

IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM ON UCU STUDENTS MENTAL HEALTH

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, MEDIA AND
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between Instagram usage and mental health outcomes among Uganda Christian University (UCU) students. With the growing popularity of social media, concerns about its impact on mental health have emerged. This study aims to explore how Instagram usage causes anxiety, depression, self-esteem and social comparison among UCU students. Qualitative approach will be employed majorly using in-depth interviews. The study will also examine moderating factors such as self-identity and mediating factors such as fear of missing out. These findings will contribute to understanding the study carried out.

DECLARATION

I declare that I am the author of this paper and that any assistance I received in its preparation is fully acknowledged and disclosed in the paper. I have also cited any sources from which I used data, ideas or words, either quoted directly or paraphrased. I also certify that this paper was prepared by me specifically for the partial fulfillment for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in journalism, Media and Communication at Uganda Christian University.

SIGNATURE



5TH AUGUST, 2024.

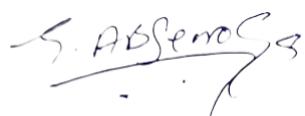
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APPROVAL

This research report has been supervised and approved by me and therefore it is ready for submission to the school of journalism, media and communication at Uganda Christian University.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. A. Ssenoga".

Date: 5th September, 2024

MR. SSENOGA ABRAHAM BAKIRAASA

(Academic Supervisor)

LIST OF ACRONYMS

UCU- UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

FOMO- FEAR OF MISSING OUT

IG- INSTAGRAM

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DECLARATION	iii
APPROVAL	iv
LIST OF ACRONYMS	v
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 BACKGROUND	1
1.2.1. MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH	1
1.2.2. Instagram and Social Comparison.	2
1.2.3Body Image Concerns and Instagram	2
1.2.4. Instagram and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	2
1.2.5. Isolation and Loneliness	2
1.2.6. Positive Aspects of Instagram.....	3
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	3
1.4 PURPOSE OF STUDY.....	3
1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	3
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	3

1.7 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY	4
1.8 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY	4
1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	6
1.10 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY	6
CHAPTER TWO	8
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.0 INTRODUCTION	8
2.1 THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT	8
2.1.1 Social Comparison and Self-Esteem	8
2.1.2 Body Image Concerns and Eating Disorders	8
2.1.3 Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and Anxiety	9
2.1.4 Depression and Loneliness	9
2.1.5 Good Elements and Helping Neighbors	9
2.1.6 Coping mechanisms and interventions.....	10
CHAPTER THREE	11
METHODOLOGY	11
3.0 INTRODUCTION	11
The Research Design	11
3.1 The case study Design	11
3.1.1 Advantages of Case Studies	11
3.1.2 Disadvantages of Case Studies.....	12
3.2 The Qualitative Approach:	14
Questionnaire: Impact of Instagram on UCU Students Mental Health	14
3.3 Data Analysis:	18
3.3 Ethical Considerations:	18
3.4 Limitations of the study	19
CHAPTER FOUR	20
DATA INTERPRETATION & PRESENTATION OF RESULTS	20

4.0 INTRODUCTION	20
4.1 THEMES AND PATTERNS	20
4.2 INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS.....	21
CHAPTER FIVE.....	22
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS.....	22
5.0 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS	22
5.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS VS FINDINGS.....	22
5.2 FINDINGS VS LITERATURE REVIEW.....	25
5.3 UNEXPECTED RESULTS	26
CHAPTER SIX	27
CONCLUSION	27
6.0	S
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	27
6.1	D
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	27
6.2	T
HEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS	27
6.3	P
RACTICAL IMPLICATIONS	27
6.4	L
IMITATIONS	28
6.5	F
UTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS	28
REFERENCES.....	29
APPENDICES	31

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION.

The spread of social media platforms in recent years has completely changed how people interact and communicate. Instagram is the most popular of these, with over a billion users worldwide who use it every month. Instagram has certainly made it easier for people to express themselves and interact with others, but an increasing number of studies indicates that it may also have a negative impact on students' mental health, especially in learning environments.

Research on the intricate connection between Instagram use and mental health is starting to emerge. A study conducted in 2017 by Primack et al. discovered a significant correlation between young adults' sense of social isolation and their usage of social media, particularly Instagram. Additionally, the platform's focus on carefully chosen photos and filtered representations of reality has been connected to elevated anxiety and depressive symptoms, as well as body image issues, especially in teenagers and young adults.

This study aims to thoroughly examine the complex effects of Instagram on students' mental health. We seek to offer a comprehensive understanding of this urgent issue by exploring the ways in which the platform affects psychological well-being, encourages social comparison, and modifies self-perception.

1.2 BACKGROUND.

1.2.1. MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH.

Social media platforms' explosive growth has completely changed how people engage with one another, communicate, and exchange information. According to a publication by Instagram (2022), Instagram has emerged as one of the most popular platforms due to its visually-driven content, especially among younger demographics. It's critical to recognize the possible effects

social media may have on students' mental health as it becomes more and more ingrained in their daily lives.

1.2.2. Instagram and Social Comparison.

The social comparison phenomenon is one of the main ways that Instagram may have an impact on mental health. The platform gives users a well-curated glimpse into other people's lives, frequently presenting romanticized portrayals of reality. Research has demonstrated that regular exposure to this kind of carefully chosen content can cause upward social comparison, in which people evaluate themselves against others and may feel inadequate or less valuable, according to Fardouly, J., et al. (2015)

1.2.3 Body Image Concerns and Instagram

Instagram's focus on visual content, especially pictures of lifestyle and physical appearance, has been connected to increased body image concerns, particularly in teens and young adults, according to Tiggemann, M., et al. (2014)

1.2.4. Instagram and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)

FOMO, or the fear of missing out, is a phenomenon that can be exacerbated by the constant barrage of updates and posts on Instagram. This is a reference to the fear that while one is away, others are enjoying fulfilling experiences.

1.2.5. Isolation and Loneliness

Overuse of Instagram has been linked to higher feelings of social isolation, which runs counter to the platform's stated goal of promoting social connections. According to a study by Primack et al. (2017), young adults' perceptions of social isolation were found to be elevated in correlation with higher use of social media, including Instagram.

1.2.6. Positive Aspects of Instagram

It's crucial to remember that Instagram also provides beneficial opportunities for self-expression, creativity, and community building, even though a large portion of the research emphasizes possible drawbacks. In addition to sharing personal accomplishments and having insightful conversations, users can locate support networks. It is still difficult to find a balance between these advantages and any potential drawbacks.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

There are situations of students at Uganda Christian University suffering from mental instability as a result of avid consumption of Instagram content. However, no research has been done as to the nature of content consumed by students on Instagram, how it affects their mental well-being and the extent of mental suffering.

1.4 PURPOSE OF STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to identify students consuming Instagram content and analyze the nature of content and its effects on students mental well being and the consequential extent of mental suffering visited upon the students.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify students consuming instagram content
- Analyze the nature of content consumed by students on instagram
- Analyze how it affects their mental well being
- Analyze the extent of mental suffering visited upon the students.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Who are the students consuming Instagram content at UCU?

- What is the nature of content consumed by the students at Uganda Christian University
- How does the Instagram content consumed affect the students mental well being?
- what is the extent of mental suffering visited upon the students?

1.7 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.7.1 Geographical Scope: To ensure a diverse representation of students from various backgrounds within UCU, the study will be carried out on different students but still within the UCU premises.

1.7.2 Demographic Focus: Students in graduate programs within the Uganda Christian University premises between the ages of 18 and 25 will be the study's target population. In order to reach the substantial number of young adults who use Instagram.

1.7.3 Time scope: One months will allow for a thorough analysis of participants' Instagram usage habits and possible changes in mental health outcomes over the course of the study.

1.7.4 Requirements for Inclusion: Users must be active on Instagram, which is characterized as using the app at least three times a week. This requirement makes sure that participants are exposed to Instagram on a regular basis.

1.7.5 Data Collection Methods: A combination of reflective journals, self-administered questionnaires, and, semi-structured interviews will be used to gather data. These techniques will offer insights into the participants' experiences from a Qualitative view.

1.8 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

1.8.1 Instagram's Pervasive Influence: Among young adults and students in particular, Instagram has grown to become one of the most widely used social media platforms worldwide. Because of its widespread use and impact on daily life, it is imperative to comprehend its potential effects on mental health.

1.8.2 Growing Concerns about Mental Health: As students deal with particular stressors and difficulties associated with academic demands, social dynamics, and the transition to adulthood, there is a growing concern about the mental health and well-being of students. Examining Instagram's function in this regard is pertinent and timely.

1.8.4 Potential Benefits and Drawbacks: Instagram is a multifaceted platform that offers options for self-expression, community building, and artistic expression. It does, however, also carry some risk in terms of mental health issues, body image issues, and social comparison. The goal of this study is to investigate both advantages and disadvantages.

1.8.5 Educational and Psychological Significance: Since school has a significant impact on students' lives, knowledge of how Instagram affects mental health can help develop interventions, guidelines, and other support systems.

1.8.6 Relevance to Well-Being Initiatives: Student mental health and well-being are becoming more and more of a priority in Uganda Christian University . The development of focused interventions and educational initiatives targeted at encouraging responsible social media use and improving student wellbeing can be guided by the insights obtained from this study.

1.8.7 Prevention of Potential Harm: It's important to recognize potential risk factors and protective factors because excessive or unhealthy Instagram use may have negative effects. The development of evidence-based mitigation strategies for potential harm can benefit from this study.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The results of this research are significant on several fronts;

1.9.1 Addressing a Contemporary Concern: Given the increasing use of Instagram by young adults, particularly students, it is imperative to comprehend the possible effects of this platform on mental health, as noted by Primack, B. A., et al. (2017) and Twenge, J. M., et al. (2018).

1.9.2 Adding to the Conversation on Mental Health: As stated by Odgers, C. L., et al. (2020) and Primack, B. A., et al. (2018). The study contributes to the expanding body of knowledge regarding the connection between social media use and outcomes related to mental health. It provides insights into a particular population within the UCU students that is especially vulnerable to mental health issues by concentrating on students.

1.9.3 Informing Educational Practices: Schools have a significant impact on students' lives. Uganda Christian University can create supportive policies, interventions, and educational programs with insight into how Instagram affects their mental health .

1.9.4 Guiding Social Media Use: It is becoming more and more crucial to provide evidence- based guidelines for social media use that is both mindful and healthy, especially with the rise in popularity of Instagram and other social media platforms. Recommendations for parents, teachers, and students can be influenced by this study.

1.10 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study was situated within the;

Impact of Instagram on UCU students' mental health, considering Instagram usage

as the independent variable and mental health outcomes such as anxiety, depression, social- comparison and many more as the dependent variable. Social support, self-identity, and social

media literacy moderate this relationship, while social comparison, fear of missing out (FOMO), and cyberbullying mediate it. As guided by Uses and Gratifications theory, this framework examines how they learn behaviors and attitudes, fulfill specific needs, and navigate autonomy, competence and relatedness online, ultimately shinning light on the complex interaction between instagram and mental health among UCU students.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Social Media refers to “the websites and online tools that facilitate interactions between users by providing them opportunities to share information, opinions and interest”. (Swar and

Hameed, 2017). People have various reasons for the use of social media which includes entertainment, communication, searching for information. Note that adolescents and young adults are spending an increasing amount of time on online networking sites, texting and other social media. Twenge and Campbell. (2019)

Social media has altered the forms of group interaction and its users individual and collective behavior around the world. According to Swar et Al. 2017, there are increased concerns regarding the possible negative impacts associated with social media usage addiction, this

relates particularly on psychological well being.

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

2.1.1 Social

Comparison and Self-Esteem

Instagram is a visual content sharing platform that has been recognized as a major social comparison arena. According to Perloff, R. M. (2014), this could lead to upward social comparison, in which individuals assess themselves in light of idealized norms, which could impair one's self-esteem and make them feel inadequate

2.1.2 Body Image Concerns and Eating Disorders

As stated by Fardouly, J., et al. (2015) and Tiggemann, M., et al. (2014). Concerns regarding Instagram's influence on body image dissatisfaction and related psychological issues have been raised due to the platform's ubiquitous presence of

idealized body images. Several studies have

shown a link between exposure to these kinds of images on a regular basis and higher levels of body dissatisfaction, especially in young women. Furthermore, studies by Perloff, R. M. (2014) and Rodgers, R. F., et al. (2018) suggest that Instagram may play a role in the emergence of disordered eating behaviors as well as increased concerns about appearance and body weight

2.1.3 Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and Anxiety

The fear that others are enjoying rewarding events or social interactions can lead to heightened anxiety and a sense of social exclusion, especially among students who may already be navigating complex social dynamics, according to Wegmann, E., Stodt, B., et al (2015)

2.1.4 Depression and Loneliness

Numerous research has investigated the connection between Instagram use and mental health consequences, specifically concentrating on feelings of depression and isolation. Primack et al. (2017) discovered a strong correlation between young adults' increased use of social media, particularly Instagram, and their increased sense of social isolation. Additional studies by Primack, B. A., Colditz, et al. (2018) and Vannucci, A., K. M., et al. (2017) have revealed a connection between frequent Instagram use and increased depressive symptoms, especially in teenagers

2.1.5 Good Elements and Helping Neighbors

Although Instagram has been shown to have detrimental effects on mental health, it's also critical to recognize the platform's possible benefits. In supportive communities, where they can exchange stories, look for guidance, and form deep connections, many users find comfort. Instagram gives people a platform to display their skills and interests while also encouraging self-expression and creative exploration.

2.1.6 Coping mechanisms and interventions

Since Instagram is so common in students' lives, it is critical to think about intervention strategies to lessen any potential negative effects. Students can be better prepared to navigate Instagram and other social media platforms in a more psychologically resilient way by participating in educational programs and awareness campaigns about media literacy, healthy social media use, and self-esteem building.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This section outlines the study's research design, sampling, data collection methods and research tools. The section also presents process of data analysis and interpreting the data.

The Research Design

3.1 The case study Design

Case Study Design: Investigating the Impact of Instagram on UCU Students Mental Health

1. Title of the Case Study:

"Through the Lens of Instagram: Exploring the Effects of Instagram on UCU Student Mental Health"

2. Objectives:

To investigate the connection between student mental health outcomes and Instagram use.

To pinpoint the potentially influential elements of certain Instagram content, such as body image and social comparison.

To investigate any possible advantages and coping techniques related to Instagram use.

3.1.1 Advantages of Case Studies:

1.Rich, In-Depth Data: Case studies enable a thorough analysis of individual experiences, offering a profound comprehension of the intricacies surrounding Instagram's effect on mental health. Nuanced insights that quantitative methods might overlook can be revealed by this qualitative approach.

2. Contextual Understanding: Case studies give you the chance to investigate the phenomenon in its organic setting. This makes it possible for researchers to take into account more extensive social, cultural, and environmental elements that might have an impact on the connection between Instagram use and mental health.
3. Investigation of Uncommon Cases: Case studies allow for the examination of uncommon or singular cases that might not be adequately represented in extensive polls or trials. This can reveal particular trends and situations that advance knowledge of the subject.
4. Holistic Perspective: To obtain a complete picture of a person's experiences, perceptions, and behaviors linked to Instagram use and mental health, researchers can collect data from a variety of sources (such as questionnaires, journals, and interviews).
5. Theory and Hypothesis Generation: Case studies can be used as a springboard to develop theories and hypotheses that can be investigated in more extensive, regulated research projects. They can offer insightful preliminary information for additional study.
6. Ethical Considerations: When it comes to delicate subjects like mental health, case studies provide an opportunity to carefully examine ethical principles. By building a relationship with participants, researchers can make sure they are comfortable throughout the study.

3.1.2 Disadvantages of Case Studies:

Limited Generalizability: It might be difficult to extrapolate case study results to a broader population. It's possible that the particulars of the case and the setting don't accurately reflect larger patterns.

Potential for Bias: The analysis and conclusions of a case study may be influenced by the biases and interpretations of the researchers. The validity of the results may be impacted by the researcher's bias, which could be introduced by this subjectivity.

Time- and Resource-Intensive: Case studies demand a significant time, energy, and resource commitment. It can take some time to find good cases, gather information, and carry out in-depth analysis.

Difficulty in Replication: Case studies are frequently particular to the particular facts and participants. It can be difficult to duplicate the precise circumstances or locate comparable cases for comparison.

Limited Control Over Variables: Case studies offer less control over unimportant variables than experimental designs do. Because of this, it could be more difficult to prove a link between Instagram use and positive effects on mental health.

Subject to Subjectivity and Interpretation: Interpretation is a necessary part of analyzing qualitative data in case studies, and it can be impacted by the viewpoint of the researcher. The same data may be interpreted differently as a result of this subjectivity.

It's critical that researchers carefully weigh these benefits and drawbacks before selecting a case study methodology to examine Instagram's effects on students' mental health.

Furthermore, integrating case studies with additional research techniques can aid in offering a more thorough comprehension of the phenomenon.

3.2 The Qualitative Approach:

Sample Size: 30-50 students from various courses with UCU representing a diverse demographic.

Inclusion Criteria: Participants must be active Instagram users (defined as using the platform at least three times a week).

Study Procedures:

a. **Recruitment:**

- Participants will be recruited through direct outreach which is word of mouth and a bit of social media announcements like in WhatsApp groups

b. **Informed Consent:**

- Participants will be provided with detailed information about the study, and their informed consent will be obtained.

c. **Baseline Assessment:**

- Participants will complete a pre-study questionnaire to gather demographic information, Instagram usage patterns, and baseline mental health measures (e.g., depression, anxiety scales).

3.3 Data Analysis:

Qualitative data from the reflective questionnaire will be subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns related to Instagram use.

3.3 Ethical Considerations:

Confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be strictly maintained.

Participants will be reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequence.

3.4 Limitations of the study

The study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Generalizability may be limited due to the specific demographic and Instagram usage criteria.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA INTERPRETATION & PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings from qualitative data analysis exploring the impact of Instagram on UCU student's mental health. The chapter begins with a summary of the research questions and the qualitative methodology used, including details on participant selection, data collection methods (e.g semi-structured interviews), and data analysis techniques (e.g. thematic analysis)

4.1 THEMES AND PATTERNS

Thematic analysis revealed several key themes related to the impact of Instagram on UCU students' mental health. The following themes emerged from the data:

4.1.1 Social Comparison and Self-esteem:

Many participants described feelings of peer pressure and lower self-esteem when comparing themselves to idealized images and lifestyles portrayed on Instagram. For example: Participant A stated, “Instagram affects me mentally every time I see how people dress and look so cool, I find myself feeling so low and it makes me doubt myself a lot.”

4.1.2 Fear of Missing Out (FOMO):

Participants expressed anxiety and stress when they felt out or disconnected from social events and updates posted by their peers on Instagram.

For example: Participant B stated, “I get really anxious if I don’t check Instagram daily. It

makes me want to try out new places just like other people so the pressure to move is there.”

4.1.3. Hopelessness and Depression:

Several participants reported experiences of being hopeless about how they look and dress because of the way their peers dress and the number of likes and followers they get on Instagram, which contributes to feelings of depression and anxiety.

For example: Participant C shared, “I’ve lost all hope and self esteem due to the few likes I get on the app yet I think I dress well. I am thinking of avoiding the app for a while.”

4.1.4. Opportunities:

A couple of participants reported positive interactions with the app mostly highlighting Opportunities, which contributed to feelings of hope and entertainment.

For example: Participant D stated, “I feel like Instagram boosts up my fashion sense, and opens up my mind with the help of conspiracy theories, the matrix basically.” Another Participant added, “Basing on the content I usually come across it always creates a positive mood such as watching motivational speeches and sometimes teaches me something new in my life.”

4.2 INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

The themes identified in the qualitative analysis provide a shade of how Instagram use impacts UCU students mental Health. They highlight both positive such as social connectedness, opportunities, and negative aspects such as increased stress, pressure and negative self-perception

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.0 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This section is where results are discussed in relationship with the research questions,

literature review and theoretical framework to provide a clear context of the findings of the research study:

5.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS VS FINDINGS

The following were the research questions used in research study above related to the key findings;

1. who are the students consuming Instagram content in UCU?

Participant A- Argues that the students who consume Instagram content in UCU are students that have access to a mobile device which is a majority of the students in the university premises

This respondent argued that as long as you can access a smart phone in UCU, you would definitely be able to consume instagram or have the app, they believe the two are inseparable like how can't you have instagram

Participant B- Argues that students that are open minded and curious about their environments and want to creatively enjoy their free time by looking at places people have visited on Instagram.

This respondent argued and emphasized that there are many of them that consume Instagram content due to curiosity and having an open mind to different places that they would also want to visit and not necessarily compete with people.

Participant C- Basically students in our age bracket which is 18-25 years of age who are active on social media.

This respondent argued that most of the people consuming Instagram content are teens and campuses majorly and those who have just started working who are social media active hence consuming Instagram.

2.What is the nature of the content consumed by the students at Uganda Christian University?

Participant A- Students majorly consume the Instagram posts because the picture quality doesn't reduce as compared to WhatsApp or even Facebook so the content there is more of optical nutrition

This respondent argued that how can't you like the content on Instagram majorly the pictures posted by the pretty ladies and handsome men, so the respondent feels like people consume majorly the good quality posts.

Participant B- definitely the funny Instagram reels that make my day so I feel the most consumed content on Instagram is the reels.

The person argued that the reels are fun entertainment so if not the extremely funny reels, then what else would you definitely be going to Instagram for.

Participant C- The cognitive content which is for the open minded, some people like me goto Instagram to see the latest trends and get to learn new things from motivational speakers, this also depends on the people you follow

3.How does the Instagram content consumed affect the student's mental wellbeing? **Participant A-** The overrated content and posts from ladies with the worked-out bodies that look too prefect compared to the person scrolling through the posts can cause self-doubt.

This respondent argued that content consumed by some students can create self-doubt and people can end up losing self-confidence because they believe they don't look good.

Participant B- The way people dress and look so cool make people, including me doubt the way I dress and look as well, makes me want to step up

The respondent argued that it creates self-doubt of how someone presents themselves.

Participant C- I get anxious when I don't check instagram in a day, I must check what is happening I feel like people are leaving me behind so I must know everything by the end of the day.

The respondent argued that the content creates anxiety within students, like someone reaches a point and they can't live without checking instagram, its addictive.

5.2 FINDINGS VS LITERATURE REVIEW

The following sub-section will discuss the relationship between the findings of this research and the Literature review.

As previously discussed in the literature review many scholars agree that Instagram is a visual content sharing platform that creates concerns regarding influence on body image

Dissatisfaction, fear that others are enjoying rewarding events or social exclusion. Numerous research has investigated the connection between Instagram use and mental health consequences, specifically concentrating on feelings of depression and isolation. (Primack et al. 2017). Although Instagram has been shown to have detrimental effects on mental health, it's also critical to recognize the platforms possible benefits. It's so common in stents lives.

Participant A

This respondent agrees with the literature review that Instagram is a visual content sharing platform that has effects on mental health for example causing self-doubt because of how people dress or appear on the social app hence low self-esteem and confidence.

Participant B

This particular respondent argued that Instagram actually causes feelings of depression and isolation so they totally agree with the literature review presented.

Participant C

This respondent points out that Instagram not only has negative effects on human mental health but also has the positive side for example it's a source of inspirational talks to those that follow the right people hence a positive mental build or progress.

5.3 UNEXPECTED RESULTS

In this case, I didn't expect to find any positive thought from students because despite the negative responses from the people interviewed, after giving a negative thought on the visualplatform, they would give a positive one too where by many put out the point of opportunities. The opportunity to create content to entertain people or the opportunity to meet new people or be able to get inspirational quotes or info from the platform. Furthermore I didn't expect to get the answer of how helpful it is to find out new places, okay yes, that is true but the side effect of that is comparing yourself to the people out there having fun and losing confidence. But to my surprise some people are actually really strong when it comes to social media life and can't be mentally put down.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The qualitative analysis revealed that Instagram use influences students' mental health through various mechanisms, including social comparison, fear of missing out, hopelessness and depression and Opportunities.

6.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings underscore the complex nature of Instagram's impact on UCU students' mental health, indicating that while it can facilitate social connections, opportunities and self-expression, it also poses risks to psychological well-being, particularly among vulnerable individuals. The identified themes align with existing literature on social media and mental health, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions and support strategies.

6.2 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to understanding how social media platforms like Instagram shape individual's perceptions of themselves and others. They suggest that theoretical frameworks such as social cognitive theory of mass communication are relevant for explaining the observed impacts.

6.3 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Practically, the study highlights the importance of promoting digital literacy and resilience among students to navigate the challenges posed by social media. Educational institutions and mental health professionals should develop interventions that address both the positive

and negative aspects of Instagram use, fostering healthy online behaviors and providing support for those experiencing mental health issues worsened by social media.

6.4 LIMITATIONS

Limitations of the study include the small size and potential biases inherent in qualitative research for example participant self-selection. Future research could benefit from larger, more diverse samples and longitudinal designs to further explore the long-term effects of Instagram use on mental health.

6.5 FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research could explore how different types of social media platforms for example Twitter, Tik Tok, how they influence mental health outcomes among students. Additionally, comparative studies could investigate cultural variations in the impact of Instagram on mental health and examine effective strategies for mitigating negative effects.

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APPENDICES

This sub-section will provide additional information that backs up the main research text

APPENDIX A

The questionnaire technique was conducted by formulating four research questions which were then printed out on a physical questionnaire. Copies were printed out and distributed to different people around the school. Through face-to-face interactions and at focus group discussions. The participants were given at least a week to finalize answering their questionnaire.

Introduction:

Thank you for participating in this study. Your responses will help us understand the relationship between Instagram use and mental health among students. Please answer the following questions honestly.

Section 1: Demographic

Information

Age: [] years

Gender: [] Male [] Female [] Non-binary [] Prefer not to say

Educational Level: [] Undergraduate [] Graduate [] other (please specify:_____)

How often do you use
Instagram? Rarely (once a
week or less)

Occasionally (2-3 time week)
frequently (4-6 times a
week) Very frequently
(daily)

Section 2: Instagram Usage Patterns

On average, how much time do you spend on Instagram per session?
Less than 15 minutes
15-30 minutes

30 minutes to 1
hour More than 1
hour

What type of content do you primarily engage with on Instagram? (Select all that apply)

- Images
- Stories
- Videos
- Captions/Text

Other (please specify: _____)

Section 3: Social Comparison and Body Image

Do you find yourself comparing your life or appearance to others on Instagram? Never

Rarely

Sometime

Soften

Very often

Has Instagram influenced how you perceive your own body image or appearance?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Significant

Extremely

APPENDIX B

Introduction:

Thank you for participating in this study. Your responses will help us understand the relationship between Instagram use and mental health among students. Please answer the following questions honestly.

- Who are the students consuming Instagram content at UCU?
 - What is the nature of content consumed by the students at Uganda Christian University
 - How does the Instagram content consumed affect the students mental well being?
 - what is the extent of mental suffering visited upon the students?