

# Body Image and Social Media in College Students

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## INTRODUCTION

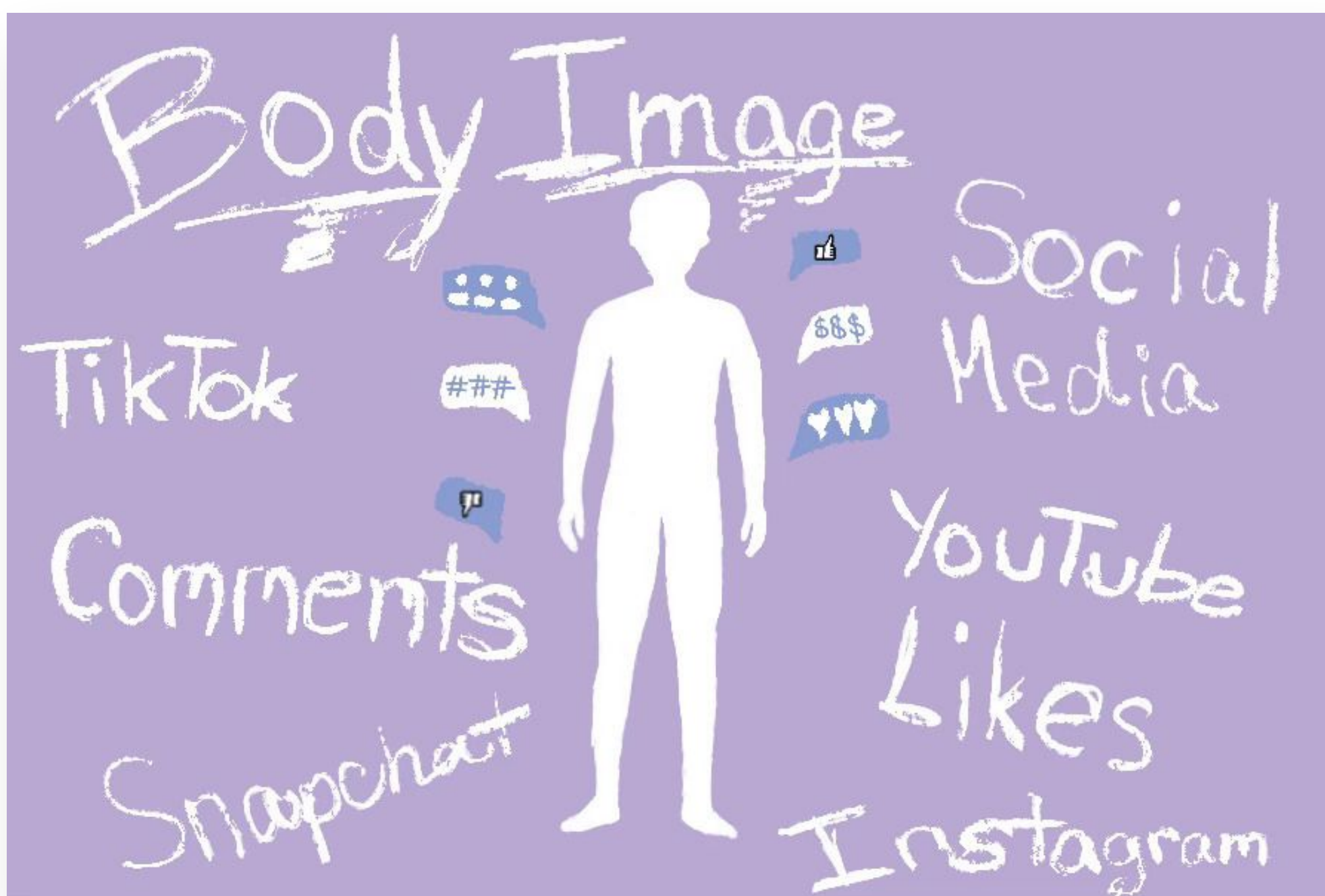
Image and visibility-based social media have provided the space for appearance-based social comparison; this has the potential to be harmful and encourage body dissatisfaction in its users (Marengo et al., 2018; Vandenbosch et al., 2022). It's important that we continue to evaluate and examine the effects of these platforms as their prevalence and usage continues to grow.

## The Current Study

In this present study, we examined appearance-related social media use and the relations that can be seen with SPA, body shame, and body surveillance. Given there is a connection between social media use and body image disturbances (Fardouly et al., 2015; Fardouly et al., 2017; Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016; Hawes et al., 2020; Ruiz et al., 2021), we tested several hypotheses:

**H1:** There will be positive correlations between body shame, body surveillance, social physique anxiety, and social media appearance related preoccupation.

**H2:** Given the connections explored by Ruiz et al. (2021), we hypothesized SPA will moderate the relationship between body shame and SMARP.



## METHODS

### Participants

Ages 18-29; 770 females and 279 males  
Undergraduate students from Boise State University and University of South Alabama

### Measures

Participants completed questions from an omnibus survey consisting of the following scales: The Social Media Appearance-Related Preoccupation scale (Hawes et al., 2020), The Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (Mckinley & Hyde, 1996), The Social Physique Anxiety Scale (Hart et al., 1989)

## Results

Results supported all hypotheses

- Correlations can be seen among all variables (see Table 1).
- There is a moderate correlation between SMARP and SPA (see Table 1).
- The moderating effect of SPA is significant (see Table 2).

## Table 1

Correlation Matrix

| Variables            | 1      | 2      | 3      |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. SMARP             | -      |        |        |
| 2. SPA               | .736** | -      |        |
| 3. Body Shame        | .671** | .701** | -      |
| 4. Body Surveillance | .657** | .667** | .605** |

Note. \*\*  $p < .001$

## CONCLUSION

- There are relationships between appearance anxieties and appearance-related social media use.
- This work encourages individuals to be aware of body and appearance-centered mindsets and how this translates into social media usage.
- Clinicians should explore these topics with their clients and encourage a reduction in appearance-related social media use.



## Table 2

Hierarchical Regression

| Variables      | B     | SE B | $\beta$ | p      | 95% CI         |
|----------------|-------|------|---------|--------|----------------|
| Step 1         |       |      |         |        |                |
| SPA            | 0.13  | .00  | .74     | < .001 | [0.12, 0.13]   |
| Step 2         |       |      |         |        |                |
| SPA            | 0.09  | .01  | .52     | < .001 | [0.08, 0.10]   |
| Body shame     | 0.46  | .04  | .30     | < .001 | [0.34, 0.54]   |
| Step 3         |       |      |         |        |                |
| SPA            | 0.12  | .01  | .71     | < .001 | [0.10, 0.14]   |
| Body shame     | 0.83  | .11  | .55     | < .001 | [0.61, 1.05]   |
| SPAxbody shame | -0.01 | .00  | -.40    | < .001 | [-0.15, -0.00] |

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