



Fitspiration & self-compassion, healthy for the body but also for the mind?

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Reference original paper:

Slater, A., Varsani, N., & Diedrichs, P. C. (2017). #fitspo or #loveyourself? The impact of fitspiration and self-compassion Instagram images on women's body image, self-compassion, and mood. *Body Image*, 22, 87–96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2017.06.004>

Link to original paper online:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1740144516305265>

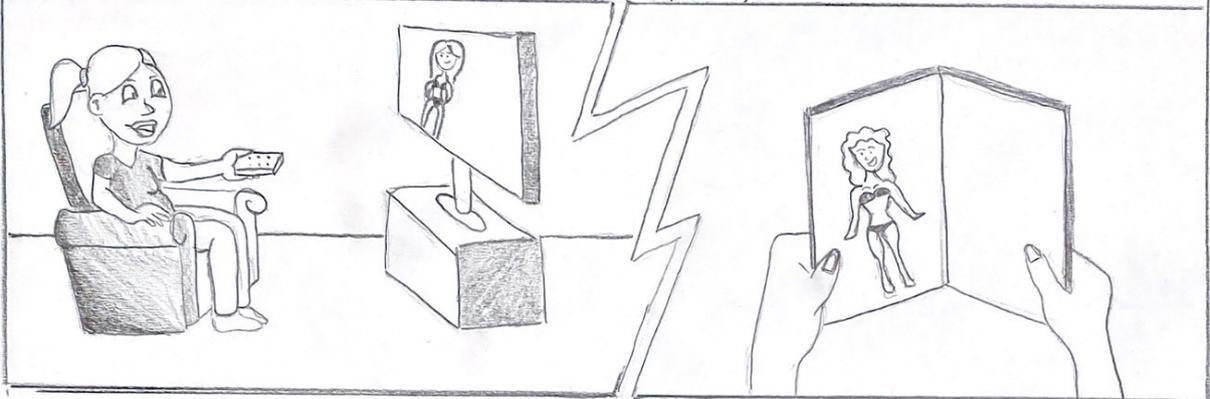
Course:

Visual Thinking and Composition, Winter 2020
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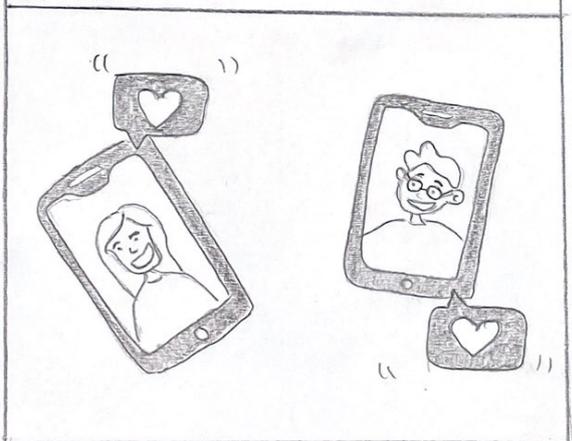
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Several studies show that exposure to 'thin-ideal' images in magazines or on television, is associated with body dissatisfaction among women (Grabe, Ward, & Hyde, 2008; Levine & Murnen, 2009; Want, 2009).



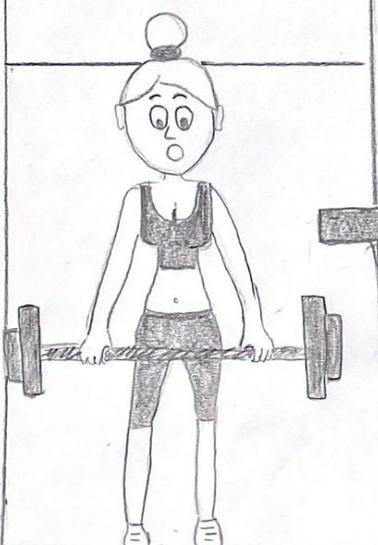
Body image is specifically influenced by social media, by for example photo sharing.



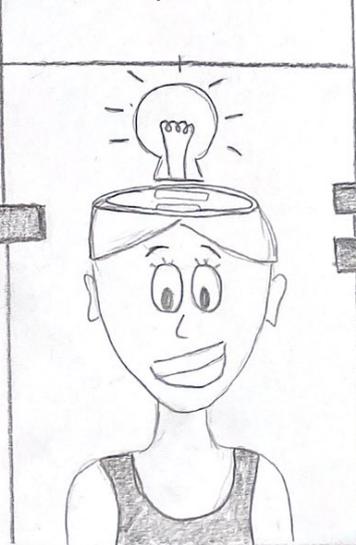
Recent research studies the impact of Instagram, due to it's focus on images.



Fitness



Inspiration



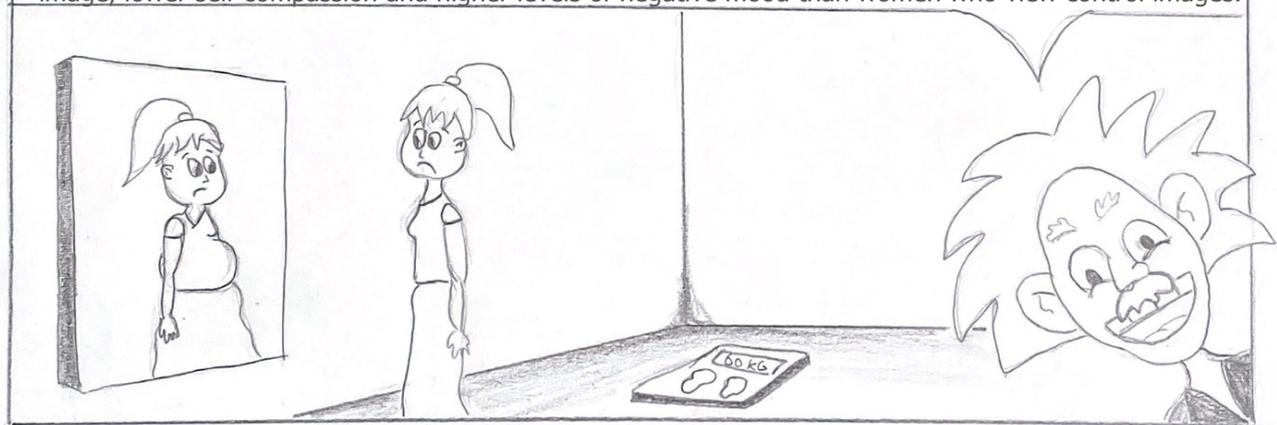
Fitspiration. (Images that motivate people to exercise & live healthy (Abena, 2013)).





However, this trend also promotes a certain body shape and makes people diet (Boepple, Ata, Rum, & Thompson, 2016)

Apparently, fitspiration images can cause harm to women's body image. Therefore, we expect that women who viewed fitspiration images will show lower levels of body satisfaction, lower positive body image, lower self-compassion and higher levels of negative mood than women who view control images.



Self-compassion means being kind to yourself, and accepting your flaws and mistakes (Neff, 2003).



We expect that women who viewed self-compassion quotes will experience more positive body image and self-compassion, and reduced negative mood compared to women who viewed control images.

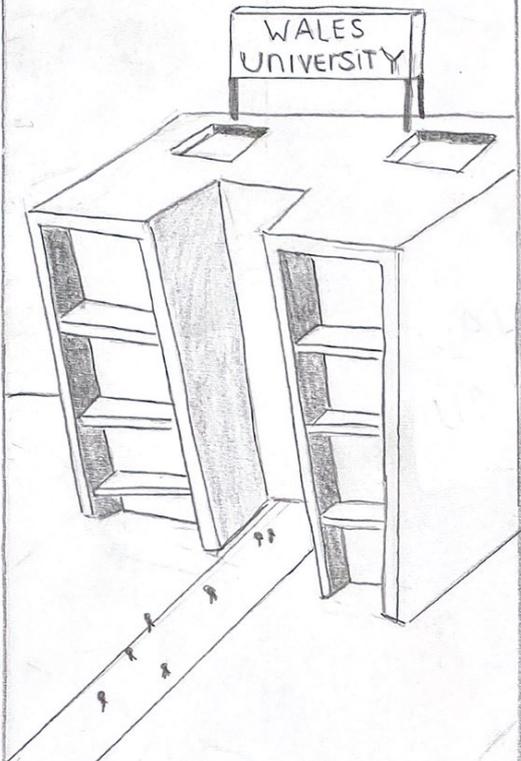
"Be your own reason to smile"

"You are beautiful"

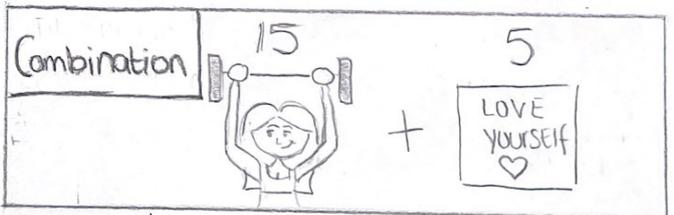
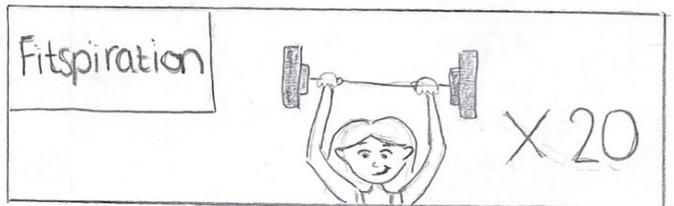
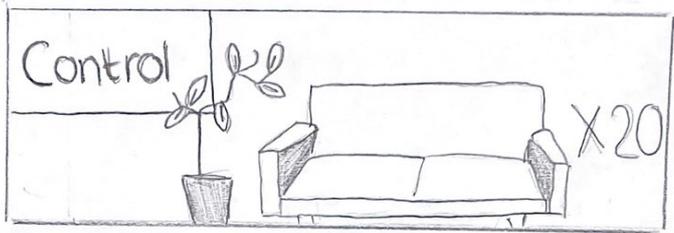
"Love yourself"

"No one is you and that is your power"

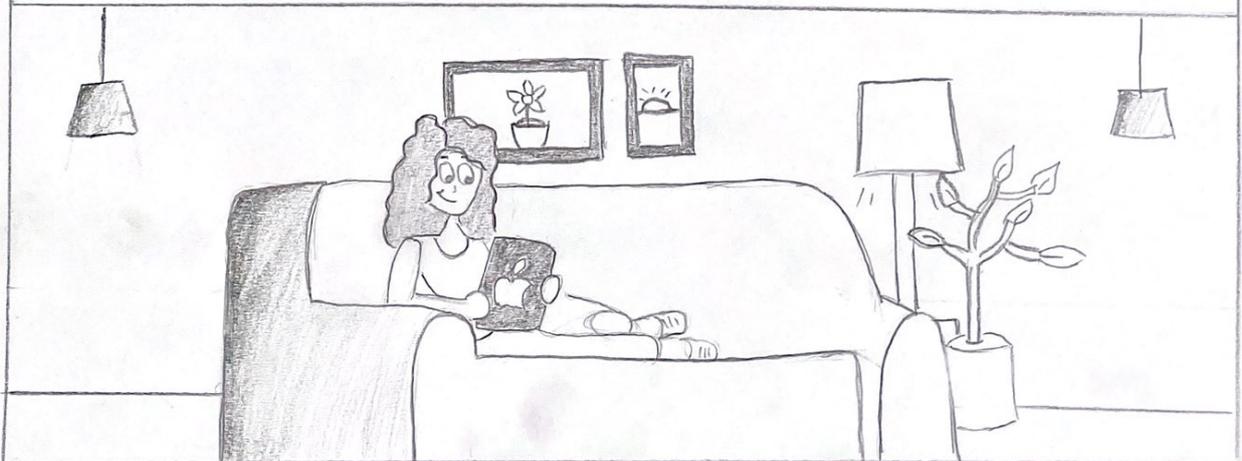
Method



160 female undergraduate students (18-25 years old) with a 'normal' BMI participated.



4 Instagram accounts were created, with each 20 images from public accounts. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions (control, fitspiration, self-compassion or fitspiration and self-compassion.) Participants could view the Instagram accounts on an iPad.



MEASURES

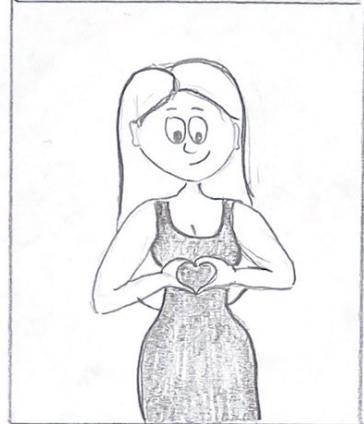
SOCIAL MEDIA USE



BODY APPRECIATION



BODY SATISFACTION



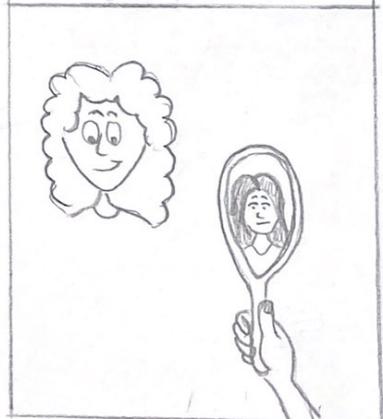
SELF-COMPASSION



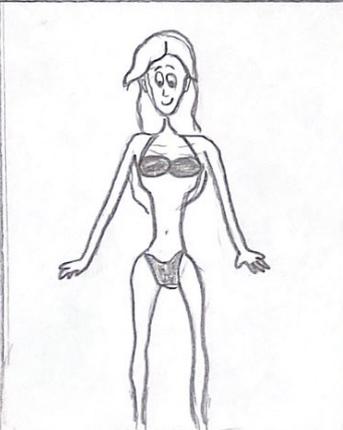
NEGATIVE MOOD



APPEARANCE COMPARISON



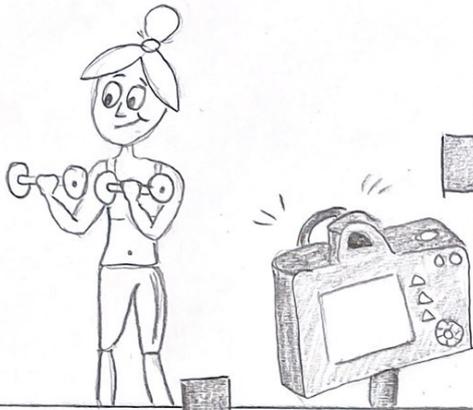
THIN-IDEAL INTERNALISATION



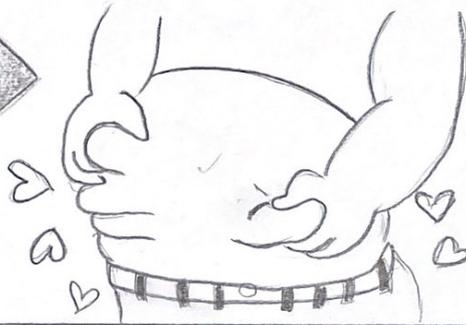
The following results were found:

RESULTS →

Exposure to fitspiration images...



...does not lead to a more negative body image and negative mood, compared to neutral images.



...but does lead to significantly less self-compassion post-exposure than viewing control images.

Exposure to self-compassion quotes...



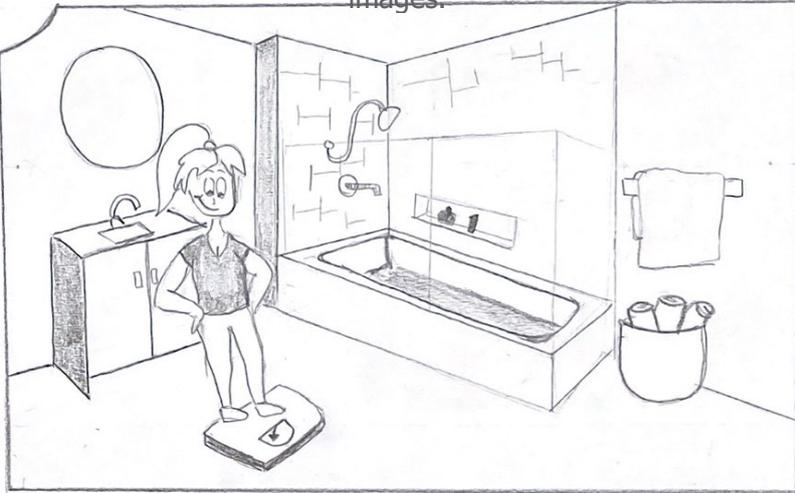
...seems to enhance women's body image, mood and levels of self-compassion.



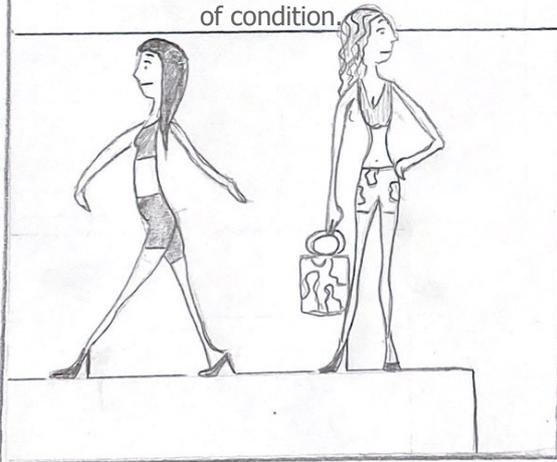
Moreover, a combination of fitspiration images and self-compassion images...



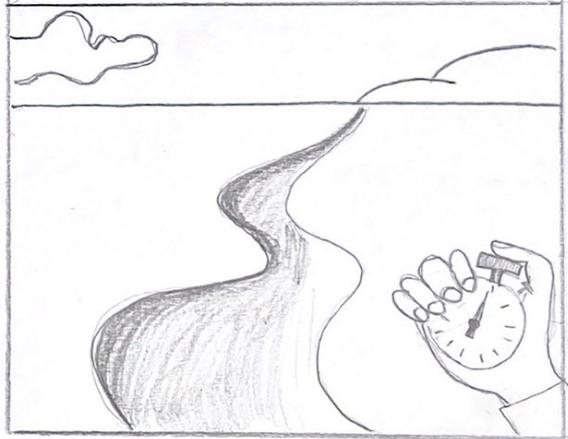
leads to a more positive body image, more self-compassion and more positive mood than only viewing fitspiration images.



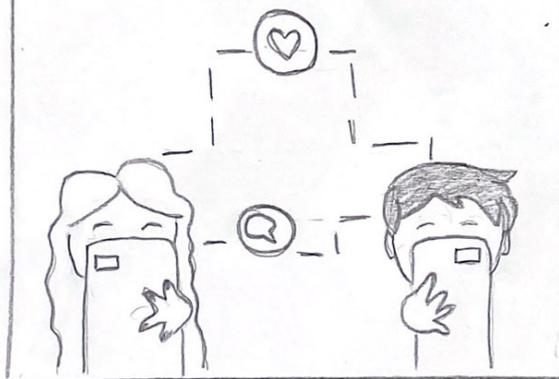
Thin-ideal internalization did not moderate the impact of fitspiration relative to any kind of condition.



Next time, a longer-term study of exposure to these kinds of contents would be valuable.



One limitation is that the experimental exposure is not representative of the actual exposure women have to Instagram images. Also, participants were not able to interact.



However, "this study makes an important contribution to the growing body of literature focusing on the impact of exposure to 'new' media. The findings are novel and noteworthy."

