

Fitness Blogging as a New Social Practice and Its Implications for Young Women’s Mental Health

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Fitness blogging and fitness marathons are becoming a popular social practice, especially among young women. Although these practices are claimed to provide health benefits, in reality they pose serious risks to the participants’ mental wellbeing. The paper focuses on a study aimed at the analysis of the level and factors of mental distress in female fitness blog subscribers, and the dynamics of their emotional wellbeing in the course of fitness marathons. A total of 112 women aged 18 to 35 years old, with a mean age of 23.5 (SD=4.7), participated in the study. All the respondents were Instagram fitness blog subscribers. The following methods were used in the study: Physical perfectionism scale [8]; Situational Inventory of Body-Image Dysphoria [14]; Perceived sociocultural pressure scale [3]; Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale [9]; Beck’s Depression Inventory [17]; N.G. Garanyan and A.B. Kholmogorova’s Three-Factor Perfectionism Questionnaire [1]. Received data testify that young women who spent on Instagram over 60 minutes a day differed from those who spent maximum 30 minutes online by significantly higher levels of excessive body standards and body dissatisfaction, and a greater severity of emotional maladjustment symptoms, including suicidal tendencies. The regression analysis showed that physical and general perfectionism as well as social anxiety and depression symptoms had the most significant effect on an increase in body dissatisfaction levels. After completion of a fitness marathon, women had significant increases in body dissatisfaction and emotional problems. Further research is needed to identify targets that would help to prevent the emotional maladjustment which occur as a result of young women’s engagement in fitness blogging.

Keywords: body dysphoria, fitness marathon, fitspiration, fitness blog.

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Introduction

This work relies on an assumption of L.S. Vygotsky’s cultural-historical psychology that a person’s development occurs through interiorizing of cultural norms, rules, customs, and various standards. Body and beauty standards and ideal body concepts have considerably varied in the course of time, while girls tend to assimilate them at an early age through playing with fashion dolls, looking at the magazine images, etc. [4; 10; 11; 26]. Since the beginning of the 21st century, these standards have been rapidly changing over the past 20 years: from an unnaturally thin body at the beginning of the century to an athletic frame with a thin waist, pumped up abs, and strong arm muscles at the present time [4; 10]. The contemporary cultural and social space is associated with an upsurge in information technologies and mass media development. Various mass media such as television, radio,

magazines, and the Internet, have been continuously informing people that they need to conform to unrealistic beauty ideals.

Social media have become an important source of various standards and norms in the 21st century. Over the past few years, social media users have found another way to actively engage in them, namely by running fitness blogs with images of athletic bodies. There has been a rise in the popularity of fitness blogs whose authors post images of their athletic bodies and present themselves as “inspiring people”. These blogs have become almost a cult due to carefully selected, beautifully designed and compelling content [24].

At first glance, social media fitness culture contributes to healthy eating, develops exercise habits, and promotes the idea that achieving one’s ideal body shape is within one’s power. However a lot of studies show that it is the mass media that trigger an increase in body dis-

satisfaction [11; 12]. Images in various mass media interfere significantly with the socio-cultural ideals of the body and exert a strong effect on the perception of the female body image [16; 23]. Investigating the relationship between dissatisfaction with one's own appearance and viewing the web content about the "ideal" body parameters and looks is an urgent problem. Experimental research has found an association between body dissatisfaction in women and their exposure to ideal lean images broadcast by media such as television, magazines, the Internet, and advertising [20].

Recently, an athletic frame with a thin waist combined with developed abs, powerful biceps, and firm buttocks, has become highly popular on the media and has been considered "ideal" for women at the present time [25; 10]. This shift to the ideal of an athletic frame takes root in a global social media movement known as "fitspiration" (a combination of "fitness" and "inspiration"). "Fitspiration" embraces images and inspirational quotes targeting mostly women to inspire them to a healthy lifestyle by means of giving advice on physical exercise and diet. A 2016 survey of the "Instagram" social network found that the rate of the #fitspiration hashtag entries reached 10 million images which proves the popularity of this kind of content. A recent content analysis of sports websites showed that focusing on looks and weight control resulted in such negative consequences as growing body dissatisfaction and general emotional maladjustment in women [25].

At the moment, there is a shortage of Russian studies on the social media fitness blog and fitness marathon effects on the youth's mental wellbeing. This highlights relevance and novelty of this study.

"Fitspiration" (Fitness Inspiration) and Fitness Marathons as Common Social Practice in Contemporary Informational Society

#Fitspiration (or "fitspo") is a genre of social content aiming at inspiring women to get a certain body shape. Images and videos usually focus on attractive, lean, and pumped bodies. Fitspiration was originally developed to promote fitness; it emphasizes the advantage of an athletic frame rather than thin one [24]. As it is claimed, this content aims at motivating women to exercise and to encourage a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

Tiggemann and Zaccardo [24] emphasized that Instagram had many vivid images of slim women who were exercising or wearing sports outfits. Therefore, it promotes an idea that only slim and fit women and men are beautiful and healthy. However, recent research shows that these accounts can adversely affect people's body image and cause severe emotional distress as a result of unfavorable social comparisons [22; 13].

Fitspiration is often available on social media; however it is still unclear to what extent the body image and exercise messages differ when targeting men and women. A content analysis aimed to identify specific features of fitspiration content in social media and to evaluate sex-related differences [19]. #Fitspo-marked content on Insta-

gram, Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr was collected within a 30-minute period. First of all, the findings showed that 87.2% of the images were extracted from Instagram. Most of the posts (308/415; 74.2%) were thematically related to exercise, and 81/415 (19.6%) were related to nutrition. 151 (36.4%) images targeted women only, and 114/415 (27.5%) images targeted men only. Women in the photos were significantly more likely to be under 25 years old ($p < 0.001$); to be almost completely naked ($p = 0.001$), and to have emphasized toned buttocks ($p < 0.001$). Women were more frequently sexualized than men ($p = 0.002$). #fitspo showed that the ideal female bodies were slim and toned, and male bodies were muscular.

Subsequent studies of sports blogs [12; 23; 24] demonstrated that almost all (97.82%) sports blogs included images of toned women. This analysis also showed that most blogs (92.85%) had posts that laid emphasis on exercise. Furthermore, these blogs often contained posts with negative or shaming comments about unhealthy diet risks and corresponding dietary recommendations.

In the first study of the effects of Fitspiration images, Tiggemann and Zaccardo [24] found that participants who viewed sports images wrote about their wish to improve their body shape and to eat healthy food, but they also reported decreased mood and an emerging dissatisfaction with their looks. Some studies showed that women's pursuit of an ideal appearance and a toned body had positive associations with eating disorders and compulsive physical exercise [25; 26]. Moreover, experimental studies showed that viewing images of ideal bodies was associated with an increased body dissatisfaction [13], anxiety and depressed mood. Another study found that women who viewed #fitspiration photos reported lower body satisfaction levels as compared to women who viewed travel photos [23].

A fitness marathon is a specific sports game that is carried out with the help of special applications or social media. Participants complete tasks, and the organizers exercise a remote control of the process. The participants who have failed to complete the task get dropped out of the marathon gradually. Information on the first fitness marathons appeared in 2014–2015. The popularity of fitness marathons has led to the emergence of special online applications. A fitness marathon participant buys access to the marathon and waits for it to start. The marathon usually lasts for one month, during which the participant gets daily video instructions with exercise, diet guidelines, and enjoys daily chat access. At the end of the marathon, the participants' "before and after" photos get evaluated by "likes", and the marathon organizers award prizes.

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between fitness blog participation, body dissatisfaction, mental distress, and personality features.

Research hypotheses:

1) Female fitness blog subscribers are guided by high beauty standards and have rigid concepts about the ideal body and its specific parts.

2) Women who often view Instagram images and dedicate more time to fitness marathons have higher levels of variables reflecting excessively high body standards (body dissatisfaction, physical perfectionism, and sociocultural

pressure), emotional distress (symptoms of social anxiety and depression), and maladaptive personality traits (hypersensitive narcissism and perfectionism).

3) Fitness marathon participation increases the levels of body dissatisfaction, unreasonably high bodily beauty standards and emotional distress among female fitness blog subscribers.

Methods

1) The “Fitness Blog Subscriber” Questionnaire consisted of questions regarding the respondent’s frequency of Instagram use, personal activity, and commitment to fitness blogs. The Questionnaire included statements describing subjective assumptions as to the fitness blog influence on body standards that participants needed to rate on the Likert Scale. At the end of the Questionnaire, participants were invited to share their ideas about an ideal female body.

2) Body-related attitude measures

1. The Physical Perfectionism Scale [8] was developed for physical perfectionism severity assessment, with physical perfectionism being a system of individual appearance-related concepts and attitudes. These include being increasingly concerned about one’s appearance; striving to comply with high body standards and to achieve the best results in one’s struggle for an ideal body. An original questionnaire included 16 items and it was later expanded to 22 items. Participants were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with each item using 4 options, “definitely not”, “perhaps not”, “probably yes”, “definitely yes”.

2. The Situational Inventory of Body-Image Dysphoria [14] was developed by T.F. Cash in 1994 and adapted by L.T. Baranskaya and colleagues for use in a Russian sample in 2008. This method allows for evaluation of negative attitudes towards one’s own body in the context of certain situations. The inventory consists of 20 statements that represent different real-life situations. Participants were asked to recall times in their lives when they had faced each of the situations and to rate how frequently they had experienced negative emotions because of their own looks on a scale from 0 (“never”) to 4 (“always or almost always”).

3. The Perceived Sociocultural Pressure Scale [3]. The Scale was developed to study the effect of sociocultural pressure on the desire to lose weight in young women. It consists of ten statements that describe family, friend, partner, and media pressure to lose weight, e.g. “I’ve noticed a strong message from my family to have a thin body.” Nowadays, young women and many young men report feeling the external pressure regarding the need to increase their muscle mass. Therefore, the scale was modified to include statements related to muscle mass gain and achieving an athletic body frame. The respondents were asked to rate the perceived pressure on their wish to lose weight / gain muscle mass / achieve an athletic frame on a scale from 1 to 5 (“none – a lot”). Both the mean score for all factors and the mean values of every pressure factor (family, mass media, en-

vironment, i.e. friends, a training group, a partner) were calculated.

3) Emotional distress measures

1. The Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale [9]. This scale was proposed by M. Leary in 1983 as a brief alternative to the Fear of Negative Evaluation Test. The scale consists of 12 statements which are related to respondents’ attitude to receiving attention and evaluation from other people. Each statement was rated on a scale from 0 to 4 (“strongly disagree – almost completely agree”). At the end, the total score of all statement ratings was calculated.

2. Beck’s Depression Inventory [17]. The Inventory includes descriptions of depression symptoms of varying severity. Respondents had to evaluate whether they had or lacked these symptoms. Depending on the symptom severity, each item could be rated on a scale from 0 (no symptom, or minimum symptom severity) to 3 (maximum symptom severity).

4) Maladaptive personality trait measures

1. N.G. Garanyan and A.B. Kholmogorova’s Three-Factor Perfectionism Questionnaire [1]. The questionnaire consists of 18 statements, that can be grouped according to three scales: 1) “Concerns about being evaluated by others resulting from unfavorable comparisons with them”; 2) “High standards and requirements to oneself”; 3) “Negative selection and fixation on one’s own imperfection”. The first scale tests socially prescribed perfectionism; the second scale tests self-oriented perfectionism; and the third one tests perfectionistic cognitive style. Answers were scored as follows: “definitely yes” was 4 points; “probably yes” was 3 points; “perhaps not” was 1 point, “definitely not” was 0 points. The total score describing the general perfectionism severity and individual scores for each scale were calculated.

2. The Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale [22]. A new scale for hypersensitive narcissism was derived by correlating the elements of the H. A. Murray’s (1938) Narcissism Scale with an MMPI-based composite latent narcissism scale. As a result, 10 items of the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS) were identified. In the meantime, the Scale has been undergoing validation in a Russian-speaking sample.

Research procedure

The research was designed as an online survey. Female fitness blog subscribers were asked to fill out a set of 7 measures. Before the start of the study, the participants were informed about the survey design and that the study was anonymous, and the results would not be disclosed to third parties. Every participant had an opportunity to get feedback on their results.

The second part of the study included young female fitness marathon participants. 44 participants filled out the set of measures before and after the marathon. At the end of the fitness marathon, we asked the participants to describe their general wellbeing in any format.

Sample

The study included 112 women aged 18 to 35 years; their mean age was 23.5 (SD=4.7).

Results

One of the “Fitness Blog Subscriber” Questionnaire items aimed at identifying the frequency of one’s body comparisons with social media images. Table 1 shows that 4% of women reported that they compared their bodies with social media images on a constant basis, and 25% did it frequently.

The last Questionnaire item invited the participants to describe the ideal female figure in any format. The rate of descriptions (N=73) of a toned athletic figure allows us to confirm the other authors’ findings that the ideal body concepts have shifted from a thin frame to athletic one. At the same time, some participants left comments that contained thoughts about the importance of being free from standards and taking one’s own feelings into account (“An ideal figure is the figure that its owner likes”; “The body should be comfortable for its owner”, “Different things suit different people, there is no one ideal frame” etc.)

Figure 1 below illustrates the rate (%) of the women whose statements emphasized the importance of being independent of existing body standards and the women who stuck to the ideas of a lean muscular body.

There were three groups of women depending on the amount of time they spent on Instagram per day: 30 minutes maximum; 60-90 minutes; or 90 minutes minimum. The first group included 31 women; the second one included 37 women and the third one included 44 women. Fig. 2 illustrates their distribution in per cent.

Describing their ideas about the ideal body, the young women singled out 7 key features. Table 2 shows that the women who spent more time on Instagram mentioned specific body parts when describing the ideal body more frequently than the others.

Table 3 below presents various test findings in three groups of the women singled out depending on the time they spent on Instagram.

As Table 3 shows, depending on the time spent on Instagram, the young women had significant differences in terms of body attitudes as measured by the Physical Perfectionism Scale and the Situational Inventory of Body-Image Dysphoria. Physical perfectionism and body dissatisfaction were significantly higher (p<0.001) in the women who spent more time online. These women also had significantly higher levels of emotional distress as evidenced by more severe depression symptoms and fear of negative evaluation from others. As for the socio-cultural pressure levels, all the three groups perceived it as quite high. The **Three-Factor Perfectionism Questionnaire** variable levels did not differ between the three groups and were characterized by a wide scatter, with the average values approaching extreme values for the community sample that the authors had studied for the Questionnaire validation [1]. According to the validation data, the Interquartile range varied from 29 to 43 scores in the community sample, and from 36 to 50 scores in the clinical group of patients with depression and anxiety disorders. The lack of differences between the groups

Frequency of Body Comparisons with Social Media Images in Female Fitness Blog Subscribers (Based on Answers to “How Often do You Compare Your Body with Social Media Images?”)

Table 1

Frequency of one’s body comparisons with social media images	Number of participants N (%)
Constantly	61 (54%)
Frequently	29 (25%)
Rarely	21 (21%)

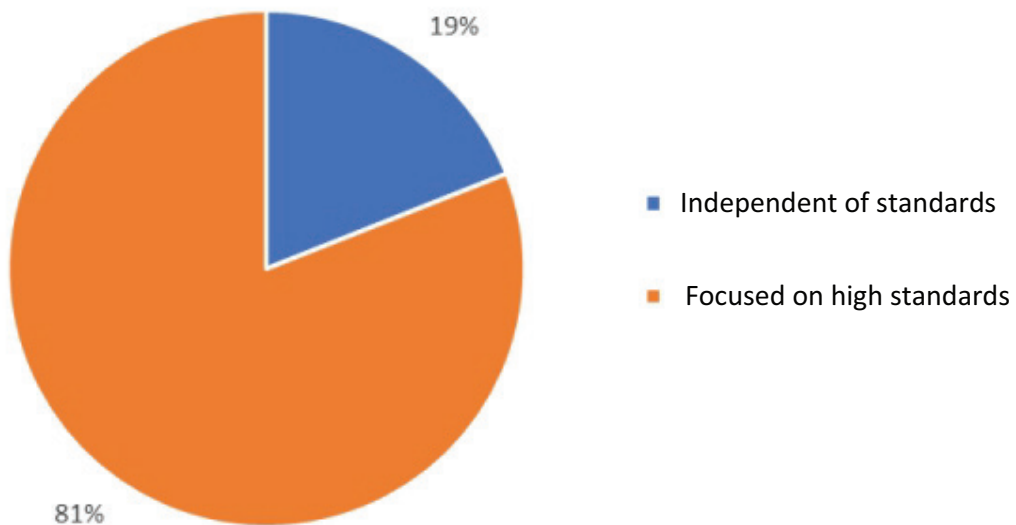


Fig. 1. Respondents’ answers describing their ideal female figure concepts

highlights the importance of studying specific types of perfectionism for certain activities. In our case, with the respondents engaging in body-perfectioning activities, it is important to study not only general perfectionism (total perfectionism score), although it correlates with gen-

eral body dissatisfaction (see Table 5), but also physical perfectionism as a specific destructive factor.

As Table 4 shows, more than half of the women who spent on Instagram over 90 minutes a day had moderate-to-severe depression symptoms, that was twice as much

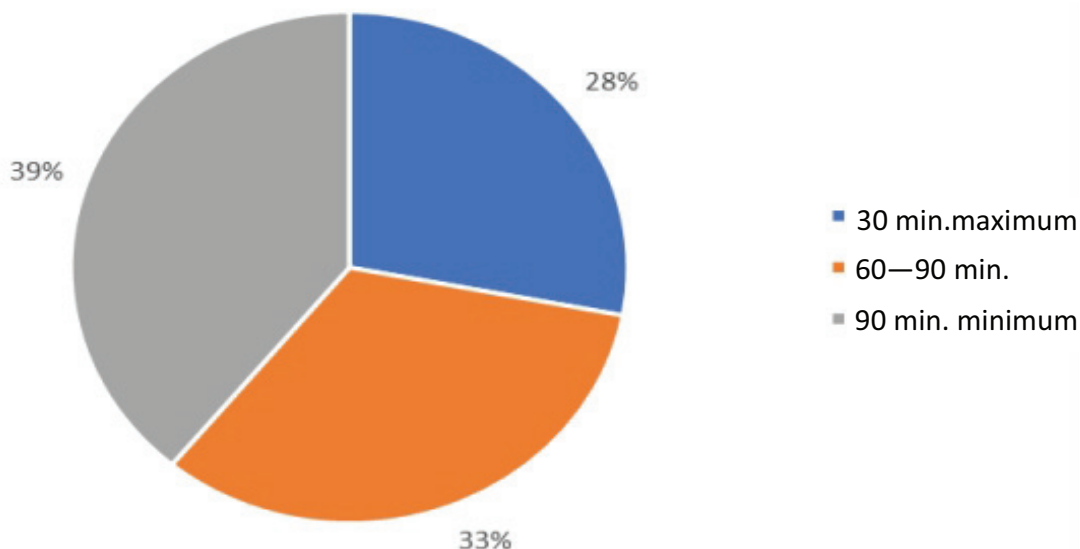


Fig. 2. Women distribution by time they spent on Instagram

Table 2

Differences in Mean Values of Body Part Mentions in Ideal Body Descriptions

Groups	Instagram time per day			Significance level (p) (Kruskal-Wallis test)
	30 minutes maximum (N = 31)	60—90 minutes (N = 37)	90 minutes minimum (N = 44)	
M (SD)				
Number of body part mentions in ideal body descriptions	2.3 (0.8)	5.7 (1.6)	6.8 (1.8)	0.000*

* – the between-group differences are statistically significant (the Kruskal-Wallis test).

Table 3

Differences in Body Attitudes, Emotional Distress, and Maladaptive Personality Traits

Measures	Instagram time per day			Significance level (p) (the Kruskal-Wallis test)
	30 minutes maximum (N = 31)	60—90 minutes (N = 37)	90 minutes minimum (N = 44)	
M (SD)				
Body Attitude Measures				
Physical perfectionism	17.01(6.5)	21.7 (5.17)	28.64(7.6)	0.000*
Body dissatisfaction	1.5(0.95)	1.74 (0.85)	2.17(0.96)	0.000*
Perceived sociocultural pressure	1.75(0.56)	1.91(0.65)	2.18(0.89)	0.306
Emotional Distress Measures				
Depression severity	8.36(7.2)	11.55(5.95)	17.03(11.13)	0.000*
Fear of negative evaluation	21.9(6.24)	20.69 (6.76)	26.8 (7.8)	0.000*
Maladaptive Personality Traits Measures				
General Perfectionism	38.94(15.2)	37.07(10.8)	39.97(12.65)	0.479
<i>Socially-prescribed perfectionism</i>	14.6 (7.2)	14.2 (5.4)	15.3 (7.4)	0.329
<i>Self-oriented perfectionism</i>	12.05 (5.00)	13.01 (4.66)	12 (4.54)	0.418
<i>Perfectionistic cognitive style</i>	11.8 (6.54)	10.9 (4.94)	12.5 (4.58)	0.434
<i>Hypersensitive narcissism</i>	26.47(6.66)	29.9 (6.2)	32.7 (7.83)	0.07t

* – the between-group differences are statistically significant (the Kruskal-Wallis test), t – the significance level is $p < 0.1$.

as for the young women who spent 60 to 90 minutes a day on the network. It was also striking that about half of the women in these two groups (45% and 47%, respectively) reported suicidal thoughts, which significantly exceeded the suicidal ideation levels in the group who spent less than 30 minutes online, as well as the general population levels. Nevertheless, 29% of the young women who spent less than 30 minutes on Instagram had suicidal thoughts and intentions, with this level being quite problematic too.

Thus, women who used Instagram often, had significantly higher levels of excessive body demands (as expressed by physical perfectionism and body dissatisfaction); emotional distress (depression symptoms and fear of negative evaluation) and suicidal tendencies.

Moreover, there were significant correlations between body dissatisfaction levels and other various measures reflecting: 1) excessively high body demands (a moderate association between physical perfectionism, body dissatisfaction and perceived social pressure); 2) emotional distress (a moderate association between depression and fear of negative evaluation); 3) maladaptive personality traits and cognitive style (weak associations with the Three-factor Questionnaire's total score of perfectionism, socially-prescribed perfectionism, perfectionistic cognitive style and hypersensitive narcissism) (see Table 5).

As Table 5 indicates, the only variable that had no positive association with body dissatisfaction was self-oriented perfectionism. This finding is consistent with several other studies, which showed that this variable might be associated with a greater personal autonomy and goals and attitudes' relative independence of external demands and standards [1; 7], which may also include the ideal body concept.

A series of regression analyzes was also carried out to assess the effects of emotional distress, excessively high body standards and maladaptive personality traits on body dissatisfaction. Table 6 presents the results of regression for body dissatisfaction as a dependent variable.

It was found that four independent variables – and namely, physical perfectionism, fear of negative evaluation, depression, and perfectionism total score – influenced the body dissatisfaction levels. The model explained 71.2% of the dependent variable variance ($R^2 = 0.71$; $F = 99.03$).

Dynamics of Body-Related Attitudes and Emotional Maladjustment Levels in Women before and after Fitness Marathon

44 women of the whole sample participated in a fitness marathon. They were asked to fill in the question-

Table 4

Depression Severity in Female Blog Subscribers Who Spent Different Amount of Time on Instagram

Depression Severity	Respondent Groups	30 minutes maximum (N = 31)	60–90 minutes (N = 37)	90 minutes minimum (N = 44)
	Number of participants, N (%)			
No symptoms		16 (51%)	10 (27%)	5 (11%)
Mild		9 (29%)	17 (45%)	16 (36%)
Moderate		2 (7%)	6 (16%)	6 (14%)
Severe		4 (13%)	4 (11%)	17 (39%)
Suicidal thoughts and intentions		9 (29%)	17 (45%)	21 (47%)

Table 5

Relationships between Body Dissatisfaction and Other Measures of Body Attitudes, Emotional Distress and Maladaptive Personality Traits

Variables and methods	Body dissatisfaction (Situational Inventory of Body-Image Dysphoria)
Body attitudes	
Physical perfectionism	.532**
Perceived sociocultural pressure	.412**
Emotional distress	
Depression symptoms	.517**
Fear of negative evaluation	.422**
Maladaptive personality traits	
Perfectionism Total Score	.325**
Socially-prescribed perfectionism	.323*
Self-oriented to perfectionism	.071
Perfectionistic cognitive style	.419**
Hypersensitive narcissism	.319*

* – $p < 0.05$ (Spearman's rank correlation), ** – $p < 0.001$ (Spearman's rank correlation)

naires before (Time 1) and after (Time 2) the marathon. At Time 1, the participants described their goals including weight loss, gluteal and abs muscles strengthening. The fitness marathon procedure was as follows: every day at a certain time the participants were sent a file with a set of exercises and one creative task, and they had one day to complete the exercise and the task. The young women had to report on their progress by sending a photo of the completed task and an accelerated training video. At the beginning and at the end of the marathon, the young women took their body measurements and provided them as a final report.

Statistical data processing was carried out using the SPSS statistical package and Microsoft Excel. The Wil-

coxon signed-rank test for related samples was used to compare the variables' levels at Times 1 and 2 (tab. 7).

As Table 7 shows, at Time 2, after the fitness marathon, the young women's levels of body dissatisfaction, physical perfectionism, and depression symptoms grew significantly.

At Time 2, we also asked the participants to describe their general wellbeing in any format. Then, we singled out the criteria, which the women used to describe their wellbeing after the fitness marathon completion. Table 8 presents the results of the analysis of the women's self-reports.

As Table 8 shows, the women mentioned various characteristics of their emotional state with domi-

Table 6

Regression Analysis for Body Dissatisfaction as Dependent Variable (N = 112)

Variable	Beta	T	P
Physical perfectionism	0.363	4.212	0.001
Fear of negative evaluation	0.312	3.920	0.000
Depression symptoms	0.402	3.635	0.000
Perfectionism Total Score	0.251	3.013	0.001

Table 7

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for Related Samples and Mean Levels of Body-Related Attitudes and Emotional Distress in Young Women before and after Fitness Marathon

Variables and methods	Values		Wilcoxon signed-rank test	
	Time 1 M (SD)	Time 2 M (SD)	Z	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Body-Related Attitudes				
Physical Perfectionism (Physical Perfectionism Scale)	21.6 (4.67)	24.3 (6.03)	5.896 (a)	.000
Body dissatisfaction (Situational Inventory of Body-Image Dysphoria)	2.07 (.83)	2.17 (.87)	3.404 (a)	.001
Indicators of emotional distress				
Depression severity (Beck's Depression Inventory)	13.9 (7.42)	18.6 (8.09)	5.802 (a)	.000

Table 8

Self-reported Evaluation of Wellbeing in Fitness Marathon Completers

Criterion	Statements	Number of mentions
Performance	I didn't lose even 100 g / I see no changes / the waist has become thinner / I have pumped up what I wanted / [I have achieved] "nothing" generally / I have put on weight and that's it / it seems that I have just gained weight / no matter how hard I tried, nothing worked / I have lost weight / [it was] useless for me / I do not see the result / [I got] nowhere near losing weight / I weighted 56 kg and nothing has changed / the result sucks / I failed to lose weight / [my] weight froze / I lost so much in the beginning, and then there was no change / I have achieved the result, gained mass / the result is good, my body has become more toned /	16
Emotional state	I am disappointed * 7 / massive (utter) disappointment * 3 / I became even more unhappier / I am terribly upset as a result / it seems it is even more disappointing / ... [I am] happy / I feel disappointed, this was quite an amount of money for me / I was so nervous every day; I felt relief when this whole thing came to an end / I'm angry that I have lapsed /	18
Self-image	It failed work for me, I'm a loser / .. and I'm obese and fat / Everyone is so great, not like me / I'm a real loser /	4
Behavior	I lapsed and overate / I have been having the blind munchies, I have been eating so much / I started to spend more time at the gym/ well, I have signed up for the gym /	4

neering negative feelings (disappointment, hurt and anger) and provided subjective evaluations of their fitness marathon performance, i.e. subjective feelings of the changes in the body (with a feeling of being dissatisfied with the results standing out), most frequently. Statements characterizing one's own self and behavior after the marathon contained more negative evaluations.

Discussion

The findings obtained are consistent with the results of multiple foreign and domestic contemporary studies. For example, there is evidence for a shift towards an athletic figure popularity over thin one [4; 5; 10]. "The ideal of an athletic frame", characterized both by a lean and toned body with a more muscular upper body, flat belly with six-pack abs, and a toned lower body, has become popular with various social groups [25]. Likewise, our study participants provided significantly more descriptions of a muscular, toned body image when writing about the ideal figure. Our study showed that female fitness blog subscribers were guided by high appearance standards and had rigid ideas about the ideal figure and its specific parts which complies with the existing research data [5]. When comparing our results to earlier findings, we can see an increase in the rate of women who focus on high beauty standards. P.M. Tarkhanova's study showed that 70% of women laid an extreme emphasis on appearance and had strict beauty standards, while in our study this high beauty standard orientation was present in 81% of the women [4].

Previous experimental studies showed a link between an exposure to thin ideal images published by various mass media (television, magazines, and advertising) and body dissatisfaction in women [20]. The rise in the athletic frame popularity was partly due to a global uprise of fitness blogging on social media, i.e. the media sources that many women use today to get information related to health, diet, and exercise.

Our study highlighted the importance of time that the female participants spent on Instagram: the more time the young women dedicated to viewing fitness blog images, the higher their levels of excessive body demands, emotional distress and maladaptive personality traits were. In compliance with a number of foreign stud-

ies, our study findings clearly indicate that active Instagram use can give rise to body dissatisfaction.

Our study also confirmed the hypothesis that female fitness blog subscribers' levels of body dissatisfaction, excessive bodily beauty standards and emotional distress increased significantly upon the fitness marathon completion. Their levels of physical perfectionism and depression symptoms increased significantly as well. There was also a predominance of negative emotional state evaluations and dissatisfaction with the results after the fitness marathon.

Conclusions

1) In the present times, the ideal of a "thin" figure, which was typical of the late 1990s and early 2000s, has undergone significant changes. The new ideal, a "sculpted" athletic body, which is portrayed as toned, high in muscle mass and low in body fat, is widely promoted on fitness blogs and social media.

2) Preoccupation with one's appearance has been assuming epidemic proportions — an increasing number of people have been experiencing concerns about, and often dissatisfaction with the way they look. Female fitness blog subscribers are guided by excessively high body standards and have rigid ideas about the ideal figure and its specific parts.

3) Young women who spent on fitness blogs over 90 minutes a day had high levels of excessively high body standards and emotional distress, including increased suicidal tendencies. The regression analysis showed that physical and general perfectionism, depression, and social anxiety exerted the strongest effect on body dissatisfaction.

4) Following their participation in the fitness marathon, young women had significantly higher levels of body dissatisfaction, physical distress, and depression symptoms, which is confirmed by the descriptions of their negative emotional state immediately upon the fitness marathon completion.

5) The findings obtained allow us to infer that young female fitness blog subscribers and marathon participants have a high risk of emotional maladjustment. There is a pressing need for preventive measures to address the youth's massive engagement in social media practices that are dangerous for their mental health.

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Участие в фитнес-блогах как новая социальная практика и ее последствия для психического здоровья молодых женщин

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Участие в фитнес-блогах и фитнес-марафонах становится одной из популярных социальных практик, прежде всего среди молодых женщин. И, хотя в качестве одной из целей этих практик заявляется польза для здоровья, в реальности они сопряжены с серьезными рисками для психического благополучия участников. В статье представлены результаты исследования, цель которого — изучение уровня и факторов психического неблагополучия женщин-участниц фитнес-блогов, а также динамики их эмоционального состояния в процессе фитнес-марафонов. В исследовании приняли участие 112 женщин в возрастном диапазоне от 18 до 35 лет, средний возраст — 23,5 лет; среднее отклонение — 4,7. Все респонденты являются подписчицами различных фитнес-блогов в социальной сети Instagram. В исследовании были использованы следующие методики: Опросник

физического перфекционизма [8]; Опросник «Ситуативной неудовлетворённости образом тела» [14]; Шкала воспринимаемого социокультурного давления [3]; Краткая шкала страха негативной оценки [9]; Шкала депрессии Бека [17], Трёхфакторный опросник перфекционизма Н.Г. Гаранян и А.Б. Холмогоровой [1]. Полученные данные свидетельствуют о том, что молодые женщины, проводящие в сети Instagram 60 минут в день и более, отличаются от тех, кто проводит в Сети не более 30 минут, значимо более высокими показателями требований к своему телу и неудовлетворённости им, а также большей выраженностью симптомов эмоциональной дезадаптации, включая суицидальную направленность. Согласно данным регрессионного анализа, наиболее значимое влияние на рост показателей неудовлетворённости своим телом оказывают физический и общий перфекционизм, а также социальная тревожность и депрессивная симптоматика. После участия в фитнес-марафоне у женщин значительно повышаются показатели неудовлетворённости собственным телом и показатели эмоционального неблагополучия. Дальнейшие исследования необходимы для того, чтобы наметить мишени профилактики эмоциональной дезадаптации, к которой приводит массовое увлечение молодых женщин фитнес-блогами.

Ключевые слова: неудовлетворённость своим телом, фитнес-марафон, fitspiration, фитнес-блог.

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