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The article I chose focuses on social media and how it affects body image issues. Specifically this article is taking into account pinterest and the idea of fitspiration. This is where people pin, like, or save posts that are about getting into shape or people that fit what society sees as the perfect body. The thesis for this article is about social media and how it has formed this idea that there is a beauty standard for bodies. With that, not only are there body image issues, but things like eating disorders and mental illnesses that come along with it. I also thought an additional thesis was “skinny is not enough”. Being skinny is not enough, now you have to have muscle and be athletic. I myself have suffered with body image issues. Reading this article gave me a lot of insight on this issue.

This article was rich in information. Fitspiration is very relevant in our society because it is mainly photo based media which would be pinterest, instagram, snapchat, tiktok and more. Not only did it describe fitspiration which is the main issue/focus of this article, but it also dug deeper into the psychology of it. It talked about social cognitive theory and how when we see these models with their abs and perfect skin, we choose to imitate that because our minds tell us that that is ideal. We see these people that “work out” when half of the time they are probably edited to look that way. However, we see almost this reward of a perfect body, that we put ourselves into situations where it almost puts us down so that it will hopefully motivate us to be more like the models. In the article, the researchers conducted an experiment. They wanted to find out if people cared about health or looking good, why the participants choose to workout,

how many fitspiration saves do they have/how often do they engage with these posts, and whether majority of these posts were women or men. This article found that most of these issues were done out of pure desire to look good rather than the actual health aspect of working out. This article is mainly to educate people on the media and the power it holds over body image issues. This relates to the influence these types of posts have over public health. Specifically they talked about how young adult women are the target audience of many of these posts. This is because these types of women are often depicted in the fitspiration posts.

Since this article is interesting to me, I want to make sure I am getting it from a credible source. In this case, the authors/researchers are a great fit for this article. This is right in their field of study and they are educated on psychology and how fitspiration plays into that. Courtney Simpson and Suzanne Mazzeo are the two authors and they are a part of the Department of Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University. In their article they clearly stated the research. They have a section for their methods, results, conclusion, and each subcategory highlighted so it will be discussed in detail. Also, there is a clear hypothesis with five research questions that they will answer throughout the experiment.

This research had a detailed literature review. I gave multiple examples of the research that they were building off of. Many were meta-analyses that had to do with mass media. They discussed body image issues in television, online media sources, not only do women feel they need to be skinny but now they also have to be seen as fit, and pro-eating-disorder social networking sites. Those were just a few research projects that they sighted and gave a brief description of. This gave good context to what their research would be about. Overall the literature review gave a well written preview to what we should expect in this article and seemed to be complete.

The conclusion was convincing. It stated that both fitspiration and thinspiration were dangerous. After learning about the psychological and physical stress women go through, I agree with their claim that young adult women should be warned for the “side effects” of posts like that. I myself have compared myself to women on the internet and workout to fit the beauty standard. I also agree that in some cases, if you're too skinny you get told to go lift or eat a burger; and if you're bigger, you get told to eat a salad and workout. So when they say skinny isn't enough, I think that no matter what, you or someone else will find something wrong with your body. It's a vicious cycle and fitspiration and thinspiration posts add onto that stress.

There were a few limitations. One was that pinterest makes it hard to have chronological data because there is no time stamp. Additionally, the only examined fitspiration posts. They should have also taken into consideration body positivity messages people had saved. Finally, since pinterest was the media studied, the results cannot be generalized to all mass media. This study was well thought out. However, I do wish that there were more open ended questions where we could see how the participant actually responds to a specific post.

Overall this article was very interesting. However, I think it only applies to people who are interested in psychology or have body image issues. The thesis for this article was about social media and how it has formed this idea that there is a beauty standard for bodies. Specifically, it looked at fitspiration and why people interact with this media. Also, what is the outcome after engaging with these posts. I can definitely say I learned something new. This article was interesting and it was about a topic that I have been wondering about.

Citation:

Simpson, C. C., & Mazzeo, S. E. (2017). Skinny Is Not Enough: A Content Analysis of

Fitspiration on Pinterest. *Health Communication*, 32(5), 560–567.

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