

UNWOMEN



Topic A: “Addressing the impact of social media on body image and self-esteem in young women.”

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MODERATOR:
Victoria García

CHAIR:
Sofía
Ramírez





Welcoming letter

Esteemed Delegates,

On behalf of the Chair and the Moderators of the UN Women Committee, we extend a very warm welcome to each of you. It is with great excitement and anticipation that we begin this year's CFMUN together. We are truly honored to have such a diverse group of delegates representing a range of countries and unique perspectives.

The issues that we will discuss, deliberate, and debate in this committee are both urgent and vital to the well-being of women and girls across the world. We encourage you to approach these discussions with an open mind, a spirit of collaboration, and a commitment to crafting meaningful solutions that can drive positive change.

We wish you the best of luck throughout the event. May your debates be fruitful, your alliances strong, and your solutions innovative.

With warmest regards,

Victoria Garcia and Sofia Ramirez

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I. Committee Background

UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to promoting gender equality and empowering women. Established in 2010 by the UN General Assembly, it was created through the merger of four previously separate UN entities focused on women's issues.

As a global advocate for women and girls, UN Women works to accelerate progress in improving the lives of women and addressing the challenges they face worldwide.

UN Women plays a critical role within the United Nations system as both an advocate and coordinator, bringing together governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and other key stakeholders to take collective action toward achieving gender equality.

II. Introduction to the Topic

Social media significantly affects young women's body image and self-esteem, promoting unrealistic beauty standards that can lead to anxiety and mental health issues. While platforms like Instagram and TikTok offer opportunities for self-expression, they also contribute to negative perceptions of body image.

To address these challenges, stakeholders, including governments and mental health professionals, are raising awareness and advocating for changes on social media platforms, such as banning harmful weight-loss ads.

Experts emphasize the need for a collaborative approach involving families and communities to create a supportive digital environment. Empowering young women with critical thinking skills and promoting body positivity are essential for fostering healthier self-esteem in the digital age.

III. Evolution of the Topic

Exposure to these curated images has significant effects on body image and self-esteem, with many young women comparing themselves to flawless, edited photos of influencers and celebrities. This comparison often fosters feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, and dissatisfaction. The widespread use of photo-editing apps and filters reinforces unattainable standards, increasing the pressure to conform.

The negative effects of this culture are well-documented, including higher rates of anxiety, depression, and body dysmorphia, with some young women even developing eating disorders. The need for validation through likes, comments, and followers further ties self-worth to appearance, intensifying the issue. As this problem gains more recognition, the global impact of social media on mental health, body image, and self-perception continues to highlight its pervasive influence on modern beauty standards.

IV. Relevant Events

A) PANORAMA

- A new project launched by researchers at the University of Portsmouth aims to help young women navigate social media content related to body image. The initiative includes creating a toolkit that educates girls about evolving beauty standards through historical media content.
- A report by Dove revealed that 50% of girls aged 10-17 feel affected by toxic beauty advice on social media. It highlights the prevalence of harmful trends like #Fitspo and #Thinspo, which promote unrealistic beauty standards and can damage self-esteem.

IV. Relevant Events

B) POINTS OF VIEW

- Experts emphasize that social media can lead to increased anxiety, depression, and body dysmorphia among young women due to constant comparisons with idealized images. The need for validation through likes and followers further complicates their self-worth.
- While social media often perpetuates narrow beauty standards, there is a counter-movement promoting body positivity. This movement seeks to celebrate diverse body types and challenge traditional beauty norms, though it still faces criticism for often centering on thin, white female bodies.

V. UN and External Actions

- The UN has recognized the importance of mental health with social media use, advocating for policies that promote mental well-being among young people, particularly women. This includes calls for more research and resources to understand the effects of social media on body image.
- UN Women has been actively promoting gender equality and empowering women through various programs that address mental health and body image issues. Their campaigns often focus on the impact of media representations on women's self-esteem.
- The UN collaborates with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop educational programs aimed at improving media literacy among young women. These initiatives focus on critical thinking skills to help young women navigate social media content effectively.

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, the impact of social media on body image and self-esteem among young women is a pressing issue that demands attention from global organizations and local communities alike. The United Nations, through initiatives like UN Women, emphasizes the need for mental health awareness and media literacy to combat unrealistic beauty standards.

Research and projects from various organizations highlight the importance of empowering young women to navigate social media critically. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders, we can create a supportive environment that promotes healthy self-esteem and well-being in the digital age.

VII. Committee Focus

- How do ideal body images on social media affect how young women feel about themselves?
- Is there a difference in how social media impacts body image for young women who post content versus those who just look at it?
- How do comments and likes from friends on social media change how young women view their bodies?
- How do cultural and social standards influence young women's body image issues related to social media?
- What can young women do to have a healthier relationship with social media and feel better about their bodies?

VII. Participation List

- Burkina Faso
- Commonwealth of Australia
- French Republic
- Gabonese Republic
- Japan
- Kingdom of Denmark
- People's Republic of China
- Republic of Bulgaria
- Republic of Côte d'Ivoire
- Republic of Latvia
- Republic of Panama
- Republic of Paraguay
- Republic of Tajikistan
- Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
- Republic of Zimbabwe
- Russian Federation
- State of Eritrea
- State of Qatar
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United States of America

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