

THE BODY KEEPS THE SOCIAL: THE ROLE OF INSTAGRAM ON BODY IMAGE AND ITS RELATED OUTCOMES AMONG YOUNG ITALIAN WOMEN

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Although correlational studies showed that Instagram use is associated with negative outcomes related to body image (Feerick, 2021), experiments are scarce. This study examined the effects of being appreciated on Instagram (numbers of Likes) and knowing whether or not the physical appearance of a person in an Instagram image has been altered (Disclaimer)—on women's self-awareness, body dissatisfaction, and social physique anxiety. It was used a 2x2 between participants design in which the number of Likes and the image Disclaimer were manipulated. Participants were 201 Italian women ($M=22$; $SD=3.69$), randomly assigned to different conditions. Findings showed that participants exposed to an Instagram image with many Likes reported higher body dissatisfaction and social physique anxiety (vs. few Likes condition). An interaction effect between the Disclaimer and the number of Likes emerged. When many Likes were associated with an Instagram image, the presence of a Disclaimer reduced women's self-awareness. These findings suggest that increased media literacy training could be advantageous for young women. Specifically, in the presence of socially accepted Instagram images, providing information about digital enhancements could reduce the attentional focus about one's own appearance.