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Appearance-Oriented Short Videos and Adolescent Body Image and Disordered Eating Behaviors

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Abstract. In recent years, short videos have become very popular among teenagers. Many short videos are filtered and beautified with "perfect" body and appearance. Under the recommendation of the algorithm, teenagers will continue to browse such content and start to compare themselves with the people in the video, which will easily lead to their dissatisfaction with their bodies and even unhealthy eating behaviors. This study focuses on the effect of appearance oriented short videos on adolescents' body image and eating behavior. The research mainly uses the method of literature analysis to sort out the existing research, and analyzes five typical cases from the perspective of gaze theory, fitness short videos, anti facial anxiety discourse, body image communication and restricted diet. The results show that the appearance oriented short video does not directly lead to eating problems, but works through a path: media contact, algorithm push, social comparison, negative body image, and finally bad eating behavior. Teenagers first compare themselves with their idealized image, and then are dissatisfied with their bodies. Some people will change their bodies through dieting or excessive exercise. In general, appearance oriented short videos mainly change teenagers' body image first, and then further affect their eating behavior. This study suggests that platforms, schools and families work together to reduce these negative effects. Future research should also use more long-term tracking methods, and add male samples for more in-depth exploration.

Keywords: Appearance-oriented short videos, Body image, Disordered eating behaviors, Social comparison, Adolescents

1. Introduction

At present, short videos are very popular among teenagers, and many people spend a lot of time brushing videos every day. In these videos, there are many "perfect" figures and looks that have been filtered and beautified. In addition, the algorithm constantly pushes similar content, which is easy to affect the thoughts of teenagers. Many teenagers will compare themselves with the people in the video and gradually become dissatisfied with their health, and even have unhealthy eating behaviors such as dieting. Therefore, this study focuses on the impact of appearance oriented short videos on adolescents' body image and eating behavior.

This research has significance for the mental health of teenagers, the media literacy education in schools and the content management of the platform. This can help clarify how short-form videos

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affect teenagers and provide practical recommendations for schools, families, and online platforms.

This study is mainly carried out from three aspects: first, define the three concepts of appearance oriented short video, body image and eating disorder behavior; Second, through five cases, it analyzes from the perspectives of gaze theory, fitness short videos, anti facial anxiety discourse, body image communication and restricted diet; Third, in the discussion part, the impact path is summarized and intervention suggestions are put forward.

This study mainly uses the method of literature analysis to sort out the existing research by searching and reading the relevant literature. The advantage of this method is that it integrates findings from different studies and facilitates a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between short-form videos and adolescents' body image and eating behaviors.

The goal of this study is to find out how appearance oriented short videos affect adolescents' body image and eating behavior, find out the influence path, and put forward corresponding suggestions. In order to achieve this goal, this study carried out the concept definition, case analysis and discussion summary.

2. Background

2.1. Research background

In recent years, various short video platforms have been widely popularized among teenagers. Most teenagers spend a lot of time browsing short videos every day. The appearance oriented content that has been modified by various filters and transferred idealized and extreme appearance and body standards accounts for a high proportion in the information flow. In addition, the gradually mature network algorithm recommendation mechanism in recent years will further amplify and spread the unrealistic aesthetic standards, thus subtly affecting the mentally and physically immature youth group

In this environment, the problem of appearance anxiety continues to be generalized in the adolescent group, especially in the female adolescent group. With the proliferation of short-form videos, teenagers may increasingly compare their actual appearance and bodies with highly idealized images presented in such content, potentially leading to dissatisfaction with or even negative attitudes toward their own bodies. Many observational studies have pointed out that there are multiple correlations between high-frequency brush short videos and adolescents' negative body cognition,

Appearance anxiety is becoming more and more common among teenagers, which has attracted the attention of the public health field. Studies have shown that teenagers' negative cognition of their own body is easy to induce eating disorder behavior in most cases. Therefore, how can short videos of appearance specifically change teenagers' physical cognition and eating disorder behavior is exactly the problem this study wants to explore,

2.2. Concept definition

Appearance oriented short video is a type of short video that takes people's appearance as the main display content. Fitness, beauty and dressing videos belong to this category. The video focuses on people's appearance and transmits various aesthetic standards. This kind of short video is pushed in large numbers by algorithm, which is the main channel for young women to contact appearance related content.

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Body image refers to the subjective feeling and evaluation of an individual's body, which is not completely equivalent to the real body. It includes not only the view of body, but also the resulting emotional feelings, which are divided into positive and negative. When individuals have a negative evaluation of their own body, they will form a negative body image, which is also an important basis for body anxiety.

Eating disorder behavior is a series of abnormal behaviors influenced by body anxiety. In order to pursue the ideal figure, some young women will deliberately change their physical state by dieting, excessive exercise and other means. Such behavior belongs to eating disorder behavior. This behavior not only reflects the individual's negative physical cognition, but also causes damage to physical and mental health in the long run

3. Case analysis

3.1. The generation mechanism of appearance anxiety in young women

The spread of a large number of appearance oriented content on the short video platform essentially builds a digital staring field, which further promotes the appearance anxiety of young women [1]. From the perspective of gaze theory, there are dual gaze mechanisms in the network environment. On the one hand, it is the external gaze from the platform and other users. The idealized female image has been modified by beauty and filters to build a set of aesthetic standards that are divorced from reality. The platform algorithm continues to push similar content, and continues to consolidate this set of aesthetic paradigm. Young women passively receive external judgment standards for appearance in the process of video frequency brushing.

At the same time, this kind of external gaze will gradually be accepted by the individual and evolve into self gaze. Young women will subconsciously take the aesthetic standards on the Internet to measure themselves, and constantly compare their real appearance with the highly beautified image in the short video. As a result, they are dissatisfied with their appearance and figure, and negative body images also appear [1].

Under such a state of self-examination for a long time, appearance anxiety will gradually breed. In order to cater to the Internet aesthetics, some young women will have eating disorders such as dieting and excessive weight loss. Short video media has transferred the traditional gaze to online space, and also made the appearance anxiety spread among young women [2].

3.2. The construction of fitness short videos and body anxiety

Fitness short video is a very typical type of content in appearance oriented short video. This kind of video mainly focuses on fat reduction and shaping, body management, and fitness training. Most of the videos will show the ideal body image of compact, slender, and superior proportion. Many fitness short videos will focus on the body standard and convey specific body evaluation criteria. Young women will be exposed to such content frequently in the process of brushing short videos [3].

In the process of dissemination, fitness short videos constantly output a set of ideal body models to the audience. The platform algorithm will continue to push similar fitness content and continuously strengthen this set of body shape standards. Young women will passively receive this rigorous body evaluation system when browsing the video, which constitutes the object gaze from the outside.

After repeatedly browsing such content, the external evaluation criteria for body shape will be gradually internalized by the individual and transformed into self gaze. Young women will

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unconsciously take the perfect figure in the fitness short video as a reference to compare their real body state. In the process of comparison, it is easy to feel dissatisfied with their original figure, and negative body image will be formed [4].

When individuals are under such self-examination for a long time, body anxiety will continue to breed. In order to achieve the ideal figure in the video, some young women will deliberately diet, exercise overload and other eating disorders, trying to transform their bodies in extreme ways. Fitness short videos spread standardized body aesthetics to online space, further promoting the spread of body anxiety among young women.

With the appearance anxiety spreading on social media, a large number of "anti appearance anxiety" related content began to appear on the platform. Such content usually advocates the acceptance of the true self and the rejection of a single aesthetic standard, and encourages women to no longer be bound by the external appearance judgment. Many users will share their appearance and body imperfections on social platforms, and use real life pictures to fight against the ideal image beautified by filters [4].

The emergence of this "anti facial anxiety" discourse is essentially a resistance of women to the gaze mechanism. Facing the external gaze imposed by the platform and others, women began to voice actively, questioned the rationality of the single aesthetic standard, and refused to accept the external judgment on their appearance passively [4]. Some users will also dismantle the falseness of the idealized image and reduce the psychological pressure brought about by the perfect appearance by gossiping and joking about the beauty filter.

However, there are still some limitations in the discourse of "anti facial anxiety" on social media. On the surface, some contents advocate self acceptance, but in fact, they still imply new aesthetic requirements, and the resistance is limited. On the whole, this kind of discourse provides women with space to express themselves, but to truly eliminate the appearance anxiety, it still needs more in-depth reflection and broader social support [5].

3.3. The dissemination path of body image display and users' body anxiety

The social media platform provides a carrier for the large-scale dissemination of body image. The filter image modification technology creates a large number of idealized body templates, which are continuously pushed to users through algorithm distribution, and gradually build a transmission chain of physical anxiety. As the main communication carrier, appearance oriented short videos output slender and exquisite aesthetic templates through the blogger's body display. Teenagers will unconsciously compare their body appearance with the model of "network aesthetics" in the process of browsing content [6].

This communication path is divided into two layers. The first layer is the media indoctrination outside the platform. The algorithm continuously pushes the beautified body image according to users' browsing habits, and continuously strengthens the single aesthetic standard; The second layer turns to the internal psychology of users. The external aesthetic standards are gradually internalized into the Self-evaluation Scale. Teenagers begin to examine themselves with the ideal image in the media, resulting in physical dissatisfaction.

The long-term repeated media contact continues to magnify this psychological gap, resulting in the formation of negative body image, which further induces body anxiety and, in severe cases, diet and other eating disorders. The communication path reflects the interaction among media content, algorithm mechanism and individual psychology, and also explains the internal logic of the growing physical anxiety of young women in the short video environment.

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3.4. Psychological and social factors of restrictive eating behaviors among adolescents

Driven by physical anxiety, some teenagers will have restrictive eating behavior, which is the result of the joint action of individual psychological factors and the external social environment. From the psychological perspective, body image imbalance is the core inducement. When teenagers have a negative evaluation of their own figure, and equate thin with beauty and self-worth, they are prone to have the idea of deliberately controlling eating. They hope to transform their body through dieting, so as to alleviate the psychological pressure brought by their appearance and figure. Psychological traits such as inferiority complex and emotional sensitivity will further magnify the psychological problems brought by body shape and aggravate the tendency of restricted diet [7].

At the social level, the aesthetic edification of social media and the body evaluation of peer groups are important external incentives. The network platform constantly outputs the "white, young and thin" aesthetic model, and the ridicule and comparison between teenagers about the body will continue to convey the body pressure to them. The family environment also has an impact. Some parents' excessive attention to weight and appearance will also imperceptibly affect teenagers' eating concepts. Because of multiple factors, teenagers regard diet restriction as a means to improve their body image. Long term diet restriction will not only damage their health, but also easily aggravate their anxiety, thus forming a vicious circle [8].

4. Discussion

4.1. Summary of research findings - the core influence paths of appearance-oriented short videos on adolescent body image and eating behavior

Based on the previous analysis, it can be found that the appearance oriented short video mainly acts on the youth group through the complete chain of media rendering, algorithm push and social comparison, gradually changing the body image of teenagers and further inducing bad eating behavior. The short video platform outputs a large number of standardized ideal body templates with the help of filter and image modification technology. The algorithm mechanism continues to push such appearance content to teenagers, and constantly strengthens the single aesthetic concept.

In the process of frequently browsing such content, teenagers will unconsciously compare their appearance and figure with the idealized image in the video, and the external media aesthetic standard will gradually be internalized into the yardstick of individual self-evaluation, resulting in physical dissatisfaction, negative body image, and body and appearance anxiety [9].

After the continuous accumulation of physical anxiety, some teenagers will choose restricted diet as a coping style, trying to achieve the ideal figure through diet control, and eventually lead to unhealthy eating behavior. It can be seen that appearance oriented short videos do not directly cause eating problems, but through the intermediary of body image disorder, complete the transmission from media contact to psychological anxiety, and then to bad behavior, which is also the core influence path of teenagers' physical problems in the short video environment [10].

4.2. Intervention and response suggestions

In view of the negative effects of appearance oriented short videos on Teenagers' body image and eating behavior, it is necessary to build a multi-level intervention and protection system through the cooperation of platforms, schools and families.

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At the platform level, greater emphasis should be placed on content governance and the optimization of algorithmic recommendation mechanisms. Measures should be taken to reduce the dissemination of content that intensifies body image concerns or promotes extreme dieting, regulate short-form videos that promote unrealistic appearance ideals or unhealthy weight-loss practices, and encourage content featuring diverse aesthetic standards and healthy body perceptions, thereby fostering a healthier online aesthetic environment.

Schools should implement media literacy education, guide teenagers to identify the beautification image in short videos, recognize the virtual aesthetic model made by filter image modification, teach students to rationally view the appearance and content of the network, establish an objective and positive physical cognition, and reduce the psychological harm caused by social comparison.

At the family level, parents should give teenagers positive guidance on body concept, avoid paying too much attention to their weight and appearance, pay more attention to their children's psychological state, help their children accept their own body, and establish the concept of not judging their self-worth by appearance. The three parties work together to reduce the risk of physical anxiety caused by short videos and protect the physical and mental health of teenagers.

5. Conclusion

Through literature review and analysis of five cases, this study found that appearance oriented short videos mainly affect teenagers through the path of "media rendering algorithm push social comparison". After watching such videos frequently, teenagers will unconsciously compare their bodies with the beautified images in the videos, and gradually produce physical dissatisfaction, forming negative body images, and then dieting, excessive exercise and other eating disorders. It can be concluded that appearance oriented short videos do not directly lead to eating problems, but first affect teenagers' body image, and then further affect their eating behavior.

This study provides some valuable references for future research in this direction. It mainly affects two aspects: first, it explains the mediating role of body image between short videos and eating behavior; second, it emphasizes the protective role that individual factors such as self-esteem and media literacy may play.

Future research should focus more on the direction of longitudinal research, such as tracking the same group of teenagers for a long time to observe the changes of their body image and eating behavior; At the same time, the male sample can also be added to compare whether there are differences between different genders, so as to carry out more in-depth exploration.

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