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Research Article

Self-Consciousness, Self-Objectification, and Social Anxiety as Predictors of Photo Editing Behavior among Emerging Adults

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This study aims to assess the impact of self-consciousness, self-objectification, and social anxiety on photo editing behavior among emerging adults. Correlational research strategy was used for the present quantitative research, and convenient sampling strategy was used to collect data of 444 university students (135 males and 309 females) with the age range of 18-25 years. The self-consciousness scale, objectified body consciousness scale, photo manipulation scale, and social anxiety scale were used as assessment tools for this study. For data analysis, t-test for independent samples, correlation, and regression analysis were implied. The results revealed that women had higher self-consciousness and social anxiety in contrast to men. Moreover, self-objectification and evaluation anxiety were positively correlated with photo editing behavior. Lastly, overall self-objectification and body shame, one of the three aspects of self-objectification resulted as significant predictors of photo manipulation behavior among emerging adults. This study contributes to the indigenous literature of clinical and social psychology.

1. Introduction

Photo editing applications are widely used by emerging adults, and various researches have claimed that emerging adults are struck by various psychological disorders as well [1]. Research has revealed that 9.3% of emerging adults reported to have social anxiety disorder [2]. A number of studies have been conducted in the western culture highlighting issues faced by emerging adults like self-objectification and photo editing behavior, but indigenous perspective on the effect of photo editing on emerging adults is needed. Western research has constantly revealed social anxiety, self-objectification, and self-consciousness to be interlinked [3–5]. However, there is not much research done on the link of self-consciousness, social anxiety, and self-objectification with photo editing behavior in indigenous perspective. So, this research would fill the gap of effect of self-concept on adaptation of various behaviors, i.e., photo editing, in the crucial time of emerging adulthood.

Erikson [6] suggested that during adolescence, individuals go through a phase in which they question and search for their identity. Arnett [7] expanded Erikson's theory by proposing a new stage of development called emerging adulthood. According to Arnett [8], *emerging adulthood* is the time of an individual's life when they are between the ages of 18 and 25.

Traditionally, the main concept of *self-consciousness* is based upon the definitions given by James [9] and Mead [10]. James [9] proposed that when a person thinks about self, the subject, i.e., *I*, automatically becomes the object, i.e., *me*. According to Mead's social approach [10], self-consciousness refers to how one adopts the perspective of someone else towards themselves. Self-consciousness has two parts, i.e., public and private [11]. *Private self-consciousness* examines one's internal self and emotions [12]. *Public self-consciousness* is the level of awareness a person has about others view of them [13]. The *Self-Awareness Theory* [14] states that when one focuses their attention on themselves, they start comparing their behavior with their internal standards. Once they feel that these standards do not exactly meet with one another, it triggers self-consciousness [15]. One experiences a negative thought process called their critical inner voice. This negative voice is based on implicit memories of different traumas one experiences throughout

their childhood [16]. This view of self co-occurs with self-conscious feelings characterized by continuous body monitoring. This body monitoring, also known as body surveillance, behaviorally manifests itself as self [17].

Self-objectification is to look at oneself from someone else's point of view [18]. When one perceives and treats their bodies as sexual objects, they become their own examiners while anticipating to be judged by others. Ultimately, they keenly monitor themselves to deal with the sexual objectification [17]. Objectified body consciousness has three major aspects [19]:

(a) *Body surveillance* is when one self monitors their appearance to comply with the standards set by their culture and society and to avoid negative, judgmental remarks [20]

(b) As per McFarland and Baumann [21], the feelings of *body shame* is associated with the feeling of being defected and inferior to the cultural standards

(c) *Control beliefs* is when a person believes that they are capable of controlling their body and looks by different actions and can defy their genetic makeup [19]

Self-objectification has been tested in women; however, it has not received much attention when it comes to men [22]. According to Moradi and Huang [23], even though men reported lower self-objectification as compared to women, men have started to be more concerned about their looks. This could be the result of the rising trend to objectify men in western culture [24].

Social anxiety is the fear of negative judgment and evaluation in social settings [25]. Buss and Plomin [26] believed that social anxiety could be linked with an individual's temper. Individual factors such as social approval [27], worrying about judged which leads to the need to make a good impression on others [28], have a high potential for social anxiety. Parental rejection causes insecure attachment in children which can lead to different psychopathology, including anxiety disorders [29]. Not knowing how and when one's body will be evaluated creates a sense of anxiety and the feeling of being exposed. Empirical studies have revealed that when it comes to appearance, women face more anxiety as compared to men [18].

It is believed that concerns related to being judged and evaluated by others are linked to public self-consciousness, whereas private self-consciousness is linked with a person's consciousness of physical changes like high heart palpitations [4]. Schlenker and Leary [30] believed that social anxiety is related with the motivation of making an impression on others and the doubt of doing well. High public self-consciousness can lead to high motivation by increasing the importance of social goals, which in turn increases the number of attempts at impression management and, ultimately, increasing a person's vulnerability to be socially anxious. Research has revealed that people who are socially anxious are preoccupied with how they appear to the public, how they might be evaluated by other people, and whether or not these people will notice their anxious state [31].

The amount of online activities has swiftly increased among adolescents in the last few years [32], particularly the usage of social media [33]. Social media is an easily accessible, online world that lets its users make their own public/private profiles and lets them engage with people with similar hobbies [34]. The increased focus on visual self-presentation through photos and videos on social networking sites can cause appearance related concerns and body monitoring [35]. Body monitoring can cause negative usage of social media [36] where their appearance-based behavior through photo investment and photo manipulation is reinforced through the comments they receive [37]. Photo manipulation is editing pictures prior to sharing on social platforms. It is linked with the internalization of a having a slim body as well as different concerns of one's physical appearance [38]. The visual attention towards one's body appearance potentially triggers body monitoring, self objectifying behavior, and body shaming [39].

There are so many different applications a person can choose from like B612, Candy Camera, YouCam Makeup, Prisma, Adobe Photoshop, Facetune 2, and VSCO and change their whole physical appearance in a few minutes or seconds on applications like Instagram or Snapchat. Despite being aware of the fact that the images posted by others on social media are digitally edited, they still make an effort to achieve the irrational characteristics that are displayed all over their social media feed [40].

Numerous researches have linked self-objectification and social anxiety [5, 41–43]. For Monro and Huon [3], when body shame and social appearance anxiety are looked at keeping one's culture in mind, an idealized body image causes high body shame and appearance anxiety leading to the conclusion that sociocultural factors can impact one's body image and eating pattern. Additionally, many researchers have reported that self-objectification, social anxiety, and psychological distress are interlinked [44] Self-objectifying behavior can cause depression, anxiety, and unhealthy eating [1, 45]. It has also been revealed that body discontentment and photo editing are interlinked [46, 47]. Furthermore, self objectifying behavior and photo editing have been linked with the need to undergo cosmetic surgeries [48]. Moreover, increased usage of social media platforms causes emotional and mental stress [49, 50]. These negative effects were found even after individuals edited their pictures [51]. Research has revealed that people with high social anxiety have higher control behaviors like photo editing [52]. Individuals with low self-esteem and high social anxiety are more drawn towards social networking sites as these platforms allow them to enhance their features to what is more socially accepted and avoid rejection through editing [53]. The more a person uses social networking sites, the more socially anxious they are [54].

Another study revealed that young adults had higher rates of taking pictures of themselves and in groups, sharing and editing them as compared to older adults. Age played as a strong predictor of taking, sharing, and editing pictures in women as compared to men [55]. Individuals who use SNS are more focused on their appearance and have higher body image concerns [40, 56]. Moreover, social network use and

body image are interlinked and motivates a person to engage in taking selfies [56]. Among men and women, body surveillance as well as positive picture expectations is constant predictors of taking pictures [39].

Research has shown that social anxiety and self-consciousness are strongly correlated [4, 31, 57–60]. Moreover, a person who is self-conscious is more compliant and has decreased self-esteem [61, 62]. Multiple researches have revealed that women are more socially anxious as compared to men [63–66]. Furthermore, teasing women about their appearance led towards self-objectifying behavior and restricted food intake [67, 68]. Even female weightlifters have to be worried about appearing lady like [69].

2. Hypotheses of the Study

In light of the above-mentioned researches and findings, the following are the hypotheses of the present research:

(i) Women will score higher on self-consciousness, social anxiety, self-objectification, and photo editing behavior as compared to men

(ii) Photo editing behavior will be positively associated with self-consciousness, social anxiety, and self-objectification of emerging adult6s

(iii) Self-consciousness, social anxiety, and self-objectification will be significant predictors of the photo editing behavior of emerging adults

3. Methodology and Procedure

Correlational research design was used for this study. Convenient sampling technique was used to gather data from 444 individuals (135 males and 309 females) with age ranging from 18 to 25 years. An a priori power analysis was conducted using G∗Power 3.1.9.7. [70]. For one-tailed independent samples t-test, a medium effect size = 0.5, 80% power, alpha = 0.05, and allocation ratio N2/N1 = 2 were taken. The results suggested a total sample size of 114, sample size for group 1 = 38 and sample size for group 2 = 76. The final sample size for the present study was 444 with group 1 = 135 and group 2 = 309 which indicates that the analysis is sufficiently powered. For one-tailed correlation analysis, effect size = 0.3, alpha = 0.05, and 80% power were taken. The results suggested a sample size of 67. The final sample size for this study was 444 which indicates that the analysis is sufficiently powered. For the regression analysis, a medium effect size = 0.15, alpha = 0.05, 80% power analysis, and number of predictors = 4 were taken. The results suggested a total sample size of 85. The final sample size for the present study was 444 which indicated that the analysis was sufficiently powered.

For the procedure, firstly permission was taken from the university committee and from the authors of the scales. Data was collected from university students in Lahore. Participants were given an informed consent and were told that they could withdraw from the study at their will. The nature and objectives of the research were briefed to them before

collecting data. They were assured about the confidentiality, and their data would be accessible only for the researchers involved in the study. They were given the required instructions for each scale. Then basic personal information was obtained using a demographic form. The data was collected using self-consciousness scale (SCS-R), objectified body consciousness scale (OBCS), photo manipulation scale (PMS), and social anxiety scale (SAS). After collecting data, participants were thanked for their time and cooperation.

3.1. Measures

3.1.1. Demographic Form. Demographic information form was used to collect information like age, gender, socioeconomic status, marital status, education, photo editing apps used, and social networking sites used to post pictures.

3.1.2. Self-Consciousness Scale (SCS-R). The self-consciousness scale constructed by Scheier and Carver [71] includes 22 items that measures self-consciousness. It consists of 3 subscales, namely, private self-consciousness (9 items), public self-consciousness (7 items), and social anxiety scale (6 items). The response format is 4-point Likert scale, with 3 being high self-consciousness and 0 being low self-consciousness. The Cronbach's alpha value for private self-consciousness is .75, public self-consciousness is .84, and social anxiety is .79, respectively. The test-retest correlation for private self-consciousness is .76, public self-consciousness is .74, and social anxiety is .77. The original English version of the scale was used.

3.1.3. Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS). The 24-item objectified body consciousness scale was constructed by McKinley and Hyde [72]. This scale measures negative feelings experienced when a person feels that their body does not meet social expectations. The response format is 7-point Likert scale with 1 being "Strongly Disagree" and 7 being "Strongly Agree." It includes 3 subscales, i.e., body surveillance (8 items), body shame (8 items), and control beliefs (8 items). The Cronbach's alpha value for body surveillance scale is .89, body shame is .75, and control beliefs is .72. The original English version of the scale was used.

3.1.4. Photo Manipulation Scale (PMS). The 10-item photo manipulation scale was constructed by McLean et al. [38] to assess the degree to which one manipulates their pictures before posting them online. The response format is 5-point Likert scale with 5 being always and 1 being never. Cronbach's alpha value is .85. The original English version of the scale was used.

3.1.5. Social Anxiety Scale (SAS). The social anxiety scale constructed by Ejaz and Muazzam [66] is an indigenous scale which includes 22 item that measures the intensity of anxiety one feels in different social situations. It is 5-point Likert scale with of 0 being never and 4 being always. It includes 3 subscales, i.e., performance anxiety (8 items), interaction anxiety (10 items), and evaluation anxiety (4 items). The Cronbach's alpha value is .90, whereas for the three subscales, i.e., performance anxiety, the Cronbach's

alpha is .84, for interaction anxiety, the Cronbach's alpha is .81, and for evaluation anxiety, the Cronbach's alpha is .78. The original English version of the scale was used.

4. Results

The present study assesses the impact of self-consciousness, self-objectification, and social anxiety on photo editing behavior among emerging adults. Independent sample t-test measured gender differences in relation to self-objectification, social anxiety, self-consciousness, and photo editing behavior. Additionally, the relationship between self-consciousness, social anxiety, self-objectification, and photo editing behavior was measured using correlation analysis. Moreover, regression analysis was used to see whether self-consciousness, social anxiety, and self-objectification are predictors of photo editing behavior in emerging adults or not.

Table 1 displays the frequency distribution of the participants based on the demographic characteristics: gender, age, education, socioeconomic status (SES), work status, phone brand, SNS participants post their pictures on (posts pictures on SNS), and no. of SNS used for posting pictures.

T-test for independent sample was used to measure the gender differences in self-consciousness, self-objectification, social anxiety, and photo editing behavior of emerging adults. The results showed that there is a significant gender difference in performance anxiety and avoidance ($p < 0.05$), interaction anxiety ($p < 0.01$), evaluation anxiety ($p < 0.05$), and overall social anxiety ($p < 0.01$). Mean values indicated that females are more socially anxious as compared to males. Moreover, results also showed that gender difference lies in self-consciousness of emerging adults ($p < 0.05$). Overall, results on self-consciousness indicated that females are more self-consciousness as compared to males because the mean values of females were higher. Results also showed no significant gender differences in photo manipulation behavior as well as self-objectification among emerging adults. The results are shown in Table 2.

For the interpretation of Cohen's d effect size, if $d = 0.2$ then effect size is small, if $d = 0.5$ then effect size is medium and if $d = 0.8$ then effect size is large [73].

The correlation matrix was generated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to assess bivariate relationship among self-consciousness, self-objectification, social anxiety, and photo editing behavior. The results revealed that photo manipulation was only significantly positively correlated with surveillance ($r = .11$, $p < .05$), body shame ($r = .34$, $p < .01$), objectified body consciousness scale ($r = .21$, $p < .01$), and evaluation anxiety ($r = .11$, $p < .05$).

Additionally, surveillance was also significantly positively correlated with body shame ($r = .27$, $p < .01$), control beliefs ($r = .29$, $p < .01$), objectified body consciousness scale ($r = .71$, $p < .01$), performance anxiety and avoidance ($r = .10$, $p < .05$), evaluation anxiety ($r = .18$, $p < .01$), social anxiety scale ($r = .13$, $p < .01$), private self-consciousness ($r = .14$, $p < .01$), public self-consciousness ($r = .13$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .14$, $p < .01$).

TABLE 1: Demographic statistics of the participants of the study ($N = 444$).

Variable	F	%	M (SD)
Gender			
Male	135	30.4	
Female	309	69.6	
Age			21.07 (1.76)
18	24	5.4	
19	67	15.1	
20	88	19.8	
21	97	21.8	
22	73	16.4	
23	46	10.4	
24	34	7.7	
25	15	3.4	
Education			
Bachelors	371	83.6	
MS/M.Phil	7	16.4	
SES			
Low	8	1.8	
Middle	425	95.7	
Elite	11	2.5	
Work status			
No	362	81.5	
Part-time job	65	14.6	
Full-time job	17	3.8	
Phone brand			
Apple	98	22.1	
Samsung	102	23	
Oppo	48	10.8	
Huawei	63	14.2	
Vivo	37	8.3	
Infinix	33	7.4	
Techno	14	3.2	
Others	49	11	
Posts pictures on SNS			
Facebook			
Yes	180	40.5	
Instagram			
Yes	328	73.9	
Snapchat			
Yes	229	51.6	
Twitter			
Yes	32	7.2	
No. of SNS used for picture posting			
1	225	50.7	
2	127	28.6	
3	73	16.4	
4	19	4.3	

Note. f = frequency; % = Percentage; M (SD) = mean (standard deviation).

TABLE 2: Mean, standard deviation, and t-values of males and females on self-consciousness, self-objectification, social anxiety, and photo editing behavior ($N = 444$).

Variables	Male($n = 135$)		Female($n = 309$)			95% confidence interval		
	M	SD	M	SD	$t_{(442)}$	LL	UL	Cohen's d
PM	22.25	6.70	21.75	6.78	.71	-.87	1.87	.07
Sur	29.86	7.82	29.89	7.28	-.04	-1.54	1.48	.003
BS	27.05	9.01	26.12	10.66	.88	-1.14	2.99	.09
CS	30.91	8.63	30.37	7.68	.65	-1.08	2.15	.07
OBCS	87.82	16.87	86.38	17.91	.79	-2.13	5.01	.08
Perf	15.75	6.93	17.66	7.67	-2.48*	-3.42	-.30	.26
Inter	18.05	8.18	22.30	8.51	-4.89**	-5.95	-2.54	.51
Eval	7.29	3.62	8.28	4.28	-2.36*	-1.82	-.17	.25
SAS	41.09	16.79	48.24	18.31	-3.88**	-10.78	-3.53	.41
Priv	15.85	4.13	16.45	4.09	-1.42	-1.43	.23	.15
Pub	12.19	4.38	12.89	4.07	-1.63	-1.54	.14	.16
SA	9.28	3.72	10.48	3.92	-2.90**	-1.98	-.41	.31
SCS	37.32	9.76	39.82	9.33	-2.56*	-4.42	-.58	.26

Note. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$. PM = photo manipulation; Sur = body surveillance; BS = body shame; CB = control beliefs; OBCS = objectified body consciousness scale; Perf = performance anxiety and avoidance; Inter = interaction anxiety; Eval = evaluation anxiety; SAS = social anxiety scale; Priv = private self-consciousness; Pub = public self-consciousness; SA = social anxiety; SCS = self-consciousness scale.

TABLE 3: Intercorrelation of scales and their subscales ($N = 444$).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.PM	1	.11*	.34**	-.06	.21**	.02	-.03	.11*	.02	-.04	.06	.03	.02
2. Sur	—	1	.27**	.29**	.71**	.10*	.09	.18**	.13**	.14**	.13**	.06	.14**
3. BS	—	—	1	.07	.73**	.14**	.09*	.22**	.15**	.00	.10**	.12**	.14**
4. CB	—	—	—	1	.61**	-.03	-.08	-.05	-.06	.00	-.09*	-.06	-.07
5. OBCS	—	—	—	—	1	.11*	.05	.18**	.11*	.06	.12**	.07	.11*
6. Perf	—	—	—	—	—	1	.78**	.62**	.93**	.18**	.24*	.67**	.46**
7. Inter	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.59**	.93**	.16**	.21**	.63**	.42**
8. Eval	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.76**	.16**	.30**	.48**	.40**
9. SAS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.19**	.27**	.68**	.48**
10. Priv	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.55**	.33**	.80**
11. Pub	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.35**	.82**
12. SA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.71**
13. SCS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

Note. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$. PM = photo manipulation; Sur = body surveillance; BS=body shame; CB=control beliefs; OBCS=objectified body consciousness scale; Perf = performance anxiety and avoidance; Inter = interaction anxiety; Eval = evaluation anxiety; SAS=social anxiety scale; Priv = private self-consciousness; Pub = public self-consciousness; SA = social anxiety; SCS=self-consciousness scale.

Moreover, body shame was significantly positively correlated with objectified body consciousness scale ($r = .71$, $p < .01$), performance anxiety and avoidance ($r = .10$, $p < .05$), interaction anxiety ($r = .09$, $p < .05$), evaluation anxiety ($r = .22$, $p < .01$), social anxiety scale ($r = .15$, $p < .01$), public self-consciousness ($r = .10$, $p < .01$), social anxiety ($r = .12$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .14$, $p < .01$).

Furthermore, control beliefs was only significantly and positively correlated with objectified body consciousness scale ($r = .61$, $p < .01$) and public self-consciousness ($r = -.09$, $p < .05$).

Objectified body consciousness scale was significantly and positively correlated with performance anxiety and avoidance ($r = .11$, $p < .05$), evaluation anxiety ($r = .18$, $p < .01$), social anxiety scale ($r = .11$, $p < .05$), public self-consciousness ($r = .12$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .11$, $p < .05$).

To add in, performance anxiety and avoidance is positively and significantly correlated with interaction anxiety ($r = .78$, $p < .01$), evaluation anxiety ($r = .62$, $p < .01$), social anxiety scale ($r = .92$, $p < .01$) private self-consciousness ($r = .18$, $p < .01$), public self-consciousness ($r = .23$, $p < .01$),

TABLE 4: Multiple regression analysis showing objectified body consciousness as predictor of photo manipulation behavior ($N = 444$).

Variables	B	SE	β
Body shame	.30	.05	.45*
Body surveillance	.13	.07	.14
OBCS	-.08	.04	-.22**
Evaluation anxiety	.04	.08	.02
R^2	.12		
Model fit	$F(4, 439) = 15.59$**		

Note. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$. OBCS = objectified body consciousness scale; B = unstandardized beta; SE = standard error; β = standardized beta.

social anxiety ($r = .67$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .46$, $p < .01$).

In addition to this, interaction anxiety was also significantly positively correlated with evaluation anxiety ($r = .59$, $p < .01$), social anxiety scale ($r = .93$, $p < .01$) private self-consciousness ($r = .16$, $p < .01$), public self-consciousness ($r = .21$, $p < .01$), social anxiety ($r = .63$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .41$, $p < .01$).

Furthermore, evaluation anxiety was significantly and positively correlated with social anxiety scale ($r = .76$, $p < .01$) private self-consciousness ($r = .16$, $p < .01$), public self-consciousness ($r = .30$, $p < .01$), social anxiety ($r = .48$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .40$, $p < .01$).

Additionally, social anxiety scale was significantly and positively correlated with private self-consciousness ($r = .19$, $p < .01$), public self-consciousness ($r = .28$, $p < .01$), social anxiety ($r = .68$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .48$, $p < .01$).

Also, private self-consciousness was significantly positively correlated with public self-consciousness ($r = .55$, $p < .01$), social anxiety ($r = .33$, $p < .01$), and self-consciousness scale ($r = .81$, $p < .01$).

Moreover, public self-consciousness was significantly and positively correlated with social anxiety ($r = .36$, $p < .01$) and self-consciousness scale ($r = .82$, $p < .01$).

Lastly, social anxiety was significantly and positively correlated with self-consciousness scale ($r = .71$, $p < .01$). The results are shown in Table 3.

Multiple regression analysis assessed the effect of self-objectification on photo editing behavior of emerging adults. Overall, the model was significant $F(4, 439) = 15.59$, $p < 0.01$. The predictor showed 12% variance with an R value of .35 and R^2 value of 0.12. Moreover, results showed that body shame ($\beta = .45$, $p < 0.05$) and overall body objectification ($\beta = -.22$, $p < 0.01$) were the significant predictors of photo editing behavior among emerging adults. However, body surveillance and evaluation anxiety were not significant predictors of photo editing behavior among emerging adults. The results are displayed in Table 4.

5. Discussion

Emerging adulthood was proposed as a new stage of development by Arnett [7]. The current research assessed self-consciousness, self-objectification, and social anxiety in reference to photo editing behavior among emerging adults.

Emerging adults was selected because this is the age where individuals go through feelings of in-between, instability, and exploring who they are and what they want to be [74]. They experiment with different roles and tasks to try to find their place in society. The need to fit in causes self-consciousness, social anxiety, and self-objectifying behavior which ultimately lead to photo editing behavior as an attempt to remove the imperfections that are frowned upon by their society.

The first hypothesis of the study was that women will have a higher score on self-consciousness, social anxiety, self-objectification, and photo editing behavior as compared to men. The results revealed this to be partially true as objectified body consciousness scale and photo manipulation did not show any gender difference. Women scored higher on social anxiety scale and its subscales, i.e., performance anxiety and avoidance, interaction anxiety, and evaluation anxiety as well as on self-consciousness scale and one of its subscale, i.e., social anxiety. A research conducted on female Pakistani university students reported that social anxiety and self-consciousness have a strong correlation with one another [66]. Moreover, women have a strong desire to feel like they belong and have a higher social media engagement [75]. This increased desire to belong could be due to them constantly self-evaluating and being self-conscious. Women are said to be more conscious about their physical appearance and the impression they leave on others. This need to be more physically appealing could be due to the set cultural standards that women need to have a certain level of beauty to be accepted. A woman who is tall, fair, and slim is considered to be beautiful in Pakistan. In contrast to this, the set cultural norm for men is focused on having a stable income rather than being good looking. There are numerous studies that support the current results [62, 64, 76, 77]. In contrast to the current results, Fox and Rooney [78] revealed that self-objectification in men was a predictor of photo editing before sharing them on social media.

The second hypothesis was to assess if photo editing behavior was linked to self-consciousness, social anxiety, and self-objectification in emerging adults. The results revealed that only self-objectification and evaluation anxiety are positively and significantly correlated with photo editing behavior. The objectified body consciousness scale which examined self-objectification and two of its subscales, i.e., body surveillance and body shame, had a significantly positive association with photo editing behavior. This can lead to

the conclusion that the more a person monitors their body, the more they edit their photos and the more a person body shames themselves the more photo editing applications they use to modify their pictures. Moreover, evaluation anxiety which is a subscale of social anxiety scale was significantly positively correlated with photo manipulation. This means the more a person edits their pictures, the more anxious they feel about being evaluated by others. A research revealed that appearance anxiety was positively correlated with the time invested in editing pictures before sharing on social media [79]. Furthermore, for Sun [48], selfie editing had a positive correlation with thoughts of cosmetic surgery and self-objectification, while facial discontentment played a mediating role in this relationship. Moreover, another research revealed that self-objectification is linked with higher photo investment [56]. However, the results of this study did not show any link between photo editing behavior and self-consciousness.

The third hypothesis was that self-consciousness, social anxiety, and self-objectification will be significant predictors of the photo editing behavior of emerging adults. The results revealed that only a part of this was true. Since self-consciousness was not significantly correlated with photo manipulation, it cannot be evaluated as a predictor. Overall, self-objectification and its subscale, i.e., body shame, were significant predictors of photo manipulation behavior. One of the few studies indicated that body shame is known to be a strong predictor of body image control in pictures shared on social media which indirectly causes problematic social media use in both men and women [37]. Research has revealed photo manipulation as a predictor of high self-objectification and appearance-related anxiety in adolescents [38]. Additionally, [3] body shame increases after an individual is exposed to idealized images from advertisements.

To conclude, women are more socially anxious and self-conscious in their emerging adulthood in comparison to men. Moreover, it was concluded that the more a person edits their pictures, the more they self-objectify and feel anxious that others will evaluate them. Self-objectification and body shame were seen to predict photo editing behavior among emerging adults.

Data Availability

The data which supports the results of the current study is not available due to confidentiality.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Acknowledgments

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