

Instagram a planned way can be indicative

[Life](#), [Relationships](#)



Instagram being a fairly new (2010) form of social media has very few studies, or limited studies done.

With regard to self-esteem however, there seems to be substantial work done, all pointing in negative directions. A study by Anna Hill and Lamaja Denman in 2012, titled 'Adolescent Self Esteem and Instagram: An Examination of Posting Behaviors', explored how a specific social media site - here Instagram, may affect adolescent girls and their self-esteem. Social media, with the rise in technology, has changed the very manner in which young people interact with it and each other.

Instagram as a platform is used often to share pictures that the user takes to depict only certain, desirable aspects of their life, and is often used to recreate their desired self image. Portrayal of self in a planned way can be indicative of suffering self-esteem, especially based on the "follow" "like" and "comment" feedback features that the platform allows, and this can cause unprecedented declines in terms of mental health and rise in mental illness. The hypothesis of the study was that the girls with the lowest self-esteem would post the most provocative pictures. This hypothesis is based on how people can choose to "follow" certain users, make their accounts "public" or "private" and thereby choose the influences that may regulate how young women view themselves and how they wish others to view them.

The researchers issued a self-esteem questionnaire to a group, and followed closely the Instagram profiles of the group of adolescent girls (N=14), looking to find correlations. Close examination was done on the accounts

of type of photographs found, frequency of sharing pictures, usage of “filters” to alter the picture and correlated thus to the self-reported self-esteem scores. It was so found that the participants with highest self-esteem scores tended to post most unflattering, humorous and “goofy” pictures. The average self-esteem participants posted an increasing amount of filtered and provocative, revealing pictures, whilst the ones showing lowest self-esteem had open accounts most often- alongside most provocative and filtered or edited pictures- proving the study’s hypothesis. As social media becomes an almost invariable part of most adolescents and early adults’ life in urban and progressive lifestyles, it has an increasingly ill effect on the self-esteem and further- self-portrayal and self-confidence of adolescents as it creates its own flawed ideals of beauty and standards of what is considered “attractive”. The study could have done with including more factors than just number of provocative pictures to gauge correlation with self-esteem, and perhaps could extend itself to be non-gender specific. A study ‘THE EFFECT OF INSTAGRAM ON SELF-ESTEEM AND LIFE SATISFACTION’ by Nicole Annette Dion, 2016 was conducted as a quasi-experiment that examined the effects of Instagram, on self-esteem and life satisfaction. Specifically the study looked at the effects of following celebrities on Instagram in relation to Festinger’s social comparison theory that explains how individuals compare themselves to others to evaluate their own opinions and abilities in order to reduce any uncertainty in these areas and to learn how to define the self.

Social comparison can be a way of self-enhancement by downward social comparisons, by means of looking to another individual or group that they consider to be worse off than them in order to feel better about themselves,

or have a negative impact on an individual's self-report by means of upward comparisons, when comparing themselves with others who are better off or superior. Such negative social comparisons are detrimental to the perceptions about the self. Traditionally-aged college females (N = 51) were assigned to either the control group where they were asked to use Instagram as they normally would, or the experimental group where they were asked to follow 15 specific celebrities for 4-6 weeks. Participants were given a pretest and posttest which included a self-esteem (Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale- Revised Positive Version, 2003) and a life satisfaction survey (Revised Work and Nonwork Life Satisfaction Scales, 2013).

There were no statistically significant differences found between the experimental group and the control group, nor between the pre-test and post-test scores. However, a subgroup of participants that initially followed a minimal amount of celebrities before the experiment showed a decline in their life satisfaction at post-test which approached statistical significance, which resulted in the conclusion that usage of Instagram can decrease self esteem and life satisfaction in college aged females depending on who they follow. This study thus successfully found the answers it sought in relation to self esteem and Instagram usage, but its lack of a control group-natural settings and a less gendered approach would yield more conclusive evidence.

A study survey ' Friend Networking Sites and Their Relationship to Adolescents' Well-Being and Social Self-Esteem' (Valkenberget al, 2006) among 881 (ages 10-19 years) adolescents on a Dutch friend networking site showed interesting results on feedback and self-esteem.

It is known that adolescents often engage in what has been referred to as “imaginative audience behaviour” where they tend to overestimate the extent to which others are watching and evaluating and as a result can be extremely preoccupied with how they appear in eyes of others. Interpersonal feedback and public evaluations are publicly available on all members of friend networking sites, likely to affect the development of adolescents’ social self esteem, that is their evaluation of their self worth or satisfaction. Conducted in Netherlands, the study was based in networking site CU2 (“ See You Too”) used by 415, 000 profiles- 45% boys and 55% girls.

Upon accessing their profile, members of the site received a pop-up screen with an invitation to participate in an online survey that assured participation was voluntary, and that their responses would be anonymous. Using structural equation modeling, measures like use of site, frequency of reactions to profiles, the tone of reactions to profiles, relationships established online, and social self esteem were analysed. It was found that the frequency with which adolescents used the site had an indirect effect on their social self-esteem and well-being. The use of the friend networking site stimulated the number of relationships formed on the site, the frequency with which adolescents received feedback on their profiles, and the tone- positive or negative, of this feedback. Positive feedback on the profiles enhanced adolescents’ social self-esteem and well-being, whereas negative feedback decreased their self-esteem and well-being- reliant solely on the tone of the feedback. For 78% adolescents, positive feedback was predominant, but for the smaller 7% adolescents who received a majority of negative feedback on their profiles, the use of the site resulted in aversive

and deeply negative effects on self esteem. The study specified also the necessary spot for all communication researchers and educators alike to look into the global phenomenon of social networking sites as it has deeply psychological effects on its users.