NUDITY ON THE NET
Social Perception of Body Censorship on Instagram and Twitter (X)

PATRICIA SÁNCHEZ-HOLGADO [1], MARÍA ELENA RODRÍGUEZ-BENITO [2]
[1] University of Salamanca, Spain
[2] Pontifical University of Salamanca, Spain

ABSTRACT

The sexualization and censorship of nudity on social networks generates a controversial debate about freedom of expression, gender equality, individual autonomy, or discrimination. The objective of this work is to analyse the perception of the censorship to which male and female bodies are subjected on Instagram and Twitter (X). The results shows that there is a gap in the perception of censorship based on gender, especially towards women, showing that there is a sexualized view in society that pornifies what is natural.

1. Introduction

The utilisation and consumption of social networks has continued to increase in recent years. The act of scrolling through one's mobile phone screen in search of tweets, posts, TikToks, or live videos has become a ubiquitous practice among the 40.7 million individuals worldwide who have a profile on a social network (We Are Social Spain, 2023).

The utilisation of social networks is employed for a multitude of purposes, including the expression of disparate perspectives on global issues, the dissemination of personal and occasionally intimate information, the appreciation of artistic and aesthetic creations by others, and even the pursuit of economic gain. Nevertheless, opening a social network is akin to opening a window onto a world characterised by diverse social, geographical, cultural and even generational realities and contexts that, on occasion, are in conflict and do not always receive the same level of approval from users or algorithms. This conflict is frequently resolved through the implementation of censorship, a content moderation policy that is often in conflict with the right of users to express themselves freely.

However, in the context of nudity and semi-nudity, particularly female nudity, the user's right to artistic expression and the network's community standards are in conflict. The detection algorithms, or the gaze of user censors, perceive nudity without distinguishing between free artistic expression and the realm of pornography. This has resulted in the banning of works of art that have been exhibited in museums and admired for centuries.

This phenomenon can be attributed to the sexualisation or pornification of the gaze, which endows female nudity, particularly the breast, with a sexual connotation that was previously absent (Sibilia 2014, p. 50). The data provide further insight into this phenomenon. In 2022, the fifth most visited website in the world was PornHub, the seventh was XVideos, and more than 30% of the content circulating on social networks was pornographic in nature (We Are Social Spain, 2023).

The formation of individual identity is contingent upon the social and cultural milieu in which each individual develops (Bradley, 2020; Butler, 1997). This implies that the practice of censorship is deeply embedded within the social fabric itself, as well as within the gaze of users, who in turn transfer this gaze to social networks. As García Reig (2017) observed regarding censorship on social networks, the interests of some minority groups are given precedence over those of the majority, who accept all types of publications, even those of a sexual nature. Furthermore, research has revealed that women are subjected to heightened criticism when they publicly display nudity or sexual content, whereas men are not met with the same level of disapproval in certain online communities (Schaufler, 2016; Tomás, 2018; Tomás-Jiménez et al., 2022).

Despite the existence of control systems based on algorithms and user reports on social networks such as Twitter (X), Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Twitch, and YouTube, the latter two are the most popular platforms for image sharing. This study will focus on these two networks to examine how users perceive the censorship of naked bodies on social media.

The overarching objective of this study is to ascertain users' perceptions regarding the censorship of naked bodies on Instagram and Twitter (X).

Similarly, the following specific objectives are set out:

SO1: To examine the extent to which female nude bodies are perceived to be censored on Instagram and Twitter (X).
SO2: To investigate the extent to which male nude bodies are perceived to be censored on Instagram and Twitter (X).
SO3: To assess the level of discomfort generated by images of naked bodies posted on social media.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. The Sexualisation of Nudity in Social Networks

The depiction of the human nude has been a pervasive element in the history of art and cultural expression, serving as a symbol of a multitude of concepts, including beauty, human vulnerability, freedom, and protest. In the context of modern social media, however, the perception of nudity has undergone a significant transformation, often linked to sexualisation and the forbidden. This

transformation has led to the emergence of three categories of nudity, which can be further divided into erotic or sexual, shame or humiliation, and natural or innocent.

> Users are afforded the opportunity to assess and censor images according to their own standards of acceptability. Consequently, when discussing depictions of the naked body, the image in question is inherently linked to the personal, social, and ideological perceptions of the viewer, who thus plays a pivotal role in interpreting the nature of nudity. (Liévano, 2017, pp. 45–46).

The Spanish legal system acknowledges the right of individuals to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions, including through the medium of images. This right is enshrined in Article 20 of the Spanish Constitution, which provides protection for such expression, provided that it does not infringe upon the rights of other users (Spanish Constitution, 1978).

Notwithstanding the legal framework that safeguards artistic creation and production in all domains, there persists a conflict that occasionally precludes artists from exhibiting their work, as evidenced by the case of social networks, where it is "denied due to imposed social taboos that degrade the image in the face of excessive sensitivity to its viewing" (Sánchez Sabido, 2018, pp. 17-18). In light of the fact that a significant proportion of adults engage in the creation of sexual content, whether in the form of text, image or video (Stasko and Geller, 2015), the definition of inappropriate content is a particularly challenging area of discourse when it comes to addressing human nudity (Karabulut et al., 2023).

The role of algorithms in this shift is of great consequence. In consequence of their lack of semantic intelligence, algorithms are unable to differentiate between contexts in which a naked body is shown, with or without a sexual connotation (Diaz et al., 2021). The inability of these systems to differentiate between art, pornography and personal expression has resulted in the often-indiscriminate application of censorship policies. This situation has reinforced the trend towards the sexualisation of nudity, whereby any representation of nudity is susceptible to being categorised under a sexual prism, irrespective of its original intention (Gimeno, 2013).

Furthermore, the censorship of female nipples in the community policies of some social networks reflects a broader tendency to assume that female nudity is inherently sexual (Comesaña Barros, 2021). The early detection and removal of pornography represents a significant challenge for online platforms, which have increasingly relied on automated technology to address this issue (Karabulut et al., 2023; Lovenia et al., 2022). However, this approach carries the potential risk of infringing upon the legitimate freedom of expression associated with nudity. There has been a notable shift in our perception of the nude, accompanied by a shift in the nature of the gaze, which has become increasingly pornified. This has led to the imposition of censorship on social networks becoming an inevitable consequence.

In this context, controversies have arisen in recent years that reflect this idea. One illustrative example is the case of the Italian band Maneskin, winners of the Eurovision Song Contest 2021 held in Rotterdam. They became the focus of harsh criticism due to their provocative style, both on and off stage. Since attaining notoriety, the youthful Italians have been embroiled in controversies pertaining to social media, particularly Instagram, and to censorship, due to the images they disseminate, both on their personal accounts and on the band's profile. Two notable instances of censorship occurred in September 2021, when Maneskin's profile uploaded a photograph of all the members of the band in a state of undress (Figure 1). While the images did not display any genitalia, the nipples of Victoria D'Angelis, the sole female member of the group, were partially obscured by an icon. The photograph was initially removed from Instagram due to its non-compliance with the platform's community standards. However, it was subsequently reinstated after a few days. The second case pertains to the personal account of the group's vocalist, Damiano David, who uploaded a cover of his album Mammamia to his Instagram stories. The image was subsequently removed from the social network on the grounds that it did not comply with community standards for containing nudity (Figure 2). However, it should be noted that no nudity can be seen in the image and that it was not censored when posted by the rest of the members and the group's profile.

Figure 1. Image of the music group Manneskin

Source: MåneskinOfficial @thisismaneskin, 2021.

Figure 2. Cover of Manneskin's Mammamia disc

Source: MåneskinOfficial @thisismaneskin, 2021.

In the Spanish context, Rigoberta Bandini's 2022 Benidorm Music Festival song, which inquired as to the rationale behind the perceived unacceptability of female breasts, became a feminist anthem that provoked a strong reaction from both supporters and detractors. The song's subject matter, namely the representation of female breasts in social media and public spaces, prompted a heated debate surrounding the censorship of female bodies in various spheres of public life.

As a final illustration of the censorship that is embedded in society and manifests in social networks, it is noteworthy to mention the photograph taken in February 2023 of Minister Ione Belarra during a public event in support of the Law of Only Yes is Yes (Solo Sí es Sí), which was also attended by the then-Minister Irene Montero (Figure 3). The image was not censored, yet it was subjected to social censorship. This is because it revealed that, currently, nudity or the suggestion of it remains a taboo, particularly when it comes to female bodies that are not exposed for passive consumption, such as in advertising, films, on television, or even in magazines. When nudity, or what is inferred from it, becomes a matter of conventional propriety, the norms of social control are applied to judge what is moral and what is immoral, what is decent and what is not. These norms are replicated in the same way in social networks.

Figure 3. Ione Belarra with Irene Montero

Source: Official Twitter account of @ionebelarra (X)

In consideration of the aforementioned factors, our initial research question is as follows: (RQ1) What is the awareness among Instagram and Twitter users of the rules governing the publication of nude bodies and the censorship policies of these networks?

2.2. Censorship on Social Media: Instagram and Twitter

The question of whether social networks should be regarded as a distinct form of media, with their own right to freedom of expression, remains a topic of ongoing debate (Teruel Lozano, 2023). However, all social networks have established community and moderation policies that regulate and filter the content that is published. Notably, Instagram and Twitter have disparate rules regarding the publication of nudity.

Instagram, which is owned by Meta, is the second most used social network in the world, with 74.9% of users (the first is WhatsApp, an instant messaging service that is considered private). The platform is predominantly female, with 53.8% of female users compared to 46.2% of male users. The platform is conducive to artistic expression, particularly for those engaged in photography, whether amateur or professional. It offers a suitable channel for the dissemination of artistic work. In recent years, the platform has introduced a variety of video formats, including reels, live videos, and temporary 24-hour stories.

Instagram has very strict community guidelines regarding the publication of nudity by users. These guidelines, which are outlined under the title "Nudity and adult sexual activity," prohibit the sharing of photos, videos, or digital content that depicts sexual acts, genitalia, female nipples, or close-ups of fully exposed buttocks. In this way, the social network places particular emphasis on photographs of uncovered female nipples, although it indicates that an exception is made for photographs of breastfeeding, childbirth or postpartum, or any health-related issue. Furthermore, as a recent development, photographs of uncovered female nipples are now also permitted, provided that they represent an act of protest (Instagram, 2024; Meta, 2024). Prior research has demonstrated that female nudity is subjected to greater censorship on Instagram than male nudity (Tomás-Jiménez et al., 2022). It is particularly noteworthy that the platform also censors the nudity or semi-nudity of celebrities, despite their role in disseminating positive messages to their followers (Dunne, 2019; Ingleton & York, 2019).

In light of the aforementioned evidence, we put forth the following research questions:

RQ2: What is the perception of Instagram users with regard to the censorship of naked bodies?
RQ2a: What are the perceptions of male and female body nudity?
RQ2b: Are there any differences in the perception of nudity censorship according to gender?
RQ2c: Are there any differences in the perception of nudity censorship according to age?

Twitter (X) is the fourth most popular social network, with 47.7% of users. The proportion of female users is 38.4%, compared to 61.6% of male users (We Are Social Spain, 2023). The platform enables users to disseminate text-based content, limited to 280 characters, which stimulates public discourse. Additionally, users can include up to four images or videos. Twitter's community standards (X) are concise and lenient, with a particular emphasis on the prohibition of content related to child sexual abuse or exploitation, as well as any sensitive material pertaining to violence or sexual abuse.

With regard to the issue of nudity, Twitter's content policies are divided into two sections: one pertaining to consensual nudity and the other to non-consensual nudity. With regard to the former, the platform permits some forms of consensual nudity, intended for adults, and categorizes it as "sensitive content," thereby associating nudity with sexual content. It is stipulated that this category of content will not be removed from the network; however, a warning message will be displayed with the label, thus enabling users who wish to access such content to do so. Examples of this category include: The following forms of content are prohibited: full or partial nudity, including close-ups of genitals, buttocks, and breasts (except in cases of breastfeeding); simulated sexual acts; and sexual intercourse and other sexual acts. With regard to the second section, it is explicitly stated that the posting or sharing of intimate photographs or videos of another individual produced or distributed without their consent is prohibited (Twitter/X, 2024). Once more, pornography is inextricably linked with nudity, promoting the sexualisation of the human body.

In light of the aforementioned evidence, we propose a third research question:

RQ3: This study aims to ascertain how Twitter users perceive the censorship of naked bodies.
RQ3a: What are the perceptions of male and female body nudity?

RQ3b: Are there any differences in the perception of nudity censorship according to gender?
RQ3c: Does the perception of nudity censorship vary according to age?

In both networks, while users may appeal the removal of a post, the decision will be made not by an impartial third party, but by the social network itself. This raises concerns about the impartiality of the process, as the social network may have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo (Avirama and Daza Usuriaga, 2023, p. 57). In practice, social media content is categorised, filtered, flagged and censored by a combination of algorithms, professionals, volunteers and users (Marigorda, 2022; Paasonen et al., 2024). These policies reflect the challenges of moderating content in a globalised digital environment and extend the debate to freedom of expression and the right to representation of the human body. This has the potential to result in arbitrary governance of platforms (Witt, 2020).

2.3. Perception and Social Response to Censorship on Networks

In this social context, where censorship is perpetuated and permitted in various forms, it is foreseeable that rejection movements will emerge that seek to liberate the body from the sexual connotations ascribed to it by the social gaze. One of the most intriguing aspects of our digital future is the manner in which new social paradigms linked to bodily representation and identification will be experienced (Pintos, 2006; Galit, 2021).

The emergence of movements such as #FreeTheNipple (Paul, 2019; Matich, et al., 2019; Boling, 2019) can be seen as a direct response to censorship. These movements challenge regulations that sexualise specific parts of the female body and advocate for equal gender representation. Following the film denunciation by activist and filmmaker Lina Esco in 2014, which highlighted the need for "female nipples to cease to be, by their mere existence, the object of fetishism, censorship or persecution and criminalisation" (Blanco and García, 2021, p. 832), actresses and public figures began to occupy a space on social networks, especially on Instagram, with images where their naked nipples could be seen accompanied by the hashtag #freethenipple. Another campaign along these lines, which received less attention from the general public, was #cheekyexploits. Its objective was to raise awareness, confront and highlight the absurdity of censorship of images of naked buttocks (Mirón, 2018; Varela, 2023).

These movements not only denounce censorship policies but also facilitate discourse on the social perception of nudity, sexuality, and the rights of expression. The perception of censorship and the depiction of nudity varies among different demographic groups. The interpretation of censorship and the depiction of nudity on social media is influenced by factors such as gender and age (García Reig, 2017). While some view these policies as vital safeguards against exploitation and inappropriate content, others regard them as unjust limitations on personal and artistic freedom.

The practice of censorship on social networks has also prompted a response from institutional actors. In recent decades, numerous museums across the globe have experienced the censorship of their publications on various social networks, with the content being labelled as "obscene". This has occurred due to a lack of understanding and identification of the algorithms employed by these networks, which have been unable to differentiate between art and pornography (Otero, 2018; Sánchez, 2016). To illustrate, in July 2018 Facebook censored images that the Peter Paul Rubens House Museum, in collaboration with the Flanders Tourist Board, had published with the objective of disseminating and promoting different works by the Baroque masters. In 2021, a number of art institutions, including the Albertina Museum, the Leopold Museum, the Natural History Museum Vienna and the Museum of Art History, relocated their content to the Onlyfans platform, a social network with a focus on the publication of pornographic content. This was done in order to circumvent the censorship they had previously encountered when publishing artistic images on Instagram (González, 2022). This phenomenon demonstrates the conflict between the regulations of social platforms and the desire to preserve artistic integrity and freedom of expression. In the context of this debate, some authors have questioned the impact of male domination strategies on social networks on feminist activism, which can potentially limit the scope of some social movements and demands (Megarry, 2018).

In light of the emergence of these campaigns, movements and brands, it becomes evident that despite the general acceptance of censorship, society is capable of generating a response in the form of rejection. This observation leads us to propose a final research question: RQ4. What is the perception of unease generated by the publication of images of the human body in a state of undress on social networks?

3. Method

3.1. Methodology and Sample

This study is based on a self-developed survey, which was distributed in October 2022 via an online questionnaire designed for the purposes of this research. All responses were collected in an anonymised format. The sample comprised a total of 274 individuals, with 63.1% identifying as female and 32.8% as male. In terms of age range, the distribution was as follows: 12.8% of respondents were between 16 and 19 years of age, 44.2% were between 20 and 24 years of age, 10.9% were between 25 and 29 years of age, 7.7% were between 35 and 40 years of age, and 15% were over 40 years of age.

3.2. Measures

The following section outlines the measures employed for data processing.

The socio-demographic variables encompass gender (male, female, other) and age (16-19 years; 20-24 years; 25-29 years; 30-34 years; 35-40 years; and over 40 years).

The presence of an Instagram and/or Twitter account was determined (X), as well as the user's familiarity with the respective community standards. This was assessed using a dichotomous response, where 0=No and 1=Yes.

The degree of censorship and restrictions on the portrayal of nude bodies on the social networks in question were evaluated using a Likert-type scale, with responses ranging from 1 (not at all restrictive) to 5 (very restrictive). This assessment was conducted separately for each social network, namely Instagram and Twitter (X).

To ascertain the perceived level of censorship specifically pertaining to the male and female body on both Instagram and Twitter (X), a 5-point Likert-type scale was employed, with 1 indicating a lack of censorship and 5 signifying a high degree of censorship.

To ascertain the level of discomfort or rejection of specific images, respondents were presented with a series of photographs that had been subjected to some form of censorship on these social networks. The level of discomfort was quantified using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating no discomfort and 5 indicating significant discomfort.

3.3. Analysis

Descriptive statistical tests were conducted, comprising frequency and mean analysis, as well as inferential statistical tests for mean comparison. These included the application of Student's t-tests to ascertain whether there was a discernible difference in this perception according to male and female content, as well as by age. The IBM SPSS package, version 28, was employed for this purpose.

4. Results

A total of 96.7% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had a profile on Instagram and/or Twitter. However, awareness of the policies and community standards of these two social networks varies depending on which network is being referenced. While 68% of respondents indicated awareness of Instagram's policies regarding the censorship of nude bodies, this figure was reversed for Twitter (X), where only 34.7% of respondents demonstrated awareness of these policies. In response to RQ1, it can be stated that a greater lack of knowledge of the regulations is evident on Twitter (X) than on Instagram.

Regarding the global average perception of censorship on social networks, the results indicate that Instagram is perceived to have a censorship level of 3.1 (SD=0.87), while Twitter (X) is perceived to have a censorship level of 2.48 (SD=1.1). Consequently, Instagram is perceived to have a higher level of censorship than Twitter.

4.1. Instagram

In order to respond to the second research question (RQ2) posed by the study on the social network Instagram: This study aims to examine how Instagram users perceive the censorship of naked bodies, with a particular focus on the perception of female and male nudity. With regard to the female body, the

respondents indicated that the female body on Instagram is subjected to an average level of censorship, with a mean score of 3.80 (SD=1.2). Conversely, the average rating for the male body is lower, at 2.34 (SD=1.1).

In response to question RQ2a regarding users' perceptions of male and female nude bodies on Instagram, it can be stated that the female body is perceived to be more censored (3.80) than the male body (2.34) on average.

A comparison was then made according to gender and age range in order to ascertain whether these factors are significant in the perception of censorship of naked bodies.

With respect to the gender of the respondents, the results indicate that the mean perceived censure of female bodies by women is 3.92, while the mean perceived censure of female bodies by men is 3.60. The student's t-test revealed that there are no statistically significant differences between men and women in their perceptions of the censorship of the female body (t (257) = -2.022, p>0.05). Men (M=3.60, SD=1.21) and women (M=3.92, SD=1.22) demonstrated no statistically significant divergence in this regard. Conversely, the mean for women in terms of the perception of censorship of the nudity of the male body is 2.22, while for men it is 2.57. Furthermore, no statistically significant differences [t(258)=2.57, p>0.05] were identified in the perception of the male body by male respondents (M=2.57, SD=1.02) and female respondents (M=2.22, SD=1.08) (Table 1). In response to RQ2b, it can be concluded that there is no discernible difference in the perception of censorship of male and female nude bodies according to gender on the social network Instagram.

Table 1. Comparison of means of perceived censorship by gender on Instagram

	Gender	Media	DT	t	gl	p	95% confidence interval	
Perceived censorship of the female body on Instagram	Women	3,92	1,22	-2,022	257	0,022	-0,64	-0,008
	Men	3,60	1,21					
Perceived censorship of the male body on Instagram	Women	2,22	1,08	2,57	258	0,005	0,083	0,63
	Men	2,57	1,02					

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

With regard to the age of the respondents, it can be observed that the perception of the female body is, on average, higher in the 16-19 age group (M=4.14; SD=0.77) than in the 20-24 age group (M=3.77; SD=1.2). In this regard, there are statistically significant differences (t (151) = 1.71; p < 0.05), indicating that as age decreases, the perception of censorship of the female body increases. With regard to male bodies, the perception in the younger age group is, on average, slightly higher (M=2.51; SD=1.1) than in the 20-24 age group (M=2.21; SD=1). Nevertheless, no statistically significant differences were observed [t (151) = 1.53; p > 0.05]. In response to RQ2c, a significant difference in the perception of censorship on Instagram is evident according to age, specifically in the context of female bodies, but not in the case of male bodies.

4.2. Twitter (X)

In order to respond to question RQ3, it is first necessary to review how Twitter users perceive the censorship of nude bodies. This will entail an examination of the perception of censorship of male and female nudity.

The mean perceived level of censorship of female bodies is 2.82 (SD = 1.34), while the mean perceived level of censorship of male bodies is 2.13 (SD = 1.1). In light of the aforementioned findings, it can be concluded that, in response to question RQ3a, the perception is that the female body on Twitter (X) is exposed to greater censorship than the male body.

A comparison of the average perceived degree of censorship of the female body by male and female respondents reveals a discrepancy of 0.48, with women rating it at 2.99 and men at 2.51. It can thus be concluded that women perceive a greater degree of censorship of female nude images on this social network than men. A statistically significant difference [t (258) = -2.80, p < 0.05] was observed between the perception of censorship of female bodies by men (M = 2.51; SD = 1.36) and that of women (M = 2.99; SD = 1.31). With regard to male bodies, the mean perceived level of censorship for women is 2.10, while the mean perceived level of censorship for men is 2.17. The results indicate no statistically significant differences [t (258)=0.477; p>0.05] between the perception of men (M=2.17; SD=1.13) and

women (M=2.10; SD=1.09) regarding the censorship of male nude images on the social network Twitter (X) (Table 2). In response to RQ3b, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the perception of censorship on Twitter of female bodies according to gender, but not in the case of male bodies.

A comparison of the average perceived censorship of the female body by male and female respondents reveals a discrepancy of 0.48, with women rating it at 2.99 and men at 2.51. It can thus be concluded that women perceive a greater degree of censorship of female nude images on this social network than men. A statistically significant difference was observed between the male and female respondents' perceptions of censorship of female bodies (t (258)=-2.80, p<0.05). The male respondents reported a mean score of (M=2.51; SD=1.36), while the female respondents reported a mean score of (M=2.99; SD=1.31). With regard to male bodies, the mean perceived censorship for women is 2.10, while the mean perceived censorship for men is 2.17. No statistically significant differences [t(258)=0.477; p>0.05] were observed between the perception of men (M=2.17; SD=1.13) and women (M=2.10; SD=1.09) regarding the censorship of male nude images on the social network Twitter (X) (Table 2). In response to RQ3b, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the perception of censorship on Twitter of female bodies according to gender, but not in the case of male bodies.

Table 2. Comparison of means of perceived censorship by gender on Twitter (X)

	Gender	Media	DT	t	gl	p	95% confidence interval	
Perceived censorship of the female body on Twitter	Women	2,99	1,31	-2,801	258	0,005	-0,832	-0,145
	Men	2,51	1,36					
Perceived censorship of the male body on Twitter (X)	Women	2,1	1,099	0,477	258	0,634	-0,217	-0,355
	Men	2,17	1,131					

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

Regarding age, the perception of censure of female naked bodies is, on average, higher in the 16-19 age group (M=3.09; SD=1.3) than in the 20-24 age group (M=2.69; SD=1.2). However, there are no statistically significant differences (t (151) =1.58; p>0.05). The same is true for male nude bodies, with the mean score in the youngest group being slightly higher (M=2.31; SD=1.2) than in the next group (M=2.1; SD=1.1). However, there are no statistically significant differences [t (151) =0.97; p>0.05]. In response to RQ3c, it can be concluded that, in contrast to the findings for Instagram, there is no significant correlation between age and the perception of censorship of naked bodies on Twitter (X).

4.3. Perception of Nude Images Posted on Social Networks

In order to respond to RQ4, the respondents' perception of the degree of discomfort generated by the images selected from social networks is analysed. To facilitate the presentation of the results, the data have been divided according to the type of image, whether it is an artistic work, an image where a female body appears totally or partially nude, or an image where a male body appears totally or partially nude.
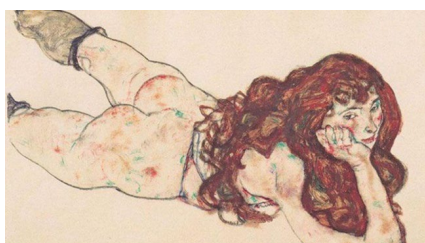
The data pertaining to images of artistic works are presented in Table 3. The image of the world by Coubert (Figure 6) is the one that generates the most discomfort, with a mean of 1.98 (SD=1.33). This is followed by the promotional poster for the film "Parallel Mothers" (Figure 5), which shows a nipple from which a drop of what appears to be milk emanates, therefore a female nipple, with a mean of 1.68 (SD=1.05). Finally, the image of the woman lying down in the Vienna museums (Figure 4) has a mean of 1.23 (SD=0.63).

Table 3. Perception of images. Pictures and illustrations.

	M	DT	NADA	% ENOUGH	% MUCH
LYING WOMAN VIENNA (Figure 4)	1,23	0,63	85,3%	0,7%	0,4%
PARALLEL MOTHERS (Figure 5)	1,68	1,05	62,8%	4,7%	2,9%
THE ORIGIN OF COUBERT'S WORLD (Figure 6)	1,98	1,33	55,8%	9,5%	7,7%

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

Figure 4. Woman lying down, Vienna Museum.

Figure 5. Poster for the film Parallel Mothers by Pedro Almodóvar

Figure 6. The Origin of the World, by Coubert.

Source: Instagram, Kunst Historisches Museum Vienna. https://www.instagram.com/kuns thistorischesmuseumvienna/

Source: Twitter, Productora El Deseo. https://twitter.com/eldeseo

Source: Instagram, Musée d'Orsay https://www.instagram.com/museeor say/

The image of Paco León with a water hose (Figure 7), in a rebellious position, is the one that generates the greatest discomfort, with a mean of 2.11 (SD=1.31). The next image features the same protagonist, Paco León (Figure 9), in a relaxed position, lying on a bed in front of a mirror. This image has a mean of 1.60 (SD=1.12), indicating that, in this instance, a defiant and obscene attitude generates more rejection than a relaxed attitude. This observation introduces a new behavioural factor. The mean score for Jon Kortajarena (Figure 8) is 1.37 (SD=0.87).

Table 4. Perception of images. Photographs of male bodies.

	M	DT	NADA	% ENOUGH	% MUCH
PACO LEON WITH WATER HOSE (Figure 7)	2,11	1,31	47,4%	9,1%	8%
JON KORTAJARENA (Figure 8)	1,37	0,87	79,9%	2,9%	1,8%
PACO LEÓN TUMBED (Figure 9)	1,60	1,12	71,2%	5,5%	4,4%

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

Figure 7. Paco León with water hose.

Figure 8. Jon Kortajarena

Figure 9. Paco León lying down

Source: Instagram, Paco León. https://www.instagram.com/pacol eon

Source: Instagram, Jon Kortajarena. https://www.instagram.com/jon kortajarena

Source: Instagram, Paco León. https://www.instagram.com/pacoleon

Regarding the images of female corporealities (Table 5), the photograph that generates the greatest level of discomfort on average is that of Melo Moreno (Figure 10) with a mean score of 1.66 (SD=1.22). This image depicts four women in a glass pool with their breasts exposed. The next most discomforting image is that of Jessica Goicoechea (Figure 11) with a mean score of 1.65 (SD=1.15). This image shows

the subject posing naked in front of a mirror, covering her nipples with emoticons and her face with her mobile phone.

It is also pertinent to cite two linked photographs: Figure 12 depicts Candice Swanepoel, while Figure 13 presents a humorous replica of the previous image, featuring Celeste Barber. Both images depict a woman in a seated position on a chair, clothed in a garment that covers part of her shoulders and exposes the side of her naked body. The distinction between the two figures lies in the identity of the poser. Figure 12 depicts a model who conforms to conventional standards of beauty, as indicated by a mean score of 1.30 (SD = 0.73). In contrast, Figure 13 features a comedian who does not align with these norms, resulting in a mean score of 1.56 (SD = 1.04). In the latter case, the level of discomfort is greater, despite the fact that the woman does not display any anatomical features that would be considered objectionable according to the prevailing norms. This may be seen to contravene the 'Body Positive' trend, which can be understood as a rebellion against the established beauty canon. This discourse speaks 'about self-love, respect for others and self-improvement' (González, 2021, p. 8). Some studies have demonstrated that Instagram is an effective platform for challenging prevailing stereotypes regarding female beauty, with the aim of promoting a positive message of body acceptance (Herrera García, 2022).

Table 5. Perception of images. Photographs of female bodies.

	M	DT	NADA	% ENOUGH	% MUCH
MELO MORENO (Figure 10)	1,66	1,22	66,4%	6,9%	3,6%
JESSICA GOICOECHEA (Figure 11)	1,65	1,15	67,5%	4,4%	5,5%
CANDICE SWANEPOEL (Figure 12)	1,30	0,73	81,4%	1,8%	0,7%
CELESTE BARBER (Figure 13)	1,56	1,04	70,4%	4%	3,3%

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

Figure 10. Melo Moreno

Source: Instagram, Melo Moreno.
https://www.instagram.com/melomoreno/

Figure 11. Jessica Goicoechea

Source: Instagram, Jessica Goicoechea.
https://www.instagram.com/goicoechea

Figure 12. Candice Swanepoel
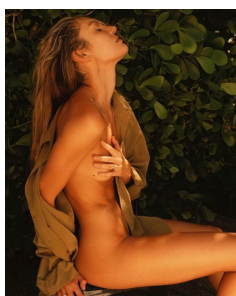
Source: Instagram, Candice Swanepoel.
https://www.instagram.com/candiceswanepoel/

Figure 13. Celeste Barber
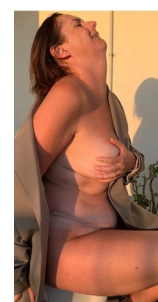
Source: Instagram, Celeste Barber.
https://www.instagram.com/celestebarber/

Therefore, it can be observed that the perceived rejection or discomfort does not only depend on the nudity, or the various parts of the anatomy exhibited, but also on the body types and how they represent social canons, especially in female beauty.

5. Conclusions

A series of conclusions have been drawn from the data shown, and after having conducted a thorough analysis of previous studies on the subject of nudity and the censorship of nudity on social networks.

Despite having their own profiles on both Instagram and Twitter (X), most respondents demonstrated a lack of awareness regarding the content correction rules and policies applied by these social networks. This lack of knowledge was more pronounced on Twitter (X). Nevertheless, it is perceived that there is greater censorship on Instagram than on Twitter (X).

The perception of censorship of images containing nude bodies on social networks differs depending on whether the image depicts a male or female body. The perception of censorship is more pronounced in the case of images depicting female nudity than in those depicting male nudity. A comparison according to the gender of the respondents revealed that perceived censorship of the female body on Twitter (X) exhibited statistically significant differences.

Regarding the factor of age, it was determined that this can be considered a significant element in the context of the social network Instagram and in the perception of censorship of female bodies.

These findings have been previously documented in the aforementioned studies. These studies have revealed a gender gap in terms of the acceptance of images depicting nudity and the extent to which they are sexualised. As Liévano (2017) indicated, the very vision of the naked body, especially the female body, has historically been conceived as something to be censured, and therefore deemed reprehensible. Consequently, it is unsurprising that this has been extrapolated to social networks such as Instagram and Twitter (X), which, due to their algorithms lacking semantic understanding, sexualise and pornify nudity (Sibilia, 2014).

The debate should not focus on the presence of the nude or the female or male body as a problem or catalyst for certain passions. Rather, it should address the sexualised gaze that society tends to and which pornifies the natural.

In essence, the perception of an image of a naked body is shaped by the personal, social, and ideological perspectives of the observer, with the latter playing a pivotal role in interpreting the image (Liévano, 2017). In the context of social networks, social perception plays a pivotal role in determining the content correction and, consequently, the censorship policies that govern the dissemination of images. The social perception of nudity, which tends to sexualise bodies, particularly female bodies, effectively transforms the natural into the sexual and, therefore, pornographic.

The limitations of the study are primarily due to the unbalanced gender composition of the sample. This is a crucial factor in the analysis of gender differences, and thus requires further attention to achieve a more balanced representation in future studies.

Further research could be conducted using qualitative analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to the perception of discomfort with the images presented. This could involve conducting personal interviews or focus groups to examine specific cases where censorship has occurred on one of the two social networks under study. Similarly, the analysis should be extended to other social networks with an impact on young people, such as TikTok or Twitch. These platforms, in contrast to the aforementioned ones, do not demonstrate a greater semantic algorithmic understanding of the images. Instead, they represent new controversies that place the body at the centre as a consumable and sexualised object.

6. Acknowledgements

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