

mage, Social Media, and Greek Life

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Abstract

Social media platforms can promote unachievable body standards using techniques such as photo editing and filters. Similarly, Greek organizations provide environments where members are highly concerned with their appearance. Research suggests that young adults compare themselves to their peers more often than celebrities on social media platforms; thus, social groups play a vital role in how they perceive themselves. This study investigates how social media usage and participation in greek organizations can influence students' satisfaction with their appearance. Participants will complete a survey that measures satisfaction with physical appearance, eating habits, and social media usage. Additionally, if the participants are members of a greek organization, they will be asked to elaborate on their experiences. This is an ongoing study that aims to illuminate toxic body standards through young adults' social groups.



Body-image is a concept that is prevalent in today's society. I was specifically interested on how appearances are taken into deep consideration in both social media and greek organizations (fraternities and sororities). Social groups play a large role in how young adults, perceive themselves; thus, environments where physical appearances are prioritized can

I hypothesized that:

- Students with higher social media usage will have more dissatisfaction with body image than those with lower social media usage.
- Students in sororities/fraternities will have more dissatisfaction with body image than students who are not in sororities/fraternities

Background

- "Several participants noted idealized images were likely to have been altered (e.g., edited or filtered) and were aware of the harmful influence this could have; however, they [women] still felt pressure to adjust to these standards." (Baker, 2019)
- "Fraternity men who attain 'ideal' physical attractiveness have been shown to attai greater social status within their organizations (Anderson et. al, 2001). Thus, there may be more pressure on fraternity men to have a body that more closely lines up with the muscular "ideal" that is portrayed in the media." (Davis, 2009)
- *Results show that individuals with higher positive body image reported fewer depressive symptoms, higher self-esteem, fewer unhealthy dieting behaviors, a lower drive for muscularity...Interestingly, these findings occurred independent of BMI." (Gillen, 2015)
- "Findings suggest that social media is a robust source of appearance pressure, even after accounting for the influence of family, peers, and traditional media." (Roberts et al., 2022)







Method

- ❖ Recruited FSU undergraduate students aged 18-23
- Distributed questionnaire:
- Introduction: age, year in school, if in a fraternity/sorority
- SATAQ-4: internalization of appearance ideals and pressures from family, friends, media or sorority/fraternity members
- EAT-26: eating behaviors
- Social media: frequency, interaction, platform use
- Greek organizations: if living in sorority/fraternity house, experiences in organized events, and if they felt pressured to change their appearance to fit in

Discussion & Results

- Because social media is embedded in today's world, body-image issues will continue to exist. Technology will only make it easier to edit photos, making it easier to create unrealistic body standards.
- Similarly, greek organizations create environments where physical appearance are prioritized. Previous studies narrowly define "fitting in" as losing significant amounts of weight; however, body-image issues manifest in different ways between men and women. Men primarily wan to build muscle while women primarily focus on losing weight to look thinner.
- This study addresses these gender differences, and doesn't exclude either gender to these stereotypes. I hope this project inspires others to continue exploring this phenomenon and highlights the influence social media and social groups have on young adults' body-image.

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