MS Research Proposal

IMPACT OF BEAUTY INFLUENCERS ON SELF-ESTEEM OF TEENAGE GIRLS IN ISLAMABAD: A STUDY OF INSTAGRAM

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(August 2025)

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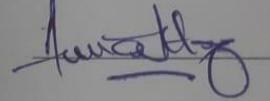
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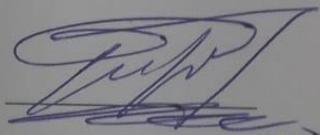**Dr. Sahifa Mukhtar**

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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.

Registration Number

521-FSS/MSMC/F-22

Date: 23-09-2025

Acknowledgement

All praise and gratitude are due to Allah Almighty for bestowing upon me the strength to successfully complete my work. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all my teachers who have played an important role in shaping my educational path.

Dedication

I wholeheartedly dedicate this work to my family, who have always stood by me throughout my journey. Their constant support, prayers, and love gave me the strength to keep going, even when things were tough. They believed in me when I doubted myself and guided me with their care and wisdom. I am also deeply thankful to my sister, who gave me emotional support and stood with me through every step. This achievement would not have been possible without my parents, sisters and of course my whole family and I would always be grateful to them.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of beauty influencers on teenage girls, Islamabad self-esteem, perceptions about physical appearance satisfaction and social acceptance. A survey was utilized to collect data from 300 teenager girls in Islamabad, who are students and between the ages of 14 to 19. The data analysis carried out using SPSS to explore the relationships between exposure to beauty influencers, self-esteem, dissatisfaction with appearance, and social acceptance among teenage girls. Descriptive statistical methods were used, as well as the Spearman rank-order correlation test. The results show that the majority actively follow beauty influencers and spend a lot of time engaging with content related beauty ,skincare and fashion trends. Beauty influencers play a significant role in disseminating beauty updates and fostering connections; however, it also contributes to feelings of inadequacy regarding physical appearance, encourage social comparisons, and impose pressure to conform to unrealistic beauty standard. Further indicated that edited images and felt dissatisfied with their appearance in comparison to influencers. The study revealed a detrimental effect on self-esteem, as participants reported a decrease in self-worth and confidence, illustrating complex psychological effects on teenage girls. The research indicates that physical attractiveness link to increased peer acceptance and enhanced opportunities for friendship, thereby underscoring the significance attributed to appearance in teenager social settings. Social Comparison Theory suggests that comparing yourself to influencers' idealized bodies might impair self-esteem and physical satisfaction. The findings are significant for parents, educators, mental health experts, and policymakers. It underlines that influencers and social media platforms must preserve appropriate beauty standards and create content that encourages teenage well-being.

CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of Study

One of the primary objectives of social media is to promote interpersonal relationships (Reinikainen et al., 2020). An SNS is a website that "enables users to (1) create a publicly available or semi-public profile, (2) list other users with whom they are connected, and (3) view and navigate their list of relationships and those that others have created in the system." People of different ages have joined them for a variety of reasons as their popularity has skyrocketed in recent decades (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). People can express themselves more freely on social media than in the real world, where they are confined to a condition known as hyperreality or an inability to discriminate between reality and fantasy, making it difficult to tell the difference between lies and truth (Damayanti & Hidayat, 2019).

A considerable proportion of internet users are young people and teenagers Numerous research back this up, showing that approximately 90 % of young children between their ages of 13 to 17 utilized social media and about 75% are active on a minimum of one platform currently. They use these platforms for five to six hours a day, which is a significant amount of time, but not for academic or school-related objectives (Hoxhaj, Xhani, & Sinaj, 2023). Although social media links young children to their environment, its utilization may adversely affect mental health, including self-esteem (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Given the evolution of social media into an ever more accessible online community and its increasing prominence in daily life, examining its impact on individuals is a crucial area of study. Recent research indicate that social media usage is a significant indicator of body dissatisfaction, signs of eating disorders, and overall life satisfaction in adolescent females (Ferguson, et al., 2014).

The importance of social networking sites has grown in the last several years. Instagram has emerged as one of the world's most prevalent social media sites, including 32% of those using the internet in the country of America alone. (Barker, 2018).Instagram is an application designed for picture sharing that facilitates users in posting both images and videos. As of June 2018, it had approximately 1 trillion users, establishing it as the most popular social networking platform in existence. Women can now juxtapose their

appearance with that of other women, establishing a form of beauty competition to surpass others in aesthetics and allure. It is essential to recognize that Instagram serves as a platform for visual communication, enabling users to convey their identities through self-portraits. The quantity of likes on an Instagram photo often indicates the image's popularity among followers. Over time, the capacity for visual communication becomes progressively vital in influencing an individual's success and fortune in life (Kertamukti, Nugroho, & Wahyono, 2018).

Facebook is the most popular social media site, with more than a billion active users every day. However, it is losing appeal among teens as more and more of them move to image-based sites. The Pew Research Center's Centre says that Instagram has quickly become popular, especially with people aged 18 to 24. In fact, 71% of the US population in this age group are actively using the platform. Instagram is quickly becoming the leading social networking platform among teens, which makes it even more important to understand how it affects users' health and self-esteem. The study found that Instagram is different compared to other text-based social media sites like Twitter and Facebook since it focusses on visuals.. Instagram postings are positively biassed because users engage in positive types of self-presentation and choose good aspects of their lives to share (Trifiro, 2018).

Instagram is distinct from other social media platforms. Instagram is distinct from other forms of social media such as Facebook and Twitter in that it exclusively allows users to share photographs and brief videos. Furthermore, individuals upload images for those who follow them to "like" and remark on. Instagram was instrumental in the inception of the "selfie revolution," which involves individuals capturing images of their own features using a camera. Instagram provides a variety of tools and filters for altering photos prior to posting them. While some individuals share stunning photographs of landscapes, cuisine, and other objects, a significant number of individuals utilize this social media platform to share images of themselves (Dion, 2016).

Instagram, like other social media sites, has an impact on how people engage with the beauty industry and beauty-related content. Beauty influencers may exhibit a preference for Instagram over other social media channels(Lopez & Islam, 2021). Influencers are people who have established a substantial following and are esteemed by their audience, who invest considerable faith in them (Shareef , Mukerji, Dwivedi, Rana , & Islam , 2019).

Karjo and Wijaya (2020) argued that beauty influencers often disseminate photographs and videos on social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok pertaining to makeup, skincare, and hair. Beauty products and skincare routines are commonly utilized as they have demonstrated the ability to improve perceptions of physical appearance. Influencers exist across all sectors: health and fitness, fashion and beauty, food, technology, and others (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

Instagram users typically perceive influencers as appealing, genuine, and relatable. The followers' opinion of influencers significantly enhances the effectiveness of brand messaging. Influencers use the trust and relationships they have built with their followers to get more people to see and interact with their posts on platforms such as Instagram. The impact of social media celebrities is particularly important to the Instagram community, especially for women. Instagram social networking influencers have become new opinion leaders, and they have a big impact on how their followers think. The environment established by an influencer has fostered a sense of trust among his followers, particularly with the dissemination of advertising and consumer purchasing behaviors (Nurul, Demartoto, & Sunesti, 2022).

A unique beauty ecosystem and digital beauty culture have emerged due to social media. These accounts are meticulously curated pages featuring user-generated videos and photographs that emphasize specific types of beauty. These accounts, managed by individuals or moderators, often include everyday life video logs, product evaluations, and beauty tutorials. The popularity among audience and online trends is influenced by this recently formed set of stakeholders (Nurfadila & Setyo , 2020).

Social media, including Instagram, disseminates discourse that is internalized by users, so influencing behavioral habits. Daily examination of these photos enables us to value beauty derived from our visual experiences. Influential figures on social media profoundly affect the cosmetic items we utilize, the aesthetic treatments we pursue, and the lifestyle decisions we choose to attain a particular beauty standard. In a survey, participants demonstrated a pronounced preference for the opinions and recommendations of Instagram and YouTube influencers over those of conventional film or television celebrities (Ward & Paskhover , 2019).

Influencers often present themselves as notable figures, with "beauty influencers" constituting one of the most substantial types of influencers. Aesthetic practitioners that

educate their audience on enhancement and beautification methods are referred to as beauty influencers. Given that women constitute the principal demographic for the makeup industry, these content creators predominantly focus on women. Contemporary influencers engage their followers via digital media channels, including YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter. A beauty influencer frequently enters into contractual agreements with particular beauty firms that compensate them for promoting their products (Tran , Rosales, & Copes, 2020). Instagram is a very flexible and easy-to-use platform. People who have a lot of followers on social media and can change people's minds are called influencers. They are able to divide them into three groups: micro-influencers, macro-influencers and meso-influencers. Macro-influencers possess 1 million or more followers, micro-influencers have 100,000 followers or fewer, and meso-influencers fall between these two categories (Islam, 2021)

Influencers can engage their audiences across various social media platforms by establishing accounts that showcase and discuss topics of their expertise or interest, thereby cultivating a following of individuals who trust their viewpoints (Alhoei, 2022). Make-up and beauty rituals are prevalent as they enhance the perceived attractiveness of the one employing them. Researchers have observed that an increase in women's perceived attractiveness correlates with elevated self-esteem levels (Kellie, Blake, & Brooks, 2021).

One of the foremost influential industries on social media is the wide range of influencers promoting different beauty goods and services. There is increasing concern among professionals and politicians about the influence of social media personalities on young women's ideas of beauty standards (Kumar, 2023).

The beauty sector is among the most competitive businesses globally. According to a BBC article, it has increased by 17% over the past five years. Many famous people and influencers have started their own makeup lines or worked with big companies to make beauty products. Some examples are Rihanna's Fenty Beauty, Kylie Jenner's Kylie Cosmetics, and the Morphe x James Charles product , who is a collaboration between popular beauty influencer James Charles and the firm Morphe. Because of this growth and the release of new products, a lot of cosmetic businesses have started to market themselves on social media. Specifically, these firms have depended on celebrity endorsements and influencer marketing to enhance sales and cultivate brand recognition (Islam, 2021).

Instagram has transformed into a prime environment for influencers, thanks to its significant daily user engagement. The platform has enabled the growth of career opportunities by sharing a diverse range of visual content. This platform boasts one of the greatest levels of engagement per follower when compared to its peers in the social media landscape. Individuals have the capability to create their own content, allowing them to target a specific audience, whether for commercial and promotional reasons or merely to share images with loved ones. (Jones, 2018).

In addition to facilitating connections with peers, Instagram enables users to forge direct relationships with individuals they might not have met in person, including social media influencers. Young individuals often seek inspiration from influencers regarding their actions, appearance, and behaviors that attract online attention while fostering acceptance, community, and a sense of belonging. Götz (2020) posits that influencers serve as the modern models of behavior for preteens and teenagers (Jenkins, 2022).

Moreover, numerous beauty products are endorsed every day by these celebs. The evolution of beauty standards over time is a challenge faced by all women. Women across all social strata are clearly influenced by the notion of beauty, resulting in a self-image. This beauty myth portrays women with an idealized and imaginative self-image. Women have exerted considerable effort to achieve this idealized self-conception. These efforts may inadvertently be self-repressive. As pressure to perform increases, their conviction of being worthless and inadequate intensifies. Their self-perception will continue to evolve. In pursuit of beauty, individuals may allocate greater financial resources to cosmetics, invest additional time in preparation, and participate in activities aimed at improving their appearance. The concept of beauty among women is reinforced by the increasing prevalence of Instagram influencers who possess elevated social status. Influencers began to be seen as exemplary role models (Putri et al., 2023).

This study seeks to elucidate the correlation between various modes of Instagram usage and their resulting impacts on adolescent users. Influencers can cultivate the following who are people who trust their perspectives by utilizing many social media platforms to engage their audiences. By creating their own profiles, influencers can exhibit and deliberate on subjects in which they possess expertise or a personal affinity(Leader et al., 2021).

The most popular categories for prominent social media influencers in Pakistan, as reported by Datareportal (2021), are fashion, lifestyle, music , physical fitness, beauty , parenthood, food, and technology. Instagram is particularly popular among the cosmetics industry. which is recognized for its idealistic portrayal (Farooq , Farrukh, & khan, 2023).

Leary and Baumeister (2000) discovered that Self-esteem is profoundly affected by one's societal relationships. These impacts have been identified as potential determinants of an individual's self-esteem. Influencers often cultivate relationships wherein followers experience a para-social connection, an illusory bond with a media figure established through media consumption (Brown, 2015). "Self-esteem is the evaluation a person makes of themselves based on a comparison between how they see themselves and their own values." It can influence individuals' self-image and portrayal on social media (Romero, 2022).

Self-esteem, a crucial factor influencing multiple aspects of life, may provide valuable insights through how to support young adults during this transitional period. The concept of self-esteem in adolescents is characterized as intellectual confidence in oneself. This qualitative research aimed to investigate the perspectives of female teenagers concerning self-esteem, recognizing its importance during the teenage years and the value of qualitative approaches for a deeper understanding of the issue. The adolescents said that high self-esteem, influenced by interpersonal and intrapersonal factors, resulted in perceived benefits and positive emotions. Self-esteem significantly contributes to the enhancement of adolescents' mental health. Therefore, the factors influencing adolescents' self-esteem must be taken into account. It symbolizes mental wellness, enhancing individuals' performance in academic and social spheres. The occurrence of antisocial behaviors, including smoking, substance misuse, academic difficulties, competitive anxiety, insufficient attempt to ameliorate circumstances, and suicide, is associated with poor self-esteem (Shareef et al., 2019).

The influence of social media on the self-esteem of young people and teenagers about their appearance might enhance self-esteem for two reasons when engaging with self-oriented social media. (1) Online self-presentation frequently represents "optimal version of oneself," allowing individuals to express their ideal selves and achieve maximum integration; and (2) When individuals disseminate their information, it generally provokes affirmative responses, so augmenting their self-esteem. They often evaluate the optimal

personas of others, potentially leading to social comparisons that negatively affect their feelings of worth (Steinsbekk, et al., 2021). Another concern is the considerable apprehension surrounding social media's influence on users' psychological well-being, especially with life satisfaction and depression symptoms (Boer et al., 2021).

Experts have voiced concerns regarding social media's effect on people's mental health because of its widespread use and influencers (Verrastro, et al., 2020). This issue concerns the tendency of social media users to disseminate inaccurate and idealized representations. For instance, pervasive social media trends such as "thinspiration" (i.e., disseminating photographs to inspire weight reduction) and "fitspiration" (i.e.,circulating images to promote fitness accomplishments) are associated with unrealistic body standards (Cohen et al., 2019).

These standards are created in large part by the market and an industry of hype that permeates all levels of society. They imply that our present selves or the people we follow on social media represent the ideal of beauty and lifestyle. These factors make it easier for people in the modern day to feel insecure (Mustofa, 2019). In this ever-changing scenario, the link between teens' self-esteem and their use of social media is highlighted (Frieiro et al., 2022).

 The prevalence of young individuals utilizing these platforms underscores their significance in daily life and positions them as primary means of connection, information sharing, and self-presentation (Festl, 2021). The beauty and makeup sector is increasingly prevalent on various social media platforms, such as Instagram and YouTube, because to the growing population of beauty consumers (Lopez & Islam, 2021).Adolescent females are susceptible to upward comparison, which compels them to enhance their beauty standards, resulting in dissatisfaction with their physical appearance, uncertainty over their self-worth, and maybe leading to self-harm behaviors (Boyd D. , 2014).

Among the most engaged and dynamic participants on these platforms are young individuals, a group that explores the complex landscape related to identity formation, social interactions, and the development of self-worth (Valkenburg, et al., 2021).Young individuals navigate a digital landscape where online comparisons and the emphasis on appearance play significant roles in their quest for self-identity. This vibrant environment highlights the connection between teens' self-esteem and social media use (Frieiro et al., 2022).

Social media has a significant impact on women's self-esteem and appearance. Women with darker skin tones experience body dissatisfaction as a result of social media's perpetuation of the belief that pale skin is the ideal of beauty. Social media elevates thinness while marginalizing other body forms, perpetuating specific ideals of size and shape. Women's perceptions of physical beauty are drastically altered by the influence of powerful individuals and celebrities (Kushwaha , 2024).

Adolescence is the period of existence that encompasses the transition from childhood to adulthood. Biological, growth, and significant social role transitions are all part of adolescence. Adolescents possess the highest level of physical, social, and emotional capabilities, which are highly subjective. Regrettably, a considerable number of them are unable to utilize this level of ability. Adolescents exhibit a more intricate, structured, and consistent perception (Berk, 2013).

The American Psychological Association says what teens are. This says that puberty, which most people go through between the ages of 10 and 12, is the first step of adolescence. Researchers in the field of neuroscience have shown that it lasts until at least age 20, when neurological and physiological growth takes place. Between the ages of 18 and 20, the last few years of adolescence are especially important for brain growth. In many people, brain growth does not stop until they are in their mid- to late-20s, but this is still considered the early adult years. Adolescents' changing sexual and physical characteristics and interests, which occur at varying rates, can significantly impact their self-esteem, body image, and self-concept(Hoxhaj, Xhani, & Sinaj, 2023).

Social media's effect on young people's self-esteem is a topic of growing scholarly interest and concern. Teenagers have many possibilities to communicate, express themselves, and get feedback from their peers on these digital platforms, but there are also possible concerns. The multifaceted nature of this relationship has been thoroughly examined by researchers, with findings ranging from enhancing to diminishing self-esteem (Farooq , Farrukh, & khan, 2023).

In addition, Instagram researchers discovered that an idealized portrayal of life that emphasizes delight and attractiveness lower self-esteem by encouraging social comparison (Alhoei, 2022). Hill & Denman's (2016) and Romero-Rodriguez et al.'s (2020) research, a new social hierarchy is established, which results in a competition to collect the most followers, likes, and comments. Having a greater number of followers has a positive

influence on the self-esteem of young users and allows them to engage in social comparisons. The purpose of this is to facilitate enjoyable and amusing user interaction; however, it does so by encouraging social comparisons and judgement (Romero, 2022).

Teens' emotional responses were mediated by their online feedback-seeking and social comparison behaviors, according to a recent research study that examined the reasons behind their extensive Instagram usage. This encompassed the influence of the number of likes acquired, suggesting that it is essential to comprehend the degree of social comparison taking place (Hernández , Herrera, & Expósito, 2021).

Rather than deriving inspiration from something shared on Instagram, we are overwhelmed with the desire to make our own lives similarly visually beautiful. The term "influencer envy" refers to the audience's jealousy of these fashion influencers' perfect bodies and facial traits. As a result, we regularly compare our physical qualities to those of others, which can lead to an unsatisfied body image. People are welcome to participate in this social comparison at any age or stage of their lives (Panjrath & Tiwari, 2021). Social acceptance refers to an individual's perception of being included within their groups and relationships. When a person perceives social acceptance, they are likely to believe that others desire to include them in their networks and relationships. Conversely, social rejection suggests that there is minimal interest from others in incorporating the individual into their social circles and relationships (Leary R. M., 2010).

The theory of social comparison provides a fundamental framework for analysing the relationship between body image perception and media consumption levels on social networking platforms. The notion of social comparison involves the cognitive assessment of oneself in relation to one or more individuals (Wood, 1996). Festinger (1954) found that the majority of individuals desire to evaluate their abilities and perspectives, and in the absence of objective information, they tend to engage in social comparisons, which involve comparing themselves to others. The research examined the impact of social networking sites on the mental health and body image of young women. A link was observed between increased social media exposure and reduced body satisfaction. According to Tiggemann et al. (2018), social comparison is more likely to happen because of group pressure than because of seeing famous people on social media (Alhoei, 2022). According to Lewallen & Behmawitz (2016), communication research is still in stages of development when it

comes to evaluating the unique interactions between social comparison, social media, and body image (Owens, 2022) .

It's critical to look at how Instagram influencers engage with appearance comparisons and body image-related outcomes. Because it is thought that physical comparisons with different comparison groups (like peers and models) have different effects on female concerns about their bodies and dissatisfaction, it is critical to examine how comparisons with Instagram influencers compare to comparisons with others and more traditional models (Bauer, 2020). On social media, teenagers commonly make upward social comparisons, contrasting their own lives, experiences, and accomplishments with those of their classmates whose accounts seem to showcase better lifestyles, interactions, or achievements (Tiggemann & Slater, 2017).

Consequently, Instagram often showcases a higher volume of misleading and unrealistic content, potentially adversely affecting the self-esteem of adolescent girls. Despite this, empirical research in Pakistan remains minimal. Many studies are conducted in western societies. The research was conducted in South Asian settings, with the majority of the participants being young women. However, the effects of beauty influencers and social media exposure on teenage girls' physical appearance satisfaction have yet to be investigated in Pakistan.

This study will focus on examining the impact of beauty influences in propagating makeup and skincare routines, shaping perceptions about physical appearance, and influencing acceptance by others among teenage girls. This study aims to explore the relationship between teenage girls' interactions with Instagram beauty influences and their feelings of dissatisfaction regarding their own appearance and social status, ultimately assessing the potential negative effects on self-esteem. Furthermore, there exists a scarcity of research focused on adolescents and the psychological processes linked to Instagram usage in Pakistan.

1.2   Problem Statement

Teenagers spend a lot of time on Instagram and are greatly affected by beauty influencers there. Beauty influencers share photographs and videos of their dress style, makeup, and skincare regimens on Instagram, which could make teenage girls unhappy with their looks and, as such, lower their self-esteem. Concerns are raised regarding their possible effects on mental and physical health. The passage from childhood to adolescent

can be unclear and challenging due to adult life situations. This happens commonly but extremely limited research has done in context of Pakistan particular on teenager's psychological mechanisms . However, it seems that teenage girls physical satisfaction has not received as much attention as it deserves. This research will focus on examining the influence of Instagram beauty influencers on the self-esteem of teenage girls, as well as investigating the role these influencers play in shaping perceptions of physical appearance and social acceptance, among others.

1.3 Significance of Study

This study is significant because it examines how beauty influencers affect self-esteem of teenage girls. In order to promote a more informed society, it is imperative that the dynamics of effect on mental health and beauty standards be understood. The study helps teenage girls by making them aware of and giving them insight about how potential makeup and skincare used by beauty influencers might affect how they perceive themselves. Teenagers will focus on good outcomes, such as making effective use of their time, and making educated decisions regarding their usage of social media by being made aware of these detrimental impacts. Without this study, society might not be aware of the detrimental effects of girls' self-esteem are impacted by beauty influencers, which would lead to the propagation of unattainable standards of beauty and mental health issues. The results of the study will help teachers, parents, and lawmakers encourage teens to use Instagram responsibly and reduce the negative impact it may have on their psychological wellness.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of Instagram beauty influencers on teenage girls' self-esteem.

2. To investigate teenagers' girls perceived physical appearance in comparison to beauty influencers leads to dissatisfaction.

3. To examine the impact of beauty influencers on teenage girls' perception about social acceptance.

1.5 Research Questions

RQ.1 What extent do teenage girls follow Instagram beauty influencers?

RQ.2 To what extent beauty influencers impact on self-esteem of teenage girls in Pakistan?

RQ.3 What do teenage' girls perceive physical appearance in comparison to beauty influencers lead to dissatisfaction?

RQ.4 What do teenage girls social acceptance perception is impacted by beauty influencers?

1.6   Delimitation(s) of the Study

In light of the restricted time and resources, the research will employ a quantitative approach. Instagram restricts access to beauty influencers, despite their ability to access other platforms such as TikTok and YouTube. The data for this research will be exclusively collected from teenage girls in Islamabad, which means that it may not accurately represent the general population of teenage Pakistanis.

CHAPTER 2:LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Review of Related Literature

The creation of Classmates.com, an online social network designed to promote relationships between former classmates and coworkers, in 1995 marks the birth of social media. Due to the platform's quick success, users can now connect in real time anywhere in the world. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, other social networking sites, such as Friendster and LinkedIn, unavoidably arose in response to the success of Classmates.com. The 2003 launch of Myspace, which offered a plethora of cutting-edge capabilities for users to interact with in their virtual spaces, may have revolutionized how people view social networking. More options for users to customize their public sites and profiles were among these features. Myspace swiftly gained great popularity among adolescents and young adults globally. After Facebook launched in 2004 and swiftly became the world's leading provider of social networking services, social media grew more and more ingrained in everyday life (Shah, 2016).

The correlation between adolescent girls' and young women's social media use and their level of body satisfaction across two age groups (14–18 and 18–25). Regardless of age, it was shown that adolescent girls who used social media more often compared themselves to their peers and influential people, and the opposite was also true. Further, demonstrated that a woman's bodily self-satisfaction was lower when she regularly compared herself to peers and influencers, and vice versa. Nonetheless, Wallis' research demonstrated the fact that there is no meaningful correlation between women's beliefs regarding attractiveness and the quantity of time they spend on social media. Nonetheless, it has been demonstrated that women's sentiments towards attractiveness and physical self-satisfaction are inversely correlated (Wallis & Kozar, 2015).

Finally, the data showed that between 300 young women, using social media a lot was linked to being more unhappy with their bodies and comparing how they looked to others (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016). Researchers discovered a link between higher levels of internalizing standards of beauty and body dissatisfaction and increased social media use in a study involving 150 female college students. It is possible to see that social media

influencers have an effect on the perceptions of beauty held by young women since they advocate for unrealistically low standards of cosmetic attractiveness. If the individuals in charge of their lives give young women an unreasonably limited definition of beauty, they could feel pressured to live up to these expectations. According to the findings of a recent study, young women who are influenced by images of the idealized body on social media networks report lower levels of pleasure with their bodies, as well as higher degrees of anxiety and hopelessness (Tiggemann & Slater, 2017).

This investigation illuminates the adverse consequences of adolescent participation in online social networks on their growth and development. Instagram is an application that enables users to generate and observe visual content from individuals worldwide, regardless of whether they are following them or not. People who use Instagram are acknowledged for their ability to share content from a diverse array of media and genres. They are often paid money or other things of value to promote goods or services to the people who follow them on social media (Khamis et al., 2017).

The influence of observing "Instagram vs. reality" images on women's satisfaction and discontent with their physical appearance. In an online social activism campaign called "Instagram vs. reality," women share two photos of themselves side by side: a more realistic, more natural-looking version and an ideal, well-lit "Instagram" version that highlights their greatest features. The female participants were split up into three groups: the first group saw the "Instagram vs. reality" photos, the second group saw the actual photos, and the third group just saw the Instagram photos. According to the findings, the group that saw "Instagram vs. reality" photos and the group that saw actual photos had lower body dissatisfaction scores than the group that saw idealized Instagram photos. For individuals exposed to the idealized Instagram image, comparisons of appearance predicted a rise in body dissatisfaction and a fall in body appreciation (Tiggemann & Slater, 2017).

Young women's perceptions of beauty are significantly influenced by social media influencers because these individuals promote beauty standards that are excessively idealistic and usually impossible to achieve. It is possible that young ladies would hold themselves to an unreachable standard of beauty as a result of the tendency of prominent people to display their beautiful features and ideal bodies. The research indicates that young women who have been exposed to the idealized beauty standards that are provided on social media platforms such as Instagram have a greater tendency to be unhappy with their

physical attributes and to want to improve how they look. It has come to light that young women are experiencing a greater degree of unhappiness with their bodies as a result of the exposure to idealized beauty standards that are displayed on social media sites such as Instagram. Additionally, such exposure has led to an increasing desire to alter their look (Fardouly, Willburger, & Vartanian, 2018).

Cohen et al. (2017) demonstrates that there exists a negative correlation between active social media use and body image. Specifically, a study conducted on Instagram indicated that the viewing of idealized body images diminished body satisfaction among young women, whereas engagement with body positive content significantly improved it. It underscored the importance of beauty by demonstrating its relationship with happiness, economic advantages, reliability, and self-assurance (Nahai, 2018).

Instagram, on the other hand, which is owned by Facebook, hasn't been studied as much. Instagram's launch in 2010 was a big step forward for social media. More and more people started using image-based places to not only stay in touch with friends and family, but also to interact with them through pictures online. According to a Pew Research Centre study from 2018, the social networking sites that teenagers like the most are those that focus on pictures and videos, with Instagram and Snapchat being the most popular. The data demonstrates that Instagram has gained significant traction among teenagers, with 72% of the participants indicating they use the platform, in contrast to only 51% of those aged 13 to 17 utilizing Facebook (Anderson & Jiang. , 2018).At present, social media has shifted the focus of young women towards online posting and content creation, thereby enhancing the pressure to engage in comparisons of their bodies with those of those around them (Nesi et al., 2018).

Despite the evident transformation in the manner in which adolescents engage with social media, current studies have not adequately explored these developments. In light of the extensive body of research exploring the effects of Facebook usage on users' subjective well-being, there remains a notable scarcity of research focused on the consequences of image-centric social media usage The literature is limited, argue that Instagram postings are often more positively biassed than Facebook posts. This is most likely due to photo editing and enhancement options that foster a culture of refining and perfecting among users (Trifiro, 2018).

Regarding the impact of seeing perfect Instagram photos and how some women use these photographs as a benchmark for their own self-esteem. Fardouly conducted research on women aged 18-25 (strong Instagram users) from Australian and the United States to determine the significance of Instagram on body image issues, self-objectification, and dissatisfaction with their bodies, as well as internalization of cultural ideals of beauty and evaluation of others' appearances. According to studies conducted among 270 female youths, more social media exposure and spending time with beauty-related material were linked to more unhappiness regarding their bodies and greater self-esteem (Fardouly, Willburger, & Vartanian, 2018).

Photos may be captured and shared on social media at any moment, young women are constantly reminded to feel self-conscious about their bodies (Choukas etal., 2019). Instagram claims that three main criteria—interest, timeliness, and relationship—determine the information that appears in your feed. Content that Instagram predicts a user would "like" based on prior behavior is referred to as interest. Instagram will then prioritize these posts in the newsfeed. Posts that have been published recently are considered timely. Frequency and timely content are preferred by the algorithm. A company or influencer is more likely to appear in a user's newsfeed if they post regularly. Lastly, relationship describes how users interact with one another. Every time you tag, remark, share, "like," or engage in any other kind of engagement, Instagram keeps track of it. In order to increase their chances of appearing in a user's newsfeed, marketers and influencers frequently tag or remark back with users. The likelihood that an influencer or brand may appear in a user's newsfeed is also increased by paid adverts, which are offered by Facebook, the company that owns Instagram (Lockhart, 2019).Researchers have looked into how social media and celebrities affect women's body image before, but they've only looked at Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook users(Cohen et al., 2019).

Instagram and other social media posts have an impact on the purchasing decisions of 72 percent of millennials when it comes to cosmetic items. The use of cosmetic products is a precise process designed to enhance or modify an individual's appearance, serving both artistic expression and the correction of imperfections. Jang-Soon and Hye-Jin conducted an inquiry into the makeup preferences of 240 adolescent males. The findings suggested that their physical presentation was a significant factor contributing to their social achievements. The young, unmarried male respondents residing in urban areas exhibited a predominantly favorable view towards cosmetics. The continuous endorsement of cosmetic

products by influencers on social networking platforms has greatly influenced their increasing popularity. The representations found on social media platforms are often idealized and distorted through digital manipulation, consequently establishing elevated expectations among individuals within society. Flaws are meticulously eradicated through airbrushing and various digital applications designed to enhance features such as teeth whitening, waist slimming, and size reduction, all in pursuit of conforming to prevailing beauty standards. These techniques could potentially result in adverse outcomes, including heightened body dissatisfaction, alterations in body image, and diminished self-esteem. Waxing, shaving, and removing undesirable hair from the face and body have become popular ways for people to achieve cultural beauty standards. Despite knowing the hazards of fake acrylic nails and eyelashes women reported continuing to engage in them to feel socially accepted (Henriques & Patnaik, 2020).

Studies have shown that these effects vary and can either improve or reduce the body image as well as self-esteem of young women. Although platforms like Instagram have been extensively studied, the contemporary social network TikTok has yet to be adequately investigated concerning young women. A limited number of studies have investigated the psychological factors associated with TikTok influencers while the platform's usage (Montag, et al., 2021). Analyzing the visual representations of Instagram influencers based on their varying levels of popularity, as indicated by metrics such as "likes" and follower counts. The findings indicated that idealized images led to increased body dissatisfaction, irrespective of the inclusion of popularity indicators. Idealized photographs often include comments from viewers expressing their pleasure, in addition to measurements (Calverley, & Grieve, 2021).

Examining females aged 13-16 is essential, as visual platforms like Instagram typically attract greater engagement from girls compared to boys. Additionally, Forbes (2019) states that "the average American girl spends 6-10 hours per day on social media, encountering products and images that are often unrealistic or unverified." Instagram blurs the line between fiction and reality, as the application of filters, makeup, lighting, angles, and posing creates images for young girls that do not reflect genuine experiences. “When girls come across a highly rated image, their brain—likely the center accumbent, or reward circuit—instinctively links it to a sense of superiority, irrespective of the content”. Influencers, recognized for their elevated status, present young girls with an inescapable

platform for self-comparison, compelling them to pursue unattainable, altered, and curated standards of beauty (Jenkins, 2022).

According to Harrod (2018), Kim Kardashian, one of the most popular female fashion influencers on Instagram, is one example. As of December 2021, her Instagram following reached 269 million users. Kardashian is consistently portrayed as "perfect" and stunning in her images. Her high self-esteem has faced scrutiny, as it may negatively impact young girls who perceive themselves as less attractive than the influencer. An analysis model that connected the engagement with Instagram—such as observing others' the profiles, commenting on their looks, and sharing personal images or narratives—to experiences of body dissatisfaction, marked by a discrepancy in body image relative to others and a deficiency in self-appreciation, driven by upward social comparison among immediate peers, further away other people, and social media influential individuals. The self-reported cross-sectional data from 291 female adolescents (Mage = 19.8, SD = 4.6; 94.8% Italian) was analyzed through structural equation modelling. The findings suggest a link between Instagram usage and lower levels of body appreciation. This relationship was predominantly shaped by upward social comparisons with media social media influencers rather than with nearby or remote peers. The act of sharing personal content and commenting on others' appearances showed no correlation with feelings of body dissatisfaction (Pedalino & Camerini , 2022).

Furthermore, Johnson and Knobloch-Westerwick (2016) illustrate that social media posts featuring images significantly influence users' moods differently compared to those containing only text. Since young women appear to process appearance-based images more deeply than men, they have been the subject of the majority of studies. Social media users' emotions of body dissatisfaction have been exacerbated by these idealized images. Many studies have shown that social media can affect the mental and physical health of young women. This could be explained in part by the simple fact that social media sites also emphasize physical beauty. Furthermore, it has been discovered that young women are more likely to believe those they come across on social media (Alhoei, 2022).

A survey conducted by the Pew Research Centre in 2021 revealed that a remarkable 81% of teenage Americans aged 13 to 17 engage with social media platforms. The widespread use of these platforms highlights their importance in young people's lives and places them in the forefront of social interaction, information sharing, and self-presentation

(Farooq , Farrukh, & khan, 2023). Especially young people are extremely interested in virtual places, so it was thought to be helpful to look into how they affect people's minds. Our study shows that teens today are going through puberty strangely than teens did in the past. This is because technology has a bigger impact on our daily lives. Really for kids and teens, social media is now a big part of daily life (Hoxhaj B. etal., 2023). Influencers on social media have a tremendous impact on the formation of young women's conceptions of beauty when they recommend particular cosmetic procedures, products, and ways of living. The findings of the research conducted by Perloff reveal that social media influencers have a considerable impact on young women, particularly those who support beauty items and services. According to the findings of a study conducted by Pempek and colleagues (2011), the content of social media users that discussed beauty and appearance had a significant influence on the opinions of beauty and physical appearance held by younger women. The finding is comparable to another that was announced earlier in the process. Influencers on social media have access to a wide range of alternative ways that go beyond the conventional beauty standards that adhere to the expectations of young ladies (Kumar, 2023).

Additionally, the study that was carried out in the past sheds light on the intricate relationship that exists between social media influencers and the beauty standards that young women adhere to. In the case of young women, social media influencers has the potential to cause harm to both their self-esteem and their physical looks. Nonetheless, influential people on social media can also help spread messages of body positivity and challenge unrealistic ideas of what it means to be beautiful. There is a complex issue that requires additional research as well as the development of strategies to decrease the negative effects and promote positive transformation. The influence of social media idols on the perceptions of beauty held by young women is a topic that requires deeper investigation.In particular, participation enables the assessment of one's own and other people's physical beauty. More photographic activity, including sharing images and stories online and observing other users' photos, is linked to increased body awareness, internalization, the desire to be thin, and discontent with one's own weight and body type (Alfonso, et al., 2023).In the same way, Perloff et al. (2016) found that within a sample of 184 female participants, consistent engagement with social media correlated with diminished self-worth and increased feelings of body dissatisfaction (Kumar, 2023). .

It has been suggested that there is a connection between user behavior and the design and features of a particular social networking site. So, it's really important to study all of the ways that different social media sites might affect people. The goal of this research project is to learn more about how Instagram affects young girls' self-esteem. Consequently, the present investigation concentrates on this particular demographic of teenage girls in Pakistan.

2.1.1 Beauty Influencers

Influencers on social media are becoming a significant factor in shaping young women's perceptions of attractiveness. Young women are greatly influenced by social media influencers, particularly those who advertise beauty products and services (Perloff, 2014). A steady stream of supposedly ideal lives, frequently focusing on looks, are presented by well-manicured online personas brought about by the growth of influencers. Influencers build a strong bond with their audience—known as a trans-parasocial relationship—by candidly exposing details of their everyday lives and interacting personally with their followers. This interaction is more interactive and reciprocal than the conventional parasocial ties among media characters and the viewer. According to the authors, this relationship turns the influencers into reliable resources for guidance and motivation. Because followers may get favorably biassed towards influencer endorsements, this lays the groundwork for influencer marketing. (Hudders & Lou, 2023).

Beauty influencers alter their social comparison group, which usually consists of users with similar demographics and social class or celebrities who possess significantly greater wealth and social status. This may influence additional aspects, including self-esteem, social acceptance, and satisfaction with physical appearance. Examining the impact of beauty influencers reveals a potential decrease in self-esteem and an increased sense of dissatisfaction about personal appearance. The constant exposure to their curated images of "perfect" bodies and appealing faces fosters unrealistic comparisons among viewers. The influence of Instagram on personal satisfaction with life and self-esteem, shaped by the interactions with well-known personalities and celebrities that users engage with on the platform. The study involved 51 female undergraduate students. It was mandatory for participants to be frequent Instagram users, using the app at least once every day, and to follow no more than 15 celebrities. Participants who met the requirements were given tests of their life satisfaction and self-worth in addition to qualitative sub-study. The study found

no connection between life satisfaction and self-esteem. Nonetheless, a connection was identified between decreased life satisfaction (Dion, 2016).

Aesthetic appeal can significantly influence multiple facets of our existence, frequently in unforeseen manners. Influencers serve as micro-celebrities, capturing their everyday experiences through both written and visual content, all while endorsing various businesses and services across social media platforms and blogs. Posts by influencers frequently comprise a combination of paid and organic content (Abidin, 2018).Influencers can establish a following of individuals who believe their viewpoints by building their own profiles on various social media platforms and discussing topics they are knowledgeable about (Burke, 2019).

Results showed that people were more receptive to the opinions and recommendations of celebrities on social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram than they were to those of more conventional Hollywood stars. Controversy persists over the positive and bad effects of social media on beauty standards and body image, especially among young people (Ward & Paskhover, 2019).

The discussion surrounding the pros and cons of social media's influence on individuals' body image and beauty ideals, especially in the youth demographic, remains a topic of ongoing examination (O'reilly, 2020) . According to the findings of several studies, social media has a major impact on the total population. As an illustration, the selection of Hollywood smiles that college students choose to wear may be impacted by social media usage (Ansari et al., 2020).

In a study involving 24 teenage girls, Chua and Chang found that social media users often conform to expected standards and preferences to meet the expectations of their followers, demonstrating a "highly selective representation of themselves." (Taaffe, 2022). In a more specific sense, beauty influencers are individuals who know a lot about looks and share information online. Within the niche or field that they have decided to build their image around, social media influencers frequently reach exceptionally large audiences (Alhoei, 2022).

Instagram influencer @thegiirlyouhate asserted, "Women desire to begin undergoing various plastic procedures." The influencer states, "millions of young women idolize social media influencers possessing the 'perfect' butt, lips, breasts, jawline, and

hips, claiming these attributes are natural, which leads teenage girls to doubt the normalcy of their own bodies" (Jenkins, 2022).

Beauty influencers who candidly share their experiences with cosmetic procedures significantly influence a demographic of young women. A recent study revealed that a minimum of eight out of the top 10 beauty influencers on YouTube admitted to receiving lip filler injections. Consequently, individuals captivated by beauty and makeup frequently encounter influencers showcasing enhanced lips. To determine the influence of social networking websites and beauty influencers on perceptions of beauty, extensive investigation is necessary (Dimitrov & Kroumpouzos, 2023).

The significance of utilizing influencers across diverse social media platforms has been steadily increasing year after year. This study analyzed the interactions of female Instagram users aged 18 to 50 in the Republic of Serbia with beauty influencers. The findings indicate a noteworthy influence, especially regarding women's skincare products. In his analysis, he concluded that influencers possess a personal inclination to sway the purchasing choices of other consumers. Based on his research, he indicated that they have become reputable, popular and insightful sources of information because of their ability to communicate with their peers and their target groups (Stojanović et al., 2023).

Because technology is always getting better, new products come out every day. When it comes to consumption, women are especially bad because they are so focused on seeing how unrealistic their self-images are. This is especially true on Instagram, where photos of women users are easy to find. Putting yourself down against other people seems like a habit that will never end. Because of this, they never really feel happy with themselves. This is why women always feel like they need to "improve" themselves by using a lot of beauty items (Putri et al., 2023).

2.1.2 Self-esteem

A strong feeling of self-worth and self-respect indicates an individual's high self-regard, whereas a diminished sense of self-worth implies self-rejection and dissatisfaction (Rosenberg & Pearlin, 1978).Self-esteem is a broad and evolving concept in the field of communication. To understand the fundamental aspect of self-esteem, one must acknowledge the various factors that influence individuals' self-perception. Self-esteem has been one of its most important conceptions since it was mentioned in the first psychology textbook produced by William James (1890). James believed that the human propensity to

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feel good about oneself is an essential component of human nature. Self-esteem is classified into two types: trait and state. Trait self-esteem is someone's overall worth of oneself, which is not immediately changed by something specific or incident, whereas state self-esteem is defined by transient swings in how a person feels about themselves (Leary et al., 1998).

The feelings of self-worth are made up of emotions that happen when a person thinks about how important or good they are as an object and then judges their own worth based on that thought (Thoits, 2012). The relationship among dietary limitations, feelings of body discontent, and engagement with social media platforms. The authors conducted a survey involving 100 seventh-grade girls to examine their social media usage alongside their concerns related to food and body image. The findings revealed that, in contrast to those who did not engage with social media, girls who regularly shared images of their bodies exhibited significantly elevated levels of dissatisfaction with their bodies, dietary restraint, internalized beliefs regarding the thin ideal, and an overestimation of their weight and size. The authors also discovered that girls who uploaded photos of themselves on a daily basis were more inclined to alter such photos to make them appear slimmer and more in line with an idealized body image(McLean et al., 2015).

The study has explored the various psychological impacts resulting from the increasing prevalence of social media, with alterations in self-esteem being one of the identified effects. It has been hotly contested whether physical appearance and low self-esteem are related. Individuals engaging with Instagram frequently encounter the daily content shared by these influencers. The involvement of influencers or celebrities as a social comparison group could potentially lead to a more pronounced detrimental impact on an individual's self-esteem. Research on the effects of modelling photos on females found that compared to a control group that did not view any models, those who did saw images of models showed much lower levels of body dissatisfaction and self-esteem (Dion, 2016).

The relationship among dietary limitations, feelings of body discontent, and engagement with social media platforms. The authors conducted a survey involving 100 seventh-grade girls to examine their social media usage alongside their concerns related to food and body image. The findings indicate that, in contrast to those who do not engage with social media, girls that regularly share images of their bodies online report significantly greater body dissatisfaction, stricter dietary control, a stronger internalization

of the ideal of being thin, and an inflated perception of their weight and size. The authors also discovered that girls who uploaded photos of themselves on a daily basis were more inclined to alter such photos to make them appear slimmer and more in line with an idealized body image (Lewallen & Elizabeth, 2016).

According to the findings of another survey, individuals' self-reported levels of self-esteem were lower when they believed that their social media contacts had more successful lives (Wang et al., 2019).Determined to assess the psychological impact of Instagram usage on female adolescents in Lebanon. Throughout his research, he transitioned from examining how women's perceptions of Instagram content influenced their self-esteem to investigating its impact on their growth in ourselves and motivation for self-improvement. First, he discovered that women's moods changed when they saw models and Instagram influencers with thin, beautiful faces. They felt bad about themselves because they thought they looked ugly and fat. The mood swing was more pronounced in younger ladies, aged 18 to 25, compared to older females, although all were impacted. A considerable proportion of the sample demonstrated a tendency to compare themselves with the photographs and posts encountered on Instagram, resulting in dissatisfaction regarding their physical appearances and lives. The sample demonstrated a strong interest in the quantity of "likes" received and the number of "followers" acquired (Abou , 2019).

Self-esteem, as a fundamental human necessity, influences the progress, growth and development, and identity of individuals. It is an individual's imagination shaped by their social interactions. Self-esteem, an individual's assessment of their worth, establishes a crucial foundation for effective lifelong development. Early self-esteem forecasts subsequent physical and mental health, relationship and job satisfaction, economic opportunities, and lifespan(Shareef et al., 2019).

Despite the inverse association between self-esteem and social comparison on Instagram, there is a positive correlation with users' levels of inspiration, which is defined as a motivational condition that can appear in a variety of spheres of life. (Fagundes, Marot, & Natividade, 2020). Because Instagram provided a virtual world with fewer human connections during a trying time, it appears to have benefited young people throughout the 2020 pandemic. This conclusion is supported by studies investigating the body positivity movement, which shows that photographs of people with positive bodies may boost their self-esteem, particularly when it comes to their body images (Alhoei, 2022).

Instagram has a big effect on the mental health of the people who use it. Statistics show that spending more time on social networking sites has been linked to a drop in general self-esteem. Some experts have said that social media can be bad for you, but a lot of others have said that it can also be good for your health and happiness (Staniewski & Awruk, 2022). Furnham et al. (2002) indicate that adolescents aged 16 to 18 experience concerns with their bodies and self-esteem challenges. The study's findings reveal that young women correlate perceptions of their bodies with self-esteem, whereas young men do not establish this association. Individuals' self-esteem increases from puberty to early teenage years. A person's self-esteem can fluctuate based on their experiences, with triumphs and disappointments exerting considerable influence (Farooq , Farrukh, & khan, 2023).

2.2 Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 *Social Comparison Theory*

Individuals often evaluate themselves in relation to those whom they perceive as socially superior during the process of upward comparison. Individuals often engage in self-comparison with others whom they regard as akin to themselves, and this process does not necessitate direct acquaintance with those individuals. Social media has the potential to adversely affect women's self-esteem, a phenomenon that can be elucidated through the lens of the social comparison hypothesis (Festinger, 1954). This concept suggests that women are portrayed in the media as sexually appealing figures, which influences their self-perception and prompts them to assess their value mainly based on their physical looks. Research indicates that body dissatisfaction and self-objectification adversely affect depression, both of which have been previously associated with diminished overall self-esteem (Battle, 1978).

 Social comparison theory extends beyond mere self-comparison with others by evaluating the impacts of upward comparisons. An individual must evaluate their well-being in relation to somebody whom they consider to be in a more favorable situation for improvement to take place. However, when an individual considers another's situation as inferior to their own, this is referred to as a downward comparison (Swallow & Kuiper, 1988).

An upward comparison occurs when an individual evaluates their current condition against that of another whom they perceive to be in a superior state of existence. Social

comparisons can yield beneficial benefits when an individual identifies similar with the person to whom they are comparing themselves. The individual making the comparisons relies on the notion that they are either superior or equivalent to the person being compared. Consequently, individuals may engage in upward comparisons to elevate their self-image when they are not at risk. A strong feeling of self-worth is crucial for individuals to establish positive social comparisons. Supplementary research has reinforced this study by illustrating that social comparison with an individual who is similar to or more advantaged can yield positive outcomes and motivate individuals rather than engender negative self-perception (Collins, 1996).

Several studies have shown that using social media causes people to make negative social comparisons with people they follow or friend on social media, which has a negative impact on self-reported wellbeing. Social comparisons and social media use are causally related, according to experimental research. To determine the degree of self-referential attention to others, researchers evaluated the social comparison orientation (SCO) of 120 female college students. After that, participants were told to look at a Facebook profile of someone who was similar in age and gender as them, their own page, or an assignment that didn't need social comparison. Results indicated that participants with high SCO exhibited inferior self-perceptions, diminished self-esteem, and a more negative balance compared to their low SCO counterparts following an in-depth social comparison on Facebook (Vogel etal., 2015).

Instagram is a relatively recent social media platform, founded in 2010, which explains the little research associated with it. One of the unusual studies carried out on this social media platform is titled Instagram #Instasad?: Examining the Relationships Among Instagram Utilization, Depressive Symptoms, Adverse Social Comparison, and Interactions with Strangers Performed an analysis of the relationships with Instagram usage and depressive symptoms, emphasizing the mechanisms associated with negative social comparison, moderated by the quantity of unfamiliar individuals followed. The 117 people who took part in this study were all between the ages of 18 and 29. Participants filled out online surveys that asked for demographic information, how often they used Instagram, how many people they followed from the general public, and how they felt about the Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale and the Social Comparison Evaluation Scale. While positive social comparison was found to be strongly associated with depressed symptoms, the results showed a slight positive relationship between Instagram use and

these symptoms. The influence of Instagram on social comparison was mitigated by the number of unknown individuals followed. According to the data, there is a negative correlation between increased Instagram usage and following more strangers, and a positive correlation between following fewer strangers and social comparison and depressive symptoms (Lup, Trub, & Rosenthal, 2015).

An additional experimental study investigated the relationship among social comparison and self-esteem in the context of social media. A total of 128 undergraduates took part in the study, consisting of 94 females and 34 males. They were directed to analyze a social media account created by the researchers, which was claimed to belong to an alternate student of the same gender at their university(Vogel et al., 2015).

The concept of social comparison has been applied in numerous domains. Recent research has focused on internet-based social comparison. Numerous studies have been conducted on peer comparison and how upward peer comparison affects teenage girls' eating disorders, self-esteem, and physical appearance. This concept posits that women often engage in upward comparisons, assessing themselves against idealized and distorted self-perceptions due to their propensity for self-evaluation. Consequently, encountering individuals online may potentially result in comparisons associated with body dissatisfaction (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016).

Instagram lets users follow celebrities and other notable figures to see their daily activities, including selfies from modelling photo shoots and photos of their glamorous vacations in exotic places. On Facebook, most users follow their friends and family. The group for social comparison on Facebook primarily consists of friends and family members. it evaluates in relation to others who share similar characteristics. Instagram has the potential to elevate individuals within social comparison group to the status of celebrities, often possessing greater financial resources and social standing than the majority of their followers. This study used a 2x2 design to look at user content that was labelled as either upward comparison (healthy) or downward comparison (unhealthy), as well as content on social networks that was labelled as either upward (active) or downward (inactive). The material talked about fitness, health, looks, and staying healthy to stay alive.The significance of these traits for the fitness, beauty, and health of college students led to their selection. The number of comments and "likes" that are attached to the user's uploaded photo is a measure of engagement. According to the results, people's self-esteem decreased

after interacting with users who were more active, but user-submitted content did not significantly affect this (Dion, 2016).

An Exposure to Instagram photos of skinny and attractive peers and celebrities was linked to higher levels of body dissatisfaction, according to an experimental study. Social comparison mediated this association, suggesting that female individuals who saw pictures of attractive celebrities had higher levels of body dissatisfaction (Brown & Marika , 2016).

The results indicated that increased intensity of Instagram usage correlates with elevated levels of comparison to other users. Furthermore, elevated levels of social comparison correlate with diminished levels of self-esteem. Participation in online social networks exposes individuals to the scrutiny of others while simultaneously allowing them to observe others, facilitating self-assessment based on virtual perceptions (Stapleton, Luiz, & Chatwin, 2017).An experimental investigation on a sample comprising four female groups (overweight, obese and underweight, normal) categorized by body mass weight. A portion of Dove's genuine beauty commercial and a video of Victoria's Secret fashion show were shown to some of the samples. In this investigation, the female participants' self-esteem, body self-acceptance, and comparison to the models were measured. According to the findings, the group that watched the Dove campaign had lower self-esteem and less self-comparison, but the group that watched the Victoria commercials had lower self-esteem and more upward social comparison with the models.

Additionally, they demonstrated that the younger a woman was, the more she compared herself to the media models. According to their second hypothesis, women who have a higher body mass index have lower self-esteem because they may feel anxious about not being able to achieve the ideal thinness and better overall image that the media presents, which can result in a seriously negative self-concept and a concerning depressive state. (Reategui & Palmer, 2017)

Similarly, it was discovered that, through social comparison, altered Instagram photos had a detrimental impact on the body image of female adolescents. The quantity of followers, "likes," and comments on uploaded images or videos offer more quantitative and qualitative data about how well-liked they are by others, which could help with assessing oneself in relation to others (Kleemans et al., 2018,).

Negative social comparisons are correlated with the number of strangers one follows, as the aforementioned study shows. The identity of the strangers these people pursuing is unknown to us. It may include celebrities or other influential people, or it might be other members of their age group whom they do not personally know. Upward social comparison has a negative correlation with self-esteem, but online social network utilization has a favorable correlation. Therefore, it has been demonstrated that the relationship between self-esteem and the usage of online social networks is mediated by upward social comparison (Wang et al., 2019).

When users receive notifications regarding others' life updates via social media posts, they will spontaneously and unknowingly engage in social comparison (Jiang & Ngien, 2020).The utilization of social media platforms like Instagram has been on the rise, as has the phenomenon of "upwards social comparison," which refers to the inclination to compare oneself to strangers or individuals who are in a superior position in any aspect of life, including wealth, education, and physical appearance, upon first encountering them. (Panjrath & Tiwari, 2021).

As observed, numerous investigations have been undertaken focusing on particular social platforms, chiefly Facebook, revealing substantial impacts on self-esteem and social comparisons. Nevertheless, there exists a notable shortage of research concerning other social media applications, including Instagram and specifically impact on teenagers of Pakistan The exposure of teenagers to influencer content, even for brief periods, significantly impacts their satisfaction with physical appearance and self-esteem. What are the long-term impacts of teenage girls engaging with female influencers on Instagram every day, especially on their social acceptance? Th Beauty influencers set formed their social a comparison group by posting beauty-related content every day. Could being around this all the time hurt their self-esteem and make them less happy with how they look? The goal of the proposed research is to look at how beauty influencers affect teenage girls' self-esteem by having them see beauty content on Instagram.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the approach employed to ascertain how beauty influencers, notably Instagram, affect the self-esteem of teenage girls in Islamabad is discussed. The main focus is on study design, data gathering methods, research instruments, pilot testing, demographic and sample approaches, and ethical considerations. Thus, this approach is the best since it makes it possible to gather reliable, consistent, and legitimate data that is pertinent to the goals of the study.

3.1 Research Design

The survey was quantitative cross-sectional. According to Bell et al. (2019), using a higher sample size leads to more data. Researchers argue that a big collection lets the researcher find bigger patterns and trends that they might miss with a smaller group. Quantitative data can have greater external validity due to its generalizability and relevance to a larger population. The last advantage of quantitative approaches is their resistance to researcher bias, which happens when researchers' personal beliefs and assumptions color their findings (Månsson & Lindenmeyer, 2024). The benefits of quantitative methods were considered to be more significant than qualitative methods. Instagram beauty influencers effect young girls' self-esteem, self-worth, and social acceptance, according to the study. A organized survey collected data from many girls that were able to evaluated. This approach allowed the study to build on previous knowledge and provide fresh information about Islamabad's teenage girls. It also allowed generalizations to a bigger age group. So, this method was best for studying how beauty influencers impact self-esteem, physical attractiveness, and social acceptance. This study collected data from the target population using a self-administered structured questionnaire. Statistics are used to find patterns, correlations, and effects that might happen.

3.2 Population

The research target demographic comprises teenage girls in Islamabad, Pakistan, aged 14 to 19 years, who are active users of Instagram. The rationale for selecting this subgroup is their elevated prevalence of social media usage and specific concerns on physical appearance.

3.3 Sampling

In order to address a research question and provide a convenient manner, this study used a quantitative approach to data collection, namely using the survey approach. Participants will receive the survey through a non-probability purposive sampling technique .Only 300 teenage girls who reside in Islamabad and have accounts on Instagram. further exposure with beauty influencers content participates in survey.

3.4 Operational Definition(s)

3.4.1   Beauty Influencer

According to this study's operational definition beauty influencers, are Individuals that publish and share content related to beauty on Instagram. These influencers often focus on dress designing, skincare and make-up routines, actively promote beauty goods, and deliver their content in an appealing manner.

3.4.2   Physical Appearance

In this study, physical appearance is defined as the degree to which girls are pleased with their appearance. It focuses on particular characteristics, including feeling about their appearance, specific body looks and facial features such as hairstyling, skin clarity (including acne, blemishes), in comparison to the standards set by influencers.

3.4.3   Social Acceptance

The term "social acceptance" in this study refers to the opinions of teenage girls regarding their social interactions .It focuses on liked and accepted emotions among friends and peers. It's all about teenage girl's feelings satisfied or dissatisfied about of acceptance after comparison by beauty influencers.

3.4.4   Self-esteem

This study defines self-esteem as a person's perception of their own value and confidence. It will center on how confident they are in their own abilities and worth. It involves observable behaviors like social engagement, taking on challenges, and decision-making confidence. It is impacted by social comparison, especially by beauty influencers on Instagram.

3.5 Procedure (data collection)

This study collected data with an established, self-administered questionnaire to answer a research topic in a convenient manner. Questionnaires were physically handed to teenage girls in Islamabad. The introduction and goal of this study were discussed with the respondent, and informed consent was acquired. Data from teenage girls was collected anonymously and checked for completeness and accuracy right away to ensure a response. Participation was entirely optional, and respondents had the assurance of confidentiality.

3.6 Instrument

This study has a structured questionnaire with five sections each measuring a construct relevant to the research objectives. All   instruments were adapted from established scales   or developed in alignment with validate framework. The sociodemographic data questionnaire captured age and education. We collected data on Instagram use, including daily hours, followers, accounts followed, and weekly posts and stories. IIUS was inspired by Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007). One-factor scale with ten items, measures Instagram use intensity. Users' subjective perception of Instagram's importance in their daily lives, notably time consumption, determines its intensity. Instagram intensity represents degree of emotional involvement with Instagram. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale(1965) was used to evaluates how the individual sees himself or herself.it is one of the most popular ways to measure self-esteem around the world. The 11-item PACS-R assessed the frequency of physical appearance comparisons. Higher ratings on a 4-point Likert scale suggest more appearance comparisons. The Self–Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1985) subscale social acceptance used for to measure peer acceptance in study. All scales accessed 1(strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree) Likert scale .

3.7 Data Analysis

Collecting data is the initial step. once the responses have been coded and inputted into the Excel spreadsheet. Further information transmitted via Spss. The data was analyzed using SPSS, (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). further data cleansing, and finally, to resolve discrepancies and missing values. For the purpose of analyzing demographics and response patterns, percentages and frequencies were employed. Consequently, the data in this study were analyzed using the non-parametric statistical test Spearman's Correlation. To investigate the relationship between two variables, the

Spearman's Correlation test is employed. The relationship between teenage girls' experiences with beauty influencers, their levels of self-esteem, dissatisfaction with their physical appearance, and perceived social acceptance is examined.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The research was conducted in accordance with ethical norms. The study's goals, participants' choice to withdraw, and complete secrecy were all covered by ethical standards. By not collecting individually identifiable information, total secrecy is maintained. The information was kept safe and utilized only for scholarly research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter aims to present the findings obtained from a survey conducted with 300 teenage girls in Islamabad. The survey was designed to determine the influence that beauty influencers have on the girls' self-esteem, perceived physical appearance, and social acceptance. To highlight the pattern in responses, descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage and Spearman's correlation were employed in the analysis of data a. Spearman's correlation was employed to investigate the correlation between behavior associated with influencers and indicators of low self-esteem, social acceptance, and dissatisfaction with physical appearance. This research assists in determining the components of exposure that are more strongly associated. The monotonic relationship between variables is demonstrated by the correlation coefficients, which indicate the strength and direction of the relationship. The statistical significance of the association is demonstrated by the p-values. The findings indicate whether spending an increased amount of exposure with influencers of beauty is associated with low self-esteem, higher dissatisfaction with skin tone and face features, and desire to change physical appearance.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1 Demographics

According to the criteria, respondents' ages ranged from 14 to 19, which is basically divided into three age groups . The results are completely varied by age and educational background, according to the data. The age group with the highest representation of participants is 16–17 years old, representing (38.0%), followed by 14–15 years old at (33.7%) and the final age group, 18–19 years old at (28.3%) . Since teenage girls were the study's target demographic, all responders were girls. This selected age groups provide how usage of Instagram and engagement with beauty influencers impact on different development stages of teenage girls.

Table 4.1.1.1 Frequencies of Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	14-15 years	101	33.7	33.7	33.7

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
16-17 years	114	38.0	38.0	71.7
18-19 years	85	28.3	28.3	100.0

This study looks at how different phases of teenage girls' development are impacted by Instagram and beauty influencers. Although the respondents' educational backgrounds varied, the majority (43.3%) had intermediate degrees. This was followed by (39.9%) who had matric, and finally, (17.7%) who were in O/A-Levels, respectively. This indicates that varying educational backgrounds may influence engagement with Instagram and beauty content differently.

Table 4.1.1.2 Frequencies of Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Matric	117	39.0	39.0	39.0
	Intermediate	130	43.3	43.3	82.3
	O-Levels / A-Levels	53	17.7	17.7	100.0

The data reveals that a significant portion of teenage girls spend their time on Instagram, with (26.7%) spending between 30 minutes to 1 hour, while (38.3%) engage for 1 to 3 hours, and (35%) exceed 3 hours of usage. This suggests that considerable number of teenage girls spend a lot of time on Instagram, which may increase their exposure to beauty influencer content.

Table 4.1.1.3 time spent on Instagram

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 minutes to 1 hour	80	26.7	26.7	26.7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1–3 hours	115	38.3	38.3	65.0
	More than 3 hours	105	35.0	35.0	100.0

The percentages of content types among respondents pertain to the specific categories of content they engaged with on Instagram. The survey data indicates that among the 300 teenage females questioned, fashion and beauty influencers are the most preferred type of content on Instagram, with (47.0%) of participants selecting this . This demonstrates the popularity and influence of beauty and fashion content with this age group. Following that, (19.7%) of respondents reported that they followed celebrities, while 19.3% mentioned that they engaged with Memes and other forms of entertainment. A smaller percentage, (14.0%), are mainly engaged with content shared by friends and family. The results indicate that various types of content are widely used, however fashion and beauty influencers seem to have the greatest influence on the interests among teenage girls and their social media usage.

Table 4.1.1.4 depicts about Content type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Beauty/fashion influencers	141	47.0	47.0	47.0
Valid	Friends and family	42	14.0	14.0	61.0
	Celebrities	59	19.7	19.7	80.7
	Memes/entertainment	58	19.3	19.3	100.0

To assess the level of engagement of beauty influencers. Respondents have been asked to identify the beauty influencers they follow on Instagram. A large majority of the respondents who answered (87.3%) expressed that agreement with interacting with content from beauty influencers. his high percentage shows how popular and prevalent

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beauty influencers are among adolescent girls, which means that influencer thing is an essential component of their online lives. Barely a small number (12.7%)of respondents indicated that they did not follow. which shows that this kind of content is widespread in this age group.

Table 4.1.1.5 depicts Follow beauty influencer

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	262	87.3	87.3	87.3
	No	38	12.7	12.7	100

4.1.2 Level of engagement with Beauty Influencers

However, respondent was asked more question to understand level of engagement with influencers.

When asked especially if they follow more than one beauty influencer, (52.7%) of respondents reported agreed and (9.0%) said they strongly agreed, for a total of (61.7%) following several beauty influencers. There are also (17%) who strongly disagree, (7.7%) who disagree, This could be because some people only follow certain beauty influencers or because they aren't extremely interested in beauty influencer content. Also, (13.7%) stayed neutral, which means they didn't have a clear opinion, or their following patterns changed. The results show that respondent are not only passively following these influencers, but they are actively engaged with them.

Table 4.1.2.1 depicts follow several others Beauty Influencers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	51	17.0	17.0	17.0
	Disagree	23	7.7	7.7	24.7
	Neutral	41	13.7	13.7	38.3
	Agree	158	52.7	52.7	91.0
	Strongly Agree	27	9.0	9.0	100.0

The majority of respondents expressed positive towards beauty influencers regarding trend following and engagement. The findings from the survey show that a lot of teenage girls really try hard to get in with the beauty standards set by beauty influencers. Interestingly, (45.7%) of the respondents try to stay updated with these trends, and (15.7%) strongly agreed with that idea. The total is (61.4%). This shows that a large number are not just following but might also be trying to copy the current beauty tips and trends shared by influencers. On the other hand, (21.3%) of the respondents said they disagreed, with (7.0%) showing disagreement and (14.3%) stating strong disagreement. Also, (17.3%) stayed neutral, which might indicate some uncertainty in making decisions or not being consistently involved with current trends. The findings show how much beauty influencers impact the fashion and beauty preferences of teenage girls. They show that trends shared online are extremely popular and have major consequences.

Table 4.1.2.2 depicts try beauty trend which is shared by Influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	43	14.3	14.3	14.3
	Disagree	21	7.0	7.0	21.3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	52	17.3	17.3	38.7
Agree	137	45.7	45.7	84.3
Strongly Agree	47	15.7	15.7	100.0

The survey revealed that respondents are more interested in specific beauty practices or items that influencers recommend. Approximately two-thirds of those who responded showed interest in this. (49.0%) agreed, with (14.0%) strongly agreeing. A majority of (63.0%) are interested in recommending products and demonstrating how to use them by beauty influencers which is effective at capturing teens 'interest. In contrast, (21.0%) of those who participated objected (11.0%)disagree or strongly disagreed (10.0%) . This means that less than half of those who responded could not find the routines or products that influencers promote appealing or effective. Around (16.0%) of respondents were neutral, indicating a lack of interest.

Table 4.1.2.3 depicts interested in beauty routines and products shared by Influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	30	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	33	11.0	11.0	21.0
	Neutral	48	16.0	16.0	37.0
	Agree	147	49.0	49.0	86.0
	Strongly Agree	42	14.0	14.0	100.0

The findings from the survey show that a large number of respondent are really interested reaching a point where they forgot how much time they have been looking at

beauty influencer posts. For a total (65.0%), in particular, (44.3%) of those who answered agreed and (20.7%) strongly agreed that they waste time when looking content from beauty influencers. This demonstrates a significant level of engagement with beauty influencers on Instagram. On the other hand, (18.7%) of people who answered disagreed (9.0%) or (9.7%)strongly disagreed, which means that a lesser percentage is more aware of how much time they spend on these sites. The others (16.3%) were neutral, This could be because people's experiences are different. This research shows how engaging beauty influencer content can be and suggests that teens may spend more time on screens, which could affect their health and time management.

Table 4.1.2.4 depicts looking beauty content loose track time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	29	9.7	9.7	9.7
	Disagree	27	9.0	9.0	18.7
	Neutral	49	16.3	16.3	35.0
	Agree	133	44.3	44.3	79.3
	Strongly Agree	62	20.7	20.7	100.0

To learn about the newest trends in fashion and beauty, some girls follow beauty influencers. According to the data, many consumers deliberately seek out these influencers in order to stay current with these trends. Of those surveyed, (10.3%) strongly agree and (38.7%) think that influencers also teach us about fashion and beauty trends for (49.0%) in total. This indicates that nearly half of the sample's respondents use influencer content to keep abreast of fashion trends and acquire inspiration for their own looks. However, 12.0% of respondents strongly disagreed with this assertion, and (32.3%) disagreed (20.3%). This indicates that many people follow influencers for reasons other than following trends. Additionally, (18.7%) remained neutral, which may indicate that their motivations were conflicting or ambiguous. Beauty influencers also have an impact on the learning behaviour of viewers of this show.

Table 4.1.2.5 depicts follow beauty influencers learn about beauty or fashion trends

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	36	12.0	12.0	12.0
	Disagree	61	20.3	20.3	32.3
	Neutral	56	18.7	18.7	51.0
	Agree	116	38.7	38.7	89.7
	Strongly Agree	31	10.3	10.3	100.0

Teenage girls are normally relatively excited about new beauty influencers posting on Instagram, but not always. Of the total respondents,(35.3%) indicated that they were either firmly agreed (8.3%) or inspired by the content (27.0%). This shows that many sample members find influencer posts engaging. However, a total of (48.0%) disagreed (32.8%) or strongly disagreed (15.3%), suggesting that many teens don't enjoy new beauty content. The reason for this could be that people react differently to social media influencers, have different interests, or are sick of the same material. Furthermore, (16.7%) of the respondents were undecided regarding their opinions regarding new influencer posts. Beauty influencer content excites some teenagers, but over half of the respondents disagree, showing that the group is diverse.

Table 4.1.2.6 depicts excited new beauty influencer content appears on feed

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	46	15.3	15.3	15.3
	Disagree	98	32.7	32.7	48.0
	Neutral	50	16.7	16.7	64.7

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	81	27.0	27.0	91.7
Strongly Agree	25	8.3	8.3	100.0

However, these findings confirmed that teenage girls of Islamabad have a strong engagement with beauty influencer on Instagram which shows high exposure to influencers and influencing their behaviors.

4.1.3 Impact on Self-Esteem

However, 66.3% (n = 199) of the respondent (46.0%) strongly disagreed or (20.3%) disagreed with the statement. This shows most teenage girls don't feel worthy about themselves when comparing themselves to beauty influencers on Instagram. Only 20.4% (n = 61)of agreed (14.7%), or (5.7%) strongly agreed with the statement. This suggests that a smaller number of girls may feel good about themselves by comparing themselves to influencers. At the same time, 13.3% (n = 40) stayed neutral, which meant they had mixed feelings or were not sure about the impact on their self-worth. The results suggest that comparing beauty influencers had negative impact which promotes feelings of unworthy among teenage girls, supporting concerns about how idealized influencer content may lower self-esteem.

Table 4.1.3.1 depicts feel worth after comparing with beauty Influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	61	20.3	20.3	20.3
	Disagree	138	46.0	46.0	66.3
Valid	Neutral	40	13.3	13.3	79.7
	Agree	44	14.7	14.7	94.3
	Strongly Agree	17	5.7	5.7	100.0

Further, 58.7 (n = 176) of the respondent (25.0%) strongly disagreed or (33.7%) disagreed with the statement. This shows that more than half of the teenage girls do not feel confident after seeing influencer content on Instagram Only 23.7% (n = 56)of agreed (18.7%), or (5%) strongly agreed with the statement. This suggests that a smaller number of girls may feel confident, after seeing beauty influencers content on Instagram. At the same time, 17.7% (n = 53) stayed neutral, which meant they had mixed feelings or were not sure about the impact on their feeling of confidence. These results show that posts from influencers may make teenage girls feel less confident rather than more confident. This raises worries about how idealized beauty standards on Instagram could affect girls' mental health.

Table 4.1.3.2 depicts feel confident After seeing influencers Posts

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	75	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Disagree	101	33.7	33.7	58.7
Valid	Neutral	53	17.7	17.7	76.3
	Agree	56	18.7	18.7	95.0
	Strongly Agree	75	25.0	25.0	25.0

Teenage girls had different opinions, as shown by the mixed responses. About 46.7% (n = 140) of the respondent (23.0%) strongly disagreed or (23.7%) disagreed with the statement. This means teenage girls' worth is not based on how they look on Instagram. This shows that almost half of girls think that appearance on Instagram link with their self-worth. On the other hand,33% (n = 99)of agreed (22.3%), or (10%) strongly agreed with the statement. This suggests that about one third number of girls may feel their worth is not dependent on Instagram looks. At the same time, 17.7% (n = 53) stayed neutral, which meant they had mixed feelings or were not sure about this. These results show that even though some teenage girls don't want to base their self-worth on how they look on Instagram, many still feel affected by it. This demonstrates how confusing and frequently

conflicting beauty standards being promoted on Instagram may be for how teenagers perceive themselves.

Table 4.1.3.3 depicts feel my worth is not based on how look on Instagram

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	69	23.0	23.0	23.0
	Disagree	71	23.7	23.7	46.7
Valid	Neutral	61	20.3	20.3	67.0
	Agree	67	22.3	22.3	89.3
	Strongly Agree	32	10.7	10.7	100.0

A total of 157 survey respondents (52.3%) strongly disagreed with (25.7%) or (26.7%) disagreed with the statement. Over 50% the teenage girls don't feel good about their own looks when think don't look like beauty influencers. This shows the way girls look compared to influencers makes feel bad about themselves. However, 30.4% (n = 91)of agreed (19.7%), or (10.7) strongly agreed, which shows a smaller but still significant group who feel good and maintain positive self-feelings after comparing. Additionally, girls (17.7%) (n = 52) selected the neutral option, which may indicate that they were conflicted or undecided. These findings suggest that beauty influencer content strongly influences teenage girls' self-esteem and looks. More than half of respondents indicated that they experience bad about their looks when they fail to look like beauty influencers, indicating a significant upward appearance-based comparison behavior.

Table 4.1.3.4 depicts feel good even if I don't look like beauty influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	77	25.7	25.7	25.7
Valid	Disagree	80	26.7	26.7	52.3
	Neutral	52	17.3	17.3	69.7
	Agree	59	19.7	19.7	89.3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	32	10.7	10.7	100.0

A total of 158 survey respondents (52.7%) strongly disagreed with (26.7%) or (26.0%) disagreed with the statement. This indicates the internalized pressure to conform to influencer-driven aesthetics, as more than half of the teenage girls report a decline in self-respect when they are not in keeping with popular beauty trends.However3% (n = 89)of agreed (20.7%), or (9%) strongly agreed, which indicating that fewer than one-third of the girls uphold their dignity regardless of whether they follow beauty trends. In contrast, 53 girls (17.7%) chose the neutral option, which may indicate that they were conflicted or undecided about these beauty trends. These findings underscore the significant impact of beauty trends on teenagers' self-perception and emotional well-being, as numerous teenagers associate their self-esteem with follow-through to beauty standards portrayed on Instagram.

Table 4.1.3.5   depicts respect myself even after don't follow beauty trends on Instagram

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	78	26.0	26.0	26.0
	Disagree	80	26.7	26.7	52.7
	Neutral	53	17.7	17.7	70.3
	Agree	62	20.7	20.7	91.0
	Strongly Agree	27	9.0	9.0	100.0

4.1.4 Perceived physical Appearance and Dissatisfaction

A large majority, (68.7%), agreed with (41.7%) or very strongly agreed (27.0%) the fact that they are unhappy with their skin when they see pictures of influencers that are generally glorified. Only 20.0% who responded strongly disagreed (11.3%) or (8.7%) disagree , which means that a smaller proportion of people don't feel this way. At

the same time, 11.3% were neutral. This shows how much beauty influencer content affects teens' self-esteem when it comes to their skin, which can make them feel inadequate and unhappy.

Table 4.1.4.1 depicts feel unhappy with my skin compared to beauty influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	34	11.3	11.3	11.3
	Disagree	26	8.7	8.7	20.0
	Neutral	34	11.3	11.3	31.3
	Agree	125	41.7	41.7	73.0
	Strongly Agree	81	27.0	27.0	100.0

According to the findings, many feel self-conscious about their facial appearance when compared to others. In particular, 48.0% of respondents thought that their facial features aren't equally attractive as beauty influencers', and 22.7% of the strongly agreed. This 70.7% majority indicates participants frequently compare their facial features to others. 18.0% of respondents, or 6.3%, disagreed or strongly disagreed with the feeling. It appears that a smaller set of sample members thought their faces were more or less attractive. Also, 11.3% of respondents were neutral.

Table 4.1.4.2 depicts feel facial features unattractive compared to beauty influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	35	11.7	11.7	11.7
	Disagree	19	6.3	6.3	18.0
	Neutral	34	11.3	11.3	29.3
	Agree	144	48.0	48.0	77.3
	Strongly Agree	68	22.7	22.7	100.0

In the same direction, A total of 69.4% , 46.7% agree and 22.7% strongly agree that they feel pressured to alter their makeup or hairstyle after viewing influencers. On the other hand, a total of 20.3 %, (8.0%) disagreed and (12.3%) strongly disagreed. This shows that there are certain teens who may be more confident in their own style or less likely to follow societal norms. The other 10.3%were neutral. The fact that many teens are motivated to copy the looks of influencers shows how hard it is for them to deal with beauty standards in the internet age. This pressure may make it harder for them to express themselves freely and cause them emotional pain if they think they can't match these expectations.

Table 4.1.4.3 depicts feel change my hairstyle or makeup to look like influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	37	12.3	12.3	12.3
	Disagree	24	8.0	8.0	20.3
Valid	Neutral	31	10.3	10.3	30.7
	Agree	140	46.7	46.7	77.3
	Strongly Agree	68	22.7	22.7	100.0

The results of the survey show that teenage girls who watch beauty influencer content are more likely to change their behavior when it comes to using photo editing tools or hiding in their pictures. In particular, 50.7% of the respondents and another 15.3% strongly agreed. This means that a total of 66.0% acknowledged to changing or hiding parts of their looks in images. further a total of 22.0%, 9.3% of the respondents disagree and 12.7% strongly disagree. This means that a lesser number of respondents in the sample do not feel the need to hide or change their looks after seeing influencer content. Also, 12.0% of the respondents were neutral. These results show how much beauty standards set by influencers affect how teens display their own. Editing images or hiding apparent

imperfections is a common behavior that can show that someone is unhappy with how they look and is comparing themselves to others more.

Table 4.1.4.4 depicts hide or edit parts in photos after seeing influencer posts

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	38	12.7	12.7	12.7
Valid	Disagree	28	9.3	9.3	22.0
	Neutral	36	12.0	12.0	34.0
	Agree	152	50.7	50.7	84.7
	Strongly Agree	46	15.3	15.3	100.0

The study showed that most girls believe beauty leaders set standards that are too high. A total of 81.4% , agreed (43.7%) while (37.7%) strongly agreed. The majority think that material from influencers sets unrealistic standards for beauty. A number of individuals say that beauty influencers may raise social standards and self-image. A total of 6.3%, while 4.0% of respondent disagree and (2.0%) strongly disagree with the claim. This group of respondents think that beauty experts don't set unrealistic standards. However,12.3% were neutral. These findings indicate that there is a worry about the content that beauty influencers provide, which suggests that additional research is required to investigate how this type of media impacts expectations and self-worth.

Table 4.4.1.5 depicts beauty influencers set unrealistic standards

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	12	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Disagree	7	2.3	2.3	6.3
	Neutral	37	12.3	12.3	18.7
	Agree	131	43.7	43.7	62.3
	Strongly Agree	113	37.7	37.7	100.0

4.1.5 Social acceptance

The survey results indicate that a significant proportion of adolescents who responded associated physical attractiveness, particularly resembling beauty influencers, with enhanced social acceptance and more opportunities for friendship.

Specifically, (46.0%) agreed that embodying elegance akin to influencers facilitates friendship formation, while (18.7%) expressed strong agree. which indicated still notable segment of respondents believes that attractiveness, as portrayed by influencers, directly influences their number of friends. Approximately two-thirds of participants claim that physical appeal enhances social connectedness. Teenagers may experience pressure to keep to these beauty standards, believing that enhanced appearance, similar to that of influencers, can facilitate friendships or gain social approval. Conversely, (19.4%) of respondents strongly disagreed(11.7%)and (7.7%) disagreed, while (16%) were neutral .This shows how important it is to deal with the social pressures that come with looks and promote values that value different traits in order to build meaningful relationships.

Table 4.1.5.1 depicts beautiful like influencers lead to more friend

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	23	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Disagree	35	11.7	11.7	19.3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	48	16.0	16.0	35.3
Agree	138	46.0	46.0	81.3
Strongly Agree	56	18.7	18.7	100.0

The data indicates that exposure to content from Instagram beauty influencers has influenced social acceptability. The study results reveal that individuals possess differing opinions of their social acceptance in relation to online beauty standards. Teenage girls' responses regarding whether acceptance is tied to appearing like social media beauty standards varied widely, showing that they had different viewpoints. Out of all the respondents (43.7%), strongly agreed (15.0%) that they feel accepted if they adhere to beauty standards they encounter online. This indicates that over 50% of participants experience social pressure to live up to these expectations in order to blend in with their peers. Conversely, (31.0%) of the respondents either disagree (17.0%) or strongly disagree (14.0%). (25.3%)of the respondents indicated that they were neutral.

Table 4.1.5.2 depicts Accepted only if I follow beauty standards seen online

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	42	14.0	14.0	14.0
	Disagree	51	17.0	17.0	31.0
Valid	Neutral	76	25.3	25.3	56.3
	Agree	86	28.7	28.7	85.0
	Strongly Agree	45	15.0	15.0	100.0

4.2 Research Questions Testing

The Spearman's rank-order correlation test was employed to examine the relationships between teenage girls' exposure to Instagram beauty influencers and various aspects of their self-esteem. This non-parametric test was the appropriate one to employ

because the test's objective was to determine the direction and strength of monotonic relationships between variables. This investigation examined the effects of exposure to influencers on self-esteem, confidence, self-perception in relation to appearance, and self-respect.

The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between comparison-based self-worth and exposure to beauty influencers (ρ =.297, p <.01), indicating that greater exposure heightens comparison-based self-evaluation. The association between exposure and self-confidence was found to be smaller but still significant (ρ =.177, p <.01). Additionally, exposure was found to have a correlation with self-worth that is not dependent on beauty (ρ =.137, p <.05).The correlations between exposure and self-perception (ρ = .033, p = .573) and self-respect in the absence of trend adherence (ρ = .000, p = .999) were not significant, indicating that influencer exposure does not impact these dimensions of self-esteem. The significant and positive correlation among internal self-perceptions, such as self-confidence, self-worth, and respect, illustrates the interplay of various self-esteem variables (p < .01).

Table:4.2.1 Result of correlation test for self esteem

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.exposure_total	1.00	.297**	.177**	.137*	.000	.033
2. Worth after compare	.297**	1.00	.675**	.550**	.567**	.460**
3.confident in myself	.177**	.485**	1.00	.499**	.454**	.375**
4. Worth not based on look	.137*	.422**	.499**	1.00	.534**	.410**
5.respect myself unfollow trends	.000	.276**	.454**	.534**	1.00	.459**
6.feel good about myself	1.00	.297**	.177**	.137*	.000	.033

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level;n=300

The correlation study indicates significant relationships between exposure to beauty influencers' content and individuals' perceptions of appearance related behaviors. Influencer content positively correlated with all appearance-related concerned in the study. The strongest correlations appear to be the perception that one must alter their hair or makeup to resemble an influencer (ρ =.418, p <.01) and the hiding or editing of certain portions of one's face or the body in photos following the viewing of influencer posts (ρ =.417, p <.01). These findings indicate that increased exposure correlates with both perceived pressure to alter one's appearance and the active modification of appearance.

The findings showed a significant and positive correlation between being exposed to beauty influencer material and being dissatisfied with skin ((ρ =.326, p<.01), believing that one's facial features are less attractive (ρ =.384, p<.01), feeling pressured to change makeup or hairstyles (ρ =.418, p<.01), and hiding or altering in photos (ρ =.417, p<.01). Photo editing is significantly correlated with all other appearance-related issues. This indicates that individuals experiencing greater unhappiness and stress are inclined to modify their photographs more extensively. It was also thought that unrealistic beauty standards were set by influencers (ρ =.220, p <.01). This link was weaker but still significant. The results show that teenage girls who are more exposed to beauty influencers are much more likely to be unhappy with how they look. This includes having bad thoughts about their facial features, skin, and feeling like they have to change how they look to fit in with idealized beauty standards.

Table:4.2.2 Result of correlation test for Physical appearances

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.exposure_total	1.00	.326**	.384**	.418**	.220**	.417**
2. unhappy with my skin	.326**	1.00	.655**	.687**	.454**	.477**
3.facial features unattractive	.384**	.655**	1.00	.753**	.521**	.569**
4. change hairstyle or makeup	.418**	.687**	.753**	1.00	.535**	.620**
5. unrealistic beauty standards	.220**	.454*	.521**	.535*	1.00	.367**

6.hide or edit photos	.417**	.477**	.569**	.620**	.367**	1.00

The findings indicated a significant positive correlation between observing beauty influencers and the belief that akin to their beauty will increase one's circle of friends (ρ =.288, p <.01) and feeling accepted solely when adhering to online beauty standards (ρ =.359, p <.01). In addition, the two beliefs themselves exhibited a more significant correlation (ρ =.517, p <.01). The results of this study indicate that teenage girls who consume a greater amount of beauty content from Instagram are more likely to experience the pressure to conform to social expectations by having a good appearance.

Table:4.2.3 Result of correlation test for social acceptance

Variables	1	2	3
1.exposure_total	1.00	.288**	.359**
2.leads more friends	.288**	1.00	.517**
3. accepted following beauty standards	.359**	.517**	1.00

Table:4.2.3,**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level,n=300

The findings indicate that exposure to beauty influencers on Instagram is widespread, with teenage girls demonstrating significant and active engagement. The results indicate that exposure and engagement with influencers has led to an increase in physical appearance dissatisfaction and a decrease in self-esteem. It also indicates that teenage girls in Islamabad experience pressure to alter their physical appearance, with their perceived social acceptance among peers being reliant on beauty standards promoted by influencers. Overall, the significant findings highlighted higher level exposure of teenage girls with beauty influencers on Instagram strong linked with lower self-esteem as well as higher level exposer increased feeling of dissatisfaction of physical appearance and also intensified social acceptance .

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

This chapter examines findings of a survey conducted with 300 teenage girls in Islamabad, Pakistan, focusing on the impact of beauty influencers on self-esteem. The principal concepts emerging from the data, including content preferences, the dynamics of interaction with influencer content, psychological effects, and social effects. The Social Comparison Theory, proposed by Festinger in 1954, provides a framework for understanding the impact of self-comparison with others on the mental health of teenagers. The findings indicate that teenagers' internet usage, interests, and perceptions of attractiveness and social acceptance are significantly influenced by beauty influencers.

5.1.1 level of Engagement with beauty influencers

The data reveals that fashion and beauty influencers are the favorite content type among teenagers. This outcome illustrates the significance of beauty influencers. The majority of teenage girls follow multiple beauty influencers. This illustrates the prevalence and accessibility of influencer content. The substantial following indicates that beauty influencers significantly influence trends, behaviors, and social media practices of teenagers. The results show that teenagers are really interested in beauty influencer content. Over half of respondents regularly lose track of time when they look at these postings. This immersive way of consuming information shows that influencer content not only grabs attention but also may become a habit, which raises concerns about teens spending too much time on screens and how it affects their mental health. Also, almost half of the respondent who answered that actively attempt to remain kept up with the latest beauty products that influencers advocate. This active involvement shows that influencers are more than simply entertainers; they are also major trendsetters and providers of knowledge for teenage girls about fashion and beauty.

This indicates that these beauty influencers have a significant influence and reach among teenagers. According to earlier research, influencers have a significant role in how individuals behave and adopt trends in today's digital environment. This is consistent with the respondents' strong interest in beauty trends and routines promoted by influencers (Freberg et al., 2011).

5.1.2 *Beauty influencers exposure impact on Self-esteem*

Half or more of those who took the survey reported feeling less worthy and confident when they compare themselves to beauty influencers. The different answers about confidence and self-worth show how different and difficult it can be for each teen to deal with material from influencers. The findings indicate that those who are exposed to a greater quantity of beauty influencer material are more inclined to engage in comparisons with other individuals, a behaviour that is strongly associated with poorer feelings of self-worth and self-esteem. This indicates that as adolescents consume more information produced by influencers, their sense of self-worth is becoming increasingly dependent on the degree to which they believe they are able to satisfy idealized beauty standards. Therefore, when individuals believe that they do not match these excessive criteria, they experience a decrease in their sense of value. In order to validate the data presented above, a Spearman correlation study was carried out. It was discovered that there is a significant positive correlation between encounters with influencers and comparison-based self-evaluation. This suggests that the more frequently teenage girls engage with content produced by influencers, the more likely it is that they will evaluate their own worth with regard to these carefully selected, frequently unrealistic representations.

According to Tiggemann and Slater (2017), who discovered that young women experience decreased body satisfaction, anxiety, and depression as a result of viewing social media's idealized portrayal of beauty. According to Perloff et al. (2016) and Fardouly, Willburger, & Vartanian (2018) lack of body positivity and low self-esteem have been associated with heavy social media use and exposure to beauty-related content. Romero (2022) and Ferguson et al. (2014), who also discovered that engaging in social media comparisons of one's appearance can have a negative impact on one's self-esteem and confidence. Further, Social Comparison Theory maintains that people assess themselves in reference to their perceived social superiors, and this is in line with that theory. Negative self-perceptions may arise from comparison targets that are unrealistic or made up. It's interesting to note that while the majority of participants were aware that influencer beauty standards can be unattainable, this awareness did not fully shield them from social pressure or mental distress. According with previous research, this study indicated that adolescent females whose Instagram feeds feature more beauty influencers had lower self-esteem. The large percentage of girls who lost self-respect while diverging from beauty trends showed the pressure to follow influencers. Previous research has shown

how pervasive and powerful beauty standards are among teenage social media users (Mustofa, 2019; Lopez & Islam, 2021).

5.1.3 Perceived Physical appearance and dissatisfaction

Instagram exposure often makes appearance related issues worse for teenage girls. The fact that makes them unhappy with their appearance, feel forced to conform to beauty standards set by influencers, and edit photos are all examples. According to the correlation analysis, there is a connection between utilizing greater amounts of time with influencers lower levels of skin happiness, unfavorable self-perceptions of facial characteristics, increased pressure to alter one's appearance, and more frequent photo editing. This demonstrates a direct correlation between concerns regarding one's appearance and exposure to influencers. The fact that many who answered that feel bad about themselves when compare themselves to influencers shows how idealized digital images can hurt self-esteem (Fardouly, Willburger, & Vartanian, 2018).

The study discovered a significant correlation between increased dissatisfaction with one's physical appearance and exposure to beauty influencers. Many respondents said they were dissatisfied with their skin, thought their facial features were ugly, and felt pressured to change their hair or makeup to fit influencer standards. These results are consistent with Holland & Tiggemann (2016) and Henriques & Patnaik (2020), who came to the conclusion that the idealized and digitally modified imagery on social media increases body dissatisfaction and encourages comparison and modification of appearance. The findings indicate that beauty influencers increasing the propensity of teenage girls to engage in social comparison and express concerns over their body image. According to the study, those who alter or conceal their appearance are more inclined to feel unhappy and pressured to fit into. This demonstrates how exposure to influencer content alters perceptions of beauty as well as behavior.

5.1.4 Social acceptance

Further result indicate that they are likely to be accepted if they fit the popular online beauty standards, and many participants believe that being viewed as attractive as influencers can help them get more friends. According to the correlations, believing that having more friends is a result of being pretty is associated with both feeling that they must

adhere to beauty standards in order to be accepted and having more exposure to influencers. The strongest correlation between adhering to beauty standards and peer acceptance was observed between those social views and oneself, indicating a close relationship. Farooq, Farrukh, & Khan (2023) argued about the mental health risks that come with social media's focus on popularity and belonging based on looks (Farooq , Farrukh, & khan, 2023).Many respondents declared that beauty influencers typically create unrealistic standards of appearance. This level of critical awareness may help protect certain teens by letting them understand influencer content in a more realistic way. But even if teenagers are aware of this, the emotional and behavioral repercussions of seeing this kind of information are still strong, which suggests that just knowing about it may not be enough to lessen the harmful effects. Teenagers' social lives depend heavily on their physical appearance, as seen by the notion that being pretty increases your chances of acceptance and friendship.

Another interesting finding is that there is a link between seeing influencers and feeling accepted by society. A lot of teenage girls thought that being "beautiful like influencers" would help them make more friends and be more accepted by others. The data showed a strong link between seeing influencer materials and feeling like you have to follow online beauty standards to be accepted. Also, Leary (2010), and Jenkins (2022) stated in their studies how important social acceptance is for teens' self-worth, especially when it comes to peer environments that are mediated by technology. Influencer norms put a lot of pressure on girls to look a certain way in order to fit in, which may make them feel even worse about themselves if they don't meet these standards. This demonstrates the significance of initiatives that promote diverse conceptions of beauty and presence that go beyond appearances. The research primarily focused on teenage girls, who tend to seek validation from their peers and evaluate their self-worth in relation to their appearance. Teenage girls exhibit greater propensity than boys to evaluate their appearance in relation to others and to admire influencers. According to this study, Instagram actively impacts perceptions of gender roles and beauty rather than being a passive tool (Alhoei, 2022).

According to Festinger's Social Comparison Theory, individuals determine their worth by evaluating themselves in relation to others. Instagram fosters the comparison of individuals to others due to the constant exposure of users to the curated and idealized lifestyles of influencers. Because adolescents are already experiencing a challenging period in their identity formation, they are particularly susceptible to vulnerabilities (Berk, 2013).

This study confirms prior findings that social media is harmful. Tiggemann and Slater (2017) discovered that comparing themselves to influencers lowers body satisfaction. According to Holland and Tiggemann (2016), media depictions cause people to internalize beauty standards and feel self-conscious. Influencer-generated content is typically online-enhanced and intentionally chosen to highlight unattainable beauty standards, making these comparisons worse (Henriques & Patnaik, 2020). Ward & Paskhover (2019) argued that young people now trust influencers more than celebrities, supporting the assumption that being beautiful online leads to social success. The rise of influencers as modern beauty experts affects not just what consumers buy but also how they see themselves and their place in society. Teenagers believed that they were inferior to influencers due to their superior technology proficiency, wealth, and physical appearance. Following strangers on Instagram causes users to compare themselves to others, which increases depressive symptoms and lowers self-esteem. "influencer envy," in their studies which was mentioned in the responses. The appearance of "perfect" influencers caused girls to feel guilty and believe that they could not achieve the same level of beauty without undergoing cosmetic surgery or having a significant amount of money (Lup, Trub, & Rosenthal, 2015).

The majority of the existing research has been conducted in Western contexts; however, this study contributes to the limited amount of study that has been conducted on the mental health issues that influence Pakistani teens. The results show that the same psychological effects happen in Pakistan as they do in other places. Teenage girls in Pakistan face the same pressures to be unhappy, compare themselves to others, and accept themselves. However, these effects may be exacerbated by the distinctive cultural and social variables in Pakistan, such as gender roles and beauty standards. This demonstrates the critical nature of conducting research and providing immediate assistance to the population of Pakistan.

5.2 Conclusion

According to study, teenage girls in Islamabad who follow beauty influencers have lower self-esteem and are more self-conscious about their appearance. Girls who frequently engaged with influencer content reported feeling more pressure to live up to unattainable beauty standards, being more dissatisfied with their appearance, and comparing themselves to others more frequently. These elements lead to believe that their value and social acceptance are heavily influenced by how well they adhere to external beauty standards.

Overall, beauty influencers influence teenage girls' feelings about themselves and peer interactions. In the final analysis, show that beauty influencers have two effects on teenage girls: giving information about trends, inspiration, and social interaction, but also makes them unhappy with their looks, putting pressure on them socially, and causes psychological issues. This contradiction means that it needs to use Instagram in a balanced way and also needs to do things to help understand media, have good self-esteem, and be able to deal with unattainable beauty standards. The results show a clear pattern: those who interact with influencer content more often make more upward social comparisons, are less happy with how they look, and feel more pressure to meet beauty standards that are often unrealistic in order to be accepted by others.

These findings support global research and highlight Pakistani teenage girls' vulnerability. The study suggests that parents, teachers, and legislators should be more aware of the psychological consequences of idealized social media representations. Digital literacy initiatives, supportive counselling, and more realistic beauty standards can reduce these negative consequences and increase the self-worth of teenagers.

5.3 Limitations

The survey only covered Islamabad; thus, the results merely reflect local attitudes and experiences. The results may not apply to all of Pakistan due to social, cultural, and economic differences. This research used self-report data, thus participants answered questions about their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Because it makes them look better, people may lie when answering questions this way. Known as social desirability bias. due to this, the data may be inaccurate, making the findings of the research less credible.

5.4 Future Research

This study addresses the scarcity of data regarding the impact of social media on teenagers in Pakistan, a country where this form of research is still scarce.

Widen the geographic area for results.

The findings indicate a need for additional cross-cultural research to examine the influence of cultural norms and values on the impact of digital media on youth

development. In the future, research should include people from a range of cities and rural areas in Pakistan. This wider range of geographical distribution will help make sure that the results are more generalizable and reflect the wide range of cultural and economic backgrounds in Pakistan. Interventions that consider sociocultural factors and are adapted to the individual requirements of teenagers in various settings will be more effective in assisting them with their challenges.

compared to other social networks

Studies in the future could investigate the ways in which influencers on various social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, have an effect on their respective audiences. When researchers examine different platforms side by side, they are able to identify distinct patterns of user involvement, psychological consequences, and trends that are associated with each platform.

Use qualitative methods

Using qualitative techniques like interviews and focus groups might yield important information about how social media influencers affect people's mental health. These techniques shed light on specific topics like behavioral changes, self-esteem, and body image.

5.5 Suggestions

The results of the study indicate that certain actions can be action to mitigate the detrimental impact that influencer-produced beauty content has on the bodies and self-esteem of young girls. Media literacy education should be a top priority for schools and parents, who say that teens should learn how to think critically about and understand social media content, even the unrealistic standards set by beauty influencers. Teachers and psychological specialists may establish programs and workshops to help people with low self-esteem feel better about themselves and overcome the temptation to compare themselves to others. Social media platforms can also consider implementing guidelines and resources that support the mental health of younger users, such as links to beneficial content or questions regarding photographs that have been altered. Lastly, additional study might examine the effectiveness of

these interventions as well as the ways in which cultural factors impact the relationship between influencer material and teens' perception of oneself.

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APPENDIX

Research Title: Impact of Beauty Influencers on Self-Esteem of Teenage Girls in Islamabad: A Study of Instagram

1.Age

☐14-15 years   ☐ 16-17 years   ☐18-19 years

2. Current Education Level:

☐ Matric   ☐ Intermediate   ☐ O-Levels / A-Levels

3.Do you use Instagram? (If no, stop survey and submit. If yes, continue).

☐Yes   ☐No

4. Approximately how many profiles do you follow on Instagram?

☐ Less than 100   ☐ 100 – 300 ☐ 301 – 600 ☐ More than 1000

5. Approximately how many followers do you have on Instagram?

☐ Less than 50   ☐ 100 – 200   ☐ 201 – 300   ☐ More than 300

6. How many times a day do you usually open Instagram?

☐ 3–5 times   ☐ 6–10 times   ☐ More than 10 times

7. Average time spent on Instagram per day:

☐ 30 minutes to 1 hour   ☐ 1–3 hours   ☐ More than 3 hours

8. Type of photos you post most:

☐ Selfies   ☐ Group photos   ☐ Nature / Aesthetic   ☐ Fashion / Beauty

9. What content do you view most often on Instagram?

☐ Beauty/fashion influencers ☐ Friends and family   ☐ Celebrities   ☐ Memes/entertainmen

- Do you follow beauty influencers on Instagram?

☐Yes   ☐No

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1 = Strongly Disagree,   2 = Disagree   3 = Neutral   4 = Agree   5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
I follow several beauty influencers on Instagram.					
I try to keep up with beauty trends shared by influencers.					
I feel interested in the beauty routines or products shared by influencers.					
I forget about how long I have been looking at beauty influencer content on Instagram					
I follow beauty influencers to learn about beauty or fashion trends					
I feel excited when new beauty influencer content appears on my Instagram feed.					
I feel I am a person of worth, when I compare myself to beauty influencers.					
I feel confident in myself, after seeing influencer posts.					
I feel my worth is not based on how I look on Instagram.					
I respect myself, even when I see beauty trends that I don't follow.					
I feel good about myself, even if I don't look like beauty influencers.					
I feel unhappy with my skin when I compare it to beauty influencers on Instagram.					

I often think my facial features aren't attractive enough compared to beauty influencers.	73				
I feel pressure to change my hairstyle or makeup to look like influencers.					
I think beauty influencers set unrealistic beauty standards.					
I hide or edit parts of my face or body in photos after seeing influencer posts.					
I feel being beautiful like influencers leads to more friends.					
I feel accepted only if I follow beauty standards seen online.					