences of growing up in a culture that routinely objectifies the female body. It also posits that women and girls are typically acculturated to internalize an observer's perspective; this perspective on self can lead to habitual body monitoring, which might increase women's opportunities for anxiety and shame, diminish awareness of internal bodily states and reduce the opportunities for peak motivational states (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997). Objectification Theory has expanded to more diverse populations; it includes men, ethnic minorities, and sexual minorities (Karsay, Knoll, & Matthes, 2017). Moreover, Objectification Theory has demonstrated that the internalization of cultural ideals of beauty and self-objectification could result in an excess of negative consequences for women (Peterson, Grippo & Tantleff-Dunn, 2008).

Self-objectification can lead to negative psychological consequences for women; research has identified that women who tend to self-objectify their bodies are more likely to experience body dissatisfaction, disordered eating, body shame, and appearance anxiety. In addition, self-objectification is related to depressed mood, decreased self-esteem, and decreased cognitive performance through the disruption of focused attention (Peterson, Grippio & Tantleff-Dunn, 2008).

Sexual objectification is a specific form of objectification; it occurs when individuals are valued for their body parts or sexual function over their human worth and their internal attributes. According to the Objectification Theory, young women and girls who are repeatedly exposed to sexually objectifying messages are conditioned into adopting an external viewer's perspective of their own bodies and perceive themselves as objects, and this is known as self-objectification. This tendency to self-objectify has been linked to a variety of deleterious behavioral and psychological consequences including negative body image, disordered eating behaviors, and low self-esteem. Furthermore, objectification can be temporally activated (i.e., state self-objectification), and this, by contextual factors, leads to more behaviors in the short term, such as reduced cognitive performance and talking less (Bell, Cassarly, & Dunbar, 2018).

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) also described self-objectification as both a personality trait and an emotional state. A study was conducted on North American and Australian samples, and they found that a host of negative experiences were linked to high trait self-objectification; this includes body shame, decreasing self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation, depression, and appearance anxiety (Harper, & Tiggemann, 2008).

Researchers have demonstrated that women's state self-objectification can increase in situations where attention is explicitly focused on one's physical appearance for example, by trying on a swimsuit. This was found by employing experimental methods. In contrast, self-objectification also shows that it occurs in situations in which women are not explicitly directed to focus on their appearance (Harper, & Tiggemann, 2008).

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) suggested that one of the most common means of perpetuating sexual objectification is through the visual media and viewing images in which sexual objectification or images of the sexualized female body are depicted. They showed that this might increase self-objectification in women. Surprisingly, a few studies have examined the relationship between self-objectification and media exposure; but a correlation between exposure to beauty and fashion magazines and trait self-objectification was found. While in another study, it was demonstrated that adolescent women who read sports magazines exhibit lower levels of trait self-objectification than those who do not read these magazines regularly (Harper, & Tiggemann, 2008).

Research was done to examine the concept of self-objectification in an adolescent sample; it was reported that the levels of self-objectification in a small sample of Australian female adolescents averaging 14.3 years were comparable to those for adult women. While in an adult sample, the relationship between disordered eating and self-objectification (and self-surveillance) were at least partially mediated by appearance anxiety and body shame (Slater & Tiggemann, 2015).

Studies have shown that body evaluation measures contribute 2.0–6.7% of unique variance in body surveillance, and this was among young adult U.S. women (Tylka & Sabik, 2010). Not only do men evaluate women's bodies, but also women could gaze at other women, as a means of

comparison or evaluation. Females who are recipients of this objectification will not know the intent behind this gaze, but they will realize that they are objects of this gaze. Their bodies are the main focus of attention, and this can be put under sexual objectification that was proposed by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997).

Mass media play an important role in the objectification of women. A content analysis of media imagery showed that women are depicted in ways that overvalue their body parts and sexual function. This was achieved by depicting women relative to men, as body parts dismembered from the body, wearing revealing clothes, adopting seductive suggestive poses, and exposing more flesh/body parts (Bell, Cassarly & Dunbar, 2018).

2.2.1 Sexually Objectifying Media Content and Self-Objectification

Sexual objectification is defined as the practice of using, valuing, and viewing a person as an object, whose worth is based primarily on his or her sexual and physical attractiveness (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997). Sexually objectifying experiences are not only sexual in nature, but also include the societal pressure to present, maintain, create and improve an attractive appearance such as the muscular ideal for men and the thin ideal for women (Karsay, Knoll, & Matthes, 2017).

Mass media also play a vital role in exposure to sexualizing text, sounds, images, and experiences (Karsay, Knoll, & Matthes, 2017). Sexual objectification of women is widespread in the media, and the exposure to the objectifying media might lead to self-objectification in women. Researchers have examined factors that might protect against self-objectification in females

including media literacy, feminist identity, and involvement in embodying activities like yoga (Daniels, Zurbriggen, & Ward, 2020).

Sexual objectification in the media depends on a female's appearance: the ideal women that are styled and portrayed in media follow the latest fashion trends, and their bodies have all the right curves. Frequently they are shown in the context of male gazing, an evaluation of their appearance in a sexualized way (Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2012).

Sexually-objectifying media prioritize appearance more than personality, and they consider appearance as a tool that can be used to attain essential life goals, such as successful romantic relationships. Moreover, every medium has shown to contribute, in its own and different way, to the sexual objectification of female bodies. For example, primetime television portrays females who use their bodies to attract males and promotes these messages in dialogues as well as in visual scenes showing the body. While music videos were found to place a strong visual emphasis on beauty ideals, they show women who take on sexually suggestive poses and who correspond to beauty ideals, and invite males to gaze at their bodies. These visuals promote the message that the body is a female's sole "instrument" to seduce males. Moreover, fashion magazines objectify females in a different way from television and music videos; they teach users how to modify their appearance according to the current trends. In addition, they present fashion combined with beauty as one of the most fundamental aspects of a female's life (Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2012).

Sexual objectification can be found in social networking sites, which have not previously been related to self-objectification, while social networking sites are primarily used to strengthen or to maintain social relationships, yet they are used to attract potential romantic partners. Profile pictures play an important role in social networking sites. Research on college students have

reported that young females remove photos of themselves when they feel that these pictures do not follow the societal ideals of beauty. We can identify that the awareness of the exposure of their photos to the gaze of their male peers might encourage these girls to be more conscious of their look and to put greater importance on their appearance. Those studies have indicated that sexual objectification can differ in all the media types, yet research has suggested that different media relationships with self-objectification, body surveillance, or internalization can vary. To elaborate more, the researchers reported that the exposure to sexually objectifying television affected body surveillance while reading sexually objectifying magazines did not have any effect (Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2012).

Most cross-sectional correlational studies have demonstrated that the use of sexualizing magazines, television programs, and social networking sites, like Pinterest or Facebook, are positively related to self-objectification among men and women, as well as among boys and girls. However, there are exceptions: researchers have identified that neither fitness magazines nor the use of beauty was related to self-objectification among men (Karsay, Knoll, & Matthes, 2017).

Several experimental studies have identified an increase in females' self-objectification after a short exposure to sexualizing media content and images of sexualized women. Sexualizing media content has been criticized for many reasons. Exposure to sexualizing media has been related to an increase in the acceptance of rape myths, reinforced gender stereotypes, and increased body dissatisfaction (Karsay, Knoll, & Matthes, 2017).

2.3 Social Networking Sites and Body Image

Media use is rapidly evolving nowadays, even though traditional media are still widely consumed by many people, but other forms of new media have started to be more accessible, most

notably the Internet. Since 1990, Internet usage has started to increase by almost 50% every year (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016). Social networking sites (SNSs) have started to become the primary source of media that is used by many people nowadays. SNSs are different from the other traditional media forms, by their immediacy, active participation, and interactivity. The most popular SNSs nowadays are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest (Santarossa & Woodruff, 2017).

Social networking sites are Internet applications that enable the sharing of any content allowing people to communicate, create and meet in online communities. Studies have shown that adolescents spend about nine hours a day with the entertainment media, and about 58% of teens use social networking sites, on average about two hours a day (Te'eni-Harari' and Eyal, 2017).

Social media platforms are more likely to appeal to teens; and this is due to many technical reasons such as, its accessibility on mobile technologies, its large range of interpersonal communication opportunities allowing them to stay connected with others, exchange ideas, access information easily, make new friends and be connected with anyone from all around the world. On the other hand, social networking sites pose some risks and challenges, such as engaging in risky behaviors, threats to privacy, and the obsession with the social approval by other users such as Likes and Comments (Te'eni-Harari' and Eyal, 2017).

Social networking sites have become a universal platform for social interactions for young adults and adolescents, usually aged between 10–25 years. Young social media users often post videos and photos to promote their own experiences, and to draw attention to their appearance, which allows them to get feedback from others (Hawes, Zimmer-Gembeck & Campbell, 2020).

Many studies have proved that adolescents internalize the appearance ideals that are conveyed to them through social media platforms and compare themselves with these ideals. On

the other hand, several studies have proved that viewing others' social media posts were related to social comparison, and this was found among adolescent males and females. Researchers found that viewing others' social media posts were indirectly related to the increase of body dissatisfaction through social comparisons concurrently among adolescent females and concurrently among adolescent males. Other experimental studies have reported that by viewing edited photos of other girls on the social media, body dissatisfaction among girls increases, especially among those who admit that they often compare themselves to others. Most of the research was focused on females because they have reported higher levels of body dissatisfaction (de Vries et al., 2019).

The interactive nature of the social media platforms enables users to comment publicly on each other's appearance, as well as their own appearance. This creates a complex system of appearance socialization and body image. Many studies have found that these online interactions may contribute to negative self-evaluation, and unrealistic appearance goals, which sometimes leads to lower moods and sensitive feelings, and this might become a source of stress. Moreover, it was reported that social media use is more likely to involve people in judgments and in social comparisons processes (Hawes, Zimmer-Gembeck & Campbell, 2020).

A study done on social media and body image has shown that social media use is positively related to body image problems and disordered eating (Cohen et al., 2019). Social media use has always been connected to eating disorders and poor body image for young women. To be more specific, posting and creating photos can result in risks for low self-esteem and eating disorders among girls and women beyond social media use alone. On the other hand, viewing others' photos are correlated with a decrease in life satisfaction (Fardouly et al., 2018).

To like a favorite Tweet, to heart an Instagram photo or a Facebook post are as simple as clicking a button, but these often and quick unassuming expressions of approvals can carry different and complex meanings (Butkowski, Dixon & Weeks, 2019).

The Likes on social media are instant positive evaluations that require little investment of energy or time from the liker. However, the total number of positive comments, negative comments, and Likes that any post receives can also serve as powerful tools for validation and self-assessment. For example, the number of Likes that people receive on their Facebook profile pictures has proved that it is positively related to their self-esteem; aggregated comments and Likes are apparently objective, numerical evaluations of the social success, and of the outward appearance of their recipient and their personality. It was also identified that the positive comment or feedback required to rate a self-representation as successful in the eyes of each user is highly subjective (Butkowski, Dixon & Weeks, 2019).

The features of social media sites provide users with the ability to visually enhance and edit images in many ways, similar to how media professionals modify photos of models and celebrities in magazines and all the other media outlets. Social media sites are unique; users not only can employ many photo editing techniques when they share images of themselves online, but also, they can broadcast these photos to reach many individuals such as friends, family, acquaintances, peers, and co-workers. Moreover, the photos that social media users share for themselves online can have meaningful social implications (Vendemia and DeAndrea, 2018).

Researchers have stated that social networking sites satisfy several adolescent developmental needs because they allow teens to practice identity establishment through performing self-presentation and self-expression such as editing and choosing photos. Besides, they provide many opportunities for youth to seek social approval from others through comments, likes and shares for

their posts, and this fulfills their desire for public recognition and personal visibility (Te'eni-Harari' and Eyal, 2017).

On a daily basis, almost 90% of young adults access social media. Researchers have turned away from general use to focus more on photo-based behaviors. This was identified in a meta-analysis that illustrated that the use of appearance-related features such as posting images has a stronger relationship with thin-ideal internalization among women than social media use in general. Moreover, the behaviors associated with body dissatisfaction and thin-ideal internalization include frequent engagement with photo-related activities such as, posting and editing selfies and doing self-surveillance such as checking likes. In contrast, research was done on males to show the differential effect of self-compassion on photo-based social media behaviors across genders. Men do often edit and post selfies for external validation and to cultivate their best appearance (Lonergan et al., 2019).

There is a considerable number of research studies conducted which show the effects of traditional media on body image, but there is a shortage in research in relating how social media use can affect body image either negatively or positively. Social media is an ideal platform that offers people access to a variety of information, videos, photos, and personal information. A study was done on social media and female body image and it was reported that about 46 percent of females felt that they are pressured to alter images of themselves on social media, especially their profile pictures, and about 41 percent of them ended up altering them in some way (Campbell-Phillips & Halder, 2019).

Research illustrated that Facebook photo activities have a small to moderate positive correlation with a drive for thinness, self-objectification, and thin-ideal internalization, while it was reported that there was a negative correlation with weight satisfaction. Researchers have

affirmed that women are more likely than men to use social media platforms to view others' photos; they engage in social media specifically to compare themselves with others. In contrast, men are more likely to use social media platforms to find friends. This study indicated that women feel worse about how they look than men on social media do (Hogue and Mills, 2019).

According to research, a recent phenomenon of posting inspirational fitness and health images and messages such as "Fitspiration" through social media reflects the cultural trends that construct the athletic, thin, ultra-fit body as an aesthetic ideal for women. Although the goal of Fitspiration was to inspire people to reach nutrition and fitness goals, research has reported that Fitspiration does not encourage exercise behaviors among women. Moreover, these messages and images emphasize appearance as a primary motivation to participate in such health behaviors, and they are far from innocuous, but rather have the potential to influence body image (Monks et al., 2020).

Researchers suggested that young women have difficulty identifying reshaped bodies in idealized social media images (Livingston, Holland & Fardouly, 2020). Experimental research has reported that even brief exposure to edited and idealized images of attractive or thin women on social media can negatively influence young women's body image, such as thoughts, people perceptions, and feelings about the way they look; this is because women always compare their own appearance to the other women in images, and judge themselves to be less attractive. This means making upward appearance comparisons (Livingston, Holland & Fardouly, 2020).

Some researchers suggested that specific interactions on Facebook or appearance-related content, rather than general use, were shown to be harmful to body image. especially when presented with images of attractive same-gender people on simulated Facebook profiles. It was reported that both women and men get lower body satisfaction and higher negative effects than those shown less

attractive people. Studies illustrated that greater photo activity, such as looking at photos of one's friends or updating one's profile pictures, are associated with huge body surveillance (Engeln et al., 2020).

2.3.1 Social Networking Sites and Body Dissatisfaction

Social networking sites are associated with a greater tendency to make appearance comparisons. Furthermore, both correlational and experimental studies have suggested that the relationship between body dissatisfaction and social networking sites may be partially mediated by appearance comparisons (Engeln et al., 2020).

Several studies reported that viewing others' social media posts were indirectly related to the increase in body dissatisfaction among adolescent girls and boys. In addition, an experimental study found that viewing edited photos of other girls on social media increase body dissatisfaction among adolescent girls, especially those who admitted they often compare themselves to others, although most of the research was focused on females because females report higher levels of body dissatisfaction on average (de Vries et al., 2019).

Adolescent's body dissatisfaction is also related to parental influences. Parents not only convey messages about appearance ideals to their children, but also the parent-adolescent relationship itself plays an essential role in the development of adolescents' body dissatisfaction. Researchers reported that when people feel secure in their relationships, it was found that they are less likely to think that they have to conform to appearance ideals in order to gain others' acceptance (de Vries et al., 2019).

Researchers have explored that one of the most important factors to body dissatisfaction and individuals' internalization of unattainable body ideals was offline peer influence. Two types of offline peer influences were associated with body image concerns: mainly to perceive negative

appearance evaluations from peers (appearance criticism) and to talk with friends about expectations for their bodies (appearance conversations) (Xiaojing, 2017).

Research has demonstrated that peer influence with eating pathology and body dissatisfaction in females plays an important role. It was reported that peer pressure for thinness was the main predictor of body dissatisfaction among adolescent females, especially in proximity to their opposite-sex mates. Moreover, it was reported that both parental and peer pressure for thinness predicted body dissatisfaction in adolescent females (Ferguson et al., 2014). A few studies have suggested that the relationship between social media use and body dissatisfaction appear to be similar across genders, and this was reported in a research that included both males and females and was conducted to understand the negative relationship between photo-based social media and body dissatisfaction within the population (Lonergan et al., 2019).

An experimental study has reported that young adults get more negative body images of themselves after looking at social media profile pictures of attractive users, compared to participants who were found with less negative body images after looking to less attractive profile pictures (Hawes, Zimmer-Gembeck & Campbell, 2020).

2.3.2 Social Networking Sites in Egypt

Internet usage in Egypt has been growing rapidly in the past decade, as part of the digital boom. The numbers of internet users were almost 6 times higher than what it was in 2010; reports showed that the average annual growth rate of internet users is about 22.2 percent (Eltigani, 2019).

Previous years have experienced a higher increase for internet users in Egypt. For example, in 2011 number of internet users have increased by 53 percent from 2010. While, in 2018 witnessed only 6 percent increase from the previous years. This is because internet became more accessible

and popular among Egyptians. According to the reports from Egypt ICT Indicators released by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT), showed that about 78 percent of Egyptians access the internet through Mobile Internet services (Eltigani, 2019). Since 2013, internet use has increased significantly in all the Arab countries. The increase in internet users from 2013 to 2019 is particularly striking in Egypt with almost 53 percent. While, Smartphone ownership in Egypt have increased by 23 percent between 2017 and 2019 (NU-Q, 2019).

The reported number of internet users in Egypt in October 2020 have reached 52.6 million user; the online audience is projected to reach 71.7 million users by 2025 (Degenhard, 2020a). While in October 2020 number of social media users in Egypt increased and reached 52.58 million user (Degenhard, 2020b). moreover, in July 2020 Egypt ranked #16 globally in the daily time spent on social media with an average of two hours and thirty-eight minutes per day (Enterprise, 2020).

2.3.3 Instagram Use and Body Image

Social media offers a lot of interactive photo-based platforms that can be used to react to other users and share any content. Instagram is a primarily photo-based platform, and it is the most popular and fastest-growing social media site nowadays. Instagram, in specific, is popular among young women, who have reported that they spend around 30 minutes per day on the site. The primary use of Instagram is to share and post images (Fardouly, Willburger & Vartanian, 2018). Instagram belongs to the most popular social networking site worldwide, with over 1 billion active users who visit and use Instagram every month (Clement, 2020c). Moreover, Instagram users can follow other people's accounts and search for any specific content by using hashtags (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2019).

In July 2020, it was identified that about 33.8 percent of global Instagram users were aged between 25 and 34 years, as shown in Figure (1) (Clement, 2020c). In addition, it was reported that about 13.9 percent of all the global active users were women between the ages of 18 and 24 years. To elaborate further; more than half of the global Instagram population worldwide are aged 34 years and younger, as shown in Figure (2) (Clement, 2020b).

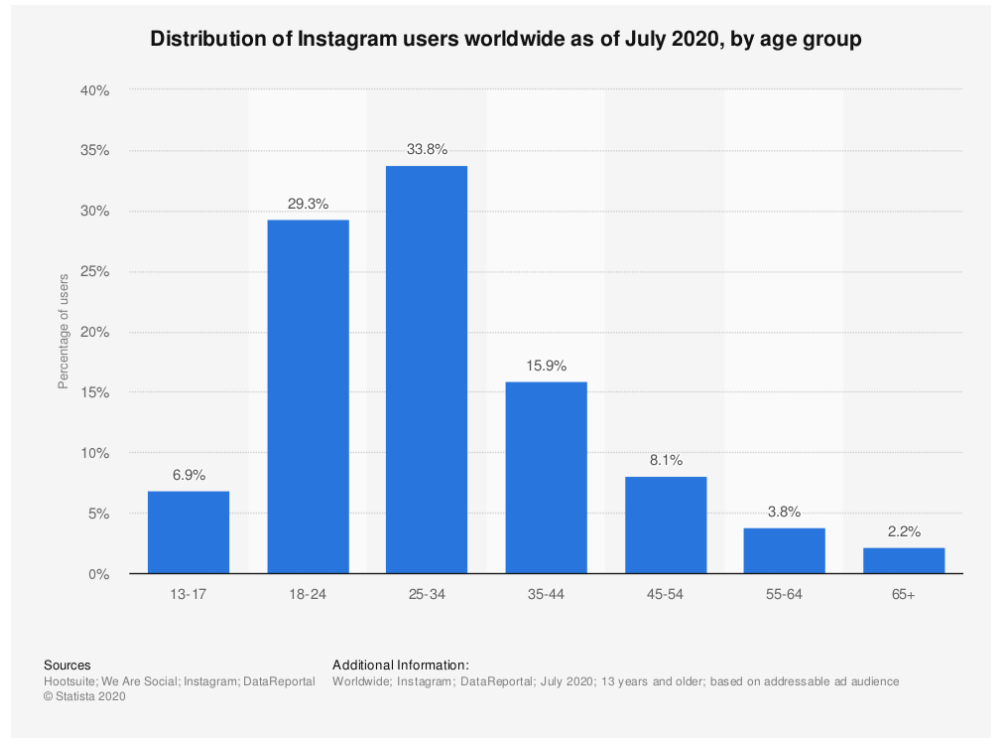


Figure 1: Distribution of Instagram Users Worldwide as of July 2020, by Age Group

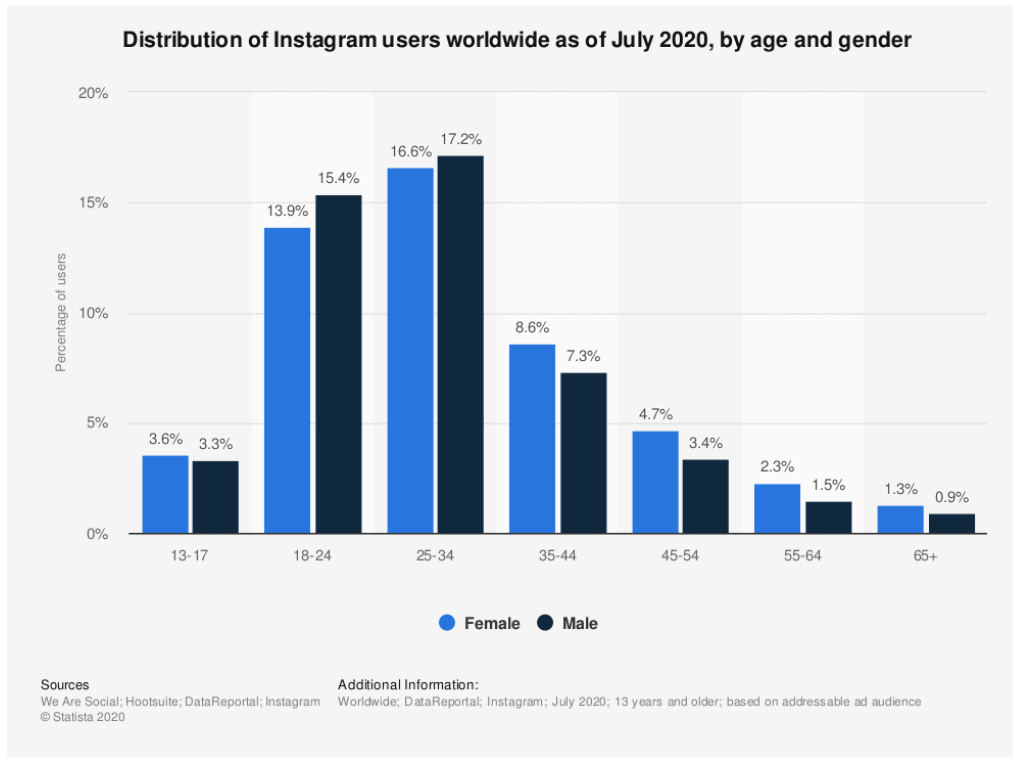


Figure 2: Distribution of Instagram Users Worldwide as of July 2020, by Age and Gender

In the United States, this platform is popular among young adults aged 18–29 (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2019). Studies have indicated that about 61% of girls are using Instagram versus 44% of boys; this increase in the usage of social media especially Instagram will have a negative effect on young women and adolescent girls in regard to their body satisfaction and their self-confidence (Lenhart, 2015).

As our study will be conducted in Egypt, the statistics present the distribution of Instagram users in Egypt in August 2020; these statistics will be broken down by gender. It was reported that males accounted for 56 percent, while females accounted for 44 percent of all active users in Egypt, as shown in Figure (3) (Clement, 2020a), In August 2020, the number of all Instagram users in Egypt reached 13495000 users, which accounts for 12.9% of the entire population; people aged between

18 to 24 years were the largest user group, as shown in Figure (4) (Instagram Users in Egypt, 2020).

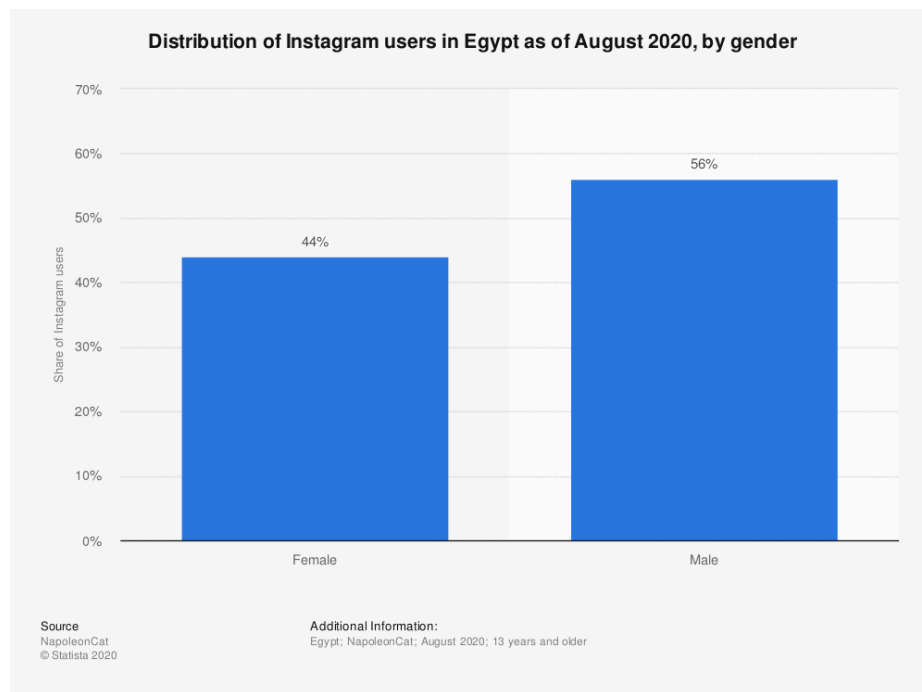


Figure 3: Distribution of Instagram Users in Egypt as of August 2020, by Gender

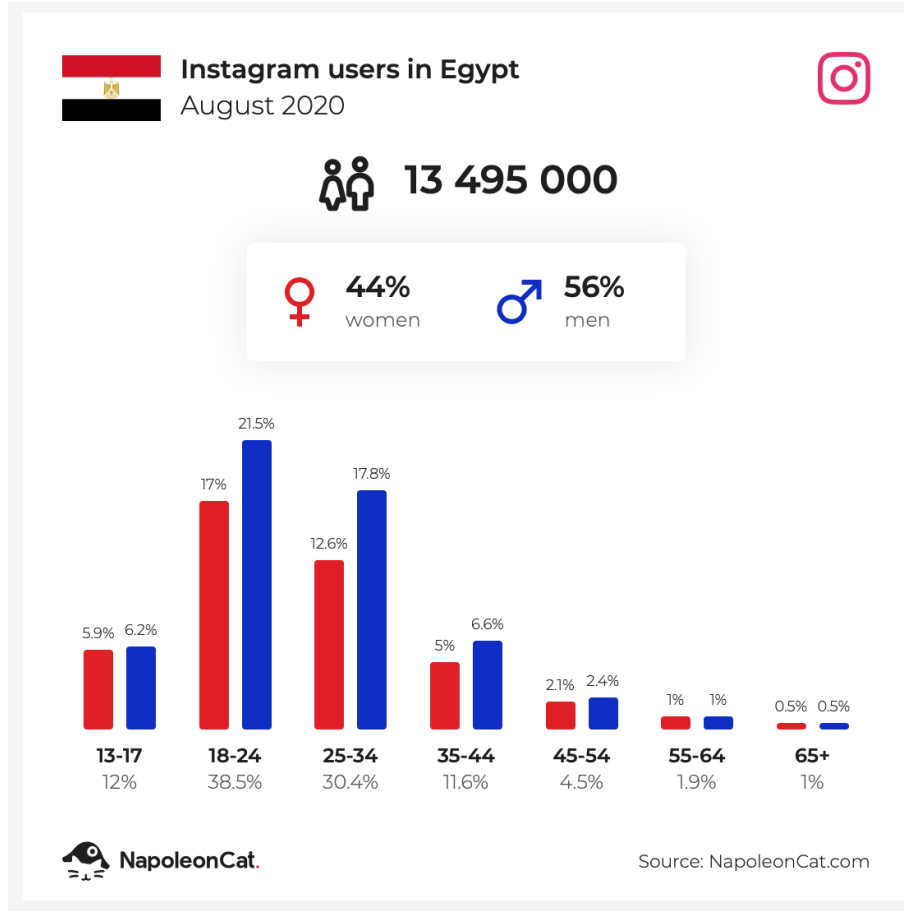


Figure 4: Instagram Users in Egypt – August 2020

Some scholars have suggested that Instagram can be more detrimental to women's appearance concerns than other social networking sites, such as Facebook, in that it contains varied content (Fardouly, Willburger & Vartanian, 2018). In some correlational studies, it was demonstrated that Instagram use had been associated with body dissatisfaction and body surveillance among women. On the other hand, limited experimental research has found that exposure to the idealized Instagram images negatively impacts women's state body satisfaction (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2019).

Instagram users always upload their best photos only; the photos that have been carefully selected and taken well in order to maximize attractiveness. Besides, those uploaded photos are sometimes enhanced by using filters and digital editing tools. Through that, they get engaged in a

reciprocal process termed social surveillance whereby people not only examine the content uploaded by others, but also examine their own posts from people's points of view. Social surveillance is essential because, when users view the content posted by others, they formulate a view of what is accepted, unaccepted, or normal in the community; accordingly, they modify their own posts. This can show that comparisons with Instagram peers are often upwards in direction and the result is dissatisfaction with one's own body and appearance. Moreover, some experimental studies have found that state appearance comparison mediates the observed effects of idealized Instagram images on body dissatisfaction (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2019).

Since Instagram is an image-based social media platform, users frequently post photos of themselves such as selfies. Instagram includes photos of the users engaging in different activities with their pets, family, or friends. These photographs often evoke comments from the users. These comments sometimes include remarks on the individual appearance, so the more they get involved with the site, the more exposure they can have. This can include comments about their physical traits which might be associated with the higher rates of body surveillance and self-objectification (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

A recent experiment has presented adolescent girls, original or digitally manipulated Instagram selfies and found that the reshaped and retouched selfies have negatively affected girls' body image and body satisfaction, especially for those who are high in social comparison. However, it is still unclear how the same selfies could be evaluated differently if viewers saw clear indications of photo editing and manipulation. Researchers have shown some women a series of Instagram images for attractive women with and without disclaimer comments, and they have reported that there were no differences in the viewer's body dissatisfaction. Moreover, they have found that

disclaimer comments have resulted in less favorable impressions of other women (Vendemia & DeAndrea, 2018).

Instagram can influence body images in different ways. One experimental study has reported that exposure to fitspiration images that were taken from Instagram led to negative moods and greater body dissatisfaction among young women; this was related to how frequently women compare their appearance to others in those images during exposure, so we can analyze that regular viewing of fitspiration images might be associated with body dissatisfaction and self-objectification (Fardouly, Willburger & Vartanian, 2018).

Researchers have examined the absence and the presence of appearance-related inspirational comments overlaid on fitspiration images of females exercising. The study found that body dissatisfaction and negative mood outcomes occurred regardless of the presence of text. On the other hand, when the text was presented as replies from other Instagram users to photos posted by attractive females, it was reported that the comments praising the physical appearance led to greater body dissatisfaction in observers than comments referring to the location or background of the images (Davies, Turner & Udell, 2020).

Objectification Theory, in particular, can be relevant in the context of the photographic social networking sites like Instagram. It was reported that Instagram is inherently objectifying, in that people post photos of themselves and others precisely to be commented on and to be looked at. No experimental research has investigated the potential triggering of state self-objectification by Instagram or other social networking sites. However, any effect could be expected to accumulate with continuing exposure. To support the above, recent correlational studies have found a positive relationship between young women's Instagram use and trait measures of self-objectification (Tiggemann & Barbato, 2018).

Accordingly, the Instagram environment somehow presents unrealistic ideals for women. Recent correlational studies have found that Instagram use was positively related to young female's body dissatisfaction and drive for thinness through appearance comparison. In addition, experimental research has reported that exposure to the idealized Instagram photos (compared to control images) has a huge impact on young adult women's body image (Tiggemann & Barbato, 2018).

A correlational study has reported that there is a relationship between viewing celebrity images or worshipping celebrities and body image concerns. Moreover, many studies have shown that women who frequently use celebrities as their target for appearance comparison as well as social comparisons to celebrities on social media are associated with self-objectification and body dissatisfaction (Brown & Tiggemann, 2020).

Qualitative research has found that the more Likes are considered as an acceptance of peer status and popularity, as well as being a numerical indicator of consensually determined physical beauty. Researchers have documented a number of strategies that women use to get Likes for their own photos in order to obtain validation and attention, such as uploading photos at a specific time of day or using filters or digital editing tools. (Tiggemann et al., 2018).

A recent study on female adolescents found a relation between both negative and positive general appearance commentary and body surveillance, but the positive appearance commentary was only related to self-objectification; even positive appearance commentary focuses the female attention away from how she looks or how she feels (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Research has demonstrated that among college females, both positive and negative general appearance commentaries were related to more body dissatisfaction, but the negative appearance commentary was only linked to body surveillance; the results show that neither positive nor

negative appearance commentaries were related to self-objectification; these contradictory findings warrant further attention (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

2.4 Role of Feminist Beliefs and its Relation to Body Image

Predictors of body surveillance and self-objectification along with other factors that mediate the relationship between Instagram use and these variables need to be identified to understand better how exposure to social media affects women. Moreover, possible protective and risk factors that can influence these relations need to be also explained. One possible variable that can moderate this relation is feminism (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Generally, feminism is commonly regarded as a political movement and belief system that is based on the notion that women should possess the same economic, social and political power as men; that oppressive systems attempting and want to keep women subjugated should be challenged; and that women's lack of power might affect their emotional well-being and other experiences. In addition, feminism rejects the cultural standards of beauty, and criticizes society's hyper-focus on women's bodies and objectification practices. The result of that is that feminist beliefs may strengthen women's ability to reject cultural standards of beauty, and experiences of sexual objectification and maintain focus on the inner personal experiences (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Research has indicated that the serious negative consequences of self-objectification for women have led to a lot of protective factors; one of these essential protective factors can be a feminist identity. To elaborate further, feminist ideology proves that women's self-worth should not be determined by their physical appearance. Studies have emphasized that the more women subscribe to feminist attitudes, the less they evaluate themselves solely on their physical appearance (Peterson, Grippo & Tantleff-Dunn, 2008).

A recent meta-analysis has explained that women who endorse a feminist identity are less likely to report body image problems and bulimic symptoms. In spite of the number of women who are exposed to the promotion of the thin ideal and media endorsement, women who were identified with strong feminist beliefs might be provided with a critical and unique perspective on body-related messages; consequently, they will be less likely to internalize those standards and ideals (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Research has found that women who possess higher levels of feminist beliefs reported that they experience similar rates of body dissatisfaction, as those with lower levels of feminist beliefs when they are faced with upward social comparisons. However, feminist women did not act on these feelings through body surveillance. Thus, they demonstrate the possible protective role that feminist beliefs may play in linking appearance comparison and body surveillance and self-objectification (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Feminist beliefs help women to maintain focus on their subjective inner experiences, and thus buffer the possible relations between social networking sites use and appearance comparison and internalization of cultural standards of beauty (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Feminist beliefs might also characterize the indirect association between Instagram usage and body surveillance and self-objectification through higher rates of both upward and downward appearance comparison, and greater internalization of cultural standards of beauty. However, research is still needed to examine the role of feminist beliefs among these variables (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Although the women exposed to the thin ideal through the media, but who are hold higher levels of feminist beliefs may serve as a buffer. Even though feminist women reject the sociocultural

messages about appearance and the traditional gender, they still report shape and weight concerns; the relationship between them still complex (Myers et al., 2012).

A meta-analytic study examined the relationship between body attitudes and feminist beliefs. The study showed that a feminist identity helped in protecting against extreme body dissatisfaction, even though a significant variability was found in the effect sizes across studies. It is still unclear if women who hold feminist beliefs could engage in fewer appearance-focused comparisons than women who do not hold such beliefs. Therefore, feminist beliefs may be an important moderating variable to consider when examining the relationship between body image disturbance and appearance-focused social comparisons (Myers et al., 2012).

A few studies have suggested that feminist beliefs may moderate the relationship between women's body experiences and experienced cultural pressures. For example, in their quantitative study of predominantly white college women, researchers have found that feminist beliefs moderated the relationship between body image disturbance and appearance-focused comparisons. Moreover, women who hold feminist beliefs still made appearance comparisons that lead to body dissatisfaction. On the other hand, they were less likely to respond to body dissatisfaction, by engaging in obsessive behaviors to improve their appearance and this showed that they were able to dismiss the feelings of body dissatisfaction (Borowsky et al., 2015). Many researchers have stated that if the feminist perspective can help in explaining the data, it can also be used to try to help in preventing body dissatisfaction (Murnen & Smolak, 2008).

There are many reasons why the feminist perspective could prevent women from developing body-related problems; the feminist perspective might allow women to see that the thin ideal and objectification are sources of women's oppression that should be resisted. For example, the feminist women should be more critical of media portrayals of women, and might find ways

to avoid exposure to the unrealistic or unhealthy depictions of women; if those women experience sexist discrimination in other ways, they will not personalize the experience, but instead, they will search for a cultural explanation which might prevent internalization of blame (Murnen & Smolak, 2008).

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

The current study employs the theories of Cultivation and Self-Objectification to analyze the effect of Instagram use on young women's body image and self-objectification in Egypt.

3.1 The Theory of Cultivation

Mass media, which are considered the most important source of aesthetic standards among young girls and women, often promote unrealistic ideals of extremely thin body shapes. The media appear to play a dual role regarding adolescent girls' body images. Conversely, mass media are popular and ubiquitous places that provide real-world information and establish social standards (Veldhuis et al., 2014). By promoting certain body types through either the stigmatization of overweight bodies or the idealization of overly thin physiques, the media play an essential role in perpetuating norms about what types of bodies are acceptable, desirable, or attractive for men and women (Mastro & Figueroa-Caballero, 2018).

Since the media started to become a prominent part of our culture, Cultivation Theory has examined the effects of large amounts of media intake and the ability they have to change the concept of reality for people. The theory explains that the more people are exposed to the socially constructed realities that they experience in the media, the more likely they perceive that as reality (Tyer, 2016).

Cultivation Theory was proposed by George Gerbner (1969). It is defined as the independent contributions television viewing makes to viewer conceptions of social reality (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). The theory suggests that media have a cumulative effect over time through repetitive, frequent exposure. The researchers suggested that people who consume large amounts of TV programs were more likely to hold perceptions of the real world that reflect their TV experience, for example. Their perceptions of reality were more comparable to TV reality

(Kinnally & Vonderen, 2014). Traditionally Cultivation Theory is associated with the effects of television viewing with the attempt to understand the connection between what people watch and what they believe to be true or real (Tyer, 2016)

The theory expanded and stated that a relationship exists between one's concepts of reality and media exposure; the theory demonstrated that the increase in media exposure might lead to an internalization of these media messages as reality. This theory is often used in media and violence studies, but it is now applied on body image due to the increase in the amount of research focusing on body image (O'Brien, 2015).

Research has indicated that recurrent television patterns of images are society's primary source of socialization, and the total exposure to these images cultivates basic assumptions and common conceptions of societal norms, values, and facts (Kubic & Chory, 2007).

Cultivation has been related to two levels of effects, described as first-and second-order effects. The first-order effect revolves around the connection between TV exposure and judgments regarding the prevalence of occurrences in society such as violent acts while the second-order effects explain the relationship between TV exposure and attitudes towards society such as the idea that the world is a dangerous and mean place, or the notion that thinness is related to success. When considering the effect of body images, it is essential to consider the differences between these processes and the notion that cultivation may not always create attitudes, but it can reinforce them (Kinnally & Vonderen, 2014).

Another view of Cultivation Theory that should be considered within the context of body image is that TV messages are not received and transmitted in a vacuum. TV is an essential source of social information among many people, such as peers and parents. The effect of TV within this social sphere has been explained as resonance. Researchers have identified resonance as a notion

that viewers' life experiences affect their perceptions of the televised messages. To illustrate further, if viewers' life experiences are similar to the media content that they are viewing, the media messages are more likely to have an effect on them; if we applied this perspective on body dissatisfaction, we could demonstrate that if a viewer observes a situation in which physical appearance and thinness are socially rewarded, and observes a similar situation portrayed on TV, the message linking thinness and social desirability may be more readily retrieved during a judgment or an evaluation regarding appearance through resonance (Kinnally & Vonderen, 2014).

Researchers have conducted a study to identify how Cultivation Theory could shape people's beliefs about medical history after watching medical dramas. The study involved a sample of national adults in the United States. The researchers stated that heavy viewing of medical television dramas is linked to more fatalistic beliefs about illness. Moreover, a survey analysis was administered to ask participants on their television viewing habits and their medical history; the findings have shown that there was a correlation between adults' false beliefs about health and heavier television viewing (Tyer, 2016).

Cultivation research has investigated a relationship between media consumption and attitudes and beliefs about women. In the United States, researchers have used cultivation analysis to examine women's roles on television and sexist attitudes over a decade; they found that women were always depicted in the traditional sex roles on television, for example, being romantically involved or participating in homemaking activities or being family-oriented. Heavy viewers of television have reported more sexist beliefs than light viewers (Fox & Potocki, 2016). Recent research on cultivation effects has offered broader implications of television viewing, such as the impacts of the local news and program genres and the effects on the viewers' well-

being and behaviors, as well as the effects on the viewers' value judgments across different social arenas. In addition, previous research demonstrated the effects of television viewing on young viewers' heightened materialism and impaired well-being. Cultivation effects studies have identified that heavy television viewers tend to overestimate the levels of affluence across households in the society and engage in upward social comparisons (Ho et al., 2019).

According to the Cultivation Theory, consistent exposure to the repeated images and themes over time can lead individuals to adopt these same perspectives of the world and themselves; this process being known as assimilation. Researchers have suggested that repeated exposure to the depictions of sexualization can lead girls to accept it as ideal and normative (Jongelien et al., 2016). Research on body images identified the influence of media consumption on females' perceptions of their bodies. Since the bias of body depiction in the media seems to be stronger for females than for males, this illustrates that gender can be related to the accessibility of specific types of information on beauty and attractiveness meaning that cultivation effects should differ for women and men. Previous research refers especially to the self-perceptions and not to social perceptions about attractiveness, and researchers have suggested that cultivation effects are related to either social, or to self-perceptions differing for women and men. This can be explained through the gender differences in self-confidence and self-construal (Eisend & Möller, 2007).

Although frequent users of television are more likely to be susceptible to cultivation effects, accordingly, media use can influence perceptions about the physical features of the world, for example, the rates of obesity in societies (i.e., first-order effects), as well as the value placed on social phenomena (i.e., second-order effects), for example, the thin ideal. Research on cultivation in this context suggests that media exposure not only influences perceptions about one's own

weight and norms about thinness but also affects views on those who do not conform to these ideals (Mastro & Figueroa-Caballero, 2018).

Cultivation Theory argues that even minimal exposure to media can have an effect over time. According to this theory, every exposure to the thin-idealized images can have a minimal negative effect on females, but years of small exposure episodes can compound to create lasting body dissatisfaction. Moreover, body dissatisfaction and drive for thinness that are promoted through the media have many negative psychological outcomes including lower psychological well-being, negative self-perception, disordered eating, and even later obesity (Kiefner-Burmeister & Musher-Eizenman, 2018). Research has identified that there are some types of programs which attract the attention of viewers. Researchers have found that the exposure to the makeover programs are negatively related to self-esteem and positively related to body dissatisfaction and perfectionism (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

One of the most common phenomena in Cultivation Theory is mainstreaming. It means that heavy television viewers' beliefs tend to share common things that lighter viewers' beliefs do not; the Mainstreaming effects have been identified for expectations of the ideal female waist, hip, and bust sizes. Researchers have stated that heavier television viewers who watched American college women reported the same thinner ideals, as was found in previous studies. However, those females who deviated from this norm felt compelled to meet it: the smaller busted viewers favored augmentation surgeries, while the larger-busted viewers favored breast reduction surgeries (Martins et al., 2009).

3.2 Cultivation Theory and Body Image

The media is constantly surrounding females with idealized images of extremely thin women. Research has shown that about 95 percent of women cannot attain these bodies

naturally, and they believe that they are abnormal, and their lives can be improved with weight loss. By applying Cultivation Theory to the thin ideal, we can identify that the more women are exposed to these messages, the more likely they are to feel dissatisfied with their bodies. In another study conducted in 1996, researchers found that after being exposed to thin women's images, the subjects surveyed felt less satisfied with their bodies. Other studies showed similar results when they randomly exposed undergraduate females to pictures from magazines. Findings have shown that exposure to pictures of ultra-thin models have produced feelings of shame, guilt, insecurity, stress, depression, and body dissatisfaction (O'Brien, 2015).

Cultivation theorists have suggested that television and its' viewers interact in the distribution and creation of TV messages, which, in turn, affect the maintenance, development or exploitation of societies' beliefs, needs, and values. Moreover, researchers have discovered that the internalization of the thin ideal body image is due to the repeated exposure to the thin ideal media depictions. Research was conducted with samples of female adolescents and declared that total TV viewing was not related to the perceived importance of appearance or weight concerns, but the exposure to music videos was found to be positively related to both of them (Kubic & Chory, 2007).

Television remains the form of media that is mostly consumed by many countries as US adolescents between the ages of 8 and 18 years watch an average of three hours of television every day. Television programs frequently present unattainable and unrealistic body ideals, especially for women and girls (Schooler and Trinh, 2011).

An experiment was conducted and an association was found between body dissatisfaction and television use, especially among adolescent girls, but not in boys. The increase in body dissatisfaction was found after viewing commercials that reflected the thin ideals. In addition,

both girls and boys have reported an increase in the negative moods after viewing commercials representing the thin ideal. Based on this theory of media effect, prior attempts to connect body satisfaction to television use focused on single indicators of television use, such as hours spent watching television reflecting the thin ideal or hours spent watching soap operas but this approach may not capture the complexity of adolescents' media use. According to the Media Practice Model, adolescents interpret and select media based on their developing identities. When adolescents decide which magazines to read, which television shows to watch or which genre of music to listen to, they do that to define themselves (Schooler and Trinh, 2011). In support of Cultivation Theory, researchers have found that overall television exposure predicted a thinner ideal adult body shape and this was identified in a longitudinal study with girls aged between 7–12 years living in the United States. Moreover, in another study of an elementary school for girls and boys, researchers stated that television exposure among American boys was correlated with an understanding that fatness was socially stigmatized and thinness was socially valued. They also stated that boys who were heavy television viewers tended to negatively stereotype the fat girl by assuming that she will be greedy, lazy and will have no friends (Martins et al., 2009)

The effect of cultivated body image realities extends far beyond advertisements and images. However, there is a profitable market devoted to encouraging ultra-thin ideals, aided by fitness, diet, and food industries. The media is working on adopting the message that it is women's responsibility to achieve the ultra-slender body ideal. The messages from those industries working to connect prosperity to thinness are repeated through magazines, radio, television, and other media outlets. A study was conducted and found that body image disturbance and television images were linked to each other, while in content analysis, the study found that there

were differences in the portrayal of female video game characters versus actual women (O'Brien, 2015).

3.3 Cultivation Theory, Social Networking Sites and their Relation to Body Image

As Cultivation Theory is applicable to all other media outlets, it would be reasonable to assume that the Internet should be examined for potential impact.

Some scholars have started to investigate the relation between thin ideal and Internet culture, but the field is still relatively unexplored. Researchers have investigated the relationship between exposure to the Internet and body image concerns, and they have discovered that the increase in Internet activities could lead to higher body image problems and body dissatisfaction (O'Brien, 2015). Nowadays, consumers are exposed to a variety of body images from around the globe on social networking sites. They might be positively influenced by these images viewed on social media rather than by images seen on fashion magazines or TV (Mingoia et al., 2017).

The results of studies exploring the relationship between the use of social networking sites (SNSs) and internalization of a thin ideal have indicated that the more frequent exposure to SNSs is linked to a higher internalization of the thin ideal. Researchers conducted a meta-analysis of experimental and correlational studies to investigate the relationship between internalization of the thin ideal in women and traditional media use and they have found that the internalization of a thin ideal is associated with women's use of traditional media. However, in another study, researchers reported a lack of association to an internalized thin ideal when SNS use was measured as a construct of the overall use of a website. Moreover, some scholars found that younger women reported higher levels of thin-ideal internalization than middle-aged and older women. On the other hand, the studies that operationalized the use of SNSs related specifically

to appearance such as commenting or viewing images on SNSs have found stronger relationships with the internalized ideal (Mingoia et al., 2017).

To understand the media effects of SNSs compared to television viewers, researchers have found that users of SNS were less passive regarding the media messages, as they can distribute and produce content to their friends and other users (Ho et al., 2019).

SNSs also allow users to communicate and respond to content providers. Thus, social media have enabled mutual communication about the messages and the shared content between senders and receivers (Ho et al., 2019).

The social networking site, "Instagram", offers a popular backdrop for fashion, fitness, and other body-related media content; surprisingly, it was found that the extensive use of Instagram has been identified as an antecedent of reduced self-esteem and body dissatisfaction. However, other consequences of Instagram homogenized, often visually enhanced, content remains somehow neglected in the scientific discourse (Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2016). The concept of cultivation is applicable to the fans who are following their favorite celebrities on social media platforms and specifically Instagram; it gives them a false feeling of the reality in which they perceive the body, beauty, and lifestyle of their favorite celebrities as attainable in their own lives (Tyer, 2016).

3.4 self-objectification

Objectification theory was developed by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997). it articulates how females become the objects of male attention and sexual interest at the onset of puberty; in response to that girls may come to view their bodies as objects to be evaluated by others, specifically men and boys. Individuals who are high in self-objectification value their bodies appearance over its function. because the objectification of women is so widespread,

objectification theory predicts that most adult women will self-objectify, at least to some extent; the theory is still not clear about predictions for female adolescents and children; because women are objectified more than men, objectification theory predicts that girls and women will self-objectify more than do boys and men (Daniels, Zurbriggen, & Ward, 2020).

This theory argues that females often regarded as objects by society; this by focusing on parts or all of their bodies in a sexual context rather than on their abilities. As a result of that woman is not seen as an entire person, but instead it considered to be represented entirely by her body or by several parts of her body (Myers & Crowther, 2007).

The consequences of self-objectification of women who are treating themselves as objects to be evaluated and viewed based upon their appearance have a negative effects; this includes anxiety, sense of shame as well as eating disorders and depression (Myers & Crowther, 2007).

Analyses of media contributions to self-objectification extend to social media; where approaches have changed over time as social media have changed. Most of the research has started to use measures of media exposure to investigate the relationship between self-objectification and social media use (Daniels, Zurbriggen, & Ward, 2020).

3.5 Social Networking Sites, Self-Objectification and Body Surveillance

Social networking sites started to be an integral part of many individuals' daily lives, and have started to be a method for anyone's self-presentation. Many users choose to make their online accounts through photo selection on their profiles. Those pictures are not chosen randomly; female users always want to present themselves as sociable and friendly, for example, when they post pictures for themselves in which they look attractive, wearing pleasing attire or posed in a beautiful place. All of this being more important for females than male users (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

According to researchers, people in college who use social media appear to post pictures that are more likely to be met with social approvals. One way this social approval or disapproval can be expressed online can be through photo commentaries made public by social networking friends (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Many studies have supported the direct relationship between time spent on social networking sites and body surveillance and self-objectification. In a longitudinal study, it was identified that social media use predicted self-objectification and appearance-focused social media use; for example, monitoring peers who are attractive online led to increased body surveillance and self-objectification among female adolescents (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Some researchers who were exploring Facebook use, which includes textual information as well as images they found an increase in exposure and appearance focus. For example, viewing, posting or commenting on the uploaded photos were a predictor of self-objectification among women; those findings indicated that image-based activities on social media might cause huge problems (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Another factor that researchers have further identified might be related to presenting the self in objectified ways on social media is the audience response. The Like feature on social networking sites, such as Facebook and Instagram, where users, without any effort, provide positive feedback on the content of others with a click of a button, it shows an interest here since it offers an easily quantifiable and unambiguous measure of positive feedback from the audience (Bell, Cassarly & Dunbar, 2018).

Recent study on young women has shown that engaging in photo-based activities on Facebook, such as sharing their own photos, looking at photos that were posted by others, and making an effort in selecting and editing one's selfies before posting them online, are all related

to body image concerns. On the other hand, some experimental studies have found that exposure to the idealized images of women on social media, whether it's the curvy ideals or fitspiration, has led to an increase in the negative mood, self-objectification and body dissatisfaction in women (Cohen, Fardouly, Newton-John & Slater, 2019). So those women tend to edit their photos before uploading on Instagram using the digital editing tools to feel satisfied with their bodies.

Other research on Facebook use has reported that there is support for some peer practices that might evoke objectified body consciousness; one such practice is viewing peers' photos on the profile pages and on the newsfeed (Manago et al., 2014).

As social media continue to evolve, it is beneficial to explore how they might influence people's body dissatisfaction and overcome this research gap. We will systematically scrutinize this social media platform, Instagram, as a cultivation system for weight-related cognitions. So, in this research study, our main focus will be on Instagram and how young Egyptian women got influenced by using the platform and how the more hours they spend on Instagram makes them dissatisfied with their bodies and how Cultivation Theory applies to this specific social media platform and how self-objectification is related to body image. This work is significant because the researcher used both cultivation and objectification theories, which was no one has done this before and we applying it in Egypt.

Chapter Four: Hypotheses and Measurements

In this chapter, we will discuss the hypotheses and the measurements that were used in this study. This chapter includes two main sections: the hypotheses and research questions section, and the operationalization and measurement of the variables section.

4.1 Hypotheses and Research Questions

Based on previous cultivation and self-objectification research, exploratory research questions and hypotheses are proposed to analyze the effect of Instagram on young women's body image and self-objectification in Egypt.

RQ1: Does the content of the comments on images affect Instagram users' body image positively or negatively?

H1: There is a direct relation between time spent on Instagram and body surveillance.

H2: There is an association between using photo editing tools and body dissatisfaction.

H3: The more hours spent on Instagram, the more likely to get body dissatisfaction.

H4: The more Likes on Instagram content, the more satisfaction of one's body shape and size

H5: Young Egyptian women will significantly have high levels of internalization of appearance ideals.

H6: There is an association between time spent on Instagram and Internalization of Appearance ideal.

H7: Feminist beliefs will moderate the direct relationship between Instagram usage and body surveillance and self-objectification.

RQ1 Explores whether the content of the comments that Instagram users receive from their friends, peers, or families on their images will affect their body dissatisfaction negatively or positively, but neither positive nor negative appearance commentary will be related to self-objectification.

H1 predicted that there is a direct relationship between time spent on Instagram and body surveillance. To elaborate further when they monitor peers or celebrities etc. who are attractive online might lead to the increase in body surveillance. **H2** explanation for this connection is that people who are already dissatisfied with their bodies, they tend to digitally edit their photos before uploading them on Instagram. In other words, according to the pressure they receive from viewing photos of other people on Instagram they get dissatisfied from their bodies, so they upload photos that are edited so they don't feel ashamed of themselves. Therefore, they use those filters and editing tools to enhance their body features to look great on Instagram. According to Cultivation Theory, **H3** predicted that the frequent use and the more hours spent on Instagram the more likely young Egyptian women get dissatisfied with their bodies. Moreover, **H4** also predicted that the more Likes they get on Instagram, the more they get satisfied with their bodies. To elaborate further, they feel that they are accepted by others when they get more Likes on the content they upload on Instagram, whether it is a photo or a video.

H5 predicted that young Egyptian women will significantly have high levels of internalization of appearance ideals; in other words, younger women will feel pressured from peers, family, and Instagram to look attractive and thinner. additionally, **H6** expected that there is a relationship between time spent on Instagram and Internalization of Appearance ideal. To elaborate further, women who spend more hours on Instagram tend to have high internalization for appearance ideal. Finally, **H7** predicted that feminist beliefs would moderate the direct relationship between Instagram usage and body surveillance and self-objectification; in other words, the more women subscribe to feminist attitudes, the less they evaluate themselves on their physical appearance. To elaborate further, if the feministic beliefs are higher and self-objectification and body surveillance are lower; they will less evaluate themselves on their physical appearance.

4.2 Operationalization and Measurement of Variables

This research adapted the measurements of some constructs from past scholars; however, some modifications were made to the measurement tools in other constructs in order to fit the purpose of the study.

4.2.1 Construct (1): Demographics, Instagram Usage and Involvement.

In Table (1), demographics' variable is being represented through gender, age, marital status, occupational position and area of living in Egypt and was developed by the researcher. As for the variables of Instagram usage and involvement, the constructs were developed by the researcher.

Table 1: Operationalization of Demographics and Instagram Usage and Involvement Variables.

Variable	Construct	Measurement	Choices
Demographics	Gender	Nominal	Male/Female/Prefer not to answer
	Age	Ordinal	From +18 to +40
	Marital Status	Nominal	From single to widowed
	Area in Egypt	Nominal	Tagamoa/Heliopolis/Nasr City/Zamalek/6 th of
	Occupational Position	Ordinal	October/Other From Unemployed to retired
Instagram Usage and Involvement	Instagram Usage	Nominal	Yes/No
	Total Hours	Ordinal	From less than an hour to +10 hours
	Uploaded Photos	Ordinal	From zero to +15
	Digital Editing Tools	Ordinal	From always to never
	Satisfaction from Likes	Nominal	Yes/No/Sometimes

4.2.2 Construct (2): Body Surveillance and Body Shame.

Body Surveillance was used to measure the degree to which individuals are concerned about how their bodies appear to others rather than their functionality, while the Body Shame was used to measure the degree to which individuals feel ashamed of their bodies. Both Body Surveillance and Body Shame subscales were adapted from the youth version of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBC) that was developed by Lindberg et al. in 2006.

The researcher took some items from the scale that are relevant and fit the study to do the measurements. The items in this scale were rated on a 7–point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Table 2: Representing constructs for the Body Surveillance and Body Shame variables.

Item	Source
Body Surveillance	(Lindberg et al., 2006).
1. I often compare how I look with how other people look.	
2. During the day, I think about how I look many times.	
3. I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing make me look good.	
4. I often worry about how I look to other people.	
Body Shame	
5. I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made an effort to look my best.	
6. I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh	

4.2.3 Construct (3): The Body Shape.

Body shape was used to measure the concerns about body. This scale was adapted from The Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ) that was developed by Cooper et al. in 1987.

The researcher took some items from the scale that are relevant and fit the study to do the measurements. The items in this scale were rated on a 6–point Likert-type scale ranging from Never to Always.

Table 3: Representing Constructs for the Body Shape variable.

Item	Source
1. Have you been so worried about your shape that you have been feeling you ought to diet?	(Cooper et al., 1987).
2. Have you been worried that you might become fat (or fatter)?	
3. Has feeling full (e.g., after eating a large meal) made you feel fat?	
4. Have you felt so bad about your shape that you have cried?	
5. Have eating even a small amount of food made you feel fat?	
6. Have you noticed the shape of other women and felt that your own shape compared unfavorably?	
7. Has thinking about your shape interfered with your ability to concentrate (e.g., while watching television, reading, listening to conversations)?	
8. Have you not gone out to social occasions (e.g., parties) because you have felt bad about your shape?	
9. Have you felt happiest about your shape when your stomach has been empty (e.g., in the morning)?	
10. Have you vomited in order to feel thinner?	

Item	Source
11. Have you pinched areas of your body to see how much fat there is?	
12. Have you taken laxatives in order to feel thinner?	

4.2.4 Construct (4): Internalization of Appearance Ideals.

Internalization of appearance ideals was used to measure the personal acceptance of societal ideals and appearance pressures such as pressures to achieve the societal ideal and pressures from family, peers or media (Instagram). This scale was adapted from The Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Questionnaire-4-Revised (SATAQ-4R) that was developed by Schaefer et al. in 2017. The researcher took some items from the scale that are relevant and fit the study to do the measurements. The items in this scale were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from Definitely Disagree to Definitely Agree.

Table 4: Representing Constructs for the Internalization of Appearance Ideals Variable.

Item	Source
1. It is important for me to look good in the clothes I wear.	(Schaefer et al., 2017).
2. I want my body to look very thin.	
3. I think a lot about my appearance.	
4. I don't want my body to look muscular.	
5. I want my body to look very lean.	
6. It is important to me to be attractive.	
7. I think a lot about having very little body fat.	
8. I don't think much about how I look.	

Item	Source
9. I feel pressure from family members to look thinner.	
10. Family members encourage me to get in better shape.	
11. I feel pressure from my peers to improve my appearance.	
12. I feel pressure from Instagram to look thinner.	
13. I feel pressure from Instagram to improve my appearance.	

4.2.5 Construct (5): Appearance-Related Commentary.

The appearance-related Commentary was used to measure the frequency of receiving appearance-related commentaries on Instagram. It is a 14-item instrument to assess both positive and negative commentaries. This scale was adapted from Feltman & Szymanski in 2017.

The researcher took some items from the scale that are relevant and fit the study to do the measurements. The items in this scale were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from Never to Always.

Table 5: Representing Constructs for the Appearance-Related Commentary Variable.

Item	Source
<p>Negative Commentary</p> <p>1. How often do you receive negative comments about your physical features e.g., bad hair day, you have a big nose etc. on Instagram?</p>	<p>(Feltman & Szymanski, 2017).</p>
<p>2. How often do you receive negative comments about your style e.g., that outfit is awful, your dress makes you look fat etc. on Instagram?</p>	
<p>3. How often do people post negative comments about your appearance via Instagram?</p>	
<p>Positive Commentary</p> <p>4. How often do you receive comments e.g., you look beautiful, you look great etc. on Instagram?</p>	
<p>5. How often do you receive positive comments about your style e.g., your outfit is so cute, that dress looks amazing on you etc. on Instagram?</p>	
<p>6. How often do you receive positive comments about your physical features e.g., Nice hair, Beautiful smile etc. on Instagram?</p>	

4.2.6 Construct (6): Self-Objectification.

Self-objectification was used to measure the extent in which individuals view their bodies in appearance-based (objectified), rather than competence-based (non-objectified) terms. This scale was adapted from The Self-Objectification Questionnaire (SOQ) that was developed by Noll & Fredrickson in 1998.

The researcher took some items from the scale that are relevant and fit the study to do the measurements; the items in this scale were rated on a 5–point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Table 6: Representing constructs for the self-objectification variable.

Item	Source
1. My body's size and shape are not important to me.	(Noll & Fredrickson, 1998).
2. I need to look my best because others will notice.	
3. My looks are the most important aspect of myself.	
4. I value my body's appearance more than its strength and stamina.	
5. The aspects of my body that can be viewed by others (i.e., my weight, facial features, shape) are the ones I value most.	
6. For a potential romantic partner to want me, I must be physically attractive.	
7. My physical appearance has little influence on my well-being.	
8. My health is more important than my physical appearance.	
9. It is okay for others to look at and evaluate me based on my physical appearance.	
10. Being physically attractive will determine how many friends I have.	
11. My happiness is dependent on my physical appearance.	

4.2.7 Construct (7): Body Dissatisfaction.

Body dissatisfaction was used to measure an individual's level of dissatisfaction of certain parts of one's body and the body in general. The 10-item subscale was adapted from The Eating Disorder Inventory 3-Body Dissatisfaction (EDI-3-BD), that was developed by Garner in 2004.

The researcher took some items from the scale that are relevant and fit the study to do the measurements. The items in this scale were rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from Always to Never.

Table 7: Representing Constructs for the Body Dissatisfaction Variable.

Item	Source
1- I think that my stomach is too big.	

2- I think that my thighs are too large.	(Garner, 2004).
3- I feel satisfied with the shape of my body.	
4- I feel bloated after eating a normal meal.	
5- I think that my hips are just the right size.	

4.2.8 Construct (8): Feminist Beliefs.

Feminist beliefs were used to measure the level of feministic beliefs. This scale includes 78 items assessing a broad range of attitudes and behaviors that are related to feminism. This scale is adapted from The Feminist Perspective Scale (FPS) that was developed by Henley et al. in 1998.

The researcher took some items from the scale that are relevant and fit the study to do the measurements. The items in this scale were rated on a 7–point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Table 8: Representing Constructs for the Feminist Beliefs Variable.

Item	Source
1. Women's experience in life's realities of cleaning, feeding people, caring for babies, etc., makes their vision of reality clearer than men's.	(Henley et al., 1998).
2. Beauty is feeling one's womanhood through peace, caring, and nonviolence.	
3. The world is a more attractive place because women pay attention to their appearance and smiles.	
4. Marriage is a perfect example of men's physical, economic, and sexual oppression of women.	
5. Romantic love brainwashes women and forms the basis for their subordination.	

Chapter Five: Methodology and Sampling Design

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the method used in this study to measure the findings. The methodology of this study adopted quantitative approach to data collection.

5.1 Population

The population of this research includes any young Egyptian women who use Instagram.

5.2 Sample

5.2.1 Data Collection

The survey method adapted many scales from past scholars to write the items of each question, as this was done before by other researchers when they were measuring body image and self-objectification.

The survey included 17 questions, at the beginning the participants found a consent page alongside the title of the research and its purpose, then the questionnaire itself, and the last page was Thank You page written as: “Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey,” which was visible only after the successful submission of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was anonymous as respondents had the freedom to quit the survey at any time without any penalty. The survey was created in English for the research purpose, as our sample was young Egyptian women who use Instagram and the since majority of Instagram users speak English and the researcher had already excluded non-English speakers, and in line with the nature and the purpose of the study, a convenience sample was used.

Convenience sampling is a haphazard or accidental sampling, its nonprobability sampling technique, and the subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher (Etikan, 2016).

It's a non-random sample where members of the target population need certain criteria such as, geographical proximity, easy accessibility and availability at a given time. Convenience sample can be either be a collection of subjects that are accessible or a self-selection of individuals who are willing to participate. In this technique it is necessary to describe the subjects who might be excluded during the selection process, as it was done in this study where the researcher excluded the non-Instagram users as well as all the males (Etikan, 2016).

The English version of the survey created was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). An initial pilot phase was created by sending the questionnaire to 10 Instagram users, aged above 18 years old as this was the youngest accepted targeted age. The purpose was to evaluate the clarity and relevance of the tools. The feedback was positive, and no modifications were made and the questionnaire was well-understood by the respondents. Then eventually, the questionnaire was launched online and was created on Google forms, and the data collection phase lasted for 14 days.

5.2.2 Sampling Unit

In this study the sampling unit is young Egyptian women who use Instagram, aged between 18 to 40 years old and above.

The questionnaire asked the respondents to identify whether they are an Instagram users or not, and this type of question was used as a screening question to filter how many Instagram users there, and if they choose to say that they are not Instagram users, they receive the page for submitting the questionnaire and then they get a Thank You page for completing the survey. The researcher used the filtered question here to identify how many Instagram users as our sample unit are young women who use Instagram.

5.2.3 Sample Size

To measure the proposed research question and the hypotheses, the target sample size was 450 Instagram users. However, the actual sample size reached was 440.

There were 405 females and 34 males and only one person preferred not to answer.

The respondents' gender were both males and females, even though this study was targeting females only. However, the gender question was used as a screening or filtering question, to make females only complete the survey and the males were excluded from the study. All the female respondents were from Egypt aged between 18 to 40 years old or above and the number of Instagram users reached was 352 females who use Instagram, and 53 females who don't use Instagram.

This study mainly a descriptive study that relied upon quantitative tool, this topic was presented in previous studies as shown in the literature review. Therefore, we cannot say it is an exploratory study. Additionally, the researcher did not rely on any qualitative tools, as we have used a survey method, so it's a quantitative tool. We will present the data in the results section in descriptive way relying on frequency and various tests.

5.3 Sampling Procedures

The data of these respondents was collected in different ways. To boost the reach of the questionnaire, the researcher searched online for groups that include only women such as, Women at AUC; Power of She; Let's Care and Share; Women Secret Club; Her Diary and many other groups. The researcher sent messages to the administrators of those groups to help in distributing the questionnaire to its group members and not violate the group rules, while in other groups, the

researcher posted the link of the questionnaire after acceptance from the administrators. This was also after asking the members of the groups to voluntarily participate in the questionnaire.

The researcher also asked friends to share link of the questionnaire on their social media accounts and invite their online friends to voluntarily participate. Additionally, some friends posted the link of the questionnaire in a story on their Instagram accounts and asked their female friends to participate on a voluntary basis.

5.4 Data Analysis

After the data was collected on Google forms, descriptive statistics were created using the SPSS version 24, with support from the Research Center at AUC, and the results will be reported in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Results and Findings

In this chapter, the results and findings of each hypothesis and research question will be reported. There are seven hypotheses and one research question in this study.

The first section will show the sample characteristics under study, then the second section will analyze the results of each hypothesis.

The study relied upon a group of questions that discuss the following items:

The first questions were about the sample characteristics and Instagram usage, followed by questions about each construct.

The first group of questions was related to **Body Surveillance and Body Shame (G1)**.

The second group of questions was related to **being concerned about Body Shape (G2)**.

The third group of questions was related to **Internalization of Appearance Ideal (G3)**.

The fourth group of questions was related to **Appearance Related Commentary (G4)**.

The fifth group of questions was related to **Self-Objectification (G5)**.

The sixth group of questions was related to **Body Dissatisfaction (G6)**.

The last group of questions was related to **Feminist Beliefs (G7)**.

6.1 Sample Characteristics

In this section the researcher used frequency tables to describe a single categorical variable.

After excluding all the males from the sample, the total number of categories consulted and interviewed amounted to 405 individuals who were all females. They responded to the questionnaire using Google forms link.

The sample was distributed among Greater Cairo Governorates (Cairo – Giza and Qalyubeya). Additionally, there was a limited number of PARTICIPANTS who reside in Alexandria, Aswan, Luxor Port Said and Gharbeya Governorates.

With regards to those who reside in Greater Cairo, these were distributed into two main categories; namely, the residents of old Cairo such as, for example, Maadi, Manial, and Zamalek. As well as those who reside in newly constructed areas such as, Tagamoa (*Avenue*) Madinaty and El Obour. Ninety-five persons were from Tagamoa, followed by 72 persons from Heliopolis, 53 from 6th of October, 46 from Maadi, 43 from Nasr City, 13 from Alexandria and the same number of people from Mokatam and 12 from Zamalek. The Figure below presents the distribution of the members of the sample by areas.

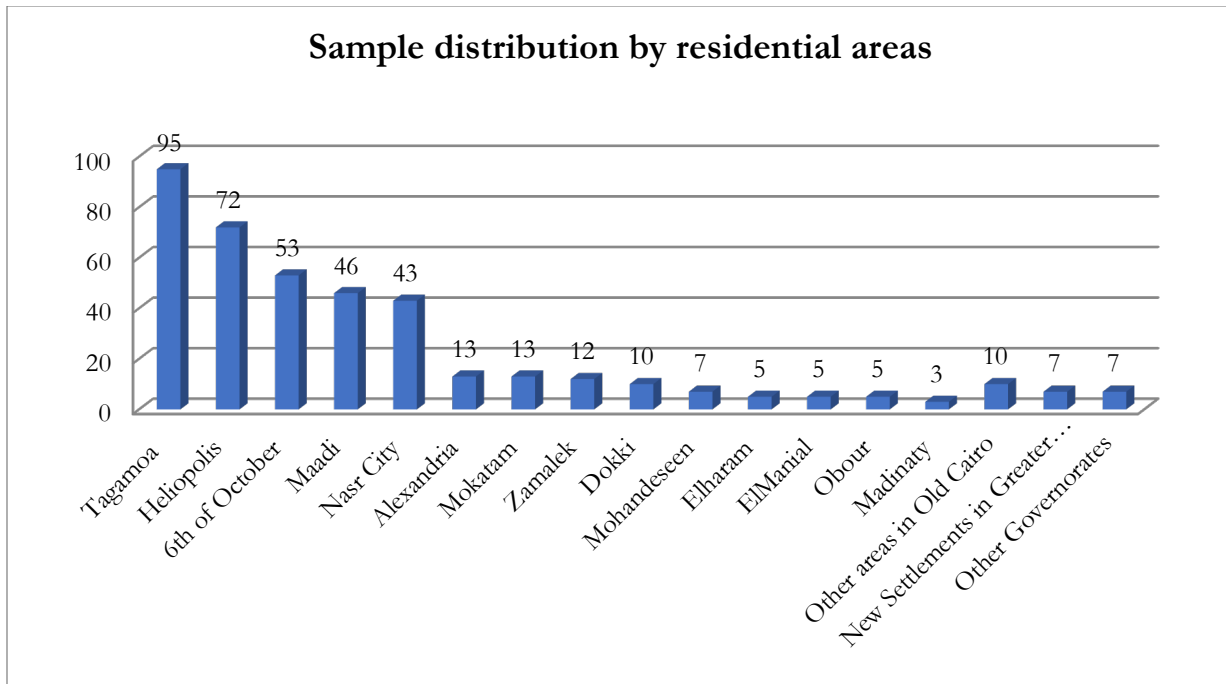


Figure 5: Distribution of sample by their residency area

6.1.1 Age Categories of the Surveyed Sample

The sample under study targeted those who use Instagram. Therefore, the majority of the surveyed sample were below 25 years old (45.5%). The second category were those who fall in the age category between 26-30 years old (20.2%) the third category were between 36-40 years old (18.3%) and finally the least category was those who were between 31-35 years old (16.0%).

The age distribution showed that the sample represents various age categories, being between 18 years to 40 years old.

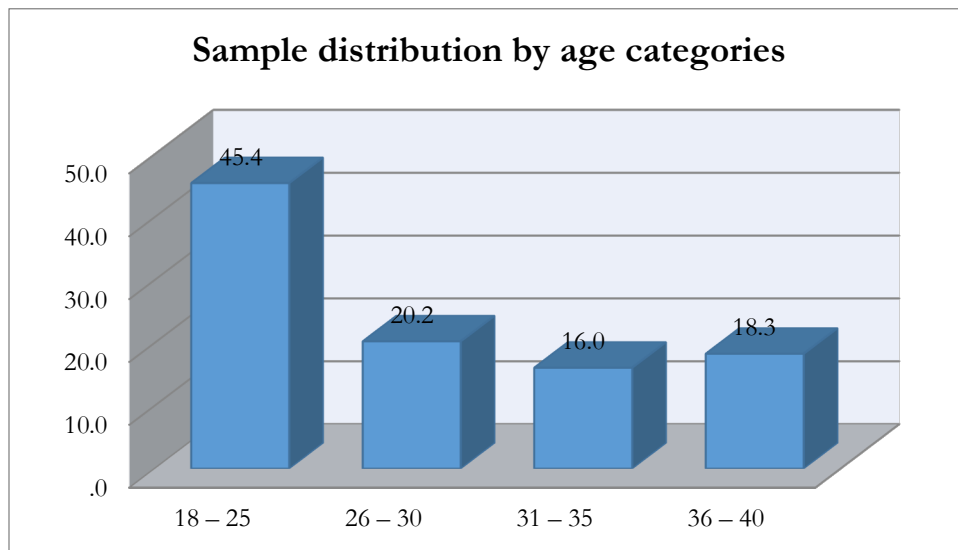


Figure 6: % Distribution of Sample by Age Categories

6.1.2 Marital status of the surveyed sample

With regards to the distribution of the marital status among the population under study, 66.0% of the total sample surveyed were single **and** 30% of the sample married. Only 3.0% of the sample were divorced and 1.0% were widowed.

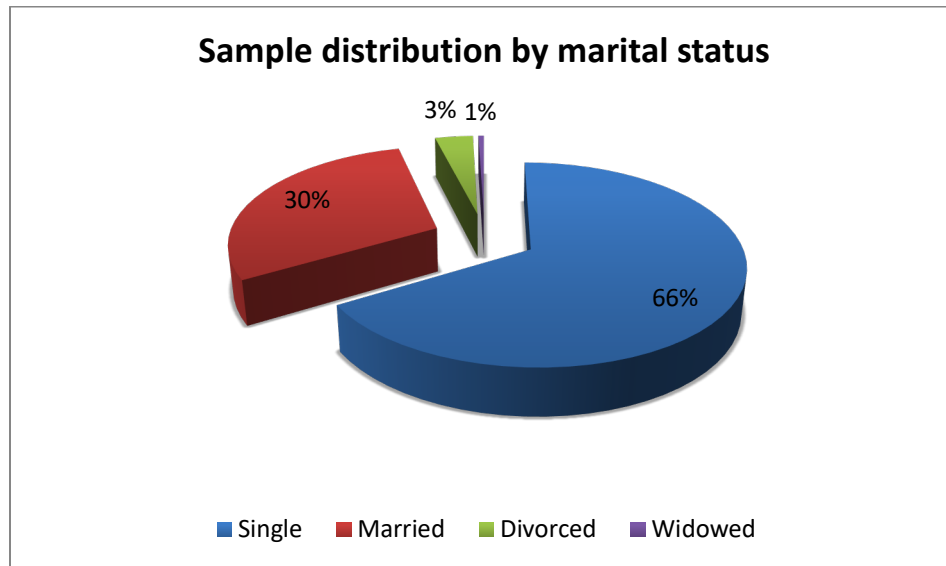


Figure 7: % Distribution of Sample by Marital Status

6.1.3 Occupational Status of the Surveyed Sample

The distribution of occupational status among the members of the sample under study showed that about 30.4% were unemployed, 59.8% employed, and 8.1% students. Five-point four percent of the total sample were self-employed while retired people and housewives were only 1.5%.

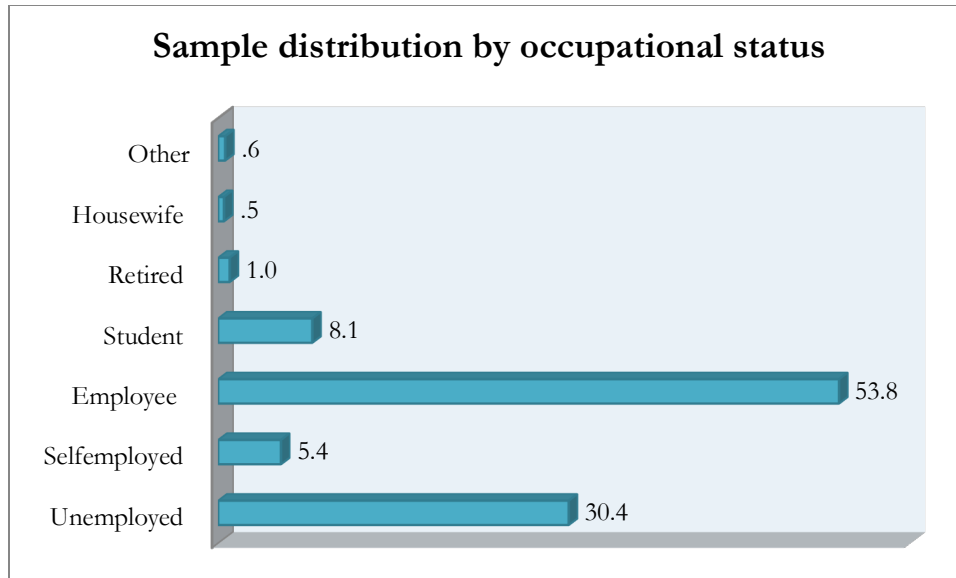


Figure 8: % Distribution of Sample by Occupational Status

6.1.4 Number of Instagram Users of the Surveyed Sample

The collected data revealed that 87.0% (352 individuals) of the total surveyed sample use Instagram. However, those who don't use Instagram were 13.0% (53 individuals).

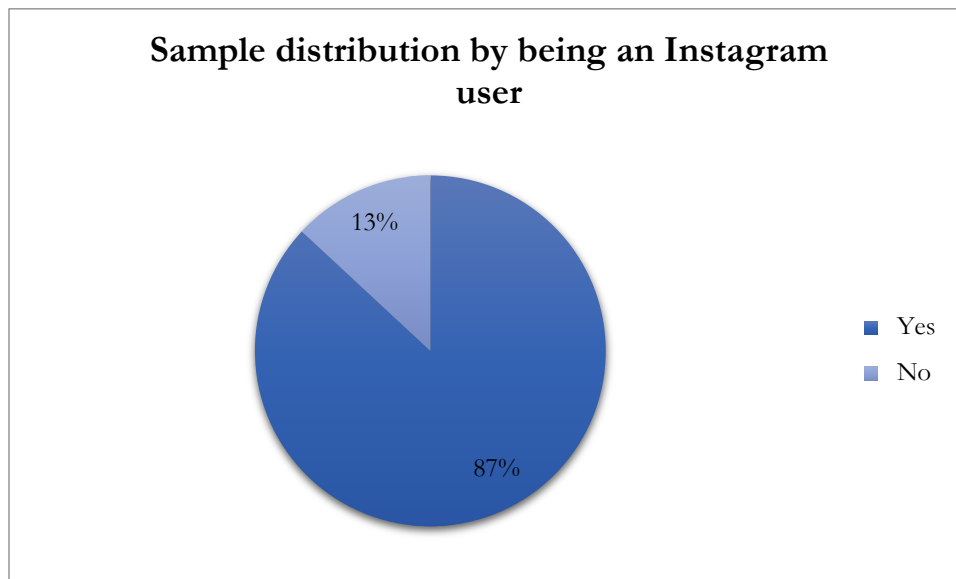


Figure 9: % Distribution of Sample by Being an Instagram User

6.1.5 Number of Hours Spent on Instagram Daily by the Surveyed Sample

Those who use Instagram reported that they use this application for specific number of hours, 33.0% of them use it for less than one hour a day while 45.0% reported that they use Instagram for 1-3 hours, and about 20% reported that they use Instagram for 4-6 hours. Last, 2.0% use Instagram for 10 hours and more every day.

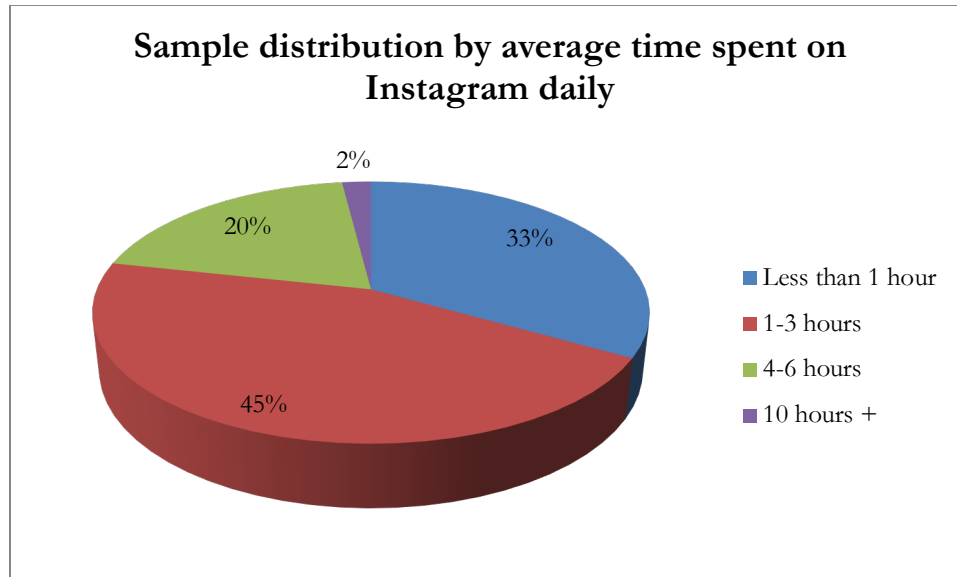


Figure 10: % Distribution of Sample by Average Time Spent on Instagram Daily

6.1.6 Number of uploaded photos monthly on Instagram by the surveyed sample

Regarding the practices of uploading photos on Instagram, the collected data revealed that 66.0% of the total surveyed sample upload between 1-5 photos on average monthly. On the other hand, 28.0% of the sample being surveyed reported not uploading any photos at all. Those who upload between 6-10 amounted to 4.0% of the sample while those who upload more than 10 photos are limited to 2.0% only.

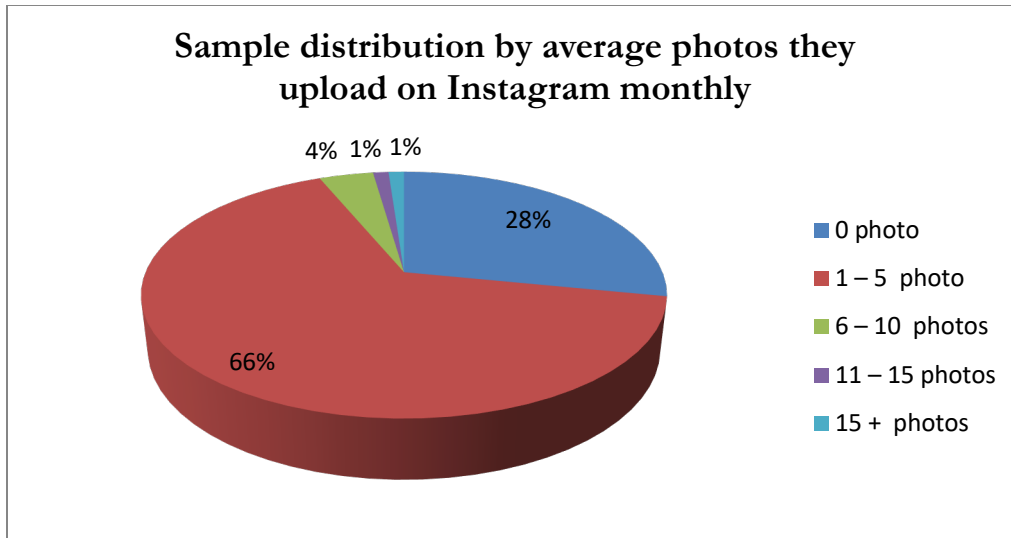


Figure 11: % Distribution of Sample by Average Photos They Upload on Instagram Monthly

6.1.7 Digital Editing Tools Used for Photos on Instagram by the Surveyed Sample

Among those who upload at least one photo per month, 34% of them never use photo-editing tools. However, those who always use photo-editing tools are considerably limited to 7.0% while those who rarely use photo editing tools are about a quarter of the sample. Last, those who sometimes use photo editing tools are about 26.0% of the total sample in the study.

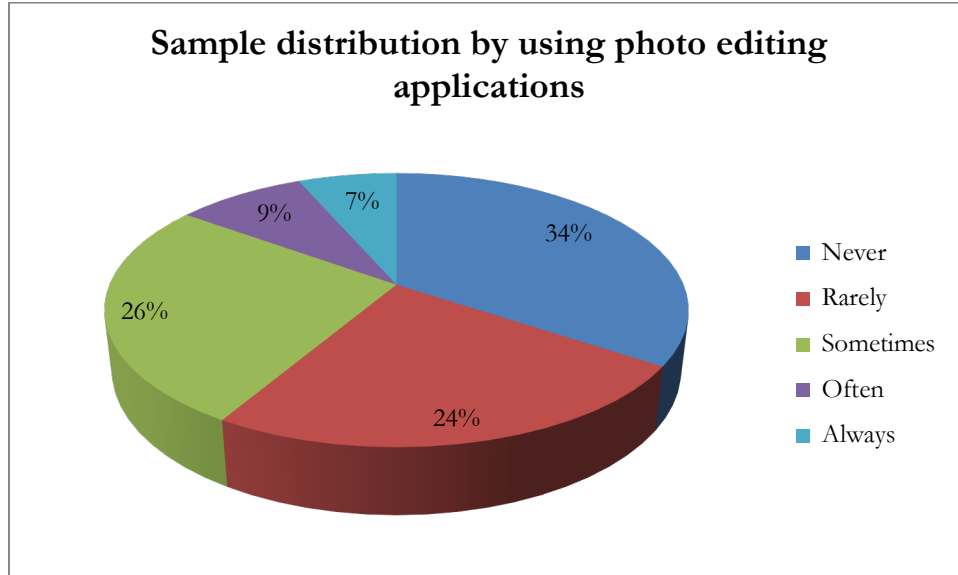


Figure 12: % Distribution of Sample by Using Any Photo Editing Applications To Edit Or Highlight Your Body Features Before Posting On Instagram

6.1.8 Caring on the Amount of Likes on Instagram

Thirty-three percent of the total sample reported caring about the number of likes obtained while 49.0% reported that they only sometimes care about the number of likes they get and those who reported not caring at all about the number of likes were limited to 18.0%.

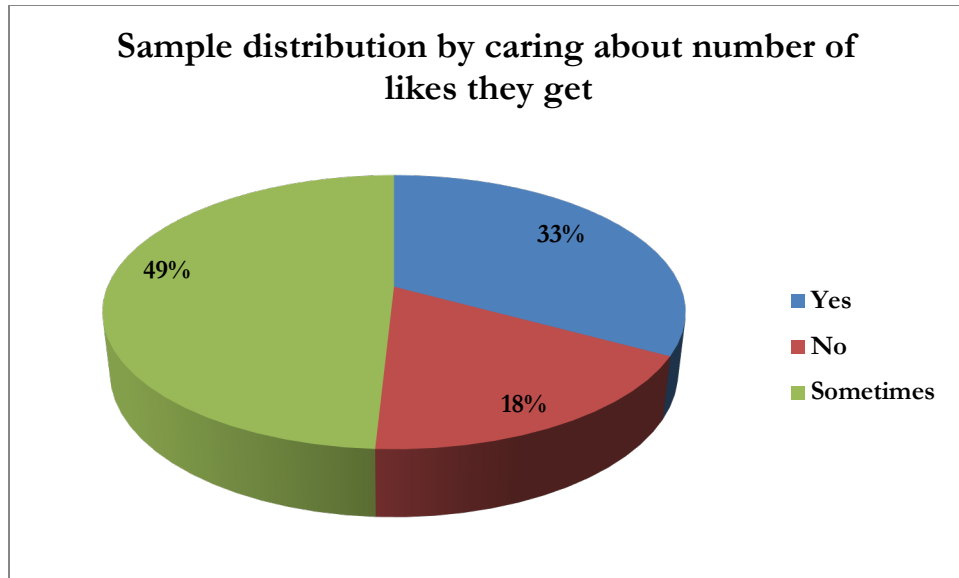


Figure 13: % Distribution of Sample by Caring About The Amount of 'Likes' They Get on Their Instagram Content

6.1.9 Conclusion:

The surveyed sample was diversified and reflected various age categories and marital statuses. As a matter of fact, there was a significant variation among the members of the sample, particularly in terms of attitudes and practices of Instagram usage and photos uploaded.

6.2 Data analysis of each hypothesis and research question

In this section the researcher used cross-tabulation to analyze the results.

RQ1: Does the content of the comments on images affect Instagram users' body image positively or negatively?

The data collected revealed that body surveillance and body shame are affected by Instagram comments. Firstly, the items discussed about body surveillance and body shame are as follows

- I often compare how I look with how other people look.
- During the day, I think about how I look many times.
- I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing make me look good.

- I often worry about how I look to other people.
- I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made an effort to look my best.
- I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh.

Those who agree with the above-mentioned items represent about 75% of those who always receive negative comments about their physical features. However, those who never receive negative comments agree with the items related to body surveillance and body shame. Despite the limited variation reported by respondents for other categories, there is still a relationship between the two variables. The table below presents the variations between various categories.

Table 9:Relation between Receiving Negative Comments and Body Surveillance and Body Shame

Body Surveillance and Body Shame.	How often woman receives negative comments about her physical features					Total
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Strongly Disagree	9.1%	6.8%	5.6%	11.1%	25.0%	8.5%
Disagree	16.5%	17.8%	16.7%	11.1%		16.5%
Somewhat Disagree	15.7%	16.4%	22.2%	11.1%		16.2%
Neutral	17.8%	20.5%	27.8%	22.2%		19.3%
Somewhat Agree	19.1%	20.5%	11.1%	11.1%	25.0%	18.5%
Agree	10.4%	12.3%	2.8%	33.3%	50.0%	11.1%
Strongly Agree	11.3%	5.5%	13.9%			9.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The relationship between receiving positive comments and body surveillance

Regarding those who receive positive comments, there is a significant relationship between body surveillance and body shame on the one hand and receiving positive comments on the other. Seemingly, the more positive comments they receive, the more body surveillance they perform. As 44.6% of those who always receive positive comments agree with the sentences pertaining to their attitudes and thoughts about body surveillance versus 40.0% only of those who never receive positive comments and who agree with the sentences related to body surveillance and body shame.

Table 10: Relation between Receiving Positive Comments and Body Surveillance and Body Shame

Body Surveillance and Body Shame.	How often woman receives positive comments e.g., she looks beautiful, you look great etc. on Instagram?					Total
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Strongly Disagree	20.0%	21.1%	4.7%	6.5%	10.0%	8.5%
Disagree	26.7%	15.8%	15.3%	16.3%	16.4%	16.5%
Somewhat Disagree		21.1%	30.6%	12.2%	10.9%	16.2%
Neutral	13.3%		21.2%	22.8%	18.2%	19.3%
Somewhat Agree	26.7%	10.5%	14.1%	20.3%	20.0%	18.5%
Agree		15.8%	8.2%	8.1%	17.3%	11.1%
Strongly Agree	13.3%	15.8%	5.9%	13.8%	7.3%	9.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The relationship between appearance related commentary and body dissatisfaction

Is there any relation between body dissatisfaction and appearance related commentary? The collected data reflected that there is significant minor relation as those who rarely receive comments about their appearance and their body dissatisfaction. About 62.5% of those who often receive comments are sometimes not satisfied with their body. However, only 35.7% of those who never receive comments are not satisfied with their bodies. Yet, the variation between other categories is still limited.

Table 11:Relation between Appearance –Related Commentary and Body Dissatisfaction

Body Dissatisfaction.	Appearance-Related Commentary.				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
Usually	11.9%	9.4%	12.4%	12.5%	10.8%
Often	50.0%	48.1%	51.2%	25.0%	48.9%
Sometimes	35.7%	39.2%	36.4%	62.5%	38.4%
Rarely	2.4%	3.3%			2.0%

The relationship between self-objectification and appearance related commentary

The relation between those who receive comments and self-objectification tends to be high as 57.1% of those who never receive appearance-related comments disagree on self-objectification items that are as follows:

- My body's size and shape are not important to me.
- I need to look my best because others will notice.
- My looks are the most important aspect of myself.

- I value my body's appearance more than its strength and stamina.
- The aspects of my body that can be viewed by others (i.e., my weight, facial features, shape) are the ones I value most.
- For a potential romantic partner to want me, I must be physically attractive.
- My physical appearance has little influence on my well-being.
- My health is more important than my physical appearance.
- It is okay for others to look at and evaluate me based on my physical appearance.
- Being physically attractive will determine how many friends I have.
- My happiness is dependent on my physical appearance.

About 25.0% of those who often receive comments on their appearance, they tend to agree on self-objectification items. There was relatively significant variation about other categories. To wrap it up, there is significant relations between recipient of appearance related commentary and self-objectification.

Table 12: Relation between self-objectification and Receive Appearance-Related Commentary.

Self-Objectification	Receive Appearance-Related Commentary.				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
Strongly Disagree	7.1%	6.6%	3.3%		5.4%
Disagree	50.0%	51.4%	46.3%	25.0%	48.9%
Neutral	42.9%	36.5%	42.1%	50.0%	39.5%
Agree		5.5%	8.3%	25.0%	6.3%

H1: There is a direct relation between time spent on Instagram and body surveillance.

Regarding the relation between time spent on Instagram and body surveillance, there was a significant relation. About half of the sample surveyed who spend less than one hour a day on Instagram have reported that they disagree on the items related to body surveillance. However, only 43.0% of those who spend more than 10 hours a day also disagreed with the same items. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant relation between the average time spent on Instagram and body surveillance.

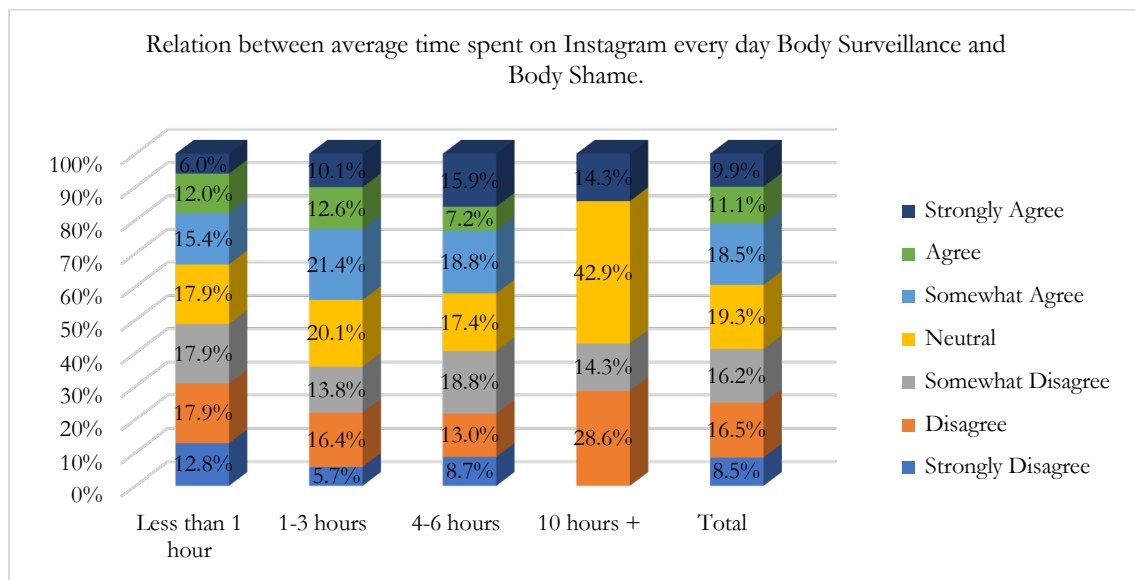


Figure 14 : Relation Between Average Time Spent on Instagram Everyday Body Surveillance and Body Shame

H2: There is an association between using photo editing tools and body dissatisfaction.

When the discussion revolved around using any photo-editing tools and body dissatisfaction, the main motive for using photo-editing tools was due to a woman being dissatisfied with her body. However, the results of the survey did not reflect this relation. About 96% of those who always use editing tools are most of the time not satisfied with their bodies. However, 95.9% of those who

never used photo-editing tools are also not satisfied with their bodies. This was an indication that using photo-editing tools is not necessarily due to a woman being dissatisfied with her body.

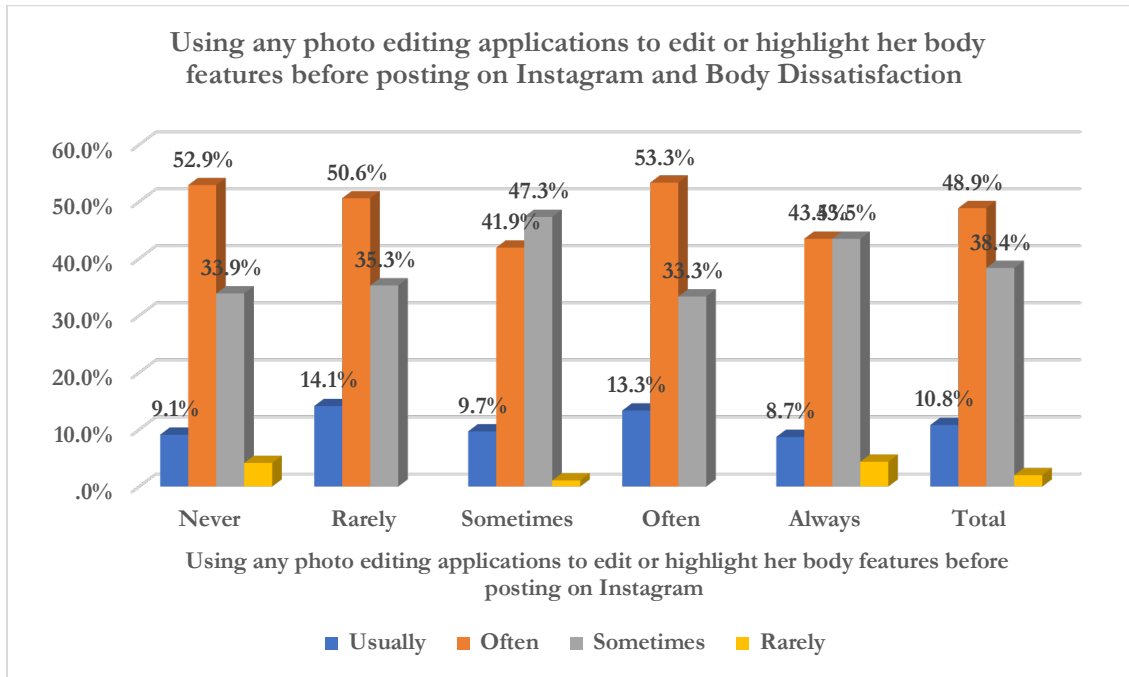


Figure 15 : Using any Photo Editing Applications to edit or Highlight Her Body Features Before Posting on Instagram and Body Dissatisfaction

H3: The more hours spent on Instagram, the more likely to get body dissatisfaction

It was anticipated that the more hours spent on Instagram, the more likely to get body dissatisfaction. The data collected revealed significant relation between the average time spent on Instagram daily and (feelings of) body dissatisfaction. About 9.4% of those who spend less than one hour daily usually feel dissatisfied with their bodies. However, about 19.0% of those who spend 4-6 hours on Instagram daily are usually dissatisfied with their bodies. A sample segregation by body dissatisfaction and average time spent on Instagram daily is presented below.

Table 13: Body Dissatisfaction and average time spent on Instagram every day

Feeling of Body Dissatisfaction	Average time spent on Instagram every day				Total
	Less than 1 hour	1-3 hours	4-6 hours	10 hours +	
Usually	9.4%	8.2%	18.8%	14.3%	10.8%
Often	49.6%	45.9%	53.6%	57.1%	48.9%
Sometimes	38.5%	44.0%	26.1%	28.6%	38.4%
Rarely	2.6%	1.9%	1.4%		2.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

H4: The more Likes on Instagram content, the more satisfaction of one's body shape and size

With regards to the hypothesis that states “The more Likes on Instagram content, the more satisfaction of one's body shape and size”, the data collected revealed that there is no significant variation between the two groups. About 7.0% of those who care about the number of likes also usually care about their body image. Additionally, 55.2% of the same group often care about their body. However, 11.1% of those who don't care about the number of likes they receive; also expressed being dissatisfied with their body. Adding to this figure the percentage of those who often don't care to get likes (50.8%); they are also dissatisfied with their body. This indicates that there is no significant relation between the two variables.

Table 14: Relation between Caring about the amount of 'likes' she get on your Instagram content and Body Dissatisfaction

Body Dissatisfaction	Caring about the amount of 'likes' she get on your Instagram content			Total
	Yes	No	Sometimes	
Usually	6.9%	11.1%	13.3%	10.8%
Often	55.2%	50.8%	43.9%	48.9%
Sometimes	36.2%	36.5%	40.5%	38.4%
Rarely	1.7%	1.6%	2.3%	2.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %

H5: Young Egyptian women will significantly have high levels of internalization of appearance ideals

The study discussed various aspects of internalization of appearance ideals. They are as follows:

- It is important for me to look good in the clothes I wear.
- I want my body to look very thin.
- I think a lot about my appearance.
- I don't want my body to look muscular.
- I want my body to look very lean.
- It is important to me to be attractive.
- I think a lot about having very little body fat.
- I don't think much about how I look.

- I feel pressure from family members to look thinner.
- Family members encourage me to get in better shape.
- I feel pressure from my peers to improve my appearance.
- I feel pressure from Instagram to look thinner.
- I feel pressure from Instagram to improve my appearance.

The data collected revealed that there were relatively significant relations between age category and the aspects of internalization of appearance ideal. About 27.0% of the youngest group agreed on the internalization of appearance ideal aspects versus only 17.5% in the age category between 31-35 years of age.

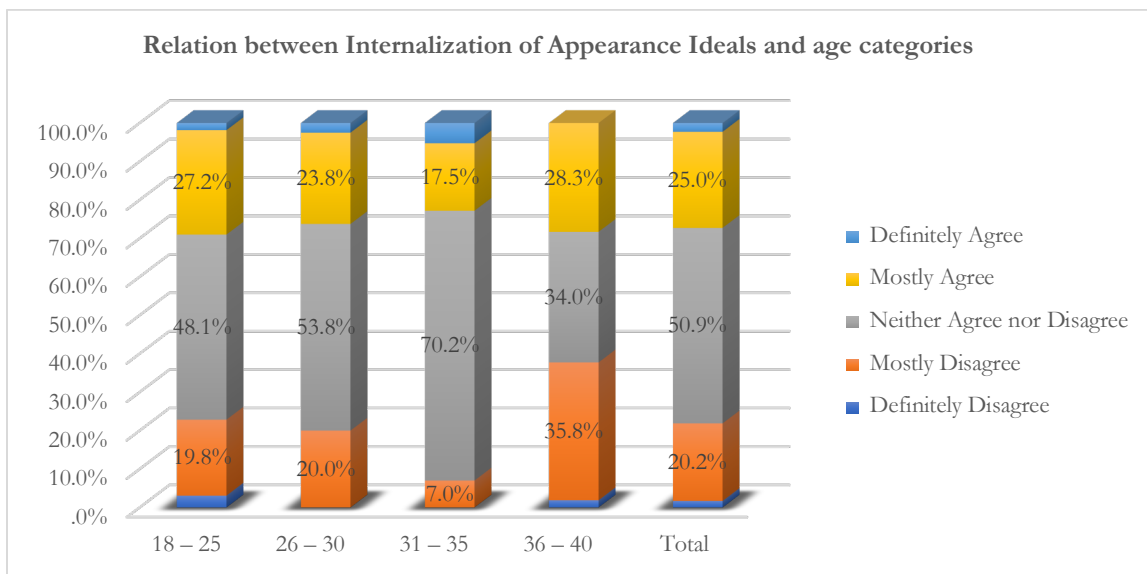


Figure 16 : Relation between Internalization of Appearance Ideals and Age Categories

H6: There is an association between time spent on Instagram and internalization of appearance ideal

There was significant relation between internalization of appearance ideal and average time spent on Instagram every day. The data collected reflected that 57.1% of those who spend 10 hours plus on Instagram agree on internalization of appearance ideals. However, only 23.1% of those who

spend less than one hour agreed on the same aspects. The table below presents in details the variation between all categories.

Table 15: Relation between Internalization of Appearance and Average time spent on Instagram every day

Internalization of Appearance Ideals.	Average time spent on Instagram every day				
	Less than 1 hour	1-3 hours	4-6 hours	10 hours +	Total
Definitely Disagree	3.4%		2.9%		1.7%
Mostly Disagree	28.2%	19.5%	10.1%		20.2%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	44.4%	52.8%	58.0%	42.9%	50.9%
Mostly Agree	23.1%	25.8%	23.2%	57.1%	25.0%
Definitely Agree	.9%	1.9%	5.8%		2.3%

H7: Feminist beliefs will moderate the direct relationship between Instagram usage and body surveillance and self-objectification

Feminist aspects focused on the items below:

- Women’s experience in life’s realities of cleaning, feeding people, caring for babies, etc., makes their vision of reality clearer than men’s
- Beauty is feeling one’s womanhood through peace, caring, and nonviolence.
- The world is a more attractive place because women pay attention to their appearance and smiles.

- Marriage is a perfect example of men's physical, economic, and sexual oppression of women.
- Romantic love brainwashes women and forms the basis for their subordination.

Feminist beliefs relationship between body surveillance and self-objectification was segregated into three main categories, namely feminist beliefs, body surveillance and self-objectification. Sometimes the sample agree on self-objectification and body surveillance, and it represents 66.7%. However, they don't agree on feminist beliefs. On the other hand, those who disagree with self-objectification and body surveillance represent 42.9% while those who agreed on feminist beliefs and the other two aspects represent 45.5%. Whereas those who disagree on self-objectification and body surveillance represent 50.0%.

The table below represents significant relations between the three variables.

Table 16: Self-Objectification, Body Surveillance, Feminist Beliefs and Body Shame.

Feminist Beliefs	Body Surveillance and Body Shame	Self-Objectification				Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
Disagree	Strongly Disagree	21.4%	8.8%	6.3%	16.7%	10.0%
	Disagree	42.9%	27.9%	6.3%		22.5%
	Somewhat Disagree		17.6%	9.4%	16.7%	13.3%
	Neutral	14.3%	16.2%	18.8%		15.8%
	Somewhat Agree	21.4%	11.8%	28.1%		16.7%
	Agree		11.8%	15.6%		10.8%
	Strongly Agree		5.9%	15.6%	66.7%	10.8%

Feminist Beliefs	Body Surveillance and Body Shame	Self-Objectification				Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
Agree	Strongly Disagree		10.3%	4.8%	9.1%	7.5%
	Disagree	50.0%	13.8%	9.7%		11.3%
	Somewhat Disagree		22.4%	17.7%		18.0%
	Neutral	50.0%	25.9%	17.7%	18.2%	21.8%
	Somewhat Agree		19.0%	21.0%	27.3%	20.3%
	Agree		5.2%	9.7%	27.3%	9.0%
	Strongly Agree		3.4%	19.4%	18.2%	12.0%
Neutral	Strongly Disagree	66.7%	8.7%	4.4%		8.1%
	Disagree		26.1%	8.9%		16.2%
	Somewhat Disagree		28.3%	8.9%		17.2%
	Neutral	33.3%	17.4%	15.6%	80.0%	20.2%
	Somewhat Agree		13.0%	24.4%	20.0%	18.2%
	Agree		6.5%	24.4%		14.1%
	Strongly Agree			13.3%		6.1%

Chapter Seven: Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, we'll present the findings, discuss their roots in the literature and draw the conclusions followed by the practical implications, limitations and directions for future research.

7.1 Discussion and Conclusion

The major aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of Instagram use on young Egyptian women's body image and self-objectification. The sample under study is well-connected and all use Instagram. The results in this study shows that the highest age group in the sample was between 18 to 25 years old. This reflects the similarity with the statistics of the Egyptian figures which prove that emerging adults between 18 to 24 years old were the highest group and the most avid users of Instagram (Instagram Users in Egypt, 2020).

The findings in this study show the relation between those who receive appearance related commentary and self-objectification that tends to be higher than those who never receive any appearance related commentary, who also disagreed on self-objectification items; the results reflected that there are significant relations between recipients of appearance related commentary and self-objectification. These findings support the previous literature that identified that neither positive nor negative appearance-related commentary were linked to self-objectification. Those findings indicated that image-based activities on Instagram might cause huge problems for women (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Regarding those who receive positive comments, the results show that there are significant relations between body surveillance on the one hand and receiving appearance-related commentary on the other. Seemingly, the more positive comments they receive, the more body surveillance they perform. These findings were contrary to the previous literature, which declared that receiving positive comments contributed to positive assessments, and possibly increased confidence about

one's body and attractiveness (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018). So, the results of the study indicated that those individuals may spend more time focusing on their bodies and how they appear to others. Moreover, the findings reflected that there is a significant minor relation between body dissatisfaction and appearance-related commentary.

Previous studies supported the direct relationship between time spent on social networking sites and body surveillance. To elaborate further, monitoring people who are attractive online can lead to an increase in body surveillance (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018). The findings of the present study were contrary to the previous studies. The results showed that about half of the surveyed sample who spent less than one hour on Instagram have reported that they disagree on the items related to body surveillance. However, those who spent more than 10 hours a day on Instagram also disagreed with the same items. This means that there is no relationship between spending many hours on Instagram and body surveillance, and women did not get affected when they monitored attractive people online.

When the discussion revolved around using digital editing tools and body dissatisfaction, it was clear that the main motive behind using digital editing tools are women being dissatisfied with their bodies. Previous research found an association between using photo-editing tools and body dissatisfaction in adolescent girls. One explanation for this connection is that people who are already dissatisfied with their bodies tend to find opportunities to digitally edit their online image to feel satisfied with their bodies (Fried et al., 2020). The findings in the present study did not reflect this relation; the results showed that those who always use photo-editing tools are most of the time, not satisfied with their bodies. However, those who have never used photo-editing tools reported that they are not satisfied with their bodies either. This was a clear indication that using photo-editing tools are not necessarily due to women not being satisfied with their bodies.

This study has tried to fill the research gap when it was hypothesized that the more hours spent on Instagram, the more likely to get body dissatisfaction. As Cultivation Theory is applicable to that, previous research indicated a link between exposure to social networking sites and body image concerns, and they elaborated on this by showing that it is not just initial exposure to these platforms that can cause an issue, but the time spent on them daily. They explained that spending more time each day on these platforms was related to having an unhealthy relationship with both body image and body dissatisfaction (BPS News, 2018).

The findings in this study revealed that there is no relationship between the amount of time spent on Instagram and body dissatisfaction. The results showed that those who spend less than one hour a day on Instagram usually feel dissatisfied with their bodies. Moreover, those who spend 4-6 hours have reported that they feel dissatisfied with their bodies too; this means that there are no consequences on women's body satisfaction when they spend many hours on Instagram.

Although the Likes are a marker of peer status and popularity, as well as an accepted numerical indicator of consensually determined physical beauty, previous research explained that the number of Likes that people receive was considered as direct evaluative feedback about both their self-worth and their beauty (Tiggemann et al, 2018). The present study hypothesized that the more Likes on Instagram content, the more satisfaction of one's body shape and size.

The major finding here was that the number of likes did not make them satisfied with their bodies. It was found no support for the proposition that the more likes on Instagram, the more satisfaction of one's body; these results indicated that there is no significant relation between the two variables. Another major finding in this study is that, for younger women only, the results showed a positive association with the internalization of appearance ideals, i.e. pressures from the media (Instagram), from peers and family with an increase in perceived actual body image distortions; this was in line

with previous research that supported the findings of this study which reported that although middle-aged women still care for their bodily appearance, they are less influenced by societal pressures compared to younger women, who are more influenced by these pressures (Bellard et al, 2020).

According to Cultivation Theory, the results of previous studies exploring the association between use of social networking sites and the internalization of a thin ideal indicated that more frequent exposure to social networking sites was associated with higher internalization of appearance ideals (Mingoia et al., 2017). This supported the present study and the findings showed that those who spend 10 hours a day or more reported a higher level of internalization of appearance ideals; this means that the more hours they spend on Instagram, the more they feel pressured from Instagram, from family and peers to look good.

Contrary to the hypotheses in this study that predicted that feminist beliefs did not moderate the direct relationship between feminism, self-objectification and body surveillance. The findings showed that the sample who agreed on Self-objectification and body surveillance were higher and represents about 66.7% and who disagree on feminism were lower. Moreover, some of the sample were agreeing on feminism with 45.5 and those who were disagreeing on self-objectification and body surveillance represents about 42.9%; this means that the difference is about 20% between both of them, but still self-objectification and body surveillance relatively high in the sample with about 50%.

Those findings do not support the previous studies that illustrated that the more women subscribe to feminist beliefs and attitudes, the less they evaluate themselves on their physical

appearance (Peterson, Grippo & Tantleff-Dunn, 2008). This indicates that the sample in the present study will tend to evaluate their bodies and themselves more.

This study showed the effects of Instagram usage on young Egyptian women's body image and self-objectification; this study combined two theories together. The study supports Objectification Theory by proving that use of an image-based social media platform is linked to self-objectification and body surveillance. It has tested the association between those who receive appearance-related commentary and self-objectification. Furthermore, it has **provided** support for the explanatory roles of internalization of appearance ideals and body dissatisfaction. Moreover, Cultivation Theory was applied to understand the effect of Instagram on young women's body image. In addition, the study examined the role that feminist beliefs play and the relationship between self-objectification and body surveillance.

The findings are the first to identify what specific variables mediate the links between Instagram usage, body image and self-objectification for young Egyptian women and highlight the importance of developing more awareness of how this type of media may affect female users. Few studies were done in this area, so this study is significant because the researcher used both cultivation and objectification theories, which was no one has done this before and applied it in Egypt.

7.2 Practical Implications

The results have some important practical implications. The simplest, but least realistic, will be for women to limit their exposure to social networking sites, especially those that are photo-based platforms like Instagram.

Public health and educational interventions should have a role; and it is important to examine ways to reduce any negative effect of this photo-based platform, Instagram. So, implementing and

developing social media literacy interventions to educate students/clients on how to evaluate and analyze what ideals that various forms of media are perpetuating, as well as identifying ways to protect oneself from internalizing harmful media messages, may also be helpful.

Also, women in particular should be educated about the potentially detrimental effect of making comments that revolve around appearance about their family and their peers' Instagram photos. As positive appearance comments are undoubtedly intended to be supportive, affirming and helpful, women may be surprised to learn that they might unknowingly be perpetuating body dissatisfaction in this way.

7.3 Limitations

Like all studies, this study carries a number of limitations. First, the sample consisted of young women residing in Egypt, so the results cannot be generalized to other population subgroups, for example, the undergraduate females who are younger than 18 years old and the males who were excluded from the study, so the generalizability of our study is limited.

Second, no self-reporting measure for body mass index (BMI) existed, so we were unable to test whether women's response to body positive content accompanying images of different body sizes might be influenced by their own body size.

Third, while analyzing the impact of social media-related appearance pressure and preferences on body image concerns, other factors such as, social comparisons with media portrayals of attractiveness, were not examined but they may also be relevant.

7.4 Directions for Future Research

Future studies may need to employ experimental designs or get personal access to participants' personal accounts in order to obtain less subjective information. In other words, researchers can analyze participants' Instagram personal accounts to gain a better understanding of their posting and viewing habits. Researchers might also consider analyzing the photos that those young women choose to post on their Instagram accounts, and how these photos compare with those of the celebrities and influential accounts that they follow.

According to evidence from previous research, it was clear that social media use affects men's body image as well, so future research should investigate whether Instagram affects males' body image and self-objectification. Future work could also examine the potential gender differences in appearance comparisons and appearance thoughts resulting from Instagram use.

Although surveys of women can provide an insightful snapshot of their current life experiences and beliefs, but such data does not address causal hypotheses. Our study can offer some groundwork for future experimental and longitudinal studies to address the directional assumptions that are embedded in our theorized mediation model. Besides, triangulating the survey data with content analysis or textual analysis may help in enhancing the explanatory power of the findings.

Future research should explore and consider other factors such as, appearance anxiety, social and appearance comparisons. Also, extending the research to be categorized by the participants' state could also expand this study. For example, researchers can apply similar to this study in other countries all over the world, as in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. This will help to see the effect that Instagram can have on people's body image and how it varies from state to state and

country to country since the study of Instagram is still a new concept and it will be interesting to see where future research takes this topic.

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Appendix A: Online Questionnaire of the Study

1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer

2. What is your age?

- 18 – 25
- 26 – 30
- 31 – 35
- 36 – 40
- Above 40

3. What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed

4. Which occupational position do you currently hold?

- Unemployed
- Self-employed

- Employee
- Retired
- Other (please specify)

5. Which area are you from in Egypt?

- Tagamoa
- Heliopolis
- Nasr City
- Zamalek
- 6th of October
- Other (please specify)

6. Are you an Instagram user?

- Yes
- No

7. How many hours in average do you spend on Instagram every day?

- Less than 1 hour
- 1 - 3 hours
- 4 - 6 hours
- 7 - 9 hours
- 10 hours +

8. Indicate on average how many photos you upload on Instagram each month?

- 0
- 1 – 5
- 6 – 10
- 11 – 15
- 15 +

9. Do you use any photo editing applications to edit or highlight your body features before posting on Instagram?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

10. Do you care about the amount of 'likes' you get on your Instagram content (e.g. images or videos) to the extent of deleting it if the content doesn't reach a personal satisfaction?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Somewhat Disagree	(4) Neutral	(5) Somewhat Agree	(6) Agree	(7) Strongly Agree
a) I often compare how I look with how other people look.							
b) During the day, I think about how I look many times.							
c) I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing make me look good.							
d) I often worry about how I look to other people.							

e) I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made an effort to look my best.							
f) I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh.							

12. For the items below, please indicate to what extent each statement is true about your body shape.

	(1) Never	(2) Rarely	(3) Sometimes	(4) Often	(5) Very often	(6) Always
a) Have you been so worried about your shape that you have been feeling you ought to diet?						

b) Have you been worried that you might become fat (or fatter)?						
c) Has feeling full (e.g., after eating a large meal) made you feel fat?						
d) Have you felt so bad about your shape that you have cried?						
e) Have eating even a small amount of food made you feel fat?						
f) Have you noticed the shape of other women and felt that your own shape compared unfavorably?						

g) Has thinking about your shape interfered with your ability to concentrate (e.g., while watching television, reading, listening to conversations)?						
h) Have you not gone out to social occasions (e.g., parties) because you have felt bad about your shape?						
i) Have you felt happiest about your shape when your stomach has been empty (e.g., in the morning)?						
j) Have you vomited in order to feel thinner?						

k) Have you pinched areas of your body to see how much fat there is?						
l) Have you taken laxatives in order to feel thinner?						

13. Please read each of the following items and indicate the number that best reflects your agreement with the statements.

	(1) Definitely Disagree	(2) Mostly Disagree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Mostly Agree	(5) Definitely Agree
a) It is important for me to look good in the clothes I wear.					
b) I want my body to look very thin.					

c) I think a lot about my appearance.					
d) I don't want my body to look muscular.					
e) I want my body to look very lean.					
f) It is important to me to be attractive.					
g) I think a lot about having very little body fat.					
h) I don't think much about how I look.					
i) I feel pressure from family members to look thinner.					
j) Family members encourage me to get in better shape.					
k) I feel pressure from my peers to improve my appearance.					

l) I feel pressure from Instagram to look thinner.					
m) I feel pressure from Instagram to improve my appearance.					

14. Please read each of the following items and indicate the number that best reflects your agreement with the statements.

	(1) Never	(2) Rarely	(3) Sometimes	(4) Often	(5) Always
a) How often do you receive negative comments about your physical features e.g., bad hair day, you have a big nose etc. on Instagram?					
b) How often do you receive negative comments about your style e.g., that outfit is awful, your dress makes you look fat etc. on Instagram?					

c) How often do people post negative comments about your appearance via Instagram?					
d) How often do you receive comments e.g., you look beautiful, you look great etc. on Instagram?					
e) How often do you receive positive comments about your style e.g., your outfit is so cute, that dress looks amazing on you etc. on Instagram?					
f) How often do you receive positive comments about your physical features e.g., Nice hair, Beautiful smile etc. on Instagram?					

15. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements based on how you feel in general.

	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly Agree
a) My body's size and shape are not important to me.					
b) I need to look my best because others will notice.					
c) My looks are the most important aspect of myself.					
d) I value my body's appearance more than its strength and stamina.					
e) The aspects of my body that can be viewed by others (i.e., my weight, facial features, shape) are the ones I value most.					

f) For a potential romantic partner to want me, I must be physically attractive.					
g) My physical appearance has little influence on my well-being.					
h) My health is more important than my physical appearance.					
i) It is okay for others to look at and evaluate me based on my physical appearance.					
j) Being physically attractive will determine how many friends I have.					
k) My happiness is dependent on my physical appearance.					

16. For the items below, please indicate to what extent each statement is true of you.

	(1) Always	(2) Usually	(3) Often	(4) Sometimes	(5) Rarely	(6) Never
a) I think that my stomach is too big.						
b) I think that my thighs are too large.						
c) I feel satisfied with the shape of my body.						
d) I feel bloated after eating a normal meal.						
e) I think that my hips are just the right size.						

17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Somewhat Disagree	(4) Neutral	(5) Somewhat Agree	(6) Agree	(7) Strongly Agree
a) Women's experience in life's realities of cleaning, feeding people, caring for babies, etc., makes their vision of reality clearer than men's							
b) Beauty is feeling one's womanhood through peace, caring, and nonviolence.							
c) The world is a more attractive place because women							

<p>pay attention to their appearance and smiles.</p>							
<p>d) Marriage is a perfect example of men's physical, economic, and sexual oppression of women.</p>							
<p>e) Romantic love brainwashes women and forms the basis for their subordination.</p>							

Appendix B: Approvals

IRB Approval

CASE #2020-2021-012



To: Sara Tarek Hussein
Cc: Nesrine Azmy
From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB
Date: Oct. 10, 2020
Re: IRB approval

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Sara Tarek Hussein', with an arrow pointing to the right.

This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled “Instagram Use and Young Women’s Body Image and Self-Objectification in Egypt” and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the "expedited" category. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

This approval letter was issued under the assumption that you have not started data collection for your research project. Any data collected before receiving this letter could not be used since this is a violation of the IRB policy.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Ashraf Hatem. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Atta Gebril', with a stylized flourish.

Dr. Atta Gebril
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