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# Influence of Instagram Exposure on People Happiness and Self Esteem

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## ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Revised:March 25, 2024Accepted:March 26, 2024Available Online:March 27, 2024Keywords:March 27, 2024Social MediaSelf-EsteemHappinessInstagramYoung AdultsSocial ComparisonFunding:This research received no specific	This study investigated at how young people's perceptions of their self esteem and level of happiness in Northern Cyprus were affected by using Instagram. A quantitative study was conducted. 99% of the international students at Cyprus University who were between the ages of 18 and 30 contributed to the sample size of 380, which was determined using the Cochran formula. Data were gathered via an online questionnaire that included validated performance indicators such the Subjective Happiness Scale, the Instagram Intensity Scale, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The aim of the survey was to determine the participants' level of satisfaction and self-esteem while use Instagram. The study's findings indicated that young people's use of Instagram had a detrimental effect on their level of happiness. However, using Instagram positively impacted the self-esteem of those who
grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.	idealised the selected portrayals of others on social media and engaged in upward social comparison. The study produced several helpful recommendations, such as helping kids develop their critical thinking and media literacy skills so they can evaluate and understand how social media affects their overall welfare and mental health. Provide mental health resources and support services to students who may be experiencing negative consequences on their mental health as a result of consuming social media. © 2024 The Authors, Published by iRASD. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non- Commercial License

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# 1. Introduction

This study is valuable because it will add to the body of knowledge about how Instagram use affects people's happiness and self-esteem, which are significant pointers of psychological wellbeing and happiness. The study will also examine how different aspects of Instagram use, such as frequency, exposure to content, and social comparison, may influence these outcomes. The study will also examine how different aspects of Instagram use, such as frequency, exposure to content, and social comparison, may influence these outcomes. These aspects have been recognized as potential threat factors or protective factors for mental health in previous studies. Instagram is becoming a more well-liked social media site for techies to post their images and videos. Instagram is a social media site where users may share photos and videos. Instagram is a social networking platform that is supposed to inspire and enhance creativity among its users. Instagram provides a number of features that can enhance the beauty, originality, and creativity of photos. Instagram is a popular social media platform(Douglass & Moy, 2019). Determining how social media use affects happiness is important since a most of the people think that having a good self-esteem is one of their main life goals. Instead of facilitating face-to-face interaction, social networking sites tend to encourage irregular updating and passive information intake about others, creating a setting that promotes upward social comparison(Wirtz, Tucker, Briggs, & Schoemann, 2021). In addition to being an essential component of today's communication, social media is a

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technology that can be used to provide people a multitude of services. Thanks to its precise target user positioning, Instagram—the largest picture social networking site globally—allows users to snap images and videos and share them on other platforms. Numerous academics have looked at Instagram's growth from various angles (C. Yang, 2021). Our knowledge of how users' feelings of self-esteem and overall happiness are impacted by Instagram and other image-based social networking sites (SNS) is what this study aims to accomplish. Prior scholarly research on the association between social media use and happiness and self-esteem, specifically the effects of Instagram exposure on users' happiness and self-esteem, was nonexistent. Research done by Jiang and Ngien (2020).

# 1.1. Instagram

The application's capacity to create and trade personalised content for free is the icing on top. The company's ability to interact with its target audience and develop brand recognition enables it to reap the benefits of traditional marketing methods. Because of this, marketers mostly use Instagram and TikTok, two of the most effective social media marketing platforms (Mou, 2020). Instagram is essential for companies in sectors like fashion, food, travel, and design that depend on photo visualization. You may create tempting content and offer data that keeps people interested in your brand by using social media as a publication tool(Adi & Prabawati, 2019). Other studies that examined the association between self-esteem and social media use found that people with low self-esteem typically utilise more social media sites to improve their self-image and self-esteem (Dutot, 2020). When researcher investigated whether narcissism and self-esteem were related to various Facebook usage patterns, the findings revealed that these traits are frequently predictors of Facebook personal importance.

### **1.2.** Social Comparsion In Young Adult

Social comparison is the natural tendency to gauge our own abilities and behaviors by observing and comparing ourselves to others. This practice, whether regarding our competencies or behavior, offers insights into our own and others' abilities, social status, and performance. It helps us navigate social interactions and fulfills fundamental human needs like the desire for social connection and recognition. Social comparison is universal across cultures, begins at a young age, and is considered a fundamental aspect of human social development (Verduyn, Gugushvili, Massar, Täht, & Kross, 2020). Most previous studies have found that a tendency toward social comparison, particularly when it involves comparing oneself to those perceived as more capable or superior, often has a undesirable impact on psychological happiness. People typically highlight their positive qualities on social networking sites, aiming to create a positive image for others (Lee, 2022).

# **1.3.** Statement of the problem

With Instagram being one of the most extensively used social media apps, social media has ingrained itself into contemporary life. On the other hand, exposure to carefully chosen photos and videos on Instagram that present romanticized portrayals of people's lives has been connected to detrimental effects on people's happiness and self-worth. In particular, vulnerable populations like teenagers and young adults may have feelings of inadequacy and dissatisfaction with their own lives due to the frequent comparison of their lives on the platform to the idealized lives of others. Even though the amount of research on this subject is increasing, more investigation is still required to pinpoint the precise causes of the detrimental effects that Instagram exposure has on people's happiness and self-esteem as well as possible countermeasures. Therefore, the determination of this study is to investigate in what way Instagram exposure affects people's happiness and self-esteem, with a focus on identifying the root causes and potential fixes for this issue.

# 1.4. Objective of the study

A study investigating the influnce of Instagram usage on individuals' well-being and selfworth may aim to achieve the following goals: to ascertain the relationship between self-worth, happiness, and Instagram. to look at the relationship between a person's happiness and selfesteem and how often they use Instagram. to look at the connections between the kinds of content that users of Instagram consume and their levels of happiness and self-esteem

# **1.5.** Significance of the study

The study shed light on the psychological mechanisms underpinning the association between Instagram use and happiness and self-esteem, as well as possible moderators and

mediators of this link. For example, the study examined how personality traits might lessen the negative effects of regular Instagram use on one's sense of self and how one's sense of self may work as a mediator in the link between happiness and social comparison. Techniques or treatments to mitigate the negative impact of Instagram exposure on people's happiness and self-esteem can be developed. The study also has practical implications for Instagram users, educators, health professionals, and policy makers who are interested in promoting positive and healthy use of social media. The study help identifies the risks and benefits of Instagram use for people's happiness and self-esteem, as well as the strategies that can be used to enhance or mitigate these effects. The study also suggested directions for future research on this topic. We live in a digital culture that has completely changed how we interact with one another, communicate, learn, and enjoy our free time. Digitalization has an impact on our life paths, our independence, and our wellbeing. To examine the various aspects of wellbeing, such as control over one's surroundings or satisfying relationships (Ryff, 2019). Numerous researchers have examined the profiles of those who actively engage in content creation and generation to better understand why and to what extent people are interested in uploading their entire identity, being able to share pictures and videos, and indicating their religious affiliations, marital status, and democratic orientations online. These users engage with one other, share information about their preferences, and ask questions (Hogan, 2010).

# 2. Methodology

**2.1. Overall Research Design**This study used quantitative research to explore Instagram's impact on happiness and self-esteem. Quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire, and relationships between variables were analyzed using correlation and regression.

### 2.2. Population and Sample

Research used voluntary stratified sampling with a total sample size of 380 international students, determined using the Cochran formula. Data was collected online through stratified sampling from willing foreign students. Summaries of each demographic variable are provided in separate tables.

# Table 1: Gender of Respondents

Variable	f	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Male	234	41.9	41.9	41.9
Female	320	57.2	57.2	99.1
prefer not to say	5	.9	.9	100
Total	559	100.0	100.0	

Note: f = Frequency, % = Percentage

Among the 559 participants in total, this study reveals that 41.9% of participants are men and 57.2% are women. The outcome matches what was noticed when the data was being collected. The intended target consists of university students from North Cyprus. A respectable proportion of male reps were also using Instagram, although the majority of the audiences were female.

## Table 2: Age of respondents

Variable	f	%	Valid %	Cumulative %		
less than 18	5	.9	.9	.9		
18-21	57	10.2	10.2	11.1		
22-25 Years	231	41.3	41.3	52.3		
26-29	112	20.0	20.0	72.5		
above 29	154	27.5	27.5	100.0		
Total	559	100.0	100.0			

Note: f = Frequency, % = Percentage

#### Table 3: Education of respondent

Variable	f	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
less than high school	3	.5	.5	.5
high school degree	29	5.2	5.2	5.7
some collage no degree	30	5.4	5.4	11.1

associate degree	9	1.6	1.6	12.7	
BS	282	50.4	50.4	63.1	
MS	159	28.4	28.4	91.6	
professional degree	31	5.5	5.5	97.1	
Doctorate/PhD/MBBS	16	2.9	2.9	100	
Total	559	100.0	100.0		

Note: f = Frequency, % = Percentage

### 2.3. Date Collection Method

The research included 380 international students in a North Cyprus university. Data collection was done using Google Forms, comprising a demographic questionnaire and scales like Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Subjective Happiness Scale, and an adapted Instagram Intensity Scale. The process involved two phases: consent and briefing, followed by completing the Google Form, taking approximately 15 minutes.

### 2.4. Statistical Considerations and Data Analysis

The researcher checked data normality with the Durbin Watson Test, confirmed normal distribution, and then used correlation tests to explore variable relationships. Additionally, a regression test determined if self-esteem and Instagram usage predict happiness.

# 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Quantitative Findings

This section presents the findings from the first phase of the study according to the associated research Questions.

# Table 4: Descriptive statistics and Alpha Coefficient Impact of Instagram Exposure onPeople's Happiness and Self-esteem (N=559)

			Range					
Scales n	М	SD	Α	Poten	tial Actual	Skew		
INSTA	8	20.70	6.62	.88	40	35.63	153	
HAP	4	14.69	4.27	.62	28	22.75	463	
SE	10	30.05	3.78	.30	50	43.50	.213	
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*Note: M* = *mean, SD*= *standard deviation. INSTA* = *Instagram Intensity scale, HA* = *Happiness scale, SE* = *Rosenberg self-esteem scale.* 

Table 4 summarized the no. of items, mean scores, standard deviation, and alpha coefficients for the scales/instruments used in this study. As shown in the table; the Cronbach alpha for Instagram intensity scale (M = 20.70, SD = 6.62) is .88. Cronbach alpha for happiness scale is (M = 14.62, SD = 4.27) is .65. Additionally, skewness was used to assess the symmetry of the data, and as seen in the table, the values are mildly skewed, and the distribution is almost symmetric.

# Table 5: Correlation matrix of study variables for happiness and self-esteem (N=559).

Variables	М	SD	1	2	3
1. Instagram	85.71	10.8	_	53**	.229**
2. happiness	14.05	2.11	_	_	276**
3.self esteem	14.56	2.02	_	_	_

*Note: Note: \*\*p <0.01 (two tailed), \*p <0.05 (two tailed). Standard deviation (SD) is equal to mean (M). Happiness = happiness scale; Instagram = Instagram intensity scale. Rosenberg self-esteem scale = self-esteem* 

Table 5 summarizes the correlations between all of the scales used in this study that are Instagram intensity scale, Rosenberg self-esteem scale. As table shows, Instagram intensity scale is negatively corelated with happiness scale, ( $r = -.53^{**}$ , p < 0.05) Instagram intensity has positive correlation with self-esteem, ( $r = -.229^{**}$ , p < 0.05) happiness is negatively correlated with self-esteem ( $r = -.276^{**}$ , p < 0.05) respectively.

#### Table 6: Regression coefficient of Instagram and self-esteem on happiness

Variable	В	SE	Т	Р	β
Constant	24.58	1.41	17.48	.000	.00
Instagram	06	.03	-6.08	0.21	10
Self esteem	29	.0.5	-2.31	.000	25
R <sup>2</sup>	0.8				

Note: N = 559, Instagram=Instagram intensity scale, self-esteem = Rosenberg self-esteem scale.(\*\*\*p<.001).

The table 6 shows impact of Instagram usage and self-esteem on happiness The R<sup>2</sup> valve of .8 revealed that the predictor variable explained 8% variance in the out-come variable with F = 25,73, p < .001. Findings reveal that Instagram relationship with happiness is negative and significant. (-.10 p < .001). Self-esteem and happiness relation is negative and significant ( $\beta = .25$ , p < .001).

# 4. Discussion

This study's primary goal is to find out how using Instagram affects happiness and selfesteem. Our goal is to specifically investigate the subject of how exposure to Instagram material affects people's happiness and self-esteem. We gathered information from North Cyprus universities in order to investigate these study topics. On the data, several statistical analyses were performed, such as regression, correlation, and descriptive analyses. The findings show that using Instagram negatively correlates with happiness, that using it positively correlates with self-esteem, and that there is a undesirable correlation among happiness and self-esteem. Additionally, we want to learn more about the role that social comparison plays in the detrimental impacts of Instagram exposure on happiness and self-esteem, as well as investigate potential mitigating techniques. Additionally, we want to learn more about the role that social comparison plays in the detrimental impacts of Instagram exposure on happiness and self-esteem, as well as investigate potential mitigating techniques. Evidence suggests that there may be a negative correlation between Instagram use and happiness. According to one study, using Instagram frequently is linked with higher levels of anxiety, hopelessness, and deprived sleep (Kircaburun & Griffiths, 2018). This study set out to find out how students felt about Instagram's impact on their sense of happiness and self-worth. We found that using Instagram was positively linked with self-esteem and negatively correlated with happiness. Additionally, we discovered that the kind of content people saw on Instagram had a bigger influence on their level of satisfaction and self-worth than how frequently they used the app. Compared to users who were exposed to more dismal and illusory information, users with greater self-esteem reported watching more inspiring and uplifting content. These findings are consistent with other research examining the connection between social media use and wellbeing e.g. (Verduyn et al., 2020; C.-c. Yang, Holden, & Carter, 2018). It should be the responsibility of instructors to educate children responsible Instagram usage in order to enhance their mental health. This is crucial since Instagram is very well-liked by younger audiences, particularly college and high school students. For example, schools may screen films like Angst and LIKE, which deal with social media, technology, and anxiety, for children and their parents. Some colleges have even implemented hashtags like #examstress and #GramFam to help students navigate challenging test and revision periods. Additionally, Instagram might be used to establish a virtual community where students help and instruct one another (Thompson, 2019).

# 4.1. Quantitative analysis

Addressing RQ #1 Quantitatively:

RQ 1: What is the relationship between Instagram, happiness and self-esteem.

The study looked at the association between Instagram using habits and user behaviours. Statistical analysis demonstrated that the study's scales are credible and regularly distributed. The Instagram intensity scale was highly reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha of.88, demonstrating that it is a credible indicator of user involvement. In comparison, the happiness scale demonstrated poorer reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of.65, indicating that it may not capture all elements of happiness. The data's normal distribution, as demonstrated by skewness values near to zero, indicates symmetry and the absence of notable outliers. These statistical findings show that the data is suitable for additional statistical tests, such as correlation or regression, to study the inference among Instagram use and happiness. Furthermore, the statistical study reveals that Instagram's impact on happiness and selfesteem may be indirect, with social comparison serving as the primary mediator. This is consistent with prior studies demonstrating that users' exposure to idealised photos on Instagram might lead to unhappiness with their own life and reduced self-esteem, eventually affecting happiness (Faelens et al., 2021; Jiang & Ngien, 2020). Furthermore, problematic Instagram use, affected by personality traits and psychological demands, has been linked to mental health difficulties such as sadness, anxiety, tension, loneliness, and low self-esteem (Kircaburun & Griffiths, 2018). Self-presentation on Instagram, where users highlight their

accomplishments and beauty, may have a good and bad impact on self-esteem and general well-being. These statistical findings underscore the necessity of addressing these criteria when studying the link between Instagram.

Addressing RQ #2 Quantitatively:

RQ2: How frequent usage of Instagram affects people's happiness and self esteem

There is a significant unfavorable connection ( $\beta = 0.25$ , p < 0.001) between self-esteem and happiness, and there is a strong negative link ( $\beta = -0.10$ , p < 0.001) between Instagram use and happiness (Table 5). These results concur with a study conducted by Maclean, Al-Saggaf, and Hogg (2022), indicating a connection between the feelings of anxiety and sadness and increased Instagram use. It's important to remember that not every research indicates that using Instagram negatively impacts wellbeing. A study of the research revealed that, depending on a person's unique usage and vulnerabilities, the relation among Instagram and self-esteem is varied and individual specific . They added that various social media usage patterns, including active vs passive use, social comparison, social feedback, and selfreflection, might have various effects on self-esteem (Cingel, Carter, & Krause, 2022).

#### Addressing RQ #3 Quantitatively:

RQ 3. How does interaction to Instagram content impact individual levels of happiness and self-esteem?

The results show a substantial correlation between individual measurements, active Instagram usage, and Table 6. Instagram intensity has a positive correlation (r = -0.229, p < -00.05) with self-esteem but a negative correlation (r = -0.53, p < 0.05) with the happiness scale. Self-esteem and happiness have a negative correlation (r = -0.276, p < 0.05). Although these results are statistically significant, it's possible that their practical impact is negligible. Other studies, like Vogel et al. (2019), contrast with the results of the current study, people who received favorable comments on their posts reported a brief increase in self-esteem. All things considered, an increasing amount of research indicates that using Instagram negatively affects one's happiness and sense of self, especially among women (Fardouly, Willburger, & Vartanian, 2018). Social media exposure to idealized photos might lead to unattainable beauty standards and low self-esteem. On the other hand, other studies suggest that Instagram can also boost self-esteem when used to see information about fitness (Cohen, Fardouly, Newton-John, & Slater, 2019). The third study question looked at how users' happiness and self-esteem were affected by their active Instagram usage. Correlation tests were used to look into the link. It's crucial to remember that using Instagram may have complicated and wide-ranging implications on one's sense of self.

# 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study highlights how important it is to understand the relationship between one's real-life self-image and Instagram persona. The burden to maintain an perfect look can prime to anxiety then problems with body image. Having less self-esteem and body Image frustration can also be brought on by exposure to Instagram influencers. Overuse of social media, particularly Instagram, can be harmful to one's happiness and well-being. While seeking praise on Instagram might temporarily boost one's confidence, it can also have undesirable significances, like a a rise in social difference. It's imperative that individuals use social media mindfully and get their feeling of worth from both their successes and the support of others. Studies show that kids who are urged to develop media literacy and critical thinking skills. Children who are urged to develop their media literacy and critical thinking skills will, according to studies, be more equipped to evaluate and understand how social media affects their overall welfare and mental health. Provide mental health resources and support services to students who may be experiencing negative consequences on their mental health as a result of using social media(Krause, Baum, Baumann, & Krasnova, 2021). The current research indicates that there is no risk for users who use social networking sites like Instagram or others to maintain contact with people they know in person. The evaluation came to the conclusion that Instagram can enhance a person's offline emotional health based on views and interviews. An individual's life could improve using Instagram. When someone sees an Instagram story or post on spirituality and life's values, one would assume that the individual wants a better life for

themselves. The second benefit is that it could help someone acquire fresh information and facts that will support their life decisions. When someone learns about scientific data, education, scholarships, world knowledge, etc., they could discover it. The second benefit is that it could help someone acquire fresh information and facts that will support their life decisions. When someone learns about scientific data, education, scholarships, world knowledge, etc., they could discover it. The second benefit is that it could help someone learns about scientific data, education, scholarships, world knowledge, etc., they could discover it. The second benefit is that it could help someone acquire fresh information and facts that will support their life decisions. When someone learns about scientific data, education, scholarships, world knowledge, etc., they could discover it. The second benefit is that it could discover it. The final benefit is that Instagram could inspire users to take positive or productive actions. For example, when our friends share a photo or narrative about them, we could be motivated to pursue the same educational goals (Kusuma & Yuniardi, 2020).

## 5.1. Limitation of study

The study's limitations include a narrow sample of university students in Northern Cyprus, potential biases in self-report data, a cross-sectional design hindering causal relationships, a focus solely on Instagram, neglecting other social media platforms, and the exclusion of unaccounted variables. Qualitative data interpretation is subjective, and findings may be culture-specific. Future research should address these limitations to enhance our understanding of Instagram's impact on self-esteem and happiness across diverse contexts and populations.

# 5.2. Ethical Considerations

The participants will be given an informed consent in which they will be asked about their permission to participate in the current study. If they agree, the potential benefits and risks involved in the study will be explained to them. Details of participants will remain confidential. Participants will not face any possible harm. Researcher will brief the participants about study. There will be no use of any sort of inappropriate, derogatory, violent, racial, and offensive words

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