Individual Differences Associated with Exposure to “Ana-Mia” Websites: An Examination of Adolescents from 25 European Countries

# Keywords

* Cyberpsychology
* Eating Disorders
* Internet
* Personality Traits
* Proana
* Promia
* ProED
* Disinhibition
* Sensation Seeking
* Media Exposure
* EU Kids Online

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## Topics

* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Risks and harms
* Wellbeing
* Content-related issues

## Sample

Adolescents from a large cross-national survey in 25 European countries (N=18,709, aged 11–16, 50% girls)

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

This study explores the individual differences associated with adolescents' exposure to ‘‘ana-mia" websites (i.e., websites where people discuss ways to be very thin, such as being anorexic). Participants were adolescents from a large cross-national survey in 25 European countries (N = 18,709, aged 11–16, 50% girls). Sociodemographic and individual factors (i.e., variables related to Internet use and personality traits) were included in a logistic regression performed separately for girls and boys. The results showed that sensation seeking and online disinhibition were both associated with an increased risk of exposure to ‘‘ana-mia" websites in girls as well as in boys, although some gender differences were apparent. In girls, but not in boys, the older the child and higher the socioeconomic status, higher the chance of being exposed to ‘‘ana-mia" websites. Further research is recommended to understand the real impact of ‘‘ana-mia" website exposure on adolescent health.

# Outcome

"sensation seeking and online disinhibition were both associated with an increased risk of exposure to ‘‘ana-mia’’ websites in girls as well as in boys, although some gender differences were apparent. In girls, but not in boys, the older the child and higher the socioeconomic status, higher the chance of being exposed to ‘‘ana-mia’’ websites" (Almenara, Machackova, Smahel, 2016, Abstract)

"The results showed that sensation seeking and online disinhibition were both associated with an increased risk of exposure to ‘‘ana-mia’’ websites in girls as well as in boys. ... In our investigation, about one out of 10 adolescents reported being exposed to ‘‘ana-mia’’ websites, and this experience was more than double in girls than in boys." (Almenara, Machackova, Smahel, 2016, p. 478)