



Instagram and its Influence on Young Girls: A Study in Mysore City

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Abstract

This comprehensive study delves into the intricate dynamics of Instagram's influence on young girls, drawing from the perspectives of 43 participants, a majority of whom hail from India. The research primarily captures the experiences of individuals aged 20-23, reflecting the profound cultural shift brought about by the internet age. Educational backgrounds vary, with 81% being postgraduate students and the remaining 19% pursuing degrees. The study portrays Instagram as a multifaceted platform, serving as both a communication channel and a source of entertainment. Participants actively invest 1-3 hours daily on Instagram, revealing the platform's pivotal role in their lives. Posting behavior is a nuanced process, with users often employing filters and careful selection from multiple photos. The quest for likes and comments emerges as a driving force, impacting emotional well-being. However, intriguingly, a significant portion of users maintains a nonchalant attitude when their posts receive less engagement, highlighting diverse coping mechanisms. The darker side of Instagram unfolds in the form of annoying messages, social comparisons, and body image concerns. More than 50% of respondents admit to occasional feelings of inadequacy when comparing themselves to others on the platform. The study also uncovers a concerning trend of users attempting to emulate others, leading to a loss of personal identity. Time management proves to be a common challenge, with over 70% of users expressing difficulty in controlling their time spent on Instagram. This, in turn, can contribute to food disorders, as users occasionally forget to eat on time while engrossed in the platform. Despite these challenges, Instagram serves as a valuable emotional support system, alleviating feelings of loneliness and sometimes even combating depression. This dichotomy paints Instagram as a double-edged sword, both enabling and constraining, prompting a nuanced exploration of its impact on the lives of young girls. The findings contribute significantly to the evolving literature on social media's intricate influence on human behavior, emphasizing the need for ongoing research and a nuanced understanding of digital engagement's consequences.

Keywords: Social Media, Young Girls, Instagram, Society.

Introduction

Globalization is an inevitable and accelerating process in today's age, amplified by social media that connects people worldwide virtually. Social media, including popular platforms like Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, and SnapChat, plays a crucial role in influencing individuals and social lives on national and international levels. While these platforms offer numerous advantages, the lack of complete knowledge about cyberspace can pose risks. Instagram, with over 2 billion active monthly users, is prominent for photo and video sharing. Research (Dean, 2022) suggests that a majority of Instagram users are youths, with 51.4% being female. However, concerns have been raised, with the Wall Street Journal (Elsesser, 2021) highlighting Instagram's negative impact on teen girls' body image. This research aims to explore the influence of Instagram on young girls, recognizing the importance of addressing this issue.

The primary focus of this paper is to delve into the impact of Instagram on young girls, with a set of clear objectives guiding the research. The study seeks to understand the significance of Instagram, analyzing both its positive and negative influences on young girls. It aims to unravel the true meaning of Instagram in the eyes of young girls and how the platform contributes to shaping their identities in the global landscape. Additionally, the research endeavors to explore the intricate ways in which Instagram influences the daily lives of young girls, with a specific emphasis on identifying professional approaches to navigate these impacts. Through this investigation, the study aspires to provide meaningful suggestions for further enhancements, drawing insights from the responses gathered.

Social media has transformed the world, becoming an integral part of human life, with over 4.8 billion users globally, constituting 59.9% of the total population. It has evolved from a means of personal interaction to a powerful tool for businesses and individuals to connect, share information, and express opinions. People use social media to stay connected with friends, family, and communities, while businesses utilize it for marketing and customer engagement. The ever-changing landscape includes platforms like TikTok and Clubhouse alongside established ones like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Despite its positive aspects, social media also presents challenges.

Positive aspects of social media: Facilitates communication, information sharing, and idea exchange globally. Offers a platform for self-expression, allowing individuals to share thoughts, ideas, photos, videos, and enhance communication skills. Acts as a vital communication tool, during the COVID-19 pandemic, connecting people virtually when physical interaction was limited. Social media networking sites offer global connectivity, instant communication, and real-time information, along with business opportunities and entertainment. They assist introverted individuals, support education, and aid in relationship building and job searches. However, concerns include privacy issues, social pressures like cyberbullying, and the potential for information overload. Health impacts such as sedentary habits, sleep disruption, and increased isolation are noteworthy. Drawbacks also encompass comparison with others, the risk of addiction, and reliability issues. There's a reduction in

face-to-face interactions. This synthesis is drawn from insights provided by (Moreau, 2022) and (ProCon.org, 2020).

Usage Statistics: A study on American adults revealed a significant increase, from 5% in 2005 to 72% in 2019, and 84% in 2022. China boasts 1.06 billion social media users, showcasing its widespread influence in 2023. And from April 2022 to April 2023 there were 150 million new social media users which it shows 3.2% increase year-over-year.

Evolution of social media: The inception of genuine social media occurred with the launch of Six Degrees in 1997. The 1980s and 1990s marked the internet's introduction to online communication, leading to the emergence of early social media networks in 1997. Notably, Weblogs or Blogs exemplify these early social networking sites. LinkedIn, catering to career-minded professionals, was established in 2002, and by 2021, it boasted 675 million users globally. Another early player, Myspace, was launched in 2003, becoming the most visited site worldwide by 2006, a status later surpassed by Facebook in 2008. As time progressed, the proliferation of social media platforms and active users surged, solidifying its status as one of the internet's paramount applications (Thomas A, 2021).

Instagram's Inception and Evolution: Launched in 2010 by Stanford graduate Kevin Systrom as a photo-sharing platform, Instagram quickly gained traction, accumulating 25,000 users within a day of its October 6 debut. Emphasizing mobile device photography, the app was developed in just eight weeks before its October 2010 release on Apple's mobile operating system. Facebook swiftly recognized its potential, acquiring the company for \$1 billion in cash and stock within two years of its launch. Systrom, with no formal computer science training, honed his coding skills during nights and weekends while working at Next-stop. Inspired by his affinity for fine whiskeys, he built a prototype named Burbn, featuring a popular photo-sharing aspect. Securing \$500,000 in seed funding within two weeks, Systrom partnered with Mike Krieger, an engineer and user experience designer, to refine the app, eventually unveiling it as Instagram. Launched on October 6, 2010, the app garnered 25,000 users on its first day, reaching one million users by mid-December. Instagram's Growth and Acquisition: Instagram's popularity surged, attracting investors and leading social media companies like Twitter and Facebook. Despite a \$500 million stock offer from Twitter, Systrom declined, opting for sustained small-scale operations. By March 2011, Instagram boasted 27 million users, and in April 2012, it expanded to Android, amassing over one million downloads within a day. Facebook, recognizing its potential, extended an offer of \$1 billion in cash and stock in April 2012, ensuring Instagram's independent management. The acquisition solidified Instagram's status as a prominent social media platform (Aslam, 2022).

Instagram, a social media giant, boasts a staggering 2 billion monthly active users as of February 22, 2022, with an impressive daily engagement of 1.9 billion users and 500 million active users on Instagram Stories. The platform has become a hub for businesses, hosting over 200 million of them. Demographically, Instagram maintains a balanced user base, with 51.4% female and 48.6% male users. The age group of 25-34 dominates, constituting 31.2% of users, closely followed by the 18-24 age group at 31%. Geographically, Instagram's impact is global, with 123 million users in the U.S. alone and an overwhelming 87% of users located

outside the U.S., reaching 17.6% of the world's population. In the U.S., Instagram is particularly influential among teens, with 73% considering it the best way for brands to reach them about new products or promotions. The platform's users spend an average of 30 minutes per day on the platform, solidifying Instagram's pervasive and engaging presence in the social media landscape.

Instagram Monthly Active Users Growth Overview (2013-2025): Instagram's ascent in the social media landscape has been extraordinary, commencing with 150 million monthly users in 2013 and rapidly expanding. The user base doubled to 300 million in 2014, surged to 400 million in 2015, and reached 600 million in 2016. The momentum continued with 800 million users in 2017, and in 2018, Instagram crossed the significant threshold of 1 billion monthly users. Sustaining this substantial user base through 2019 and 2020, Instagram further expanded to 1.074 billion monthly active users in 2021. The growth trajectory continued, and in 2023, Instagram's monthly active users soared to an impressive 1.35 billion worldwide. Looking ahead, predictions for 2025 anticipate a continued climb to 1.44 billion active users, reaffirming Instagram's enduring popularity and its pivotal role in shaping the global social media landscape.

Literature Review

This review focuses on teenage girls' social media use, particularly Instagram. It aims to address gaps in existing literature, emphasizing the importance of giving voice to teenage girls. The review incorporates relevant studies, often dominated by perspectives of the older generation, and employs sociological concepts to inform the theoretical framework. Citing a 2018 Pew Research Center study, it notes the rising popularity of image and video-based social networking sites like Instagram among teenagers, surpassing Facebook usage. Social media use has been consistently associated with an elevated risk of eating disorders, as evidenced by numerous studies, including a comprehensive review of 67 studies conducted in 2015. The review concludes that internet use, especially on appearance-focused social media, is linked to heightened concerns about body image and eating disorders, with adolescents being particularly vulnerable to these effects (Elsesser K., 2021).

A study by Davis (2012) explores how young people, for whom identity issues are crucial, leverage digital media technologies for self-expression. Davis contends that social networking enables users to modify their online identity in ways they might not offline due to confidence issues. Social networking serves as a testing ground where individuals can experiment with one online persona, observe reactions, and apply these lessons to real-life interactions, supporting the goals of identity practice in this research. The impact of posting selfies on mood is highlighted in a 2018 study, revealing that college-age women who took and shared selfies reported a worsened mood and lower perceived attractiveness. Intriguingly, these negative effects persisted even when participants were allowed to retake and retouch their photos. Additionally, social media use has been associated with an increased desire for cosmetic surgery, as demonstrated by a 2010 study involving 600 Dutch adolescents aged 11–18 (Mills, 2018).

A brain fMRI (Functional MRI (fMRI) is an imaging technique that highlights the most active areas in the brain) study on adolescents investigated the changes in brain activity associated with Instagram "likes." The study found that participants showed heightened brain activity when viewing photos with more likes, activating the brain's reward center when their own photos received likes. The researchers concluded that likes serve as a social cue within the cultural sphere of adolescents, contributing to their understanding of social navigation (Sherman, 2016). Moreover, Instagram use was linked to an increased drive for thinness, particularly driven by viewing appearance-focused posts such as those featuring models and fitness bloggers (Rachel Cohen, 2017). Sharing selfies has a negative impact on mood, as indicated by a 2018 study that discovered college-age women, even when given the opportunity to retake and edit their photos, reported feeling less attractive and in worse moods. Another study from 2010, involving 600 Dutch adolescents aged 11–18, revealed a correlation between social media use and an increased desire for cosmetic surgery (Mills, 2018).

Examining brain activity associated with Instagram "likes," a study used fMRI on adolescents to reveal heightened brain activity when participants saw photos with more likes. The activation of the brain's reward center occurred when their own photos received likes, leading researchers to conclude that likes serve as a social cue specific to adolescents, influencing how they navigate their social world (Sherman, 2016). Instagram use, particularly when viewing appearance-focused posts featuring models and fitness bloggers, was found to increase the drive for thinness, unlike other types of posts (RachelCohen, 2017).

The manipulation of photos on Instagram poses a challenge to body image, according to a 2016 study titled "Picture Perfect." This research explored the impact of viewing manipulated Instagram photos of peers, leading to the conclusion that exposure to such manipulated images directly contributes to a decrease in one's own body image (Mariska Kleemans, 2018). Given the well-established link between eating disorders and social media, researchers are exploring solutions. One group discovered that a social media literacy intervention designed to educate young girls about the risks of social media resulted in a reduction in the risk of eating Engaging in social comparison, especially on Instagram, poses significant risks to mental health. According to research conducted by Facebook, which owns Instagram, the platform exacerbates body image issues, particularly among teenage girls. The focus on appearance and lifestyle on Instagram, as opposed to apps like TikTok or Snapchat, contributes to negative social comparison. This trend affects both genders, with 14% of U.S. boys reporting that Instagram worsens their self-esteem.

The association between social media use, including Instagram, and suicidal thoughts is supported by a review of nine studies. Increased exposure to self-harm behavior, negative messages, and emulation of harmful actions contribute to higher psychological distress and suicidal ideation among users. Studies also suggest that reducing social media use, as demonstrated by a group of university undergraduates, can alleviate loneliness and depression. Additionally, Instagram is implicated in making teens feel worse about their bodies, with 32% of teen girls attributing increased negative feelings to the platform. Facebook's ongoing studies indicate that Instagram negatively impacts a significant portion of

its young users, particularly teenage girls. The platform is associated with increased rates of anxiety and depression, leading to concerns about its impact on the mental health of adolescents. While Facebook claims that Instagram is not harmful to all users, research acknowledges that the effects of negative social comparison can be managed but are not universally positive. disorders (Susan J Paxton, 2017).

Being addicted and causing mental health issues: Instagram researchers observed that individuals grappling with the platform's psychological effects were not necessarily logging off. Teens frequently expressed a desire to spend less time on Instagram, but they lacked the self-control to do so. An Instagram research manager revealed that teens often felt "addicted" to the platform, recognizing its negative impact on their mental health but struggling to stop themselves. In focus groups, Instagram employees heard directly from teens facing difficulties, such as one who felt compelled to fight for recognition and visibility, leading to negative perceptions of body image. The report by Lovejoy (2021), as reported by The Wall Street Journal, accessed an internal report based on three years of research, revealing alarming findings. Thirty-two percent of teen girls stated that when feeling bad about their bodies, Instagram exacerbated these feelings. Comparisons on Instagram were noted to influence how young women perceive and describe themselves. Despite Facebook's ongoing studies into Instagram's impact on millions of young users, especially teenage girls, the platform appears to worsen body image issues for a significant portion of them. Teen's attribute increased rates of anxiety and depression to Instagram, with some associating their suicidal thoughts directly with the platform. In 11 out of 12 areas, including loneliness, anxiety, sadness, and eating issues, more teenage girls struggling with these concerns reported that Instagram made these difficult times better rather than worse. Body image was the only area where some teen girls reported Instagram making it worse, highlighting worst-case scenarios. Despite these negative effects, a majority of teenage girls experiencing body image issues reported that Instagram either had a positive impact or no impact at all.

The study titled "Selfies Harm: Effects on Mood and Body Image in Young Women" by Jennifer S. Mills (2018) from the Department of Psychology at York University suggested that taking and posting selfies on social media resulted in lower mood and worsened self-image. Even women who had the opportunity to retake and modify their selfies before posting experienced negative emotional reactions similar to those who could not retouch their photos. Participants without the option to retouch felt anxious, less confident, and less physically attractive after uploading selfies, with significantly greater differences than the control condition. In an article discussing Instagram bullies, a parent mentioned instances where bullies urged their daughter to harm herself (Thomson, 2020), emphasizing the ease with which individuals can be manipulated online by anonymous entities.

Another article (Boulier, 2019) argued that Instagram, considered a positive application by some, promoted peace by removing the view of "likes" to users. This move aimed to counter unrealistic life standards, signaling that a like does not define a person. Hiding likes, however, led to a minor loss of fame for social influencers. Instagram's goal in concealing likes was to create the "safest place on the internet," minimizing the impact of bullying and self-hate. A survey study in Singapore (Jiang, 2020) on "The Effects of Instagram Use, Social

Comparison, and Self-Esteem on Social Anxiety" revealed that social comparison increased social anxiety. Users often compared themselves to others in terms of appearance, ability, popularity, and social skills, triggering strong psychological responses. Instagram's various filters, which enhance photos, exposed users to idealized images, activating negative emotions and contributing to poor psychological well-being, such as social anxiety.

BBC's case studies (McCallum, 2022) regarding sexual harassment and death threats highlighted instances of women being sexually harassed through Instagram accounts. Rachel Riley, a TV presenter, received a series of pornographic messages, emphasizing the alarming ease with which illegal content can be sent through the platform. Instagram's efforts to regulate abusive content were discussed, with regulations leading to the removal of a significant portion of abusive content. The use of Instagram DMs for image-based sexual abuse, including cyber flashing and unsolicited explicit photos, was uncovered. The CCDH, a non-profit organization, reported that one in seven voice notes sent to women in the study were abusive. However, Instagram's policies did not specifically include voice notes, and there were challenges in reporting such instances. The study concluded with concerns about the emotional toll on individuals, particularly younger females, who may receive such content behind closed doors.

Methodology

In this chapter, the focus is on exploring the impact of Instagram on young girls, drawing from previous studies that utilize both qualitative and quantitative analyses. The research is based on primary data and a literature review also used for collecting data. Conducted at the University of Mysore, Karnataka, India, in July 2022, this research employs a mixed-method approach to collect explanatory and statistical data. The study specifically targets female participants aged 18-24, with a total of 43 young girls as respondents.

While Instagram is the primary platform of interest, other social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Snapchat are used as research tools to capture a broader perspective. A survey method, utilizing a questionnaire, is employed for data collection. The study's limitations include a focus on Instagram and its impact on young girls, with a confined scope to the University of Mysore and a specific age group (PG and PhD students).

The significance of this study lies in informing young girls about the impacts of Instagram, addressing issues like online attacks and social comparisons. The study period spans four months, from June 1, 2022, to October 6, 2022, with initial months dedicated to the introduction and literature review. The analysis plan involves a simple percentage method, and ethical considerations prioritize voluntary participation and unbiased research practices.

Results

The study encompassed participants from diverse national backgrounds, with 74% identifying as Indian and 26% as foreign nationals. This intentional inclusion of foreign nationals offers a global perspective on the impact of Instagram. The data underscores the

study's reach beyond a specific cultural context, enriching the findings with insights from participants around the world. The participants' biographical data, encompassing nationality, age, educational qualifications, family status, family income, place of living, and the timing of their first Instagram account creation, offers a comprehensive view. The majority, constituting 74%, were Indian, with 26% being foreign nationals. In terms of age, the study predominantly included respondents aged 20-23 (82%). Regarding education, 81% were postgraduate students, 12% were undergraduate students, and 7% were pursuing other educational levels, primarily PhDs. Family status revealed a significant presence from middle-class backgrounds (60%), followed by upper-middle class (19%) and upper class (14%). Family incomes were diverse, with 35% having an income of 50k+, and 39% falling in the 20-50k range. Most participants (51%) hailed from cities, while 32% were from villages, indicating urban and rural representation. Finally, in the analysis of participants' Instagram account creation, 63% initiated their accounts after 2018, signaling the platform's increasing popularity in recent years.

The study intentionally included participants from diverse national backgrounds, with 74% identifying as Indian and 26% as foreign nationals. This intentional diversity offers a global perspective on the impact of Instagram, enriching the findings with insights from around the world. The participants' comprehensive biographical data encompassed nationality, age, educational qualifications, family status, income, place of living, and the timing of their first Instagram account creation. The majority, constituting 74%, were Indian, with 26% being foreign nationals. Predominantly, respondents aged 20-23 (82%) participated in the study. Regarding education, 81% were postgraduate students, 12% were undergraduates, and 7% were pursuing other educational levels, primarily PhDs. Family status revealed a significant presence from middle-class backgrounds (60%), followed by upper-middle class (19%) and upper class (14%). Family incomes were diverse, with 35% having an income of 50k+, and 39% falling in the 20-50k range. Most participants (51%) hailed from cities, while 32% were from villages, indicating urban and rural representation. Finally, in analyzing participants' Instagram account creation, 63% initiated their accounts after 2018, signaling the platform's increasing popularity in recent years. Among the participants, 65% are active Instagram users, while 35% have accounts but are not actively engaged. Regarding daily usage, 47% spend 1-3 hours on the platform, 23% exceed 4 hours, 23% use it for less than 1 hour, and 7% dedicate over 5 hours daily. This diverse distribution highlights varying engagement levels, with the majority favoring a balanced 1-3 hours of daily usage.

The participants in the study revealed diverse motivations for using Instagram. A majority of 54% cited pleasure as their primary reason, indicating a preference for recreational use. Meanwhile, 30% reported using Instagram for news consumption, 9% for business purposes, and 7% for various other reasons. The posting habits on Instagram varied among respondents, with 49% posting once a month being the most common frequency. A breakdown of the types of posts participants enjoyed viewing on Instagram showed a preference for Reels (35%), followed by fashion (21%), and food (19%).

Application of filters and the Emotional impact of post engagement metrics on young girls using Instagram:

Regarding the process of posting, 44% take 2-5 photos before finding one deemed "Instagram-worthy," while 37% take 5-10 photos. Only 12% are content with a single photo, and 7% take 15 or more photos before posting. These insights provide a nuanced understanding of users' behaviors and pre-Photo Editing Practices. The majority of young girls actively engage in photo editing, with 51% indicating that they use Instagram filters sometimes, 23% usually, 14% always, and 12% never. The data underscores the prevalence of filter use among participants, with a notable emphasis on occasional application.

Emotional Response to Likes and Comments: Likes and comments play a significant role in influencing the emotional state of Instagram users. The data reveals that 72% of respondents (35% always and 37% sometimes) experience positive emotions when receiving high engagement. Conversely, 28% express indifference, indicating that social validation doesn't necessarily impact their emotional well-being.

Impact of Engagement Metrics: The emotional impact of likes and comments is a nuanced aspect of Instagram use. While a substantial percentage (72%) derives happiness from high engagement, a significant minority (28%) remains unaffected. This suggests diverse attitudes toward the significance of social validation in the Instagram user experience. The majority of young girls actively apply filters, emphasizing the platform's role in facilitating creative expression. Moreover, the nuanced emotional responses to likes and comments highlight the varied ways users interpret and internalize social validation. This understanding is crucial for comprehending the complex dynamics of Instagram use among young girls and opens avenues for further research into the evolving landscape of social media behaviors.

A nuanced emotional landscape among young girls using Instagram.

Emotional Response to Post Engagement: When evaluating the emotional impact of likes and comments on posts, it is evident that a significant portion of participants (53%) never feels worse when lacking engagement. However, 28% admit to occasionally feeling down when they receive fewer likes and comments, while 14% feel mostly affected. Strikingly, none of the respondents claim to always feel worse, suggesting a range of emotional responses rather than a consistent negative impact.

Deletion Patterns Based on Post Performance: The data on post deletion behaviors reveals a balanced spectrum of responses. A majority of participants (49%) never delete posts, regardless of their performance. Conversely, 35% sometimes remove posts that fall short of expectations, and 16% have a proactive approach, opting to delete posts that do not align with their desired engagement levels. The emotional impact of post engagement varies among Instagram users, with a substantial portion remaining unaffected by the quantity of likes and comments. The decision to delete posts is equally diverse, showcasing a split between those who maintain a laissez-faire attitude and those who actively curate their content based on performance. This nuanced understanding contributes to a more comprehensive view of user behavior on Instagram, allowing for tailored platform improvements and a deeper exploration of the relationship between users and their digital content.

The frequency of receiving annoying messages among Instagram users, particularly young girls. Out of 43 participants, 56% reported receiving annoying messages sometimes, while 23% stated they never receive such messages. Notably, 21% revealed that they regularly encounter annoying messages. This suggests that a majority of the participants are occasionally disturbed by unwanted content, pointing to the prevalence of this issue among young Instagram users. While the girls asked regarding Impact of Insta-famous Accounts on Self-esteem, this segment delves into the emotional responses of participants after viewing content from popular Instagram accounts. Astonishingly, 50% of respondents claimed to never feel down or envious after seeing Insta-famous accounts. However, 25% admitted to sometimes experiencing feelings of inadequacy and envy, while 14% reported rare occurrences of such emotions. A mere 11% confessed to usually having these sentiments, indicating a minority of users who are consistently affected by content from popular accounts. Impressively, none of the respondents claimed to always feel envious, presenting a balanced emotional response to the influence of Insta-famous accounts.

A comprehensive overview of Instagram usage patterns and their psychological implications

We explored participants' tendencies to compare themselves to others, particularly in terms of body image. A substantial 44% of participants claimed to never engage in such comparisons, highlighting a positive self-image among a significant portion of respondents. On the contrary, 23% reported sometimes comparing themselves, and 21% admitted to rarely doing so. Only 12% claimed to usually engage in self-comparisons. Notably, none of the respondents confessed to always comparing themselves to others. This suggests that a majority of the participants maintain a healthy perspective on self-image, with only a minority occasionally engaging in self-comparisons.

The survey aimed to understand the extent to which users emulate others on Instagram. Notably, 47% of respondents admitted to sometimes copying others, suggesting that Instagram serves as a platform for inspiration and imitation. However, the majority (70%) either rarely or never engage in this behavior. This indicates that while some users draw inspiration, a significant portion maintains individuality on the platform. This segment delved into users' perceptions of their worth based on appearance and success. Impressively, 26% strongly disagreed with this notion, emphasizing that a substantial portion rejects the idea that Instagram defines their worth. Contrarily, 39% agreed or strongly agreed that they perceive respect on Instagram linked to looks or success. This finding raises concerns about the potential impact of societal beauty standards on user self-esteem, requiring further investigation into the platform's role in shaping perceptions.

Understanding users' struggles with time management on Instagram revealed that a significant 56% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they struggle to control the time spent on the app. This suggests a potential issue with addictive behavior and the need for features or interventions to support users in managing their time effectively. As we explored the impact of Instagram on users' daily routines, particularly in terms of eating and studying habits. Encouragingly, 67% of respondents claimed they rarely or never forget to eat

or study due to Instagram. However, it is concerning that 33% occasionally or frequently experience disruptions in their routines, signifying a need for awareness and education on responsible social media usage. Examining the platform's impact on mental well-being, 58% of respondents revealed that Instagram sometimes or rarely alleviates feelings of loneliness and depression. This nuanced response indicates that while Instagram can provide comfort for some, it may not be a consistent source of emotional support for all users. This underlines the importance of promoting healthier coping mechanisms and fostering a supportive online community. Many users experience positive aspects, such as finding inspiration, the findings also highlight areas of concern, including potential addictive behavior, body image perceptions, and the impact on daily routines. These insights can guide platform enhancements, educational initiatives, and user support features to ensure a more positive and responsible Instagram experience for all users.

Discussion

The findings of the research provide valuable insights into the demographics, behaviors, and psychological impacts of Instagram usage among the surveyed participants. A significant majority, comprising 74%, hail from India, with the remaining 26% representing various foreign countries. The age distribution reveals that 82% of participants fall within the 20-23 age group, predominantly comprising postgraduate students (81%). In terms of socio-economic status, 62% identify as middle class, 19% as upper middle class, and 14% as upper class, while a smaller percentage belongs to low and lower-class families. Monthly income distribution shows that almost 75% earn between 20-50k or more. Regarding residence, 51% live in cities, 32% in villages, and the rest in metropolitan areas and towns. Instagram account creation is recent, with 63% starting after 2018. The majority (65%) are active users spending 1-3 hours daily for pleasure. Posting habits vary, with most posting once a month or twice a week. Notably, 90% apply filters before posting content. Likes and comments impact users positively, making them feel happy, although 49% don't feel worse if they receive fewer likes or comments. A considerable number (51%) delete posts that don't perform well. An overwhelming 77% have experienced annoying messages. Comparison is prevalent, with over 50% admitting to feeling down when viewing others' lives. Interestingly, 75% occasionally or frequently try to copy others. A concerning 35% believe that respect on Instagram correlates with looks and wealth. Time management proves challenging for over 70% of users, and 55% face food disorders. However, Instagram emerges as a source of solace for more than 85% during lonely and depressed moments. These findings collectively paint a complex picture of Instagram's multifaceted role in the lives of young users, with both positive and negative implications for their well-being and behavior.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this comprehensive exploration of Instagram's impact on the lives of young girls shed light on the multifaceted dynamics of social media use in today's digital age. The findings underscore the transformative nature of Instagram, revealing both positive and concerning aspects that shape the behaviors and perceptions of its users. Demographically, the study notes that a majority of the participants, predominantly from India, fall within the 20-23 age group, representing a demographic deeply immersed in the internet age. Instagram

is a prominent platform among this cohort, serving as a communication hub and a source of entertainment and pleasure. While the platform facilitates new ways of communication and connection, it brings forth challenges. The quest for validation through likes and comments emerges as a significant emotional driver, impacting users' self-esteem. The research highlights the emotional roller coaster that comes with the pursuit of social affirmation, as users experience joy when receiving engagement but also encounter feelings of sadness or even resort to post deletion when faced with underwhelming responses. Anonymity and distance on social media, however, do not shield users from negative experiences. The prevalence of annoying messages and the toxic habit of comparison contribute to a less positive environment. Disturbingly, users, particularly young girls, are susceptible to body image issues, with a propensity to copy others and engage in unhealthy comparisons and envy.

The study also reveals the struggle for time management on Instagram, with users admitting to a lack of control when it comes to spending time on the platform. This phenomenon not only affects their ability to focus on essential tasks but also poses risks, such as the development of food disorders due to neglecting regular meals. Despite these challenges, Instagram emerges as a powerful tool in mitigating feelings of loneliness and, at times, acting as a source of emotional support for users. This dual nature of Instagram, serving as both an enabling and constraining force, emphasizes the need for continued research and awareness regarding the platform's impact on the well-being of young girls.

In conclusion, this research contributes valuable insights to the broader discourse on social media's influence on human behavior, offering a nuanced understanding of how Instagram shapes the lives of young girls. As technology continues to evolve, the study advocates for ongoing exploration to navigate the complexities and consequences of digital engagement, ensuring a balanced and positive online experience for the younger generation.

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