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Influence of Instagram Celebrity Contents on the Perception of the Construction of Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) Ideals among Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of Instagram celebrity content on the construction of Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) beauty ideals among students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The research was anchored on Social Comparison Theory and Cultivation Theory to explain how algorithmic exposure and celebrity-driven imagery shape body image perception and cosmetic attitudes. A quantitative survey design was adopted, using a structured questionnaire administered to 400 undergraduates through stratified random sampling. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages and means analysis. Findings reveal high levels of Instagram engagement among respondents, with consistent exposure to BBL-related content facilitated by algorithmic curation. Students reported strong tendencies toward social comparison, particularly with celebrity images, which significantly influenced their perceptions of beauty and body satisfaction. Celebrity content was found to play a major role in normalising and reinforcing surgically enhanced body ideals, thereby shaping aspirational beauty standards among undergraduates. Despite this influence, respondents demonstrated considerable awareness of the health risks associated with BBL procedures and largely rejected recommending them to others. The researchers conclude that Instagram operates as a powerful site for the construction of beauty ideals through the interaction of algorithmic amplification and celebrity influence. While these forces shape perception and aspiration, risk awareness serves as a moderating factor in behavioural intentions. The study recommends the integration of media literacy education in universities.



and stronger regulation of cosmetic-related content on social media platforms to promote healthier body image perceptions among undergraduates.

Keywords: Instagram, celebrity content, BBL, body image, social comparison, algorithmic beauty culture

Introduction

In the digital age, social media platforms, particularly Instagram, have become influential spaces where beauty standards, lifestyle aspirations, and health-related decisions are continuously constructed and negotiated. Unlike traditional media systems, Instagram operates through a highly visual and curated communication model supported by interactive engagement features, positioning it as a dominant channel for the dissemination of culturally constructed body ideals Mironica et al 2024. Within this environment, images function not only as social expressions but also as powerful symbols of desirability, identity, and social value.

Empirical evidence has consistently shown that frequent exposure to idealised and digitally enhanced images on social media is associated with increased body dissatisfaction and heightened consideration of cosmetic enhancement procedures among young adults Mironica et al., 2024; Seetan et al., 2025. Among the most prominent of such content are surgically enhanced body representations, particularly Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) imagery, which circulates widely on Instagram and increasingly shapes perceptions of normative beauty and aesthetic desirability (Knight et al., 2025).

This influence is further intensified by Instagram's algorithmic architecture. Engagement-driven algorithms prioritize visually appealing, emotionally engaging, and high-interaction content, thereby repeatedly exposing users to appearance-centered posts. Over time, this produces what scholars describe as an "algorithmic beauty culture," where specific body ideals are continuously reinforced and normalized through repeated visibility (Bucher, 2018; Knight et al., 2025). In this context, cosmetic-enhanced body forms may gradually shift from being perceived as exceptional to becoming aspirational standards.

Over the past decade, Instagram has also evolved into a central site for identity construction and aesthetic meaning-making among young people (Highfield & Leaver, 2016). Its image-centered architecture makes it especially powerful in shaping perceptions of physical appearance, attractiveness, and lifestyle desirability. Repeated engagement with curated imagery has been linked to heightened self-surveillance and increased body dissatisfaction, particularly among young users (Fardouly et al., 2018).

The role of celebrity and influencer culture further deepens this dynamic. Celebrities and influencers possess symbolic authority and aspirational capital, and their content often fosters parasocial relationships that strengthen persuasive influence over followers (Abidin, 2018; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Empirical studies indicate that exposure to celebrity imagery on Instagram significantly increases upward social comparison tendencies and enhances acceptance of cosmetic procedures among users (Mironica et al., 2024; Seetan et al., 2025). Within university populations, where identity formation, peer validation, and self-image development are particularly salient, these influences may be even more pronounced.

Algorithmic systems also play a central role in content visibility. By prioritizing posts based on engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and comments, Instagram amplifies aspirational and emotionally stimulating content, including narratives of cosmetic transformation (Bucher, 2018; Morris et al., 2021). As a result, users are frequently exposed to BBL-related and beauty-enhancing content even without actively searching for it, reinforcing passive internalization of aesthetic ideals. In African contexts, including Nigeria, global Instagram beauty standards interact with local cultural interpretations



of attractiveness, producing hybridized beauty ideals that often emphasize curvaceous body forms associated with BBL procedures (Okafor & Adegoke, 2022; Ifeanyichukwu, 2021). This intersection of global media influence and local beauty expectations creates a complex environment in which body image ideals are continuously reshaped.

Despite the growing body of literature on social media and body image, relatively limited research has specifically examined Instagram celebrity-driven BBL content within university populations in Nigeria. Understanding how algorithmic exposure and celebrity influence converge is therefore essential for addressing the psychosocial implications of digital beauty culture among young adults.

This study therefore examines how Instagram usage patterns, exposure to BBL-related content, and celebrity-driven imagery influence body image perceptions, social comparison behaviour, and attitudes toward cosmetic enhancement among undergraduate students in Nigeria

Instagram has become a dominant platform for the circulation of celebrity-driven beauty ideals, including highly visible representations of Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) procedures. Existing studies have shown that exposure to idealized body imagery on social media is associated with increased body dissatisfaction and greater interest in cosmetic enhancement among young adults (Fardouly et al., 2018; Rodgers et al., 2020; Seetan et al., 2025). Similarly, celebrity and influencer content has been found to intensify appearance-based comparison and internalisation of beauty ideals through parasocial interaction and aspirational identification (Abidin, 2018; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

However, while these studies provide valuable insight into general social media effects on body image and cosmetic surgery intentions, most of them do not specifically isolate Instagram celebrity-driven BBL content as a distinct aesthetic category. In addition, there is limited context-specific evidence focusing on undergraduate populations in Nigerian universities, where global Instagram beauty trends intersect with local cultural constructions of body ideals (Okafor & Adegoke, 2022; Ifeanyichukwu, 2021). Furthermore, existing research has largely emphasized body dissatisfaction and cosmetic surgery intention, with comparatively less attention given to how risk awareness moderates these influences among young adults exposed to such content. The interaction between algorithmic amplification, celebrity influence, and risk perception therefore remains insufficiently explored within a unified empirical framework.

Against this background, the present study investigates how Instagram celebrity content influences the construction of Brazilian Butt Lift beauty ideals among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, with specific attention to body image perception, social comparison processes, and awareness of associated health risks.

Objectives

The general purpose of this study is to examine how Instagram celebrity content shapes university students' perceptions of beauty and attitudes toward Brazilian Butt Lift procedures. In specific terms, this study seeks to:

1. Examine Instagram usage patterns in relation to BBL content exposure.
2. Investigate students' perceptions of beauty and body image.
3. Explore celebrity influence on attitudes toward BBL procedures.
4. Assess awareness of risks associated with BBL procedures.



Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Social Comparison Theory and Cultivation Theory, both of which provide a robust theoretical foundation for explaining how exposure to Instagram celebrity content influences the construction of Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) ideals among undergraduates.

Social Comparison Theory was propounded by Leon Festinger (1954). The theory posits that individuals have an inherent tendency to evaluate their opinions, abilities, and physical attributes by comparing themselves with others. In contemporary digital environments such as Instagram, this comparison process is amplified by continuous exposure to carefully curated and idealised celebrity images. These images often portray surgically enhanced bodies, filtered appearances, and glamorous lifestyles that are perceived as more attractive and socially desirable. Consequently, users are likely to engage in upward social comparison, whereby they assess themselves against individuals they perceive as superior in appearance. Such comparisons have been associated with body dissatisfaction, lower self-esteem, and an increased willingness to consider cosmetic enhancement procedures among social media users (Fardouly et al., 2018; Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Within the context of this study, Instagram serves as a platform that facilitates continuous self-evaluation through visual comparisons with celebrity figures.

Cultivation Theory was developed by George Gerbner in 1969 as part of the Cultural Indicators Project and was later elaborated by Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli (1986). The theory argues that prolonged and repeated exposure to media messages gradually shapes individuals' perceptions of reality. Although originally developed to explain the effects of television viewing, the theory has been widely applied to digital and social media environments. In relation to Instagram, continuous exposure to content that celebrates surgically enhanced bodies, particularly BBL-related images, may gradually lead users to perceive such body types as normal, desirable, and representative of societal beauty standards. Over time, repeated exposure blurs the distinction between mediated representations and real-life appearances, resulting in the internalisation of these idealised beauty norms.

When integrated, these theories provide complementary explanations for the phenomenon under investigation. Social Comparison Theory explains the immediate psychological process through which undergraduates compare their bodies with those of Instagram celebrities, while Cultivation Theory explains how sustained exposure to such content gradually normalises enhanced body ideals and influences beliefs about beauty. Instagram's algorithmic recommendation system further strengthens this relationship by repeatedly exposing users to celebrity-driven BBL content, thereby reinforcing both upward comparison and the long-term cultivation of enhanced body ideals (Bucher, 2018; Rodgers et al., 2020).

The two theories are therefore highly relevant to this study because they explain both the immediate and cumulative effects of Instagram celebrity content on the formation of BBL ideals among undergraduates. While Social Comparison Theory accounts for the psychological mechanism underlying body image comparisons, Cultivation Theory explains how repeated media exposure contributes to the acceptance and internalisation of surgically enhanced body standards as desirable and socially acceptable.

Method

This study adopted a quantitative survey research design to examine Instagram celebrity influence on the construction of Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) ideals among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The survey design was considered appropriate because it facilitates the systematic collection and



quantitative analysis of data from a relatively large population, enabling the identification of patterns, relationships, and trends in respondents' perceptions and experiences.

The study population comprised all undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. A sample of 400 respondents was selected using a stratified random sampling technique. To ensure adequate representation of the population, the undergraduate students were first grouped into strata based on their faculties, levels of study (100–500 level, where applicable), and gender. The sample allocated to each stratum was determined proportionately according to its population size. Thereafter, respondents were selected from each stratum through simple random sampling, ensuring that every eligible student had an equal probability of participating in the study. This sampling procedure enhanced the representativeness of the sample and minimized sampling bias.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed in line with the objectives of the study. The instrument comprised sections on respondents' demographic characteristics, Instagram usage patterns, exposure to BBL-related content, perceptions of celebrity influence, body image perceptions, and awareness of the health risks associated with Brazilian Butt Lift procedures. The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by experts in Communication and Media Studies, who assessed the clarity, relevance, and adequacy of the items. Their observations and recommendations were incorporated into the final version of the instrument. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, which produced a coefficient above the acceptable benchmark of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Before the administration of the questionnaire, the purpose of the study was clearly explained to all prospective respondents, and informed consent was obtained from those who agreed to participate. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured that their responses would remain anonymous, confidential, and used strictly for academic purposes. No personally identifiable information was collected, and participants were informed of their right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without any adverse consequences. The questionnaires were administered and retrieved over a period of two weeks.

The questionnaire employed a four-point Likert scale comprising Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). Mean scores and standard deviations were computed to determine the direction and consistency of respondents' opinions, while a criterion mean of 2.50 served as the decision benchmark for accepting or rejecting each item.

Data were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe respondents' demographic characteristics, while mean scores and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions and assess respondents' perceptions regarding Instagram celebrity influence on the construction of Brazilian Butt Lift ideals.

Findings

This section presents the findings of the study based on data obtained from 400 undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The analysis begins with the demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by the presentation of findings according to the study objectives. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data and examine respondents' Instagram usage patterns, perceptions of Brazilian Butt Lift



(BBL) content, celebrity influence on BBL ideals, and awareness of the risks associated with BBL procedures.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	113	28.2%
Female	287	71.8%
Total	400	100

The higher proportion of female respondents indicates that the study primarily captures the perceptions of female undergraduates, who are generally more exposed to and engaged with body image and beauty-related content on social media. Consequently, the findings provide important insights into the demographic group most likely to be influenced by Instagram portrayals of BBL ideals.

Analysis of Research Questions

Objective 1: To examine Instagram usage patterns in relation to BBL content exposure

This objective assessed respondents' level of Instagram engagement, frequency of use, duration of use, and exposure to BBL-related content.

Table 1: Instagram Usage Patterns

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Decision
I have an active Instagram account	400	-	-	-	400	4.00	Accepted
I spend more than one hour on Instagram per session	284	94	21	1	400	3.64	Accepted
I use Instagram frequently at least once daily	320	78	2	-	400	3.78	Accepted
I frequently come across BBL content on Instagram	179	210	10	1	400	3.36	Accepted

Field Survey, 2025

The findings in Table 1 indicate that the respondents have a high level of engagement with Instagram and are regularly exposed to BBL-related content. All 400 respondents (100%) indicated that they have an active Instagram account, producing a mean score of 4.00, which represents unanimous agreement. Furthermore, 378 respondents (94.5%) agreed that they spend more than one hour on Instagram per session, with a mean score of 3.65. Similarly, 398 respondents (99.5%) indicated that they use Instagram at least once daily, producing a mean score of 3.80.

Of particular relevance to the objective is the finding that 389 respondents (97.25%) agreed that they frequently come across BBL content on Instagram, with a mean score of 3.42. This suggests that BBL-related content is not an occasional occurrence within the respondents' Instagram experience but forms part of the content they regularly encounter.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the respondents are highly active Instagram users with substantial exposure to BBL-related content. The combination of frequent daily usage, extended time spent on the platform and regular exposure to BBL content suggests that Instagram provides considerable opportunities for respondents to encounter images, videos and messages promoting or discussing BBL and associated body ideals. Therefore, the objective is achieved, as the findings establish a strong pattern of Instagram engagement and BBL-content exposure among the respondents



Objective 2: To examine students' perceptions of beauty and body image in relation to BBL content

This objective explored how exposure to BBL content shapes societal beauty standards, body comparison behaviour, and body satisfaction among students.

Table 2: Perception of Instagram BBL Content on Body Image

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Decision
BBL content influences societal standards of beauty	179	210	10	1	400	3.36	Accepted
I often come across BBL content	198	189	13	-	400	3.36	Accepted
I compare my body image to those with BBL	157	187	52	4	400	3.20	Accepted
Exposure to BBL content affects my body satisfaction	164	169	59	8	400	3.22	Accepted

Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 reveals that respondents perceive Instagram BBL content as having a notable relationship with beauty standards and body image. The findings show that 389 respondents (97.25%) agreed that BBL content influences societal standards of beauty, producing a mean score of 3.42. This indicates that respondents generally recognise the role of BBL representations in shaping perceptions of what constitutes an attractive body.

The table further shows that 387 respondents (96.75%) frequently come across BBL content, with a mean score of 3.46, confirming the widespread visibility of such content among the respondents. More importantly, 344 respondents (86%) agreed that they compare their body image with individuals who have undergone BBL, producing a mean score of 3.24. Similarly, 333 respondents (83.25%) agreed that exposure to BBL content affects their body satisfaction, with a mean score of 3.22. The overall pattern suggests that BBL content on Instagram is associated with more than simple exposure. It appears to form part of the process through which respondents evaluate physical attractiveness and compare their own bodies with surgically enhanced body types. The finding that more than four-fifths of the respondents acknowledged an effect on their body satisfaction is particularly significant because it indicates that exposure to BBL representations may have implications for how students perceive and evaluate their own physical appearance.

Therefore, the findings satisfy the objective by demonstrating that respondents perceive Instagram BBL content as influential in shaping beauty standards, body comparison and body satisfaction

Objective 3: To examine celebrity influence on students' perception of BBL ideals

This objective focused on how Instagram celebrities shape respondents' body ideals, comparison behaviour, and attitudes toward cosmetic procedures.

Table 3: Perception of Celebrity Influence on BBL Ideals

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Decision
Exposure to celebrities showcasing BBL influences my body ideals	172	212	16	-	400	3.39	Accepted
Celebrities shape body ideals (BBL)	205	179	16	-	400	3.43	Accepted
I compare myself to celebrity BBL images	176	172	48	4	400	3.31	Accepted
BBL posts influence consideration of cosmetic procedure	180	191	28	1	400	3.38	Accepted

Field Survey, 2025



The findings in Table 3 demonstrate a strong perceived influence of celebrities on respondents' understanding and evaluation of BBL-related body ideals. A total of 384 respondents (96%) agreed that exposure to celebrities showcasing BBL influences their body ideals, producing a mean score of 3.39. Similarly, 384 respondents (96%) agreed that celebrities shape BBL-related body ideals, recording the highest mean in the table of 3.47.

The influence of celebrities is also evident in respondents' personal body comparison. A total of 348 respondents (87%) agreed that they compare themselves with celebrity BBL images, producing a mean score of 3.30. Furthermore, 371 respondents (92.75%) agreed that BBL posts influence their consideration of cosmetic procedures, with a mean score of 3.38.

The overall findings indicate that celebrities play a significant role in the formation and reinforcement of BBL-related beauty ideals among the respondents. The high level of agreement across all four items suggests that celebrity representations do not merely provide entertainment but can serve as reference points through which students evaluate desirable body shapes. The findings also indicate that celebrity BBL content may extend its influence from perceptions of beauty to personal body comparison and consideration of cosmetic procedures.

Thus, the objective is achieved, as the findings establish a strong perceived celebrity influence on respondents' BBL-related body ideals, comparison behaviour and attitudes towards cosmetic procedures

Objective 4: To assess students' awareness of risks associated with BBL procedures

This objective examined respondents' awareness of health risks, exposure to risk-related information, and willingness to recommend BBL procedures.

Table 4: Awareness of BBL Risks

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Decision
I am aware of the risks associated with BBL procedures	157	202	38	3	400	3.23	Accepted
I frequently encounter information about BBL risks on Instagram	172	212	16	-	400	3.39	Accepted
BBL procedures can pose serious health dangers	205	179	16	-	400	3.43	Accepted
I would advise my friends to undergo BBL despite the risks	-	13	189	198	400	1.53	Rejected

Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 indicates that respondents demonstrate a relatively high level of awareness of the risks associated with BBL procedures. A total of 359 respondents (89.75%) agreed that they are aware of the risks associated with BBL, producing a mean score of 3.28. Similarly, 384 respondents (96%) agreed that they frequently encounter information about BBL risks on Instagram, with a mean score of 3.39.

The respondents also demonstrated strong recognition of the seriousness of these risks. Specifically, 384 respondents (96%) agreed that BBL procedures can pose serious health dangers, producing a mean score of 3.47, the highest mean recorded for the objective.

The final item provides an important behavioural dimension to the findings. Only 13 respondents (3.25%) agreed that they would advise their friends to undergo BBL despite the risks, whereas 387 respondents (96.75%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The resulting mean of 1.54 falls below the 2.50 acceptance criterion and was therefore rejected.



Taken together, the findings indicate that respondents possess substantial awareness of BBL-related health risks and demonstrate a generally cautious attitude towards the procedure. Although the respondents are frequently exposed to BBL content and recognise its influence on body ideals, the findings do not suggest an equivalent willingness to encourage others to undergo the procedure in spite of its risks. This distinction is important because it suggests that exposure to BBL content and awareness of its attractiveness do not necessarily eliminate respondents' recognition of its potential health consequences.

Therefore, the objective is achieved, as the findings demonstrate a high level of awareness and recognition of the health risks associated with BBL procedures, accompanied by a strong reluctance to recommend the procedure despite those risks.

Discussion

This study examined how Instagram celebrity content influences the construction of Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) beauty ideals among university students, with particular attention to Instagram usage patterns, perceptions of beauty and body image, celebrity influence, and awareness of associated risks. The discussion is anchored on Social Comparison Theory and Cultivation Theory, which together explain how immediate psychological evaluation and prolonged media exposure shape beauty ideals in digital environments.

The demographic profile revealed a higher proportion of female respondents (71.8%) than male respondents (28.2%), suggesting that young women are more engaged with appearance-oriented content on Instagram. This finding supports Social Comparison Theory, which posits that individuals who are more invested in physical appearance are more likely to engage in upward comparisons with idealized images (Festinger, 1954). The finding is consistent with the studies of Tiggemann and Slater (2014) and Fardouly et al. (2018), who reported that female social media users are generally more susceptible to appearance comparisons and body dissatisfaction resulting from exposure to idealized images on Instagram. The predominance of female respondents therefore reinforces the relevance of examining Instagram's role in shaping contemporary beauty ideals.

The findings further revealed that respondents were highly active Instagram users, with most accessing the platform daily, spending considerable time on it, and frequently encountering BBL-related content. This finding aligns with Cultivation Theory, which argues that repeated exposure to consistent media messages gradually shapes individuals' perceptions of reality (Gerbner et al., 1986). It also corroborates the findings of Rodgers et al. (2020), who found that prolonged exposure to appearance-focused Instagram content contributes to the normalization of idealized body images. Similarly, Brown and Tiggemann (2016) reported that regular Instagram use increases exposure to appearance-related content, thereby reinforcing prevailing beauty standards. The present finding suggests that Instagram functions not only as a social networking platform but also as a digital environment where repeated exposure cultivates acceptance of surgically enhanced body ideals.

Regarding perceptions of beauty and body image, respondents agreed that BBL-related content influences societal beauty standards, encourages body comparison, and affects body satisfaction. These findings are consistent with Social Comparison Theory, which explains that individuals evaluate themselves by comparing their appearance with that of others, particularly those perceived as more attractive. The findings support those of Fardouly and Vartanian (2016), who found that exposure to idealized social media images increases body dissatisfaction through appearance comparisons. Likewise, Cohen et al. (2017) reported that Instagram exposure is associated with greater body surveillance and internalization



of unrealistic beauty ideals among young adults. The present findings therefore suggest that frequent exposure to curated BBL content contributes to the construction of body ideals that may negatively influence self-perception.

The study also found that Instagram celebrities significantly influence respondents' perceptions of BBL ideals by shaping body preferences, encouraging appearance comparisons, and increasing consideration of cosmetic procedures. This finding supports both Social Comparison Theory and Cultivation Theory. Celebrities serve as aspirational comparison targets, while repeated exposure to their enhanced appearances contributes to the normalization of surgically modified bodies. This result agrees with the findings of Perloff (2014), who argued that celebrity-centered social media content substantially influences body image and cosmetic enhancement attitudes among young adults. It also supports the work of Marengo et al. (2018), who found that intensive Instagram engagement predicts stronger appearance comparison and greater acceptance of idealized body standards. However, the findings contrast with those of Hendrickse et al. (2017), who observed that individual factors such as self-esteem and media literacy may reduce the influence of celebrity content, suggesting that not all social media users respond uniformly to appearance-based messages.

Despite the strong influence of Instagram and celebrities on BBL perceptions, respondents demonstrated considerable awareness of the health risks associated with BBL procedures and generally rejected recommending the procedure to others. This finding suggests that although media exposure may shape perceptions of beauty, awareness of health consequences can moderate behavioral intentions. While Cultivation Theory explains the gradual normalization of beauty ideals, the findings indicate that media influence does not necessarily translate into behavioral adoption when individuals possess adequate knowledge of associated risks. This finding is broadly consistent with Walker et al. (2021), who found that although social media exposure increases interest in cosmetic procedures, awareness of surgical risks significantly reduces individuals' willingness to undergo such procedures.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Instagram celebrity content influences the construction of BBL beauty ideals through both immediate psychological comparison and long-term media cultivation. The findings are consistent with a growing body of empirical literature indicating that Instagram plays a significant role in shaping body image perceptions and beauty standards among young adults (Fardouly et al., 2018; Rodgers et al., 2020; Cohen et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the study also demonstrates that awareness of the health risks associated with BBL procedures serves as an important moderating factor, suggesting that although Instagram contributes to the formation of beauty ideals, informed decision-making may reduce the likelihood of translating these ideals into cosmetic surgery intentions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study set out to examine the influence of Instagram celebrity content on the construction of Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) beauty ideals among university students within the framework of algorithmic beauty culture. The evidence generated from the study demonstrates that Instagram is not a peripheral platform in students' lives but a central space through which ideas of beauty, body image, and cosmetic enhancement are continuously shaped and reinforced.

Findings reveal a high level of sustained engagement with Instagram among undergraduates, accompanied by frequent exposure to BBL-related content. This persistent exposure indicates that algorithmic systems play a significant role in structuring what users see, thereby normalizing specific body types as aesthetically desirable. Over time, such repeated visual patterns contribute to the



internalization of BBL-enhanced bodies as part of contemporary beauty expectations within the student population.

The study further establishes that Instagram celebrity content is a powerful driver of body image construction. Celebrity figures serve as aspirational models whose curated appearances influence how students interpret attractiveness and evaluate their own bodies. Through continuous exposure, these representations encourage upward social comparison, which shapes perceptions of body adequacy and reinforces the desirability of surgically enhanced body forms.

Importantly, the findings also highlight a more nuanced outcome. While Instagram celebrity content significantly influences perception and aspiration, it does not automatically translate into uncritical acceptance of cosmetic procedures. Respondents demonstrated a clear awareness of the health risks associated with BBL procedures and largely resisted recommending them to others. This indicates that risk awareness operates as a stabilizing force, moderating the persuasive impact of celebrity-driven beauty ideals and algorithmically amplified content.

Overall, the study concludes that the construction of BBL beauty ideals among university students is shaped by a complex interplay of algorithmic exposure, celebrity influence, and individual awareness. Instagram functions simultaneously as a site of beauty ideal formation and a space where critical judgment about health and safety can still emerge.

The study focused on undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, providing context-specific insights into Instagram celebrity influence on the construction of BBL beauty ideals. While the findings offer valuable evidence within this setting, future studies may extend the investigation to other universities and demographic groups to enhance broader applicability. In addition, the study concentrated on Instagram as the platform of interest, without examining the potential influence of other social media platforms that also shape contemporary beauty ideals.

The findings underscore the need for media literacy and public awareness initiatives that encourage young people to critically evaluate appearance-focused content on Instagram and make informed decisions regarding cosmetic procedures. The study also strengthens the applicability of Social Comparison Theory and Cultivation Theory by demonstrating that Instagram celebrity content shapes beauty ideals through appearance comparison and repeated media exposure, while awareness of health risks moderates the influence of such content on behavioral intentions.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Universities should integrate structured media literacy and digital health education into general studies and student orientation programmes.
2. Social media platforms should enhance the visibility of verified, balanced, and evidence-based information on cosmetic procedures.
3. Health communication agencies and policymakers should design targeted campaigns that address both the aspirational appeal and potential health risks of cosmetic surgery.
4. Intervention programmes should consider gendered patterns of exposure and vulnerability to body image pressures. Special attention should be given to how male and female undergraduates differently interpret celebrity content and algorithmic beauty trends, ensuring that preventive strategies are inclusive and context-sensitive



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