FITSPIRATION AND THINSPIRATION – A REVIEW OF RECENT RESEARCH

FIT INSPIRACJA I THIN INSPIRACJA – PRZEGLĄD NAJNOWSZYCH BADAŃ

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Summary: The purpose of this article is to review the latest research on socio-cultural considerations regarding promoting body image trends in social media.

Material and methods: Using the assumptions of the socio-cultural and self-objectification theories, the article explains the main consequences of messages promoting specific body shapes, both in traditional and social media.

Results: Among the most serious of these are a tendency toward social comparisons, increased dissatisfaction with one's own body, mood changes and a tendency toward behaviors characteristic of eating disorders. The findings revealed were presented in the context of specific body image trends present on social media - Fitspiration and Thinspiration.

Conclusions: A review of information regarding fitspiration and thinspiration has been made from the perspective of the consequences of exposure to content and the elements that characterize inspirational images.

Keywords: body image, social media, fitspiration, thinspiration, social comparisons

Streszczenie: Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przegląd najnowszych badań dotyczących społeczno-kulturowych uwarunkowań związanych z promowaniem trendów dotyczących wizerunku ciała w mediach społecznościowych.

Materiał i metody: Korzystając z założeń teorii społeczno-kulturowej i teorii samoobiektywizacji, artykuł wyjaśnia główne konsekwencje przekazów promujących określone kształty ciała, zarówno w mediach tradycyjnych, jak i społecznościowych.

Wyniki: Do najpoważniejszych z nich należą skłonność do porównań społecznych, zwiększone niezadowolenie z własnego ciała, zmiany nastroju oraz tendencja do zachowań charakterystycznych dla zaburzeń odżywiania. Ujawnione wyniki zostały przedstawione w kontekście konkretnych trendów dotyczących wizerunku ciała obecnych w mediach społecznościowych - Fitspiration i Thinspiration.

Słowa kluczowe: wizerunek ciała, media społecznościowe, fitspiracja, thinspiracja, porównania społeczne

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Introduction – Sociocultural and Objectification Theories vs body image in social media

In the last decades, the first television and press (Izydorczyk et al., 2019) and internet and social media platforms (Ho et al., 2016) became the primary sources promoting sociocultural attitudes in the scope of accepted physical attractiveness and body image standards. According to postulates of the sociocultural theory (Thompson et al., 1999), exposure to images promoted by the media is very often correlated with increased dissatisfaction with one's appearance (Griffiths et al.,2018; Saiphoo & Vahedi, 2019). This results from two aspects – internalization of social standards of beauty and a tendency to make social comparisons (Fardouly et al., 2018). In the case of the former, what is important is the degree to which an individual accepts and acknowledges medially promoted standards of beauty as personally meaningful and important. It is worth adding that even though most people are affected by social factors, of which media is one of the most important, they are not as significant to some individuals as they are to others. Not everyone internalizes them to the same degree (Fardouly et al., 2018).

An effect of internalization is the emergence of negative feelings. They result from an individual perceiving discrepancies between how their own body looks and the images presenting socioculturally accepted ideal bodies (Chansiri et al., 2020). In the case of social comparisons (Festinger, 1954), on the other hand, there is an assumption that people are characterized by an innate tendency to compare themselves to others in different aspects, including their looks and physical attractiveness. It is worth adding also that a meta-analysis conducted by Holland & Tiggemann (2016) has shown that exposure to media images explains the significantly higher variance of dissatisfaction with one's appearance than, for instance, the influence of peers or family. The study also shows that young women with a high level of internalization of thin-ideal content, i.e., promoting very slim silhouettes and with a tendency to make social comparisons, are more susceptible to dissatisfaction with their bodies (Dittmar & Howard, 2004). Besides sociocultural theory, we also use the self-objectification theory to explain media's influence on body image (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). In this case, the assumption is that systematic assimilation of images depicting silhouettes of specific proportions considered attractive and socially desired leads to perceiving one's body in a category of an object that other people constantly assess. This results in a tendency towards constant self-monitoring and conscious control of one's appearance. A characteristic postulate of this theory is that we monitor our looks because we start to wonder how we are assessed by others (Chansiri et al., 2020; Holland & Tiggemann, 2016).

Researchers who delve into the issue of social media say that monitoring one's appearance may increase when using social media, for instance, with the built-in functions and settings that allow to modify and retouch posted images, which fosters the tendency to self-monitor. An argument for this assumption is that social media account owners are authors of the posted pictures, so they have unlimited access to edit and modify them. When watching photos in periodicals or magazines, on the other hand, this is not possible (Chansiri et al., 2020; Fardouly et al., 2018). Studies conducted using traditional media (television, periodicals) have shown that internalization and the tendency towards social comparisons are linked with increasing dissatisfaction with one's appearance. Moreover, analyses have shown that exposure to body images causes changes in their viewers' self-esteem and mood (Dittmar & Howard, 2004; Fardouly et al., 2015; Tiggemann & McGill, 2004; Tiggemann & Polivy, 2010), as well as create tendencies towards eating disorders (McLean et al., 2016). It is worth mentioning that previous studies have underscored the significant impact media have on dissatisfaction with one's body, the feeling of self-objectification, and the tendency towards eating disorders not only among adults but also among adolescents.

Methodology

This review is not a systematic review. Instead, it is a literature review of studies analyzing the Fitinspiration and Thinspiration trends in social media, based on desk research methodology, referring to the foundational

data analysis. Desk research (Dale et al., 2004) involves collecting and analyzing information such as reports, studies, books, databases, social media, reviews, and repositories. To conduct desk research, the following steps were established: 1) establishing the topic of the review and posing the research questions; 2) determining the type of sources to be analyzed and the scope of the review; 3) determining the factors that include and exclude sources from the analysis; 4) analyzing the data; 5) summarizing and concluding. Thus, the following research questions were posed in this review.

Research question

Does the literature on Fitspiration and Thinspiration trends focus on problematic consequences related to self-esteem, mood, or body image?

Sources of information

All the articles considered for the review underwent prior assessment based on specific criteria for eligibility. The review encompassed empirical research papers released from 2000 to 2023. The articles had to be in English and employ a Fitspiration and Thinspiration trend. Furthermore, the study design included the research needed to incorporate body image, appearance, self-esteem, and mood.

Primary exclusion criteria included the exclusion of studies conducted on a sample of children, prepared before 2000 years, and not paper but book chapters or dissertations.

Search strategy

The search queries consisted of all possible combinations of the phrases (1) "Fitspiration," (2) "Thinspiration," (3) "body appearance," (4) "self-esteem," (5) "mood," and (6) "body image,"

An example query was Fitspiration and Thinspiration: AND (body image* OR self-esteem* OR mood* OR body appearance).

Selection process

After confirming the initial collection of records, duplicates were removed, and all authors began evaluating the titles and abstracts to establish additional eligibility for each record. If there was any uncertainty regarding a specific record's eligibility, all authors collectively reached a decision. Following this, the accepted records underwent a comprehensive examination of their full texts by the authors to ensure adherence to inclusion and exclusion criteria. Subsequently, data from the final list of articles were extracted and summarized.

Social networking sites and body image

In the 21st century, emergent social networking sites have been gaining more and more popularity. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat are currently popular (Slater et al., 2017). Forms of communication most often encountered by social media users are commenting on content posted by other users (Davies et al., 2020), publishing posts with various content on their public or private profiles, as well as sharing information (Slater et al., 2017; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015). This content includes messages concerning body image and beauty. Even though Facebook is one of the most popular communication platforms, researchers increasingly use Instagram to conduct their studies, as it is among the fastest-growing platforms. It is worth adding that it is more often used by women, including young women (Fardouly et al., 2018) and teenagers (Tiggemann & Slater, 2013), than men. Because Instagram is based mainly on posting images, including images presenting oneself (so-called selfies) (Anixiadis et al., 2019), researchers believe that it may be more harmful than other social media, more diversified in published content (Fardouly et al., 2018; Holland & Tiggemann, 2016).

Social media portals have become one of the most popular media types, leaving newspapers and television

behind. At the same time, they promote the same beauty paradigms that were presented before by traditional media (Derenne & Beresin, 2006; Dittmar & Howard, 2004; Griffiths et al.,2018; Izydorczyk et al., 2019). Today, more and more studies look into the connections between exposure to posts displaying female/male bodies published by users and the effect they have on individuals viewing those images (Andrew et al., 2015; Fatt et al., 2019; Lee & Lee, 2021; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015). Previous studies have shown that, among other things, the tendency to make social comparisons is correlated with using Facebook, as well as with fears about one's appearance and the feeling of self-objectification in women (Meier & Gray, 2014). Similar conclusions were reached regarding Instagram use. Analyses have shown that exposure to such images, displaying other peoples' bodies, coincides with increased dissatisfaction with one's looks and body weight (Prichard et al., 2020). Moreover, the use of social media results in decreased mood (Anixiadis et al., 2019). Results of cross-sectional studies show that frequent use of social media may cause an increase in body dissatisfaction both in women and teenagers (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016). It is indicated that a potential factor increasing dissatisfaction with one's appearance is the time an individual spends online, being engaged in activities connected with social media use – commenting, browsing, and sharing content related to body image (Fardouly et al., 2015; Holland & Tiggemann, 2016; Meier & Gray, 2014; Tiggemann & Slater, 2013). Aside from correlation studies, experimental studies are being conducted more often. Their purpose is to establish social media's influence on satisfaction with body image. Such studies often use images presenting idealized bodies that may be found during everyday browsing of various portals (Anixiadis et al., 2019). Obtained results show that after being exposed to such images, individuals are characterized by decreased body satisfaction when compared to pre-exposure (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016; Slater et al., 2017), as well as with lowered mood and increased tendency to compare one's appearance (Fardouly et al., 2015).

Publishing images displaying users' bodies have gained popularity along with the increased propagation of healthy lifestyles, proper nutrition, and physical activity (Pilgrim & Bohnet-Joschko, 2019). This gave rise to the emergence of private profiles on different social media platforms to support promoting pro-health attitudes, simultaneously strongly referring published information to external appearance and promoting the current canon of ideal, slim silhouettes. Users, when publishing – often motivational – content on their accounts on social media, were meant to encourage their followers to achieve the "perfect" – slim or athletic – silhouette and to eat well and live healthy lives (Raggatt et al., 2018). From the beginning, the idea accredited to those profiles was to be inspirational and motivating. The published posts were, and still are, supposed to encourage those who follow the content to become inspired and implement it. Most often, the inspiration was to encourage people to change their eating habits, like eating only specific produce or in one's physical activity patterns. As such, it was to motivate and to help persevere in making subsequent changes in one's appearance (Tan et al., 2024). A significant increase in this type of content across different social media portals has caused the emergence of two trends: fitspiration and thinspiration (Alberga et al., 2018).

Thin/Fitspiration on social media

Thinspiration most often relates to posting selfie images on websites and social media displaying overly slim bodies. The name is a coinage of the words thinness and inspiration. People post thinspiration images to inspire others to make changes in their lives and to achieve an appearance similar to that they see in the images (Ghaznavi & Taylor, 2015). To a certain extent, the images suggest that other people desire such an appearance. Thinspiration content, in addition to displaying images of very slim, almost emaciated bodies, also promotes harmful weight-loss strategies with its messages. As a result, people who view thinspiration content aim to intentionally lose weight through intense physical activity (Nuss et al., 2023) or restrictive diets (Boepple & Thompson, 2016; Slater et al., 2017). It is worth adding that within the scope of thinspiration, a movement called

Pro-ana has also emerged (Ging & Garvey, 2018). The meta-analysis conducted by Bell et al. (2024) compares fitspiration posts from the years 2014 and 2021, identifying trends and changes over time. The study reveals shifts in themes and messages, highlighting an increase in content promoting mental well-being alongside physical fitness. The analysis underscores the evolution of fitspiration content and its potential implications. Results of studies show that thinspiration encourages individuals to employ unhealthy eating habits, characteristic of eating disorders, and is also characterized by a significant negativism toward excessive body fat and weight gain (Ghaznavi & Taylor, 2015; Sowles et al., 2018; Wick & Harriger, 2018). Thinspiration is not the dominating trend in social media, however.

Results of studies (Tiggemann et al., 2018) based on data collected from Twitter have shown that fitspiration is much more popular today, with a more extensive follower base. The name is derived from fitness and inspiration, and as explained earlier, the trend aims to motivate people to incorporate physical activity habits and a healthy diet into their lives (Slater et al., 2017). It focuses on publishing messages both in the form of images, focused around well-toned silhouettes, and content promoting exercise and improving body shape (Carrotte et al., 2017; Prichard et al., 2020); they also encourage to eat healthy, nutritious meals (Slater et al., 2017). Previous studies have shown that exposure to images promoting healthy habits is connected to, among other things, an increased tendency in their viewers to make social comparisons, undergo changes in terms of body satisfaction, and have decreased mood (Prichard et al., 2020; Raggatt et al., 2018) or self-esteem (Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015). According to Festinger's theory of social comparisons (1954), which was mentioned earlier, there is an assumption that people are characterized by a natural tendency to compare themselves to others. This may be due to a desire to assess one's worth. For example, women often compare their perceived attractiveness with other women's (Fardouly et al., 2017).

The theory of making social comparisons is often considered in studies on social media and body image assessments (Betz et al., 2019; Fardouly et al., 2015). Social comparisons may be analyzed either in the context of state or trait. The former is the result of exposure to idealized body images. The latter mediates the negative effect of content presenting ideal silhouettes on dissatisfaction with one's body (Tiggemann & McGill, 2004; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015). The character of comparisons may be twofold. An individual may compare to others perceived as better (comparisons upward) or as worse (comparisons downward).Many studies show that the social comparison process during exposure to images displaying body silhouettes is spontaneous, automatic, and subconscious and applicable to both women and men (Fatt et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2019). The consequence of this process may be an increase in dissatisfaction with one's appearance or lowered mood (Boepple & Thompson, 2016; Fardouly et al., 2018; Holland & Tiggemann, 2017; Prichard et al., 2018; Raggatt et al., 2018, Ladwig et al., 2024; Stutts & Blomquist, 2024). It is worth adding that this applies to Thinspiration and Fitspiration content (Fardouly et al., 2015; Woodley, 2018). Results of studies (Betz et al., 2019) show that watching content displaying slim, athletic, and curvy bodies increases the tendency to make state social comparisons, resulting in increased surveillance and lowered self-acceptance. Furthermore, in the obtained results, trait social comparisons moderated the correlation between watching curvy bodies and state social comparisons. The study by Martin et al. (2023) indicates that reducing appearance comparisons can mitigate the negative effects associated with thinspiration and fitspiration. Results of studies (Anixiadis et al., 2019) show that in the case of a group viewing thin-ideal pictures, the tendency to make social comparisons upward was correlated with negative mood changes.

Mood changes and increased dissatisfaction with one's body were also noted in a study conducted by Prichard and associates in 2020. Its results have shown that individuals with fitspiration-themed content were characterized by lower body satisfaction and increased negative mood compared to people from the control group, who were shown travel-themed images. A study where the results of exposure to fitspiration images

and quotes on self-compassion were analyzed has shown that the feeling of compassion may decrease the tendency to be in a negative mood (Slater et al., 2017). Self-compassion in literacy means an attitude of kindness and understanding toward one's disappointments and struggles. Self-compassion consists of three elements: attentiveness, kindness to oneself, and common humanity (Neff, 2003a). Mindfulness is being open and moving toward perceived inadequacies and failures. Self-kindness means treating oneself with understanding, patience, and forgiveness, even in the face of inadequacy or disappointment. In contrast, shared humanity is expressed by recognizing that all people are imperfect, make mistakes and experience failures (Neff, 2003b). The current findings suggest that self-compassion may have important implications for mitigating the adverse effects of social media on body satisfaction among women and men (Barron et al., 2021; Slater et al., 2017). For example, the results of Seekis et al.'s (2021) study suggest that upward comparison of appearance mediates the links between the use of fitspiration and body concerns. The results of the study by Slater et al. (2017) showed, among other things, that fitspiration images had no impact on body satisfaction or mood, but viewing a combination of fitspiration images and self-compassion quotes led to positive appearance outcomes compared to viewing fitspiration images alone.

Exposure to thinspiration and fitspiration content, as it pertains to body image, is often linked with an increased tendency to get into unhealthy eating habits based on restrictive diets or to display behaviors characteristic of eating disorders. Studies on exposure to both types of content (Griffiths et al., 2018) have shown that both fitspiration and thinspiration correlate with increased symptoms characteristic of eating disorders, noting that thinspiration had twice the effect compared to fitspiration (Pacella et al., 2023). To date, only one study has not demonstrated any adverse consequences of exposure to this content (Slater et al., 2017). Even though many studies on thinspiration and fitspiration are based on results obtained from groups of women (Chansiri et al., 2020; Davies et al., 2020; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015), more and more often, men are also included in the analyses of exposure to that content (Fatt et al., 2019; Yee et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies analyze individual differences between women and men regarding intra- and intergender differences in exposure to fitspiration and thinspiration content (Griffiths & Stefanovski, 2019).

Fitspiration and Thinspiration – characteristics of images posted on social media

Apart from the studies that analyze how is the functioning of individuals affected by exposure to fitspiration and thinspiration content, either as hashtags or images displaying body shapes (Anixiadis et al., 2019; Prichard et al., 2020; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015), we can more and more often come across studies that look into characteristics of the posted content. The research is conducted using programs that make it possible to analyze social networks (Santarossa et al., 2019) or through using popular social platforms directly. The ones investigated most often include those where the posted content, apart from the image, contains a short piece of information (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter), but also those that are based mainly on publishing images alone (like Pinterest or Tumblr) (Alberga et al., 2018; Simpson & Mazzeo, 2017). Additionally comparative studies are being conducted, where the analyses are done by using materials from a number of platforms simultaneously (Alberga et al., 2018; Ghaznavi & Taylor, 2015). The base element considered to date in the results of studies stresses that, in the vast majority, fitspiration and thinspiration content relates to the physical appearance and attractiveness of female (Ghaznavi & Taylor, 2015) and male silhouettes (Gültzow et al., 2020). Secondly, the most dominating trend in social media is, at present, fitspiration. Results of a study (Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018) on the analysis of Instagram content have shown that only 20% was on healthy meals in case of fitspiration content. The majority of the content, however, was images of attractive-bodied men and women, often dressed in sportswear and being in gyms. A study by Tiggemann et al. (2018) using Twitter has shown that from over three thousand tweets, the majority pertained to fitspiration rather than thinspiration. Moreover, they were better received. Still, the

results have shown that the users in the thinspiration group were a better-defined social group with a better structure when compared to the fitspiration group, characterized by a much broader freedom and less defined group structure. Group structure refers to the pattern of relationships and interactions among members within a group. It defines how individuals are connected, their roles, norms, status, and other variables that shape the group's functioning (Murder, 2020).

Studies on characteristics of inspirational images, based on the analysis of content posted on social media, have shown that its message pertains primarily to body weight and, in a vast majority, to promoting specific, uncovered body elements, concentrating on, for instance, stomach, buttocks or thighs (Alberga et al., 2018; Ghaznavi & Taylor, 2015). Posted thinspiration content pertains to exposing and promoting emaciated body elements, like protruding ribs or pelvic bones (Ging & Garvey, 2018). Another study (Boepple & Thompson, 2016) analyzing Fitspiration content and focusing on websites has shown that it includes sexual context and leads to objectivization of the body, for instance, by the "models" assuming specific positions. Additionally, the content promotes, first and foremost, slim silhouettes (Barnes et al., 2023). It is also characterized by stigmatization of increased body weight via specific messages on nutrition and exercise that reinforce the tendency for eating disorders. A similar conclusion was reached in studies analyzing fitspiration on Pinterest (Simpson & Mazzeo, 2017), suggesting that using physical attractiveness as the factor motivating one to exercise and encouraging one to focus on one's weight may be problematic and have consequences in the form of increased risk of occurrence of eating disorders. Similarly, as in other studies, the analyses used images showing full-body silhouettes of Caucasian women with thin and athletic body types. Fitspiration pertains more to images showing athletic rather than slim silhouettes and mainly to women.

More frequently, however, results appear on male bodies published in social media. In men's case, most inspirational images underscore heavily muscled, toned bodies, most often displaying areas such as arms or chest (Gültzow et al., 2020; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018). The results of a study (Gültzow et al., 2020) on male portraits published on Instagram show that the majority of images display, on the one hand, strongly muscled silhouettes and fragile ones on the other, with silhouettes with high body fat constituting just 6 percent of the total content. Those results show that the tendency to publish images of this type may increase body dissatisfaction in men. A mixed study conducted using Netlytic software (Santarossa et al., 2019), where for analyses, both text and images posted with the #fitspo hashtag were used, has shown that this type of content may be motivating, strengthening the tendency to engage in behaviors about appearance, to create the sense of community and ensure personal support between users.

Discussion

Results of studies on body image, considered from the sociocultural and objectivization theories' perspective, have for many years been of significant importance to numerous researchers, as they consistently underscore the negative consequences that exposure to body image content has on functioning of men and women, as well as their mental well-being – answering the research question posed, as the results of these studies show, fitspiration and thinspiration trends displayed in social media lead to situations whereby individuals engage in social comparisons, which applies to both women and men (Fatt et al., 2019). Moreover, exposure to this content results in increased dissatisfaction with one's own appearance or mood decrease (Boepple & Thompson, 2016; Fardouly et al., 2018; Holland & Tiggemann, 2017; Prichard et al., 2018; Raggatt et al., 2018).

Limitations

Based on the review performed and the results of the studies analyzed, it is essential to consider several limitations of the completed review. This review is not a typical systematic review but a literature review based

on desk research methodology. The methodology includes only one central hypothesis. Most studies in the review focus only on assessing the relationships and problematic consequences of fitspiration and thinspiration content. The current research, however, does not address interventions that can help counteract the findings revealed by the research.

Future directions of research accounting for the studies

The studies' results pertain to the consequences of exposure to thinspiration and fitspiration content. However, more is needed to know how to counter those consequences effectively. This currently poses a significant challenge to researchers. It is justified to direct future studies toward developing procedures to mitigate the negative consequences of inspiration flowing from social media. This would also allow the development and implementation of efficient psychoeducational programs and effective therapeutical interventions. Another important factor here is the question of age since Internet and social media users are getting younger and obtaining their virtual identity through their parents (Uram et al., 2020). Virtual identity refers to the increasingly common situation where parents, either on their profiles or setting up their profiles for their children, post a huge number of photos online to chronicle almost every moment of their children's lives - from birth through their first steps and starting school, to their teenage years (Brosch, 2016).

It is worthwhile to increase social awareness concerning the dangers of excessive exposure to various content youths and children use in social media encounters; this can be done through programs and educational campaigns aimed at, for instance, decreasing the tendency to make social comparisons. Many studies analyze the effects of social media users becoming engaged in fitspiration and thinspiration content. There are few analyses, however, on the characteristics of individuals posting this content. A recent cross-sectional study (DiBisceglie & Arigo, 2019) analyzed individuals posting fitspiration content on social media and their followers. The results have shown that both those who published the content and those who viewed it reported negative and positive feelings. Therefore, conducting further research into the motives of individuals posting both thinspiration and fitspiration content on social media is justified. Knowing the negative consequences of thinspiration and fitspiration trends, future studies should focus on finding effective predictors that will help to minimize them. Similarly, strategies described by Xu (2023), such as promoting positive body image and media literacy education, may serve as potential protective factors against the negative consequences of fitspiration and thinspiration. These conclusions are echoed in the longitudinal study conducted by Fioravanti et al. (2023). Another example is the use of affirmation interventions aimed at reducing body dissatisfaction and negative mood among women exposed to fitspiration (Pilot & Stutts, 2023). Additionally, promoting positive body messages within fitspiration and showcasing diverse images can improve body image in women (Hepburn & Mulgrew, 2023).

A perfect example may be the feeling of compassion (Slater et al., 2017). Furthermore, the results of the analyses conducted (McLean et al., 2016) revealed that improving skills in using social media and critical thinking resulted in improved assessment of one's body. Those factors did not, however, change the tendency towards eating disorders. A study (Tamplin et al., 2018) has shown that possessing the skill to use social media resulted in more minor changes to body satisfaction than lacking that skill. It is, therefore, worth conducting studies that will, in the observed individuals, engage the critical methods of processing viewed images (Andrew et al., 2015). Most studies were conducted using questionnaires. Thus, future studies and physiological tools might be applied to monitor reactions more precisely during exposure to fitspiration and thinspiration content. Despite numerous studies pointing to adverse effects frequent exposure to fitspiration and thinspiration content may have, analyses also point to a positive element, namely motivation. Studies by Boepple and Thompson (2016) have shown that fitspiration positively affects women's motivation to develop proper nutrition and physical exercise habits. Similar results were reached in studies by Tiggemann and Zaccardo (2015), where the analysis

of the presented images revealed a clear motivational message, encouraging engagement in physical activity (Boepple & Thompson, 2016; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015). It is also worth citing a recent systematic review that analyzed fitspiration content on social media and its impact on physical activity behaviors. The review yielded mixed results. On one hand, fitspiration content was associated with increased motivation; on the other hand, it indicated negative effects on body image (Nuss et al., 2023).

Summary

To summarize, the problem discussed in this article points to numerous dangers of using popular social media. Besides the motivational factor, which can be considered a positive element, most of the consequences discussed were negative. Therefore, it is justified to conduct further studies, both replication and focus on searching for factors that protect from the consequences of using social media.

Disclosures an acknowledgements

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