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DIPLOMA THESIS TOPIC:

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN THE EFFECTS OF THE
IDEALIZED BODY IMAGES ON SATISFACTION WITH THE BODY AND
PERSONALITY OF THEIR OWN AND THOSE OF THEIR PARTNERS

ABSTRACT

The idealized media body images that surround us in the contemporary image-based culture have the power to alter people's contentment and overall satisfaction with themselves and their partners. The literature review revealed that the main driving process that is able to alter people's feeling about themselves and their partners is the social comparison, which is initiated by the mere repeated exposure of people to the mentioned images. Additionally, four further variables (gender, mood, self-esteem and psychological distance) were brought forward as it was presumed that they have the potential to affect the satisfaction even more. The experimental manipulation failed, however it was observed that there might be a fault in the perception of the effect that the media images have. Up till now, it was presumed that there is a *gender effect*, which eventually influences the satisfaction with body and personality as a dominant variable. Nonetheless, according to the findings of this research, there is a more complicated interplay between several interacting variables. This results in the assumption that the self-esteem is mediating the satisfaction of people with body and personality. At the end of the thesis, a new theoretical model of the studied process is presented as the main suggestion for further research.

KEYWORDS

Body satisfaction, personality satisfaction, social comparison, mere repeated exposure, media images, idealized body images, partner satisfaction, self-esteem, mood, psychological distance, gender