MS Thesis

EXPOSURE TO FITSPIRATION CONTENT &IT'S IMPACT ON PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF ADULTS

Researcher   **Supervisor**

YUSRA HAMEED   **DR. QURAT-UL-AIN MALIK**

491-FSS/MSMC/F21

DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD

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Final Approval

It is certified that we, the committee, have read this thesis submitted by Yusra Hameed. We judge that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the International Islamic University, Islamabad for MS in Media and Communication Studies.

Viva Voice committee

Supervisor:

Dr. Qurat-ul-Ain Malik _____

Internal Examiner:

Dr. _____

External Examiner:

Dr. _____

Incharge Female Campus:

Dr. Ayesha Sadaf _____

Dean FSS:

_____

Prof. Dr. Zafar Iqbal

Declaration

The thesis has been submitted as partial fulfillment of MS in Media and Communication Studies to the department of Media and Communication studies. I solemnly declare that this is my original work and no material has been plagiarized and my material quoted from a secondary source has been provided with proper citations and references.

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Yusra Hameed

491-FSS/MSMC/F21

Date: March 2024

Acknowledgement

Dedication

My heartfelt devotion is dedicated to my parents, who were always been there for me. My father who motivated me to take admission in MS as soon as I finished my graduation. My mother who has been through a lot during my MS as I am not a very punctual student, she saved me from missing my lectures. Lastly, my siblings, there encouragement and understanding has been my constant pillar of support throughout my educational life. Your presence in my life is a source of strength and inspiration and I am grateful for the bond we share. This achievement is as much yours as it is mine.

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the proposed study was to explore the impact of social media 'fitspiration' content on audiences on multiple levels. Firstly, the research analyzed the impact of fitspiration content on social media on the users' physical and psychological health as well as explored whether fitspiration content on social media compels users to eat healthy and exercise regularly. On the next level, the research work analyzed whether exposure to fitspiration content encouraged people to engage in social comparisons. Finally, the research also explored the role of gender to find out whether gender influenced the impact of fitspiration content. The methodology adopted for the research was the quantitative survey method and a sample of 350 respondents, 175 males and 175 females residing in Rawalpindi/Islamabad were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The selection criterion was their viewing of Fitspiration content on social media sites. Data was analyzed using SPSS and distributed 350 questionnaires among both male and female young participants from Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The results were calculated by using SPSS. Moreover, a well-planned questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument containing three sections of close-ended questions. Appropriate statistical tests were being applied to get the significant results. There were several theories relevant to present research work but Social Cognition Theory, and Social Comparison Theory was highly relevant to this study. The study revealed that after consuming fitspiration content people are more concerned about exercise behaviors, and diet routines. They felt an impact on their psychological wellbeing and are more involved in social comparisons regarding their physical fitness and achievements.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Social media is a platform for making profiles, contacts, and direct relationships. Social media is an online platform that provides a variety of ways to interact with each other, allows users to post pictures, and appreciates each other by liking, commenting, and sharing. Some define social media as a set of functionalities or building blocks (Kietzmann, 2011) Social media is also referred to as sites of information technology sets that appreciate interaction and networking between masses (Carrotte et al., 2017). Social media allows users to communicate with each other and it is a good source of entertainment nowadays. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat provide people with a pervasive network for connectivity (Asur et al., 2010).

Fitspiration is perceived to be the content that inspires people to stay healthy, to improve health and fitness. In today's global world, the use of social media is very common among everyone, people gather information from social media, interact with each other, and then implement ideas in their lives. Among all these ideas various social media platforms use fitness ideas as the source of workout and exercise motivation for people. Commonly social media is used by people of all age groups but the idea of fitness is particularly common between young adults (20-24 years old), adults (25-31 years old), and adolescents (10-19 years old) (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). While the idea of fitspiration on social media helps people to maintain their health through workouts and healthy routines of exercise, it's unrealistic and unattainable body image exposure can also affect the mental health of individuals. The idealization of toned body image and extremely thin body (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014) along with the evaluation of new social media terms such as online fitness community or hashtags fitspiration, often abbreviated as fitspo, derived from the word's

fitness and inspiration. It enhanced the level of global ideas about fitness and exercise (Easton et al., 2018).

The word Fitspiration first started on Instagram when individuals started uploading, sharing, and commenting on pictures and stories related to the perfect body (DiBisceglie, 2021), the concept later spread on other social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, tumbler and Pinterest. The content on social media about fitspiration shows the changes in body before and after adopting fitness ideas. It also includes changes in body after taking different food diets and adopting to strict food habits (Carrotte et al., 2017). Before the actual concept of fitspiration, there were other concepts like 'thinspiration' and 'bone-spiration' referring to a very thin body and extreme thinness, most commonly appreciated among female individuals, these concepts have been criticized for promoting anorexia (Talbot et al., 2017). The emergence of the fitspiration concept started in 2013 which replaced other concepts such as promoting healthy messages about self-care, healthy diet, workout routine, no laziness, and motivating users to be fit instead of thin body (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014)

Social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat allow individuals to make public and personal profiles to upload pictures and videos that can be shared easily with friends. Some of the images and videos uploaded on social media significantly promote a lifestyle that leads users towards workout routines and fitness devotion. The increasing trend of uploading and sharing fitspiration content on social media often motivates and encourages healthy eating habits and exercise routines (Easton et al., 2018). The society is highly concerned not only about thin body but a touch of muscular body which is shown on social media, television, as well as advertisements (Bozsik et al., 2018). Popular people who have an influence on society use their name for promoting such content. Influencers, role models, movie stars, and famous actors are engaged by diet and

fitness companies to advertise their content and engage people with it. These types of unrealistic portrayals had a great impact on people's brain regarding their own body image (Easton et al., 2018).

Social comparison occurs among users who engage with fitness-related content on Instagram (Levine, 2004). Social comparison characterizes our urge to assess ourselves and contrast our thoughts and skills with those of others. According to earlier studies, social comparison on SNS affect a user's perception in both good and bad ways (Carrotte et al., 2017). Two characteristics of subjective well-being are satisfaction about one's health and changes in mood. Subjective well-being is defined as how individuals perceive and assess life and particular areas and activities in life (Blackstone & Herrman, 2018). According to research, participating in social comparison on SNS have detrimental impacts such as disordered eating, low self-esteem, depressed moods, and bad body image (Prichard et al., 2017).

A lot of studies have shown how social media and "fitspiration" images impact the thoughts on ideal body image and self-esteem perception of young individuals all around the world. Images related to "fitspiration" on social media are directly linked to body dissatisfaction and eating disorders among young women (Salafia, 2013). Another study published in 2018 revealed that fitspiration material on social media and body dissatisfaction create a strong desire for thinness among young people increasing low self-esteem. Social media, specifically Instagram, highlights the importance of being fit and thin all the time, motivating body dissatisfaction and negative self-image among young adults (Fichter, 2017). Among all the social media sites, the most common with fitspiration content is Instagram where fitness images and workout videos are widely circulated (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). The content on Instagram with hashtags about fitspiration includes images and videos of both genders wearing training outfits and engaged in workout or showing workout

machines and diet food or energy supplements. The images are posted with different motivational captions like, "I live to murder fat", or workout captions like "no pain, no gain" showing muscled bodies, men or women. No doubt these images of fitspiration are focused on well-being and fitness but they highly motivate people to focus on looks and body shape more than the inner functions of the body (Vaterlaus, 2015). The digital influencers and fitspiration coaches on the internet are mostly focused on product advertisements and making money through branding rather than advising people about the facts. The young adults using social media are reportedly involved in seeking fitspiration content concerning living a healthy lifestyle and being in a race with their peers. The usage of social sites for motivating people to care about their daily routine and healthy lifestyle is not wrong but doing it in concern for making money and engaging people to follow strict diets and health routines that are not effective is questionable.

Another concept in psychology is Motivation, which also describes the process of certain driving forces behind different human actions (Exercising, and dieting). Motivation is basically a process that guides, and initiates specific human behaviors that are goal-oriented. It is perceived as the motivation is behind the urge to start exercising and following certain diets. The term motivation helps people lose/gain extra weight, make their body perfectly toned and take care of their diets. It helps people to struggle in order to get close to their goals. According to the self-determination theory, the behavioral goal or following special diets results because of motivation behind the certain goal. The motivation can be driven from various factors like, social comparisons, social media, peer pressure and criticism. People follow their favorite social media fitness influencers and start getting motivated about following the same routines. Although the concept of motivation drives people towards the positive goal-oriented life, sometimes social media influence creates unrealistic goals which are complex to follow.

Furthermore, several recent research addressed the advantages that social comparison on SNS may provide for users (Valkenburg et al., 2021). The findings show that users are motivated by making social comparisons on SNS, which therefore result in a momentarily enhanced state of well-being (Meier, 2018). Additionally, the results of earlier research, contend that the fitspiration-driven emotion may inspire consumers to up their workout or alter their way of life.

1.1 Background of Study

Social networking sites like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and Pinterest are mostly mobile-based web apps that allow people to interact with each other from any corner of the world. These networking sites provided a lot of content related to fitness and health which portrayed a slim-fit and muscular body (Talbot et al., 2017). The internet users in Pakistan is increasing daily, around 72 million people are using social media in Pakistan right now, and about 3.5 million people use Twitter, and above 4 million use Instagram, 60% of it in urban areas and 40% in rural areas (Kemp, 2023). A content analysis on social media fitness images found that 63.7% of content posted were representing people, mostly women, 25% of the images were about people doing exercise and workout, 19% of the content was related to healthy and nutritious food like protein shakes and fruits, the remaining content was related to exercise clothing, gym equipment, and inspirational quotes motivating people to exercise (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014).

Another study found that images of fitspiration and healthy bodies on social networking sites such as, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest were more emphasized on female images and videos as compared to men. Their images were more focused on sexualized body focusing on legs, buttocks, and arms rather than face (Carrotte et al., 2017). Studies after 2015 to post covid era, proved that fitspiration content on social

media portray harmful themes. The changes in moods and high body-dissatisfaction in female young users was directly related to time spent on social media with exposure to such content (Prichard et al., 2017). The trends of fitness that often went viral were mostly associated with highly muscular and unreal bodies that only attract eyes but did not promote any healthy exercise. This content was more about focused on appearance rather than health. The most liked and shared fitspiration content on social media contained "before and after " body images mainly the upper legs, rarely talking about the benefits of health and healthy diet (Blackstone & Herrman, 2018). Data related to fitspiration also showed that female users are more at risk than male users to harmful psychological consequences (Easton et al., 2018). Most commonly the fitspiration content is promoted by women who are mostly involved in perfectionism, and lack confidence in their bodies. They are highly insecure about their external appearance and how they are looking in front of others.

Fitspiration is thought to "model" concepts related to fitness and health, influencing health views and promoting a "moral obligation" in young women to attain a specific body type. Acute exposure to fitspiration has detrimental impacts on women, as experimental studies have shown. These effects include elevated adverse behavior and body discontent (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Acute subjection to "thinspiration" ideal images and fitspiration-style athletic ideal images (Grant, 2008), which show a slender yet toned or muscular female figure, predict body dissatisfaction and obsessive exercise in women at comparable rates (Homan, 2010). In the meantime, modern men frequently feel dissatisfied with their bodies, especially with their muscles (Bates et al., 2017). Men's muscle satisfaction was diminished, and being exposed to conventional media's (print or magazine) portrayals of muscular ideals was linked to despair and an increased demand for muscularity. Additionally, it had been demonstrated that men's contentment with their

overall look and level of fitness decreases when they view photographs of male models participating in sports.

Motivation is an important factor here which supports exercise behaviors, resulting in changes in health outcomes. No doubt, physical activities and following the diet routine after getting motivation from social media can bring positivity in people's life. Physical activities and exercise to keep the body fit when undertaken consistently can be highly beneficial for physical and psychological health of the human body (Physical activity guidelines advisory committee report. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington DC; 2008). One of the studies also revealed that people who spend most of their time on social media are more likely to get motivation from exercise habits and diet routines. The people who spend more time on social media are measured highly in motivation, and inspiration for fitness and healthy lifestyle. This motivation for health activities is positive sometimes but with time, people may become frustrated, which results in body dissatisfaction. Secondly, the fitness content on social media is not always positive, the images and videos by fitness freaks are edited and unrealistic. These types of images do create exercise and diet motivation in young adults but when this motivation is not fulfilled, it leads to physical and psychological health issues. The exposure to 'fitspiration' images (those which motivate a person to maintain or improve their fitness) often lead people towards disordered diet routines, and compelling exercise drives.

Considering the widespread influence of fitspiration on our young population, various responses were generated in different research studies. The response generated showed that women's reactions to models presented on social media were more focused on athleticism and performance (Raggatt et al., 2018). The importance of health and physical functions of the body is also debatable but regarding psychological well-being, the fitspiration content on social media involves people in social comparisons and body

dissatisfaction problems. Social media sites are getting distinction day by day, on average 30 million users are reported to be online every day and using social media, scrolling, and getting influenced by others (Kemp, 2023). People scrolling and going through health and fitness content get affected by biological changes, mental and emotional changes (comparisons, identity grouping), and changes in social behavior (need for popularity, approval, social desirability) causing dysfunctions in patterns of eating and physical activities. On the other hand, social media platforms can be reached by anyone, anywhere at any time, providing quick ways to explore and join virtual communities related to health and fitness (Boursier et al., 2020). This access and ease of exposure allow users to constantly engage in content browsing of any type which increased the risk of active and passive exposure. Active exposure (posting pictures of one's own body to receive reactions from others) and passive exposure (checking up on feeds to make better body images) lead to unhealthy routines and excessive workouts sometimes (Cataldo et al., 2021)

Despite all the popularity, the amount of content on social media related to fitspiration is unfiltered and few studies also explored its negative psychological and physical impact on young people. This study aimed to present and go through the social media content of fitspiration and how it affects young people and their lives.

1.2 Problem Statement

Mostly a healthy approach to fitness and exercise content creates a sense of positivity which attract individuals towards a healthy and positive lifestyle. A positive life approach can also avoid harmful impacts on psychological and physical health. However excessive exposure to fitspiration content may lead to negative impacts on the physical and psychological state of young people.

Media (television, magazines, and movies) and most commonly the internet has proven to be the main informational source on the issue of societal beauty standards, their implementation, and tactics of achievements. Most of people depicted in fitspiration related content were in excellent physical shape and lovely bodies. Users viewed the unrealistic and perfect body images in the content of Fitspiration as real and normative for everyone other than themselves. This view and exposure to fitness content more commonly led to anorexia and other mental health issues among young adults. Fitspiration content and its exposure to social media also lead to compulsive exercising and uncontrollable eating habits along with psychological risks (Barron et al., 2021). Young people are most commonly busy with their phones using social media and 55 million people from every corner of the globe belong to fitness and health clubs on social media platforms. There are over 180 million users of #fitspiration on Instagram alone and 75% of the users try to visit websites related to fitness and health. For health and fitness influencers, Instagram is one of the most favorite platforms as it grows its audience within days and more people get engage with fitness posts. The problem here were not about the fitness posts and content related to a healthy life but the authenticity of this content and how excessive exposure to fitspiration content can lead to an adverse effect on young adults.

There has been claims made that social networking sites encourage bad user experiences since interacting with them can have unfavorable effects. Furthermore, appearance-focused social media (SNS) like fitness content had demonstrated this to be accurate (Pilot, 2023). Thus, it was critical to keep learning about how people on social sites understand the content and believe that it impacted their subjective well-being to increase awareness and shield people from unfavorable experiences when interacting on SNS. Moreover, the majority of research conducted to date has only examined the advantages or

disadvantages of using SNSs for social comparison. Thus, this study bridges this divide by emphasizing the whole as opposed to only looking into favorable or unfavorable effects.

The fitspiration content on social media motivates people to achieve certain health goals which are medically not possible. When people see other people doing best in their physical health, and body appearance, they get motivated to follow the same routines which often results in dissatisfaction and unhealthy exercise patterns. The high motivation from social media fitspiration content leads to following strict diets and struggling to do anything for an ideal toned body. This high motivation when not fulfilled, leads to disappointment and serious psychological problems. This study will discover the tendency of exercise and diet motivation following the exposure to social media fitspiration content.

Social media is also responsible for shaping the ideal body image, in new terms the athletic body image. Although it doesn't look bad to be healthy and fit like athletes, achieving an athletic body may involve consuming a strict and hard diet along with a daily workout routine. People with different health backgrounds practicing social media ideas of fitspiration may lead to a loss in mental and physical health. This study explored the unhealthy fitness obsession followed on social media platforms and its effects on adolescents.

Given that this research falls under the informatics category, examining the correlation between social media sites and overall health is significant. Social comparisons are visible in many people's daily lives when SNS is an integral part of it, and the impact on people's numerous benefits to well-being. With the use of this understanding, future social networking systems may be developed with platforms, features, and content that help users achieve positive outcomes while preventing bad ones. Additionally, by building on earlier studies, the knowledge obtained from this publication will help raise awareness of health issues.

1.3 Significance of Study

This study was designed to contribute to the impact of social media on the patterns and behaviour of young adults and exposure to fitness content and its impact on the realities of young adults' bodies and minds. Media research suggested that health and fitness content might cause unhealthy fitness obsession among users (Dahl & Campos, 2012). Some experts from diet and nutrition had also spoken regarding this tendency of fitspiration observing that it created a standard of body image that is only achievable by a hard diet and tough exercise schedule. This study goes through the impact on the eating habits of young adults and the psychological disturbance they face because of perfect idea of fitspiration on social sites. Social media posts related to health and fitness were more concerned about appearance-related facts and health-related content such as motivation to exercise and lose weight, and an athletic body may lead to other health disorders both on physical and psychological levels. The health-conscious lifestyle on internet seems to promote consistent diets, a healthy routine, and idea that getting the physique of your aspirations is as simple as clicking few button. The model spokesperson does not take into account the vast and diverse population and the message impact they intake. For instance, Kayla Itsines, an Instagram user with 6.7 million fans, is classified as a public figure on her website. Many referred to her as the public face of the social media fitness culture, and she is number one in the fitness sector on Forbes' list of leading inspirations. In the Forbes feature, author Clare O'Conner described details about how hundreds of women globally spent $19.9 a month on Itsines' Bikini Physique Coaching Program, maintaining those who follow them on social media bout their fitness progress. This hashtag was used in more than 10 million posts on Instagram which featured women's before and post-training progress images. However, Kayla Itsines was a young, beautiful lady who was unfairly understood. A lot of those women had never mirrored as the creators of such programs and felt disheartened, even

though women of every size and shape utilised it and some found improvements. This demotivation caused low self-esteem and a negative body image, which lead to all the problems that the literature suggests these disorders might cause. There were hundreds of social media fitness models, virtual trainers, and health bloggers, like Kayla Itsines, who had a growing degree of influence over their followers. Still, it was social media stars like her that piqued my curiosity in this specific issue.

Media's effect on women perception about their body image has been extensively studied, and studies regarding male body image were also becoming more prevalent in this area. However, the topic of social media's effect on male and female body image was still relatively new. For my personal use investigation, I concentrated on the influence of the workout culture on body image in both male and female. I wanted to investigate the sometimes-ignored negative aspects of what on the surface appears to be an unintentional body-positive alternative culture; its consequences include individuals developing self-destructive diet and exercise routines, stressing over their physical appearances, and having negative body images. The fitness movement was also altering men's and women's perceptions of their bodies by encouraging a more toned and specified body.

The common belief among users who follow Fitspiration on social media was that the influencers out there are helping them to achieve a perfect and healthy lifestyle. But concerning health reasons fitspiration now was associated with body discontent, low self-worth, and irregular eating habits in young people. Social media trends in the current era were not only about being extremely thin furthermore highly fit for an ideal body image. The main goal of the study was to understand the idea of fitspiration content and its impact on the physical and psychological well-being of people. It provided a detailed understanding of the negative psychological impact associated with fitspiration content on social media. This theory also contributed to the mixing of social media theories including social

comparison theory, social cognition theory, and social discrepancy theory which has not been done before. This study will benefit the policymakers regarding their work on social media policies. The research can also be used by content creators to create better content for the future.

This study provided relevant evidence on social media content of fitspiration and its impact on young people, it gave a baseline to the relevant department for filtration of content and making people aware of the importance of health over appearance. To be healthy is more important than to be fit and smart. Further, this study provided a baseline for future research on content related to fitspiration and the impact of media on fitness and health.

1.4 Research Objective

The objective of the research was to;

- Examine the impact of fitspiration content on social media on users' physical health.

- Investigate the impact of fitspiration content on social media on users' psychological health.

- Explore whether demographic factors influence the impact of fitspiration content on youth.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the literature review, the following set of research questions has been devised for the research.

- RQ 1: What is the impact of fitspiration content on social media on users' physical health?

- RQ 1(a): To what extent does fitspiration content on social media convince users to exercise regularly?

- RQ 1 (b): To what extent does active engagement with Fitspiration content lead to diet motivation?

- RQ 2: What is the impact of fitspiration content on social media on users' psychological health?

  - RQ 2(a): To what extent does active engagement with Fitspiration content correlate to a negative psychological impact on young adults?

  - RQ 2(b): To what extent does fitspiration content on social media encourage users to engage in social comparisons?

- RQ 3: To what extent do demographic variables influence exercise motivation

  - RQ 3(a): Is there a significant difference between males and females regarding their attitude towards exercise?

  - RQ 3(b): Is there a significant difference between different age groups regarding their attitude towards exercise?

- RQ 4: To what extent do demographic variables influence diet motivation?

  - RQ 4(a): Is there a significant difference between males and females regarding their attitude towards Diet?

  - RQ 4(b): Is there a significant difference between different age groups regarding their attitude towards diet?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Review of Related Literature

Fitspiration is the content that is made to support healthier lifestyles, researchers worked on it related to poorer body image in comparison with time spent on social media

(Hogue & Mills, 2019). Studies that worked on the impact of fitspiration on young people suggested the conclusion that viewing fitspiration may affirm an unreal lean body type, and it may cause intentional and unintentional body stigmatization, being harmful to the perception of young adults.

From its beginning, the rise of social media has been so fast and prolific. More than 4.62 billion are active users of social media. With the purpose of entertainment and interaction, social media has been also a source of income gathering platform, it launches and supports careers leading to new terms such as micro-celebrity or influencers. These influencers on social media created public identities and gave knowledge in a particular field, persuading their followers to take action according to their information. Social media influencers affect cognitive learning and consumer behavior and they are paid by brands and companies to persuade more followers (Carrotte et al., 2017). Social media influencers include people who make content that is famous and trending nowadays called fitspiration, commonly abbreviated as fitspo, a mix of inspiration and fitness, it refers to any content that inspires people to be extremely fit and healthy. 2020 research on Fitspo revealed that almost 72.2 million posts were shared with the hashtag "fitspiration". The posts related to fitspiration usually include images and videos of people, food, workouts, and daily routines and influencers sharing their diet routines. Inspiring people to achieve good health and fitness is an important career for people who are health experts, health educators, and trainers, but fitspiration is not acceptable for changing behaviors and having an impact on the mental health of individuals. Young adults were the most targeted users for content related to health and fitness, people aged 18-29 were the ones who struggled with meeting physical activity recommendations, adopting diet patterns, and suffering from ideal body image issues.

Nowadays, almost everyone uses social media, especially the generation known as Digital Natives who are growing up in the era of social media and the internet. Social media

platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Tumblr, and Pinterest all promote the concept of fitspiration by people called "Influencers" who tell people what to eat, drink, and consume in their body for fitness. For the young people on social media, fitness and healthy content plays a really important role in their lives, they are looking for nutrition, fitness information and exercise routine on social media pages, particularly during COVID-19 when everyone was locked inside the house, use of social media, and content amount related to fitspiration and fitness on social media increased significantly (Valkenburg et al., 2021). The influencers on social media presents a 24/7 routine of their healthy and sports lifestyle which promoted a demand for the ideal body type that corresponds to a slim, trained, and athlete body. The content present on social media about health and fitness was an unfiltered and unrealistic representation of body image hurting an individual's mental as well as physical health. Besides mental and physical health, viewing fitspiration images also promoted a decrease in body satisfaction and appreciated low self-esteem in both genders, as the result of social comparisons (Barron et al., 2021). It is noteworthy that women's health outcomes have been the exclusive focus of the majority of fitspiration studies (Carrotte et al., 2017).

This was consistent with research on body dissatisfaction, which typically looks at this experience in female sample populations. Fitspiration picture content research revealed that women were featured more than men (68% vs. 31%, respectively). In addition, it was shown that men were more likely to be portrayed as muscular in fitspiration posts as women, who were more likely to be shown with skin exposed or in sexualized ways (Bell et al., 2018). Fitspiration-related mental health consequences for males are only now starting to get attention. According to some preliminary studies, males who were exposed to fitspiration or thinspiration—that is, photos of extremely thin models- experienced an increase in depressive symptoms and a drop in body satisfaction in addition to a stronger desire to enhance their

muscularity (Yee et al., 2020). Overall, further research is required to understand how young men and women use and react to fitspiration.

2.1.1 Physical health and Social Media

Social media is the most influential and motivational creating the urge to get an ideal body type (Thompson et al., 2002). The body image is defined as feelings, thoughts, and perceptions about one's own body appearance, and exposure to fitspiration content reshaped this body image. The change in perception of body image motivated people to start exercising and dieting. The idea of motivation served as a helpful summary of how a person's present circumstances and prior experiences combine to influence goal-directed behavior. The social comparisons, thought of ideal body image and along with fitspiration content exposure, all lead to involvement in exercise patterns and diet habits. Motivated activities generally had one thing in common: they lead to a goal, and reaching the objective is satisfying. Therefore, a basic characteristic of all deliberate activities was motivation, which is defined as energizing conduct in pursuit of a goal. Actions following the motivation were taken to minimize biological needs and to increase the probability of survival for the organism (Aunger, & Curtis, 2013).

Later, the concept of motivation was broadened to encompass both an activation, arousing component and a directive, goal-directed component (Hommel, 2022). The fitspiration content on social media created the sense of taking action towards exercise patterns. A significant topic in theory and research, exercise motivation was measured in the literature in a number of ways. Exercise motivation was an important topic because of the intricacy of the activity, the many health benefits of regular exercise, and the variety of conflicting frameworks utilized in the research. This concept is significant across numerous academic fields and has been interpreted in various ways. Recent observations have shown

that the literature lacks practical answers as well as a knowledge of the elements that inspired people to exercise (Riar et al., 2022). This deficiency persists despite studies demonstrating that motivation was essential and the most trustworthy measure of exercise adherence (Wolters, 2013). The issue with assessing motivation was not a lack of theoretical frameworks; rather, it was a matter of variety. Despite the fact that exercise has many known benefits, the majority of people were not engaged in it. As per the US Department of Health and Human Services, regular physical activity had several health benefits, such as the prevention or treatment of certain causes of morbidity or mortality, such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and osteoporosis. Among the other benefits of exercise include improvements in body composition, strength, flexibility, endurance, and fitness. Although aging is linked to a decrease in muscle strength, exercise actually increase muscle strength and some functional measures (Grevendonk et al., 2021). Regular physical activity had been demonstrated to successfully reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression in addition to its many health benefits (Paluska et al., 2012). In a recent trial of older adults, exercise therapy was found to be just as beneficial after 16 weeks of treatment as a prescription antidepressant.

Motivation is essential for carrying out healthy activities and, in turn, for largely preserving health. It was hypothesized that initiatives to promote health through physical activity require motivational understanding. For the purpose of clarification, the following definitions were provided. Motivation is the natural desire to accomplish a task. Self-motivation is the most dependable psychological factor for predicting exercise adherence (Ryan et al., 2021).

Health professionals who promoted lifestyle improvement had as their primary goal supporting the person's internal motivation rather than offering external influences. Extrinsic variables such as encouragement from friends, family, or coworkers were referred to as social support. Exercise was the deliberate performance of a physically demanding activity. It was

especially recommended that people exercise at a moderate level for at least half an hour five days a week in order to reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality. The same paper recommended rigorous exercise for at least 20 minutes, three days a week or more, to further optimize aerobic fitness. There were differences by sex and age among different physical activities, with women reporting higher interest and enjoyment in relation to sex and fitness/health motivation increasing with age while appearance motivation decreasing. This was consistent with previous research on the motivation for participating in various physical activities, which revealed differences in reasons for sports and exercise (Hsu et al., 2022).

Young, middle-aged, and elderly persons had different reasons for engaging in physical activity because values, responsibilities, goals, and health conditions all vary with time (Miller, 2002). Another unique aspect of the SDT approach to understanding exercise behavior was the significance of satisfying basic psychological needs. According to Deci and Ryan, basic psychological requirements were innate "nutrients" (p. 7) that promoted integration when they were authentically satisfied in social settings.

Conversely, unpleasant feelings resulted from circumstances that made it difficult to achieve basic psychological needs (Ryan, 2000). To understand why people exercise, it's crucial to look at motivation and exercise motives. Even though studies had demonstrated that physical activity can improve health and reduce mortality (Haskell et al., 2007), a significant proportion of people in Western countries do not exercise. For instance, according to Kyriacou and Pavlakis, the majority of US adults were considered inactive, and 25% of Greeks do not exercise beyond what is necessary for daily living (Valanou et al, 2006). 47.2% of young Cypriots also reported not exercising at all. Gender-related variations had been observed in age-related declines in physical activity occupation and exercise involvement. Women were less active than men almost all of their lives in exercise participation. Men were driven to exercise because it helped them managing stress from their

daily life and made them feel good to take on the demands of the activity. Men were also more prone to partake in difficult activities. Research has shown that an individual's motivation to exercise is also influenced by physical characteristics such as weight and level of obesity. It has been discovered that the two main motivations for exercising were to manage weight and achieve a preferred body type. While women usually tried to cut back on exercise and lose weight, men usually involved in exercising to develop muscle mass (Markland & Ingledew, 2007). For persons who were overweight or obese, body weight typically acted as a barrier to exercise. Consequently, individuals with higher BMIs sometimes quit exercising entirely or don't exercise at all.

Previous studies have suggested a relationship between psychological qualities and exercise motivation, but few have looked at the association between exercise participants' willingness to exercise and their self-esteem, trait anxiety, or social body anxiety. Specifically, it has been discovered that the relationship between exercise participation and self-esteem was significantly influenced by age, BMI, and the degree of self-determined exercise motivation (Lutz, 2008)Low self-esteem made it harder for women to enjoy and frequently engage in physical activity because it caused them to worry about their weigh. Furthermore, people with strong senses of self-determination also had higher chances of seeing improvements in their self-esteem; conversely, people with weaker senses of self-determination were more likely to be motivated to exercise, which diminishes the significance of the motivation to exercise Regular exercise has been demonstrated to improve mental and emotional well-being (Bozsik et al., 2018) Survey found that engaging in moderate exercise on a regular basis increases energy and reduces fatigue. There weren't many studies looking into the connection between exercise incentives and trait anxiety, especially in light of the present economic depression. Furthermore, it has been found that social concern about one's looks significantly influences people's motivation to join fitness

programs, which in turn affects how often they exercise. It seems that body image and social comparison anxiety were associated.

Studies have indicated that an erroneous perception of the ideal body weight and size might adversely affect an individual's dietary and physical activity patterns. The unfriendly environment of the gym where young girls practiced hurt their sense of body satisfaction and self-esteem (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Furthermore, body image problems were made worse by peer pressure and other outside influences such as wall mirrors, posters of the ideal body type, and mocking from others in the social circle. These elements also made it simpler to quit exercising. In the meantime, social pressure and expectations from others in the exercise community develop exercise habits that boost participation with attractiveness, as exceptionally toned and skinny body types were pushed in movies, ads, music videos, and magazines.

Images of what is seen as the ideal figure were frequently shown to the public in the media. A body ideal is the standard for what a body should appear like in a certain society (Wutich et al., 2024). Prior studies showed that people made comparisons succumbing to media representations of idealized bodies. Nonetheless, idealized depictions of bodies lead to erroneous beliefs about what constitutes a suitable physical appearance because they did not accurately represent the bodies of the majority of community members. Using quantitative methods, Kaw investigated the responses to the following questions: How does the fitness culture on social media impacted the way men and women feel about their bodies? Furthermore, how social media content about fitness altered the ideal gender differences in body types? Well-fed bodies, in the setting of scarce food supply, were a representation of wealth and prestige. Nonetheless, in an abundance culture, lean, well-groomed bodies represented power, well-being, accountability, and appeal. In addition, the

media, fashion, and fitness sectors idealized the skinny, well-trained body as a representation of success and happiness.

In the meantime, obesity was linked to stupidity, complacency, and laziness. Negative cultural norms about large bodies, particularly for women, were so ingrained and widespread in modern society that they were almost taken for granted (Bordo, 2023). All human communities attach cultural significance to body size, maybe because it was a noticeable physical characteristic. Cultural differences in body ideals also exist between genders, and depending on one's culture, one may differ on what constitutes a body that is too big, too little, or just right. Moreover, there were generational, regional, and temporal variations in body ideals.

Exercise is a form of activity that consumes energy and has the purpose of improving physical activity, as well as it also changes body appearance (Prichard et al., 2017). Most of the exercise activities involved maintaining a desired body shape like gaining weight, and muscles and toning down. An individual's assessment of their physical appearance, together with the resulting attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, were referred to as their body image. The media was thought to be a potent and ubiquitous sociocultural force that might affect a person's unhappiness with their physique. The media has enforced behavior models through its various platforms (such as television, magazines, the internet, and newspapers), spreading social notions of ideal bodies that people were urged to emulate. The research study showed that people who are overweight or gaining weight were more likely to be involved in exercise and workout routines as compared to people who are less or normal weight. The relation between body image and exercise behavior was taken as the fact that body dissatisfaction and weight management have all been ranked as important stimulators for workout schedules (Prichard et al., 2017).

Young people as compared to other age groups were more likely to get attracted to and involved in body-related anxiety when being exposed to fitspiration content making it more body-dissatisfaction and guilt-fueled compulsive exercise routines (Barron et al., 2021). However, an individual's thoughts on physical appearances as being negative or positive also indicated the exercise activity and motivation. The study also proved that having a negative body image motivates people to exercise and maintain a healthy routine (Barron et al., 2021).

The long-term exposure of body dissatisfaction thoughts also created Body Dysmorphic orders. One fundamental feature of both Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) and Muscle Dysmorphia (MD) was preoccupation with body image and physical appearance. The fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM5) classified MD as a subgroup of BDD. Relevantly, the clinical characteristics of these disorders appear to share themes with fitspiration, including an obsession with appearance and a strong desire for muscularity (which resulted in spending a lot of time lifting weights, paying too much attention to food, or using supplements improperly). Consequently, it was possible to see some fitspiration-related aspects as potentially contributing factors to the development of clinically relevant body image problems. Examples of these factors includes body objectification and the preference for physical beauty over health and well-being. The amount of time individuals spent exercising and working out was related to negative body appearance more than just health concerns.

According to the research study, people increased their exercise time when they were overweight and were interested in changing the appearance of their body parts(Bozsik et al., 2018). The part of this study also found that none of the exercise participants were comfortable with their body appearance while having a negative body image also served as both a motivator for exercise and more adaptation to a lazy lifestyle. Thus, body appearance

problems like being underweight and not having a toned physique triggered individuals to avoid wearing revealing clothes, and going out in gyms and public activities.

They usually involved themselves in exercise and work out in the environment in their own comfort zone. Various studies indicated that particular exercise routines, workout frequency, and exercise environment were related to effects on body image. The amount of time spent in gyms and fitness centers was also correlated with body image concerns and poor eating behaviors (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Social media exposure to these societal body norms also negatively impacted people's food and exercise habits, mental health (such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness), and body image.

The "athletic ideal" is defined by firmness in the lower body, a toned tummy, and a more muscular upper body. It also involves being extremely slender. The process of social comparison between an individual's physical appearance and idealized bodies portrayed in the media was thought to be the cause of the impacts of media representation on body image. Fitness was primarily seen as a means of getting in shape, looking good, and achieving a beauty ideal by fitspiration users. This resulted in feelings of frustration, dissatisfaction, and mood swings ("It made me not enjoy things like going to the beach and like taking photos on holiday because I don't look like the photos on Instagram") and "When I see fitness accounts where all the girls are like svelte and toned, I'm like oh, it's hard to love me when I look like this" (Easton et al., 2018). People who measured their physical appearance against media-presented cultural and beauty standards were almost always unhappy with how their bodies and appearance look. Additionally, Tiggemann and Zaccardo demonstrated how appearance comparison inclinations, which caused people to compare their looks to the idealized bodies on those posts, moderate the negative impact of viewing fitspiration postings on body dissatisfaction and negatively impact body image.

Looking at perfect body images and videos on social media motivated people to change their appearances to match the standards that were hard and unrealistic to achieve. Social media influenced opinions, behaviors, and routines when it comes to exercise and food choices, it motivated young people to work out following new ways of exercising. Some of the fitspiration images on social media were specifically designed to make people feel shameful about their bodies and lifestyles while degrading their self-worth and achievements. The attempt for a bigger and leaner muscle body lead to the use of steroids, and ephedrine and engage people in dieting and strict workout routines. The struggle to change body muscularity for aesthetic or athletic purposes leads to detrimental physical and psychological changes. The images of male models engaged in heavy physical activities and sports were normal people which also decreases body satisfaction and overall appearance in men.

The "thinspiration" movement, which promoted slim bodies as the ideal body image, gave rise to the fitspiration movement several years later, and its devotion is rapidly increasing (Carrotte et al., 2017). When the term "#fitspiration" was searched on Instagram in December 2016, around 10 million photographs were found. Furthermore, there were a lot of "influencers" and models out there right now that posted encouraging images along with advice on good eating (Carrotte et al., 2017). Theoretically, fitness content influenced and improved the people's health and wellness through food and exercise; in fact, those who follow this trend said it motivated them to engage in physical activity and eat properly (Raggatt et al., 2018). But most people found it difficult to attain these goals without turning to unhealthy habits (Ramme et al., 2016), which raised some serious issues, especially about people's body image (Carrotte et al., 2017).

While adopting exercise behaviors, nutritious eating habits, workout routines, and self-care contribute to the overall health of an individual, the primary health goal of the

body also relied on front strength and empowerment of a person. Fitspiration content on social media also exerted a positive impact on physical health by introducing slogans like, "Strong is the new skinny". However, fitspiration raised many other concerns showcasing a specific body type characterized by leanness and muscularity which was not possible for a normal individual (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). The fitspiration images on social media were mostly toned up and edited to a level that it caused real impact and social comparisons among normal people. The quotes used with these social media contents were highly engaging and made people think about achieving unideal body images like, "Do it for looking in the mirror and feeling good about what you see". Such types of quotes attempted to motivate people towards health and fitness but it rather focuses more on the outside appearance and benefits of being fit and skinny. Exercise behaviors focused on appearances rather than a healthy lifestyle were associated with negative body image (Strelan & Hargreaves, 2005).

A lot of these fitspiration images were uploaded with objectifying features, such as poses focusing on different body parts which were unethical and not possible to achieve for normal individuals. A lot of research has been done on body ideals and fitspiration motivation content on social media, still, there is a great need to do more in-depth study on the field. Fitspiration content usually attracts young people and makes them feel motivated toward exercise routines and diet habits. The fitspiration content these days promotes unreal body images and it encourages social comparison between young minds. Thus, a lot of research was warranted on young adults' minds and fitspiration content promotion on social media.

According to the National Health Interview Survey of 2018, 53% of adults ignored the importance of physical activities in their life. Only 12.2% of adults met the necessary food intake and only 9.3% met the vegetable intake that was necessary for the growth of the

body. Weight gain issues among college students and not meeting the nutrition quantity (Carrotte et al., 2017)caused other health issues at a very young age, the obesity rate among young people has also continued to increase. According to the Centers for Disease Control (2018), 42.2 % of all adults were obese and faced body image issues. Body dissatisfaction was also a problem related to physical and mental health caused by unhealthy weight control behaviors, binge eating, and following strict workout routines. Bodydissatisfaction,unhealthy routines, and following diets without a doctor's recommendation lead to depression (Sharpe et al., 2017). In a study on the BMI of both males and females, it was explored that both male and female individuals experienced body dissatisfaction from adolescence and adulthood and it was increased through social comparisons on social media. Young people started feeling unhealthy and not fit for the ideal fitness scale which was set by social media influencers. Researchers also worked on the relationship between viewing fitspiration content and taking action to do exercise (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014) however no particular results were measured. Another study on college students revealed that students chose to rest as compared to exercise after exposure to exercise and workout videos (Prichard et al., 2017)

Fitspiration posts, according to content analyses, also highlighted external motivations for physical activity, such as attractiveness and unrealistic body ideals, which were linked to poor body image and particularly dangerous for people who were at risk of disordered eating and other related mental health issues, like body dissatisfaction. Among a group of young adults who self-reported engagement with fitspiration content regularly, 17.4% expressed extremely high psychological distress, and 17.7% were deemed to be at high risk of developing an eating problem (Raggatt et al., 2018). Fitspiration photos on social media therefore affected one's self-image and ability to engage in healthy behavior in either a favourable or negative way. It's unclear yet, though, if specific young students were

more prone to react negatively (as opposed to positively) to fitspiration posts. Social media wellness campaigns were more focused if young people's specific responses to fitspiration were better understood.

2.1.2 Psychological Health and Social Media

According to Stone and Mackie, psychological well-being is the sum of an individual's perceptions and assessments of their life, particular areas of it, and activities within it. Moreover, it encompassed a multifaceted assessment of existence, encompassing cognitive assessments of life, emotional assessments of moods, and feelings of satisfaction. Two variables were included in the concept of subjective well-being, according to some researchers (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005): mood and life satisfaction. Mood is the emotional aspect of well-being, whereas life satisfaction is the evaluative or cognitive component. Two ideas—self-esteem and body image—were used to define and clarify subjective well-being in this study. According to (Bleidorn et al., 2016), self-esteem is "an individual's subjective evaluation of his or her worth as a person." It has also been suggested that self-esteem is the evaluative component of self-knowledge that indicated how much people enjoy themselves and have confidence in their abilities. According to Zeigler-Hill, self-esteem is a reflection of perception rather than reality and is not always true or false. Zeigler-Hill stated that "an individual's accomplishments and attributes correlated with high levels of self-esteem, or these feelings of self-worth had little to do with any sort of objective appraisal of the individual." Several unpleasant feelings were frequently linked to poor self-esteem. People with poor self-esteem were shown to have more negative feelings, affect, or states overall in a study by Leary and MacDonald, as opposed to those who were highly self-esteemed. In addition to neuroticism and general bad effect, individuals experienced symptoms of depression and sadness, anxiety, social anxiety, humiliation, loneliness, shame and guilt,

aggression, and anger. On the other hand, having a good and favorable image of oneself was referred to as having high self-estee This has been linked to beneficial outcomes including life satisfaction. Men and women had different degrees of self-esteem, according to a study on age and gender disparities in self-esteem (Bleidorn et al., 2016).

According to the study's findings, males often had higher levels of self-esteem than ladies in their teens and early to middle adult years. However, both men and women required competence and worthiness to have good self-esteem, and culture affects self-esteem in terms of gender more than gender influences self-esteem (Mruk et al., 2013).

Recent studies on social contrasts had changed the approach to examine the effects of specific platforms that young people were exposed to, in response to recent advancements in our ability to access media. Body ideals were dictated by society. Numerous studies had focused on image-oriented websites like Pinterest and Instagram. For instance, Sherlock and Wagstaff deliberately opted to use Instagram for their study because of the platform's focus on the sharing of images and brief videos, as well as its frequent use of filters to enhance photos and "hashtags," which facilitate the more rapid and easy global sharing of specific items. Additionally, Instagram features a search and explore page where users are exposed to a variety of public profile photographs and videos tailored to their recent search history, introduced them to new content without requiring them to specifically look for the content, which encourages the growth of possible targets for social comparison. Research has switched to focus on these platforms to better understand how people get affected differently by image-based platforms than by other platforms, including Facebook. The research that followed assessed how young people's use of Instagram affected their psychological health. (Liu et al., 2018) looked at the relationships between the frequency of Instagram use and depression symptoms. A moderated mediation model was put forth based on the body of available literature. It was proposed to be favorable. The percentage of

strangers followed on Instagram moderated the direct and indirect associations hypothesized, with associations being stronger for those who followed more strangers. There was an association between the frequency of Instagram use and depressive symptoms, and the association was mediated by more negative social comparisons to other users.

The relationship between social media use and subjective well-being has also been demonstrated to be moderated by social comparison orientation; that is, those with a stronger (as opposed to a weaker) comparison orientation was more likely to experience future increase in depressive and lonely feelings as well as decrease in self-esteem (Schmuck et al., 2019). Thus, the relationship between these experiences and health-related behaviors be moderated by social comparison orientation. However, rather than emphasizing the importance of comparisons or one's propensity to compare, fitspiration literature has more frequently concentrated on the frequency of social comparisons. The regulatory emphasis, or a person's propensity to shift from feared outcomes (prevention focus) or toward idealized aims (promotion focus), had a comparable effect.

The literature on regulatory attention that is now available makes a similar suggestion to that on social comparison: other people serve as a potential representation of one's future objectives or results. Some people (those with a promotion emphasis) see other people performing well as idealized goals that inspire action, while other people (those with a preventive focus) see other people performing poorly as consequences that they fear will occur and inspire action.

Prior research has shown that weight maintenance interventions that were customized to each person's regulatory focus outperformed self-directed weight loss attempts. Additionally, compared to a preventative focus, a promotion focus has been linked to improved psychological results (Liu et al., 2018). When compared to their prevention-focused counterparts, those who performed well on the promotion-focused subscales of the

regulatory focus measures also reported better levels of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and reduced feelings of loneliness (Liu et al., 2018). Regulatory attention hasn't, as far as we know, been investigated in connection with young adults' usage of social media, specifically their reactions to fitspiration posts. Therefore, it was helpful to consider the effects of both regulatory focus and social comparison orientation on the relationships that existed between young people's perceptions of fitspiration and subjective well-being outcomes (e.g., motivation for physical activity after viewing fitspiration posts or positive versus negative feelings in response to fitspiration posts).

Numerous studies have found that themes in fitspiration content were dangerous (Carrotte et al., 2017). The more time a group of adolescent female respondents spent engaged with such content, the higher their levels of negative mood and worse their happiness with their bodies. (Prichard et al., 2018). Fitspiration trends on social media were linked to the promotion of seemingly healthy, unrealistic bodies that were visually appealing, but they don't appear to support exercising to achieve "health-related" objectives as opposed to "appearance-related" ones (Raggatt et al., 2018). The most popular images were actually "before-and-after" pictures of people's bodies, primarily their upper torso and legs and infrequently connected to the health advantages of exercise (Blackstone & Herrman, 2018). Data indicated that fitspiration-related negative psychological outcomes were more common in female adolescents than in male adolescents (Easton et al., 2018). Additionally, young women who interacted with fitspiration trends typically had low self-esteem, obsessive traits, and perfectionism as traits. Fitspiration content may affect how men and women think about and perceive their bodies, although there was currently very little research in this area (Easton et al., 2018).

Given the conclusion of the impact of fitspiration content after revising literature work on the topic, and outcomes associated with social media viewership, more research in

this field is needed. The purpose of this study was to find out the relationship between fitspiration content and body image perceptions of young people and to find a relationship between fitspiration content and its impact on psychological health.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Social Cognitive Theory

The impact of fitspiration content on young adults can be studied under the umbrella of Social Cognitive Theory, which proposes that an individual learns from observation, from people's actions and their outcomes (Krcmar, 2019). Related to the field of mass communication, Social Cognitive theory recommended that information applying to human behavior, values, and thinking patterns was retrieved from modelling present in media. Electronic media and the internet allowed individuals to access unique learning opportunities, as they transmit new ways of thinking and behaving to a large number of people having a notable impact (Krcmar, 2019).

Social Cognitive Theory that influencers or celebrities exhibited strong motivational actions by viewers. Thus, exposure to content showing individuals achieving desired outcomes created activated responses from people who were watching and learning from behind the screens. Viewing content related to exercise and workouts along with achieving the perfect social standards of fitness motivated exercise and diet behaviors. Young people nowadays were more likely to be interested in content that is rewarded socially, on social media, sharing, commenting, liking, and repins served as social rewards. Individuals started liking the content which was liked by their peers and they started having a desire to get the same appreciation as influencers out there were getting.

The Mass Communication-focused Models (Morgan, Shanahan, &Signorielli, 2009), the Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (2009), and the Sociocultural Perspective on Body Image (Thompson et al., 1999) were also utilized as mediating factors in several studies (Tiggemann, 2011). According to these findings, media messaging promoted false perceptions of what makes a woman beautiful. Internalising such warped perceptions has been linked to body dissatisfaction, which was a major factor in the development of disordered eating (Ghaznavi & Taylor, 2015). Fitspiration, also known as a positive spin-off of sweat, was a positive offshoot of sweat that has emerged from the use of blogs, images, and websites to encourage people to work out and follow healthy eating habits to attain a healthy lifestyle and related health objectives.

According to social cognitive theory, we learn from what we observe. An individual is more likely to desire to adopt similar behaviors to obtain a comparable body type when they are exposed to photos of thin and fit people (Cc & Se, 2017). This explained why there has been a movement in the media as a whole, as well as on social media, towards health and fitness. To determine what behaviors were associated with this body image and what body image was associated with sweating, a study using Pinterest conducted a content analysis (Cc & Se, 2017). The results of this study demonstrated that sweating was correlated with attractiveness and thinness as well as an encouragement to engage in physical activity.

For further acceptance and adoption of socially modelled behavior and attitudes, individuals were more engaged in pro-fitness content to get endorsement by their peers (Bozsik et al., 2018). This engagement and exposure to fitspiration content and desire to be extremely fit affected the cognition of a person causing a lot of negative changes in the whole personality as well as physical and psychological health.

2.2.2 Social Comparison Theory

The content of fitspiration on social media had an impact on young adults also applies social comparison theory. Social comparison theory suggested that people build their opinions about themselves by comparing them to others. People became more addicted to achieving goals when they were gaining appreciation and approval from others (Festinger et., (2018). People when watch the content of fitspiration on social media they started comparing themselves with influencers, this led to an upward social comparison. This kind of comparison was most common, because of social media exposure people started comparing themselves and tend towards negative self-evaluation (Festinger et., (2018). This kind of upward social comparison led to a form of action to reduce differences people were more likely to start diets and workout habits when they were exposed to fitspiration content on almost all their social media handles (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Fitspiration was still centred on having a slender body image, even though it was more positive than thinspiration, according to the study's findings. Social comparison theory was applied to an examination of fitspiration on Instagram, classifying the terms "food," "people," and "other." A survey discovered that pictures of food made up one-third of the images connected to this hashtag. The majority of the women's photos had a similar toned and slender body type, which was connected to fitness in some way. This study's key conclusion was that at least one body part—typically the legs or the abdomen—was objectified, which is thought to contribute to body image dissatisfaction. According to research by Ghaznavi and Taylor, reading material that encourages self-objectification made women perceive themselves as third parties, which resulted in a higher degree of self-monitoring. These Women were more inclined to compare their images to those of other people and to have negative self-evaluations. This procedure was frequently associated with self-grooming, a method of ensuring that one is presenting the best possible picture of oneself on social media. This entails ensured that you only have

positive shots, removing your name from any images that are judged unsatisfactory, and retouching images before posting.

Festinger's Social Comparison Theory is a suitable framework for explaining Fitspiration imagery and words that aim to encourage fitness, as young people have an innate tendency to compare themselves to others and their peers. The theory of Social Comparison argued that individuals had a propensity to compare themselves to others to assess, enhance, and develop themselves. Depending on how one assimilates to or deviates from the comparison model, one experience either positive or demotivating impacts from such comparisons. According to the theory, people's primary motivation was to understand themselves. They had an innate urge to maintain a consistent and accurate self-view by receiving feedback about their traits and performance. According to Festinger's (1954) theory, individuals assessed themselves by comparing themselves to others who laterally shared certain critical features. The next benefit of downward comparisons is that they improved oneself and helped to sustain a positive self-image. These are contrasts with other people, we surpass. Self-improvement was the third need that social comparison satisfies. People looked for upward comparisons of norms here, comparing them to those we consider to be superior.

For instance, evaluating oneself against an idealized, thin model is an upward comparison, and evaluating oneself against a heavier model is a downward comparison, we took into account contrast and assimilation effects. According to Mathras, Loveland, and Mandel (2013), contrasting shape and weight with a somewhat shallow model led to assimilation effects in the direction of a potentially achievable ideal. However, negative self-esteem and low body satisfaction has been linked to 117 contrast effects away from extraordinarily slim models. It was justified and beneficial to have an accurate self-perception about enhanced fitness and general health and well-being. However, making comparisons to

an artificially produced unachievable fitness ideal by "manicuring the online self to adhere to the mainstream aesthetics" caused one to feel inadequate when one did not met this ideal to fulfil idealized virtual identities (Fardouly, 2015). Such comparisons impacted eating disorders, body dissatisfaction, and thin-ideal thoughts.

One explanation for the contradictory results regarding the relationship between fitspiration and health was the social comparison theory (Festinger, 2016). It proposed that people assess themselves in comparison to others in a valued domain (like looks or health), which gave insight into one's present and potential standing in that domain. People believed that, in the comparison domain, they were performing worse than, better than, or about the same as another person. There was incentive to alter conduct to close the perceived difference between oneself and those who were thought to be "doing better" in the valued domain (Festinger, 2016). Fitspiration posts highlighted a disparity between the real and ideal bodies (as portrayed in photos of fit people), which inspired healthy behaviors by evoking a positive emotional reaction (Dignard, 2017). However, because accomplishments like those of the comparison target—that was, the person utilized for comparison—seem unachievable, a noticeable disparity also elicited negative feelings and demotivate behaviors toward desired fitness results. Fitspiration photos, as opposed to travel photos, had been shown to indirectly affect body satisfaction through appearance-based social comparisons. In particular, fitspiration exposure was linked to increased appearance comparison, which predicted a worse level of body satisfaction. The degree to which people paid attention to and appreciate social comparison information was reflected in their social comparison orientation. According to research, a strong comparison orientation put one at risk for low subjective well-being. In other words, for people who placed high importance on comparisons, using social media frequently resulted in a fall in subjective well-being. On the other hand, people who valued comparisons less frequently reported no appreciable decline in their subjective

well-being and occasionally report gains in good mental health outcomes (such as elevated self-esteem) (Verduyn et al., 2020).

The general understanding of social media suggested that it shows filtered, enhanced, and idealized images of people to their peers, caused them to undergo upward social comparison (Kim & Chock., 2015). Daily interaction and engagement on social media was another way people undergo social comparison as they needed approval from their peers for ideal fitness and health which often affected their perception and opinion about themselves. This research applied social comparison theory to explore how social media fitspiration content affected the body image of young people, it applied social comparison theory to see if people felt negative about their health and fitness when they were exposed to fitspiration content.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This research was completed through the Quantitative method based on the survey technique of research. Survey research was a quantitative method containing survey questions that were filled out by respondents or participants. The data was collected through an online survey method, and questionnaires were provided to multiple respondents for data collection.

3.2. Population

The target population was selected 350 individuals aged between less than 18, 18-25, and more than 25 total three age groups. The final study population consisted of people from different backgrounds of study. The population was based in twin cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The population of the study was both male and female young people who were also active users of social media.

3.3. Sampling

Using a purposive methodology, the technique was Convenience sampling technique used for collecting data. Total sample was 350, 175 respondents were male and 175 were female respondents.

3.4. Operationalization of Variables

3.4.1. Fitspiration

Fitspiration refers to the perceived ideals about health and fitness. Present-day social media is encouraging the user's obligation to achieve a particular body type and shape

keeping in mind the new health beliefs. The research explored the impact of exposure of fitspiration content on social media on young people.

3.4.2. Body Image

The body image is the representation of one's body in both static and action aspects. It contains affective and cognitive elements explaining how the body is imagined, experienced, and felt. This study aimed to explore how social media fitspiration content influenced the overall body image.

3.5. Procedure

A list of users from different social media sites was created based on their active usage of social media platforms and viewing of fitspiration content. An online questionnaire was sent to them through email.

3.6. Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument of this work was a questionnaire. The questionnaire included four sections. The first section of it was dealt with measuring the motivation for exercise among young individuals of Rawalpindi, Islamabad, and the second section of questionnaire dealt with diet routines of individuals after consumption of fitspiration content on social media. Third section of questionnaire evaluated the psychological impact of fitspiration content consumed through social media. Fourth and the last part dealt with the social comparison factor among people in terms of fitness.

3.7. Data Analysis

Total 350 questionnaires, 304 filled out by young adults, for the purpose of data study the package used was IBM SPSS. This tool is used to do analysis data check different tests. In this study, I analyzed demographic analysis of gender, age and education, computations of four variables, exercise motivation, diet motivation, negative psychological impact, and social comparison, correlation analysis, T-tests, and Anova tests.

3.8. Ethical Consideration

This study has no effect on animals and human being.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The present study was conducted to assess the social media usage patterns and the impact of fitspiration content on the physical & and psychological well-being of young adults of Pakistan from the perspective of social cognitive theory and social comparison theory. The data collected through the survey questionnaire was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and hence the results were generated. Data was collected from the young citizens residing in the areas of Rawalpindi/Islamabad. The sample size consisted of a total of 350 respondents including males and females from age groups of Under 18, 18-25, and more than 25. These respondents belonged to diverse educational backgrounds.

The survey questionnaire was circulated among almost 350 young citizens. Upon receiving back, out of 350 questionnaires, 304 questionnaires or responses were valid giving the response rate of 86% in the study. The data was then analyzed via SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Sciences).

In this chapter, highlights of the major findings of the current research study are provided. Descriptive statistics provide details about the major findings of the study, whereas research questions are tested with the help of inferential statistics by using SPSS.

4.1 Demographic Statistics

The demographic variables of the respondents including age, gender, and educational backgrounds of young citizens were analyzed using SPSS, and the results were recorded (see Table 1).

Data revealed that out of 304 young citizens, 154 were females, constituting 50.7% of the entire sample, whereas 150 were males comprising 49.3% of the total sample. Therefore,

it is evident from the gender statistics that female young citizens gave the highest rate of responses as compared to male senior citizens.

Table 1:

Respondents' Demographics

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	150	49.3%
Female	154	50.7%
Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Under 18	46	15.1%
18-25	166	54.6%
More than 25	92	30.3%
Education	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Under Graduate	110	36.2%
Graduate	117	38.5%
Post Graduate	61	20.1%
Others	16	5.3%

Descriptive statistics exhibited that the majority (54.6%) of the young adults belonged to the age group of 18-25 years, while 30.3% of young citizens' age group ranged more than 25 years. Moreover, 15.2% of citizens belonged to the age group of less than 18 years.

Hence, it is acknowledged from the age statistics that the highest response rate was received from young citizens belonging to the age group of 18-25 years.

Results also revealed the education level of the young citizens. According to Table 1, 36.2% and 38.5% young citizens were having Under Graduate and Graduate degrees respectively. The young adults holding the degree of Post-Graduation were 20.1%, while 5.3% of citizens reported that they had other degrees. Thus, it is concluded that most of the young citizens who participated in the study were undergraduates and graduates.

4.2 Computations

The questionnaire was designed to assess the opinion of the respondents regarding the five main variables including Exercise Motivation, Diet Motivation, Negative Psychological Impact, and Social Comparison. In the questionnaire, 34 statements were placed to elaborate the variables. The responses of each variable were measured on the Likert five-point scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree).

4.2.1 Computed Variable: Exercise Motivation

Table 2:

Exercise Motivation

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Exercise Motivation	35.9%	44.4%	10.9%	8.6%	0.3%

The first computed variable was Exercise Motivation which comprised of the following eight statements: I enjoy Exercise, Exercise makes me feel stress-free and reduces my tensions, Exercise improves my mental health and well-being, I believe that exercise

prevents heart attacks, I have achieved the exercise goal I had set for myself, I exercise to the best of my ability, Exercise allows me to manage my daily activities without becoming tired, and exercising improves my self-concept. Findings indicated that out of the total 304 respondents, 109 (35.9%) respondents strongly agreed that they follow exercise patterns, 135 (44.4%) agreed, 33 (10.9%) remained neutral, 26 (8.6%) disagreed with this whereas 1 (.3%) strongly disagreed to this.

4.2.2 Computed Variable: Diet Motivation

The Second computed variable was Diet Motivation which comprised of the following eight statements: I think that I eat a healthy diet, I believe that I am reducing the risk for disease by the way I eat, There is no need for me to eat 3 standard-size meals a day, When dining out, I can easily choose foods from the menu, I sometimes think that I need to change aspects of the way I eat meals, There are certain foods that I strictly avoid, I spend a lot of time looking for new ideas for food and meals, and I feel disappointed when I miss my regular diet routine.

Table 3:

Diet Motivation

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Diet Motivation	19.4%	47.7%	29.6%	2.3%	.7%

Findings indicated that out of the total 304 respondents, 59(19.4%) respondents strongly agreed with this statement, 145(47.7%) agreed, 90(29.6%) were neutral, 7(2.3%) disagreed with this whereas 2(.7%) strongly disagreed to this statement.

4.2.3 Computed Variable: Negative Psychological Impact

Table 4:

Negative Psychological Impact

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Negative Psychological Impact	23.7%	43.8%	27.0%	5.6%	.0%

The third computed variable was Negative Psychological Impact which comprised of the following nine statements: I do not seek support or guidance to improve my psychological well-being, I do not feel confident about my body, I do not feel a sense of accomplishment or self-esteem from my daily activities, I experience guilt or negative emotions about my health, I feel stressed and unhappy in my daily routine, I feel emotional about weight-related comments, I have trouble controlling my temper, I could not seem to experience any positive feeling at all, I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything. Findings indicated that out of the total 304 respondents, 72(23.7%) respondents strongly agreed with this statement, 133(43.8%) agreed, 82(27.0%) were neutral, 17(5.6%) disagreed with this whereas 0(0%) strongly disagreed to this statement.

4.2.4 Computed Variable: Social Comparison

Table 5:

Social Comparison

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Social Comparison	23.0%	42.8%	17.4%	13.5%	3.3%

The fourth computed variable was Social Comparison which comprised of the following five statements: I often compare how my loved ones are doing, I often compare my own accomplishments with other people, I often compare how I am doing socially with other people, I compare myself with others in terms of my physical appearance, I compare myself with others in terms of my health. Findings indicated that out of the total 304 respondents, 70(23.0%) respondents strongly agreed with this statement, 130(42.8%) agreed, 53(17.4%) were neutral, 41(13.5%) disagreed with this whereas 10(3.3%) strongly disagreed to this statement.

4.3 Research Questions

4.3.1. RQ1:What is the impact of fitspiration content on social media on users' physical health?

In order to gauge the impact of fitspiration content on social media on users' physical health, two sub-questions were posed which focused on the impacts of such content in motivating the users to adopt appropriate diets as well as exercising regularly.

RQ 1(a):To what extent does active engagement with Fitspiration content lead to diet motivation?

The first part of Research question 1 queried whether active engagement with Fitspiration content is positively correlated with diet motivation. To determine this, the respondents were asked about their active engagement with fitspiration content on social media.

Table 6:

Correlation between Diet Motivation and active engagement with Fitspiration content

	Diet Motivation
active engagement with Fitspiration content	.173**

N=596, ** *p*< 0.01 two-tailed

Pearson's Correlation test was run to test whether a relationship existed between the fitspiration content engagement on social media and Diet Motivation (See Table 6). The results (r= 173, p < .003) showed that there was a very weak positive relationship. It showed that the respondents who are engaged with fitspiration content on social media more often were a little bit likely to be motivated towards dieting and improving their eating habits.

RQ 1(b): To what extent does fitspiration content on social media convince users to exercise regularly?

The second part of Research question 1 queried whether active engagement with Fitspiration content is positively correlated with exercise motivation. To determine this, the respondents were asked about their active engagement with fitspiration content on social media.

Table 7:

Correlation between Fitspiration Content Engagement and Exercise Motivation

	Exercise Motivation
Fitspiration Content Engagement	.369**

N=301, ** *p*< .000 two-tailed

Pearson's Correlation test was run to test whether a relationship existed between the fitspiration content engagement on social media and Exercise Motivation (See Table 7). The results (r= 369, p < .000) showed that there was a weak positive relationship between the two

variables. Findings indicated that respondents who are engaged with fitspiration content on social media more often were a little bit likely to be motivated towards exercising and working out.

4.3.2. RQ 2: *What is the impact of fitspiration content on social media on users' psychological health?*

RQ 2(a): To what extent does active engagement with Fitspiration content correlate to a negative psychological impact on young adults?

The first part of Research question 2 queried whether active engagement with Fitspiration content is positively correlated with negative psychological impact. To determine this, the respondents were asked about their active engagement with fitspiration content on social media.

Table 8:

Correlation between Fitspiration Content Engagement and Negative Psychological Impact

	Negative Psychological Impact
Fitspiration Content Engagement	-.116*

N=298, * *p*< .045 two-tailed

Pearson's Correlation test was run to test whether a relationship existed between the fitspiration content engagement on social media and Negative Psychological Impact (See Table 8). The results (r= 116, p < .045) showed that there was a weak negative relationship. It was revealed that respondents who are engaged with fitspiration content on social media are actually less likely to be impacted negatively and are thus present in a more positive frame of mind than those respondents who were not engaging with fitspiration content very often.

RQ 2(b): To what extent does fitspiration content on social media encourage users to engage in social comparisons?

The second part of Research question 2 queried whether active engagement with Fitspiration content is positively correlated with a tendency towards social comparisons. To determine this, the respondents were asked about their active engagement with fitspiration content on social media.

Table 9:

Correlation between Fitspiration Content Engagement and Social Comparisons

	Social Comparisons
Fitspiration Content Engagement	.035

N=304, p< .544 two-tailed

Pearson's Correlation test was run to test whether a relationship existed between the fitspiration content engagement on social media and the tendency towards social comparisons (See Table 9). Findings indicated that there was no correlation between the variables indicating that the respondents who are engaged with fitspiration content on social media do not necessarily feel the impulse to engage in social comparisons.

4.3.3 RQ 3: ***To what extent do demographic variables influence exercise motivation?***

RQ 3(A): Is there a significant difference between males and females regarding their attitude towards exercise?

The first part of RQ 3 pertained to the attitude of young Social Media users towards exercise. Independent sample T-tests (See Table 10) to find out whether there were any significant gender differences in this regard.

Table 10:

Gender Differences in Exercise Motivation

	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig
Males	150	27.9067	7.5754	-	302	.652
Females	154	30.4516	7.1584	2.963		

Findings revealed that there were no significant differences between males (M=27.9067, SD= 7.5754) and females (M=30.4516, SD= 7.1584) regarding their exercise motivation (t (302) = -2.963, p= .652).

RQ 3(B): Is there a significant difference between different age groups regarding their attitude towards exercise?

To analyze whether there were any differences in the exercise motivation of social media users belonging to different age groups, a one-way ANOVA was conducted.

Table 11:

Age differences in Exercise Motivation

Age Group	*N*	Mean	SD	Df	F	Sig.
Under 18	46	27.5000	8.26707			
18-25	166	27.6899	6.96526	2/296	1.577	.208
More Than 25	92	29.0761	7.89524			

The table shown above (Table 11) shows that there is no significant influence of age group on the fitspiration impact of young citizens by social media at the p<.208 level for four conditions [F (2,301) = 1.577, p = .208]. Post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the exercise motivation of individuals older than 25 (M=29.0761, SD=7.89524)

was slightly though not statistically different from the other two group i.e. Under 18 (M=27.500, SD=8.26707) and 18-25(M=27.6899, SD=6.96526).

4.3.4: RQ 4: To what extent do demographic variables influence diet motivation?

RQ 4(A): Is there a significant difference between males and females regarding their attitude towards Diet?

The first part of RQ 4 pertained to the attitude of young Social Media users towards being diet conscious. Independent sample T-tests (See Table 12) to find out whether there were any significant gender differences in this regard.

Table 12:

Gender Differences in Diet Motivation

	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig
Males	147	27.6531	6.18732			
				-.352	295	.725
Females	150	27.9067	6.23623			

Findings revealed that there were no significant differences between males (M=27.6531, SD= 6.18732) and females (M=27.9067, SD= 6.23623) regarding their diet motivation (t (295) = -.352, p= .725).

RQ 4(B): Is there a significant difference between different age groups regarding their attitude towards diet?

To analyze whether there were any differences in the diet motivation of social media users belonging to different age groups, a one-way ANOVA was conducted.

Table 13:

Attitude Towards Diet by Social Media Fitspiration Content Based on Age

Age Group	*N*	Mean	SD	Df	F	Sig.
Under 18	44	27.5000	6.13226	2/301	.439	.645
18-25	164	27.5427	5.90451			
More Than 25	91	28.2637	6.75086			

The table shown above (Table 12) shows that there is no significant influence of age group on the fitspiration impact of young citizens by social media at the p<.645 level for four conditions [F(2,301) = .439, p = .645]. Post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the exercise motivation of individuals older than 25 (M=28.2637, SD=6.75086) was slightly though not statistically different from the other two group i.e. Under 18 18 (M=27.5000, SD=6.13266) and 18-25 (M=27.5427, SD=5.90451).

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion

This research aimed to know about social media fitspiration content impact on physical and psychological wellbeing of adults. This study is useful for future scholars to add more about fitspiration content impact related research. It is very important to all of us in this era to know about content consumption through social media and its impact on our mental and physical health. The uniqueness of this study is that I collected data from three different age groups. Most of the studies I found on this particular research was based on female body ideals and females concerns about fitness, also the young people. But I explored the fitspiration content impact on young adults both males and females.

In this study, 86% of respondents rate through the survey. Both males and females were selected for data collection. Results indicated that the majority of respondents expressed that fitspiration content on social media plays a significant role in motivating them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. These individuals reported being satisfied with their

exercise engagement after engaging with such content, indicating an improvement in their self-concept. These findings contrasts with previous literature, where the impact of consuming diet and exercise content was often perceived negatively. As active exposure (posting pictures of one's own body to receive reactions from others) and passive exposure (checking up on feeds to make better body images) lead to unbalanced routines and excessive workouts sometimes (Cataldo et al., 2021).

Instead, these findings suggest that fitspiration content serves as a positive influence, encouraging individuals to adopt exercise routines and pursue fitness goals for their well-being. Concluding the fact, high percentage of population agreed that they have fitness goals and they are involved in daily exercise routines for betterment of their health. Coming to the next findings, a significant portion of participants agreed on the statement that consuming fitspiration content on social media serves as a motivating factor in adhering to their diet routines. This finding resonates with existing research, indicating a consistent trend wherein individuals actively seek and engage with content that promotes health and fitness. These results underscore the enduring importance placed on maintaining dietary habits to support overall well-being, as observed both in this study and in previous literature. This showed that large number of populations agreed that they do follow diet routine after consuming fitspiration content through social media. Recent findings suggest that a majority of individuals perceive fitspiration content on social media as a source of motivation for adopting exercise routines and maintaining healthy diet habits. Contrary to previous literature indicating potential negative psychological impacts, most participants reported no adverse effects on their mental well-being after engaging with fitspiration content. Instead, they expressed feeling empowered to prioritize their health, stay fit, and adhere to dietary regimens. In previous studies, when young people practiced workouts after being exposed to fitspiration content, it had a negative impact on their mental health (Tiggemann & Slater,

2014). These contrasting results highlight a shift in perceptions regarding the influence of fitspiration content, indicating a positive association with health-conscious behaviors among consumers.

The majority of respondents expressed agreement with the notion that viewing fitspiration content on social media tends to prompt a bit of social comparison. This suggests that 70% individuals find themselves influenced by the activities and achievements of others, often leading to feelings of inadequacy or dissatisfaction with their own lives. These findings align with previous research indicating that exposure to fitness and diet motivation content can have negative effects on mental and physical health. Specifically, studies have shown a decrease in body satisfaction and self-esteem, particularly due to social comparisons, across both genders (Barron et al., 2021). This concluded that people get involved in comparing themselves with other in terms of their physical health and achievements after being exposed to fitspiration content on social media. Concluding the overall facts calculated from this research, adults do follow fitspiration content on social media and after being exposed to fitspiration content, they are highly involved in exercise and diet routines on daily basis. Results showed that they are also involved in social comparisons and had negative psychological impact on their health. As fitspiration content on social media motivates people to do exercise and maintain their healthy habits but constant involvement shows the signs of bad psychological impact and social comparisons which are unhealthy for society.

This also showed that people are more concerned about how they look? Are they fit enough according to societal ideal body norms? That's why they are focused on exercise and diet habits but are also involved in social comparisons. However, there was no significant difference among genders regarding social comparisons, negative psychological impact, exercise and diet routine. In the past, women were more concerned about ideal body images,

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outer appearance and toned body, but now both male and female are equally concerned about their looks and staying fit all the time.

The Ministry of Health Pakistan, along with National Institutes for Health (NIH) should do some reforms regarding the fitness content on social media. There should be a policy about influencers giving fitness ideas and routines. The individuals who are enthusiast about exercise and fitness should also focus on their inner body health rather than just outer appearance.

5.2 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to analyze the fact that how fitspiration hashtags and content that is highly promote on social media is impacting the physical and psychological health of adults. The results of this study suggested that most of the people get impacted after following fitspiration content on social media. The study is important as it fills a research gap in the data available on fitspiration content in Pakistan regarding both male and female genders. The results from this research showed that both genders are highly concerned about their fitness but do experience negative psychological impact along with involvement in social comparisons. Social media is used by almost everyone in this era and fitspiration content is highly shared on platforms, we see exercise equipment, several diet packages, exercise clothing ads, random influencers and models telling people that how they achieved their ideal body. This motivated people to follow strict diets and unhealthy exercise routines which is dangerous both from physical and psychological aspects. We as a society is still lacking when it comes to psychological well-being or mental health, people are more focused on outer appearances, which should not be promoted more through fitspiration content. A healthy body is necessary but with a healthy mind.

However, there is still a lot of research is needed on the laws about health advices on social media and few practices about following diets should also be included in doctors

prescriptions. There should be proper health advisors working in gyms to guide people about their exercise routines. The government of Pakistan should also take initiatives regarding psychological well-being of adults. The national health organizations should launch educational campaigns to give awareness on fitspiration content on social media. There should be a balanced approach towards body ideals and acceptance of individual level differences regarding health. There should be proper guidelines and rules for influencers about their content promoting positive fitness advices. The government of Pakistan should provide funding for psychological support programs that concentrate on addressing problems with self-esteem and body image.

Incorporate instruction on mental health into educational programs to help children develop a positive outlook early on.

5.3 Future Suggestions for Research Purpose

Regarding future research suggestions, it needs to examine the long-term impacts on people's physical and mental health due to exposure of fitspiration content. Analyze the long-term effects of consistent exposure to this kind of content on lifestyle decisions. Examine the distinctive cultural elements of Pakistan that influence how fitspiration content is received and used.

Examine the ways that society's expectations and cultural norms affect people's opinions of their bodies. Investigate successful programs or interventions that lessen the harmful impacts of fitspiration content. Examine how positive influencers as well as creators can support a positive body image and fitness philosophy. Evaluate how well government regulations and policies are working to create a more wholesome media environment.

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APPENDIX

EXPOSURE TO 'FITSPIRATION' CONTENTS & ITSIMPACT ON THE PHYSICAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF ADULTS

> The following questionnaire is being conducted for research in the Department of Media and Communication Studies at International Islamic University Islamabad.

Age:

Less than 18   18-25   More Than 25

Gender
  □   Male   □   Female

Education
        □   Undergraduate   □   Post-   □   Graduate
                                         graduate
        □   Others (please specify)----

1- Are you familiar with the concept of 'Fitspiration' content on social media like Health and Fitness Facts, Inspirational Stories of Athletes or Fitness Icons, Workout Demos, and before/after body transformation posts?

□ Yes □ No

1. Mark appropriate statements	Never	Rarely	Sometim	Often	Regularl y
Variable (User Attitudes towards Fitspiration Content)					
How often do you come across 'Fitspiration' content on your social media platforms?					
Do you actively seek out 'Fitspiration' content on social media for fitness or health-related motivation?					
How often do you actively engage with 'Fitspiration' content, such as liking, sharing, or commenting on it?					
How often do you feel influenced by 'Fitspiration' content when making decisions about your physical and psychological well-being?					

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Variable (Exercise Habits)					
I enjoy exercise.					
Exercise makes me stress-free and decreases tension for me.					
Exercise improves my mental health and well-being					
I believe that exercise prevents heart attacks.					
I achieve the exercise goal I set for myself					
It costs too much to exercise.					
I exercise to the best of my ability					
Exercise allows me to manage daily activities without becoming tired.					
Exercising improves my self-concept.					
I prove to myself that I am the only one who can do a certain exercise task					
Variable (Diet Routine)					
I think that I eat a healthy diet					
I believe that I am reducing my risk for disease by the way that I eat					
There is no need for me to eat 3 standard-size meals and a snack each day					
When dining out, I can easily choose foods from the menu that fit into my current diet					
I sometimes think that I need to change aspects of the way I eat my meals					
There are certain foods that I strictly avoid and would not even consider eating					
I spend a lot of time looking for new ideas for food and meals that fit into my current diet					
I feel disappointed when I miss my regular diet routine					
Variable(Psychological Health)					
I often seek support or guidance to improve my psychological well-being.					
I experience guilt or negative emotions about my health.					

I feel highly confident about my body and fitness level.					
I feel stressed and unhappy in my daily routine.					
I experience a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem from my daily activities					
I feel emotional about weight-related comments					
I have trouble controlling my temper.					
I couldn't seem to experience any positive feelings at all.					
I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything.					
Variable(Social Comparison)					
I often compare how my loved ones (friends, family members, etc.) are doing.					
I often compare how I am doing socially with other people.					
I often compare myself with others concerning what I have accomplished in life.					
I compare myself with others in terms of my physical appearance					
I compare myself with others in terms of my health.					
I changed my daily routine after comparing it with others.					
I do not think of others as a role models in health & fitness.					
I am concerned about following fitness freak people and their daily habits.					