The Predictive Ability of Self-Image and Self-Esteem in Selfie Addiction among Fresh Female Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to examine the level of selfie addiction among a sample of fresh female students at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University, as well as examining the correlation between body image and self-esteem for those students. Also, the correlation between the number of close friends and each of selfie addiction, body image and self-esteem. Further, the study aimed to reveal the ability of body image and self-esteem to predict selfie addiction. To achieve those objectives, the researchers employed the descriptive correlational methodology. The sample included (502) female students whose average age was (18.21) years, a standard deviation of (0.71). The study was conducted upon three scales, selfie addiction, body image, and self-esteem scale, after calculating the psychometric characteristics for all scales. Researchers used SPSS to answer study questions using the following statistical methods: Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regression. The results of the study indicated that (51.20%) of the sample suffered from the selfie addiction between moderate to severe levels. There was a positive correlation between the number of close friends, and both self-esteem and body image, while there was no correlation between the number of close friends and selfie addiction. Also, the study has found that there is a positive correlation between body image and self-esteem. Moreover, it was found that the positive body image had a predictive ability to increase selfie addiction, while the positive self-esteem has a predictive ability to decrease selfie addiction.

1. Introduction

In the Eastern nations, taking pictures for memories was not a big part of the culture, until selfies came into existence. Today, taking a picture of yourself (selfies) has become a phenomenon worldwide, especially among females at young ages. In the past few years, a great number of individuals, practiced taking selfies for themselves, which made the phenomenon of the selfies one of the most captivating phenomena in the world. In the past few years, a great number of individuals, practiced taking selfies for themselves, which made the phenomenon of the selfies one of the most captivating phenomena in the world.
the interesting topics for researchers in the socio-psychological field. As a result, some study was conducted to examine this phenomenon and its relationship with individuals’ personalities and their self-esteem. (March & McBean, 2018).

Recently scholars have started examining selfie-related behavior, with an emphasis on young women. However, little studies had looked at the issue from the lens of the individual developmental stage with considering different variables such as a close friend, body image and self-esteem of young females. Thus, the current study is designed to examine the level of selfie addiction among a sample of fresh female students as well as examining the correlation between body image and self-esteem for those students, also, the correlation between the number of close friends and both selfie addiction, body image and self-esteem. Further, the study aimed to reveal the ability of body image and self-esteem to predict selfie addiction.

1.2. Statement of the Study Problem

This current study seeks to find an answer for the following questions:

1. What is the level of selfie addiction among a sample of fresh female students?
2. Is there any significant correlation between body image and self-esteem?
3. Is there any significant correlation between the number of close friends and both of selfie addiction, body image and self-esteem?
4. Can selfie addiction be predicted by the level of self-esteem and the body image?

1.3. The Importance

1. The study deals with a recent phenomenon that is widespread among students.
2. The scarcity of Arabic studies that dealt with the relationship between study variables according to the limits of the researcher’s knowledge.
3. This study may contribute to determining the causes of widespread selfie addiction and how to decrease its effects.
4. This study may help new students for adapting to the university environment.
5. Defining the effect of each self-esteem and body image on self-image addiction, which gives us a better insight into understanding the reasons behind selfie addiction and how to address it.

6. The current study highlights the importance of close friends among students within this age stage and is it a good or bad indicator of mental health and social adjustment.

1.4. Objectives:

1. Examine the level of selfie addiction among a sample of fresh female students.
2. Determine the type of correlation between body image and self-esteem.
3. Determine the type of correlation between the number of close friends and both selfie addiction, body image and self-esteem.
4. Examine the predictability of selfie addiction through the level of self-esteem and body image.

1.5. Hypotheses

1. There was a positive correlation between the number of close friends and both selfie addiction, self-esteem, and body image.
2. There was a positive correlation between body image and self-esteem.
3. The positive body image has a predictive ability to increase selfie addiction and decrease selfie addiction.

1.6. Limitation

The study was conducted in the first semester of academic year 2019/2020 on fresh female students at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University in Saudi Arabia. The range of the age was 18 to 19 years. The study examined the variables related to Selfie addiction, Body image, Self-esteem, and Close friends, that were measured through a computerized test battery.

1.7. Definition of the Terms

*Selfies addiction*: Oxford dictionary defined this term as, “A photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a Smartphone or webcam and shared via social media”. (Lobo & Gowda, 2016, 149). Also Griffiths & Balakrishnan, (2018,4) defined Selfies as “the obsessive compulsive desire to take photos of one’s self and post them on social media as a way to make up for the lack of self-esteem and to fill a gap in intimacy”.

*Body image*: Body image is defined as an individual’s attitude and perception regarding the

Self-esteem: vein, Sedikides & Gress defined self-esteem in Abdel-Khalek, (2016, 2) as “individual’s perception or subjective appraisal of one’s own self-worth, one’s feelings of self-respect and self-confidence and the extent to which the individual holds positive or negative views about self.”

2. Literature Review

2.1 Selfies

A selfie is a picture that is taken by an individual to himself without the assistance of others, by using a fast self-portrait made with a smartphone or webcam that can be immediately posted and distributed into a social media (Alblooshi, 2015). According to Oxford Dictionaries, “Selfie.” is the word of the year for 2013, and the word was invented to describe the act of taking a self-portrait and sharing it on social networks. Taking and sharing selfies have become common with the advent of various smart devices and social media (Sung, Lee, Kim, & Choi, 2016). As the phenomenon of taking and sharing selfies has become widespread between individuals around the world, a number of researchers have studied selfies from different socio-psychological perspectives. These studies can be classified into two main categories: studies that investigate how personality traits are related to selfies, and studies that investigate how people socially perceive selfies (Shin, Kim, & Chong, 2017).

2.2 Stages of Self-identity Development

Erik Erikson’s model of ego development encompasses a series of eight psychosocial tasks that intensify to a crisis or turning point in an ordered sequence extending across the life cycle. The majority of fresh female students fall in Erikson’s fifth developmental stages which is the age between 12 and 18 years. This stage is described as the stage of (Identity vs. Role Confusion). During this stage of adolescence, children explore their independence and develop a sense of self. If this stage, went successfully, then an individual will develop an ability to stay true to oneself, have a positive self-esteem and clear identity. However, a failure leads to confusion and a weak self-image. Adolescence who don’t have a strong sense of their own identity can easily get influenced by others around them, especially peers. This stage is critical because if they get wrongly influenced by peers they can easily get into awful habits (Hattangadi, 2019). In this study, looking from the lens of human developmental theory was imperative as it provides a clear explanation of the characteristics of individuals at fresh female students’ developmental stage in specific as well as clarifying the logic behind their behaviors and looking in-depth into the surrounding components that influence them. Moreover, understanding human development stages theory is beneficial to support this study with a strong recommendation on how to deal with any conflict that might appear in this development stages professionally.

2.3. Females and Selfies

Previous studies have shown that females tend to engage more in taking selfies and posting online compared to men (March & McBean, 2018). According to Dihr, Pallesen, Torsheim, & Andreassen (2016), females are more likely to take selfies, compared to males, as they tend to present themselves as attractive and part of a social group. Similarly, a study that was conducted by Nguyen (2014) compared to men, women are found to take more selfies as selfies enable young women to experiment with their look and present themselves as more attractive. It is obvious that being attractive is something important for females at different ages. Furthermore, a recent study found that peer pressure also motivates young women’s tendency to post selfies. In a similar study, Poe (2015) has found that higher self-esteem among college-attending females is likely to result in more selfie posts.

Even though this study was not intended to conduct comparison between genders on the average number of taking selfies and the data was collected from female only, it was important to review the literature on the influence of the habit of selfies on the females, especially at a young age, in order to be able to draw a clear conclusion.
2.4. Self-esteem and Selfies

Personal identity and a sense of self are the main concerns for adolescence during their developmental stages, which is the stage of a transition from childhood to adulthood. If this stage went successfully, individuals will turn into their adulthood stage with a clear vision of their identities and a high sense of self, otherwise individuals might experience an identity crisis which will negatively impact their self-esteem and self-identity (McLeod & Erikson, 2008). The issue of the low self-esteem and identity concern can be emerged on individuals via different external behaviors. Past studies had found that talking a lot of selfies can be one of the behaviors that indicate a divergence on an individual's self-esteem (March & McBean, 2018). In an exploratory study consisted of 15 in-depth interviews with women who were 19-30 years of age, the searchers found that the issue of self-esteem can explain the behavior of taking a lot of selfies, in which woman who are deeply engaged in taking a lot of selfies is for the purpose of enhancing their self-esteem (Pounders, Kowalczyk, & Stowers, 2016). Moreover, a recent study conducted by Biolcati and Passini (2018), found a positive correlation between the selfie posting behavior and the negative self-esteem of individuals, and people with high self-esteem do not get to be involved in selfie posting behavior.

2.5. Self-esteem and Body Image

The image of the body is found to be a concern for individuals at the adolescence age and it plays a significant role in their self-esteem. When they are satisfied with their body image, their confidence level upsurge, otherwise, a low self-esteem and depressive mode signs emerges in their behaviors (Paxton et al., 2006). A study that was conducted by Grossbard, Lee, Neighbors, and Larimer (2009) examined body image concerns and its impact on the issue of self-esteem in male and female college students and found that the contingent self-esteem issue is positively correlated with a more negative body image concerns, and it would be more evident among female college students compared to male college students. In a similar study, Sira and White (2010) indicated that body image is a combination that depends upon inner biological and psychological components and is it an important aspect of the individual's self-esteem and mental health across their lifetime. Longitudinal students had addressed the impact of negative view of the body image on individuals with considering their ages and genders (Mellor et al., 2010). However, less study attention has been directed toward a translation of this internal, unconscious, self-esteem conflict into more obvious external behaviors. Thus, this study came to spot the light on the phenomena of the intensive selfies behaviors that young adults are involved in these days to seek a better understanding of the phenomenon of selfies, particularly in relation to the body image and self-esteem of young females.

2.6. Body Image and Selfie

Taking a lot of selfie is one of the behaviors that searchers in the field had found to be an indication of the dissatisfaction toward individuals’ body image and a sign of low self-esteem. Mills, Musto, Williams, and Tiggemann (2018) found in their experimental study that women who reported to have a lower perception of their physical appearance and attractiveness tend to take and post more selfie compared to others who are more satisfied with their body image. From another angle, previous researches have also found that compared to men, women tend to be engaged in more photo-enhancement behaviors for the purpose of a positive self-presentations and it was concluded that taking and posting selfie is a risk behaviors that can negatively impact young women's body image and self-esteem (Toma & Hancock, 2010; Haferkamp, Eimler, Papadakis, & Kruck, 2012). In a similar study, a group of researchers have found that the concern about photo manipulation and selfie posting pictures might be risky associated with body dissatisfaction for both men and women at the same level (Lonergan, et al., 2019).

2.7. Close Friends and Self-esteem

Having a close friendship is significantly important for individuals, especially at the adolescence developmental stage (Hattangadi, 2019). Previous studies had shown that sharing friendships can enhance individuals’ self-esteem, especially for females (Daglas, 2006). Another study that was conducted by Tariq (2011) found that a healthy
friendship has a positive influence on improving and enhancing an individual's self-esteem and providing an affirmative self-confidence. According to Gorrese & Ruggieri (2013) friendship is significantly associated with influencing individuals’ self-esteem. Secure attachments with peers is one of the important factors that positively shape an adolescent global self-esteem (Mota and Matos, 2013).

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Method

The researchers adopted the descriptive correlational research method, in which two or more quantitative variables are correlated.

3.2. Participants

The set of participants was (502) fresh female students at Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University, whose average age was (18.21) years, a standard deviation of (0.71), And all were single. Their GPA ranged from (80% to 98.8%). Student participation was entirely voluntary within the study. These participants were selected through simple random sampling. They all have a selfie camera in their mobile. Participants were assured of their right of refusal to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time. Anonymity and confidentiality of participants were assured.

3.3. Instruments

Selfie Addiction Scale: The selfie addiction scale was prepared electronically by the current researchers. After matching items with selfie addiction symptoms in International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), and after reviewing previous studies, to ensure understanding or modification of the items. The exploratory experiment was conducted on a sample of (12) students. It consists of 16 items, all of the self-report type, which individuals respond to in the light of 5-point Likert-Type scale (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, and 5=Always), and the higher scores indicate a high level of intensity and frequency for selfie behavior. The total score ranges between (16 - 80) scores. The validity of the scale was confirmed by the internal consistency through the correlation between each item and total score ranged between (.40 and .69), which indicates a validity of the scale. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for all 16-items was (0.87), and split-half coefficient was (0.82).

Body Image Scale: This scale was developed by Abdul-Naby (2008), consisting of (27) items and is located in two dimensions: First: a person's perception of his body, which is positive or negative, and includes the following items: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26. Second: Person’s perception of his body through the views of others such as family, friends and colleagues, and includes the following items: 3, 8, 11, 14, 15, 18, 22, 27. All items was self-report type, which individuals respond to in the light of 5-point Likert-Type scale (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, and 5=Always), and the higher scores indicate a high level of Positive body image and satisfaction with the shape of his body. The total score ranges between (27-80) score. The validity of the scale was confirmed by the internal consistency through the correlation between each item and total score ranged between (.29 and .73), indicating a validity of the scale. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for all 27-items was (0.88), and split-half coefficient was (0.87).

Psychological Scale of Self-esteem: This scale was developed by Youssef (n.d), consisting of (14) items. All items was self-report type, which individuals respond to in the light of 5-point Likert-Type scale (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, and 5=Always), and the higher scores indicate a high level of A high sense of self-worth or personal value. The total score ranges between (14-70) score. The validity of the scale was confirmed by the internal consistency through the correlation between each item and total score ranged between (.44 and .68), indicating a validity of the scale. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for all 14-items was 0.85, and split-half coefficient was 0.76.

3.4. Procedure

The study tools (Selfie Addiction Scale, Body Image and Self Esteem Scale) were prepared after computation of the psychometric characteristics of the scales, and then programmed electronically. This study was conducted during the academic year.
2019-2020. Participants were informed of the nature of the scales before the response of scale, and were free to stop at any given time. The study tools response ranged between 12 minutes and 16 minutes period tools. One month after the participants responded, their data were analyzed.

3.5. Data Analysis
For analyzing the data gleaned from the study, the researchers employed SPSS software, using the following statistical methods: Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient, and Multiple Regression.

4. Results
The degree to which a selfie addiction was indicated as present in the community of fresh female students at Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University was interpreted in terms of three categories. The categories were as follows: Low selfie addiction (16 - 37), Moderate selfie addiction (38-53), Severe selfie addiction (54-80). In light of these criteria, the frequency and percentage of the distribution of participants in selfie addiction were identified, as shown in both Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table (1) Frequency and percentage distribution of the level of selfie addiction among students (N = 502)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of selfie addiction</th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>48.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>45.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results shown in Figure 1 indicate that the largest category of selfie addiction is the mild (245 students; 48.80%), the students did not demonstrate selfie addiction on the scale. This is an indication of their psychosocial adjustment, i.e., despite their use of mobile, they have not resulted in selfie addiction. In the next largest category of moderate selfie addiction (227 students; 45.21%), this category might benefit from some prevention programs so that the risk factors do not increase their degree of selfie addiction. The last category of severe selfie addiction (30 students; 5.99%) consists of those who need treatment programs, either individual or group psychotherapy to reduce the level of selfie addiction.

Table (2) : Correlations between some study variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body Image &amp; Self-Esteem</td>
<td>.452</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Friends &amp; Selfie Addiction</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Friends &amp; Body Image</td>
<td>.342</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Friends &amp; Self-Esteem</td>
<td>.310</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation analysis indicated that body Image was significantly positively related to self-esteem. Also, there was a positive correlation between the number of close friends, and both positive self-esteem and positive body image, while there was no correlation between the number of close friends and selfie addiction.

Table 3 Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting selfie addiction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body Image</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>2.281</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>-.216</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>-4.385</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine if body image and self-esteem predicted selfie addiction. The results indicated that body image and self-esteem accounted for 3.7% of the variance ($R^2 = .148, F = 9.668, p < .001$). However, there was a difference in the nature of the predictive contribution of each of the variables in the level of selfie addiction. A positive body image contributed to increase the degree of selfie addiction.
addiction, while a positive self-esteem contributed to decrease the degree of selfie addiction.

5. Discussion

Taking selfies is one of the most popular online behaviors, especially among teenagers. The results of the current study indicated that the participants are involved in this behavior in a level between moderate to severe, which supported the previous studies that presented the selfie addiction as a current phenomenon that needs to be considered from a psychological perspective (Alblooshi, 2015; Wang, Yang, & Haigh, 2017).

In the context of this study, it was found that there is a positive correlation between the number of close friends, and both self-esteem and body image, while there was no correlation between the number of close friends and selfie addiction. This result can be understood from looking in depth into the characteristics of this developmental stage. At the adolescence developmental stage, friendship is valuable, and it is considered a main source of influence and a major support in life (Hattangadi, 2019). Adolescents who have secure peer relationships were rated in a higher self-esteem. Thus, those who have a number of close friends, will obviously feel the power and the self-confidence, compared to those who are not involved in such a secure relationship, as the presence of a friend can raise confidence and reduce disappointment. (Tariq, 2011 ). We expect that this finding could provide new insight to explore further and find out if having close secure friendship can be a satisfaction for adolescents that prevent them from being involved in behaviors such as selfie addiction in which they seek self-acceptance.

Moreover, this study has found that there is a positive correlation between body image and self-esteem. This finding supported other researchers in the field who found that the body satisfaction is one of the main notions factors that influence individuals’ self-esteem (Sira & White, 2010). Children’s self-esteem is influenced by their body image and physical appearance and as they grow up into adolescence and adulthood, individuals’ self-esteem is directly related to how they perceive their body satisfaction (Gurari, Hetts, & Strube, 2006).

One of the major findings of the study showed that the positive body image has a predictive ability to increase selfie addiction. This interesting finding was different than many previous studies that found a tendency from individuals with lower perception of their physical appearance and body image to take more selfie compared to others who are more satisfied with their body image (Toma & Hancock, 2010; Haferkamp, Eimler, Papadakis, & Kruck, 2012). However, in this current study, the finding can be explained that individuals at this developmental stage who are satisfied by their physical appearance, tend to use tools such as selfie to share this notion of themselves with others. Thus, the reason that people with positive body image tend to take more selfies could be because they needed constant attention, social validation and they relied too much on the response of others to maintain their high self-esteem.

This study also found that the positive self-esteem has a predictive ability to reduce selfie addiction. Self-esteem is defined as an individual’s overall self-evaluation of one’s own worth (Rosenberg, 1965; Weiten, 2004). According to Amirazodi & Amirazodi (2011), the individuals’ self-esteem expresses the evaluation and the respect they make to themselves. When individuals are internally satisfied, they do not need to be involved in any external behavior or fake tools for self-presentation. Many previous studies have supported this finding as they presented a relationship between taking a lot of selfies and having low self-esteem. In a similar study that was conducted by Blades (2014), the result showed that 60% of the females who are involved in the behaviors of taking a lot of selfies admitted having a low self-esteem. In a similar result, Biocati and Passini (2018), found a positive correlation between the selfie posting behavior and the negative self-esteem of individuals, and people with high self-esteem do not get to be involved in selfie posting behavior. Thus, individuals who have high self-esteem do not use tools such as selfies for self-representation because they are internally satisfied.

6. Conclusion

This study was conducted to examine the level of selfie addiction among a sample of fresh female students as well as examining the correlation between body image and self-esteem for those students, also, the correlation between the number
of close friends and both selfie addiction, body image and self-esteem. Further, the study aimed to reveal the ability of body image and self-esteem to predict selfie addiction.

The results of the study indicated that the level of the selfie addiction is between moderate to severe. Also, the findings showed that there is a positive correlation between the number of close friends, and both self-esteem and body image, while there was no correlation between the number of close friends and selfie addiction. It was also found that there is a positive correlation between body image and self-esteem. Finally, it was found that the positive body image has a predictive ability to increase selfie addiction, while the positive self-esteem has a predictive ability to decrease selfie addiction. Based on the current study, and a review of the previous related ones, it can be concluded that the phenomenon of the selfie addiction among fresh female students is increasing and it is a sign of a psychological deficit that is related to their self-esteem. Thus, experts in the counseling psychology field need to take this issue into their considerations.

7. Recommendations
1. Professionals in this field to consider preparing prevention programs for those who have traits of a selfie addiction behavior.
2. Intervention programs for those who are diagnosed to have selfie addiction symptoms.
3. It may be beneficial to address the additional changes that occur after the college years and how the identity of those young females shifts during that time.
4. Designing counseling programs that include self-esteem and body image to reduce level of selfie addiction.
5. Activating university counseling centers role in treating such problems.
6. It is important to examine the negative psychological effects of addictive selfie addiction.
7. It is important to develop body-image and positive self-esteem in order to gain many friendships.
8. Clarifying the harms and dangers of some situations of selfies by mass media.

8. Suggestions for Future Studies
1. Age stages and gender differences in selfie addiction.
2. Efficacy of cognitive-behavioral therapy for students with selfie addiction.
3. Personality traits for university students addicted to selfie behavior.
6. The effects of selfie addiction on academic performance and motivation.

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References


