
Contribution of Social Media in Development of Body Dysmorphia and Anxiety Amongst Teenagers In Urban Areas of Nepal: A Mixed Method Study

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of daily social media exposure in the development of body dysmorphia and anxiety among adolescents aged 13 to 19 residing in urban areas of Nepal through a mixed method approach. This study seeks to understand the relationship between the impact of excessive and daily engagement online has on mental wellbeing, particularly how specific types of content contributes to negative self-perception and mental health wellbeing. The study seeks to address the current research gap in Nepali research and address how social media has an impact on the development of body dysmorphia and conduct a mixed method approach. Data was collected via an online questionnaire posted on several social media platforms and responses of 47 participants were collected. Qualitative data was collected from 10 participants through semi-structured interviews. Participants were recruited primarily through social media platforms, using voluntary and stratified random sampling techniques. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses (Chi Square Testing, regression analysis) were applied to analyze the quantitative data using tools such as Microsoft Excel. The qualitative data was analyzed thematically to uncover recurring patterns in participant experiences. The key findings of this study included finding the heavy reliance the Nepali youth has on social media, the strong statistical relationship between gender and screentime and how consuming and following influencer/celebrity content makes the Nepali youth feel insecure about their self-image. The data suggested that type of content consumed, specifically following celebrities and online personalities can result in self-image issues. Additionally, the study revealed that 28.6% users had more than 8 hours screen time: indicating a high reliance on social media. The mean body image concern was 3.9 (out of 5 on Likert scale) the mode was 4. This indicates that usage of social media somewhat impacts the development of body image, Additionally, the mean anxiety concern was 68% reported moderate to high levels of anxiety symptoms. The significance of this research is it focuses on how social media affects the mental health of teenagers in urban Nepal which is a topic that hasn't been studied exceptionally before. While many studies talk about anxiety linked to social media, there isn't much research that shows how social media affects the development of body dysmorphia. This study helps fill that gap by showing what kinds of content may be harmful and why. The findings can be useful for parents, schools, and mental health workers to better support young people in Nepal.