

This section provides a comprehensive review of existing literature on the impact of social media on eating habits. In Saudi Arabia, social media influencers mainly promote restaurants that serve high-energy-dense food rather than restaurants serving low-energy-dense food. Developing a negative body image increases eating disorders, including dieting, bingeing, fasting, calorie counting, and self-induced vomiting, which eventually lead to long-term side effects. It explores studies that have examined the relationship between social media use and dietary preferences, focusing on how social norms propagated on these platforms influence individuals' food consumption choices. Social media influencers can be defined as famous content creators with many followers, promoting products and services to inspire others. The popularity of a social media influencer depends on a more favorable attitude among their followers toward purchasing products and brands advertised by the influencer. Social media influencers can persuade their audience to purchase products, join movements, follow their advice, and shape attitudes and behaviours. The section also discusses research on the role of online friends in shaping eating habits and the potential benefits of social media as a source of information on diet and wellness. Influencers on social media represent new, independent external advocates who shape audience behavior through posts, blogs, and tweets. Specifically, maladaptive usage of Facebook has been associated with bulimic symptoms, over-eating, and body dissatisfaction. They promote products and lifestyles and share their perception of health and body image messages, often incompatible with health promotion. Saudi Arabia is among the top countries to use Twitter worldwide. Moreover, social media exposure increases anxiety among users, which leads to emotional over-eating. The issue is that social media content is not regulated nor intensively monitored; therefore, people are exposed to misleading information daily. In this study, 36% of participants followed influencers on social media such as celebrities, coaches, and athletes. In Saudi Arabia, 68% of the Saudi population were active on social media in 2019. Twitter is one of the most widely used social media platforms today, and it is becoming a very common data source platform, including health related research. The way social media is changing the food habits of people is through advertisements, news, and posts on different platforms. The use of social media is increasing in developing countries. Moreover, one-fifth of the study participants were influenced by social media when making food-related decisions. In addition, food advertising on social media works through various mechanisms. Most of the influential social media accounts have many followers. In 2021, almost 4 billion people are using social media worldwide, a two-fold increase since 2015.