

The Use of Instagram and Psychological Well-Being in the Digital Era

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Abstract: *In this digital era, human life has been dominated by technological advances and social media. Instagram is one of the social media that almost everyone knows and uses. However, most people do not become aware that the use of Instagram can affect their psychological well-being. Here, the author conducted research to seek the advantages and disadvantages of Instagram towards people's psychological well-being. The method used in this study is qualitative with interview techniques. The subject of this study comprises twenty Instagram users. From 20 subjects, various results were obtained, such as the benefits of Instagram to improve one's psychological well-being and the disadvantages of Instagram that affect the condition of one's psychological well-being. This research is also inspired by previous findings from several journal articles.*

Keywords: *Psychological well-being, Instagram application, digital age*

Introduction

In this digital era, people cannot separate from the role of technology, especially the advances of social media. No doubt that almost everyone knows and uses various social media in their lives. Nonetheless, few people are aware that the use of social media can influence their perception of life, especially its influence on their psychological well-being.

Social networking sites are becoming increasingly popular and providing a key material for social comparison effect to take place (Haferkamp and Kraemer, 2011; Lee, 2014; Heliyon 5,2019). Our knowledge of the effects of social comparison through social media is growing; rather, it is focused on perceptions of psychological well-being (Jordan et al., 2011; Kross et al., 2013; Lee, 2014; Heliyon 5, 2019). Social comparison with others can lead to both positive and negative effects, depending on the interpretation of comparative information (Van der Zee et al., 2000; Heliyon 5, 2019). Many evidence show that the psychological perceptions of someone who uses Instagram can affect his real-life (Dibb and Yardley, 2006; Heliyon 5, 2019). Given a strong relationship between one's actualization needs and one's psychological well-being, this comparison can indirectly affect human's psychological well-being.

Hence, the researcher is interested to understand the effect of using Instagram on people's psychological well-being. Based on many references, as well as the researcher's preliminary observation findings, the use of , Instagram application on one's psychological well-being is indeed an interesting topic that is worth to discuss further.

New media

New media, according to Mondry (2008: 13), is media that uses the internet, technology-based online media, interactive, flexible, and can be used publicly or privately.

Instagram

One of the social media that is widely used nowadays is Instagram. According to Enterprise (2012:02), Instagram is a community shared among one member with other members from all over the world. In this digital age, researchers have found many people using Instagram. The results of observations found that most people around us use Instagram. Therefore, the researchers conducted a study using interviews and observation methods to a person who uses Instagram.

The researcher found some weaknesses and strengths of someone who uses Instagram to his psychological well-being. The first result is the researchers found some disadvantages of someone using Instagram, including Instagram can cause a sense of social inequality towards others, which result in individuals to feel their lives are not better than others. Both Instagram users feel that Instagram can lead someone to do bad things, such as spreading hate speech, receiving hoax news, committing suicide, etc. It can be seen in every post or story that is shared by people on Instagram. These two things can affect someone's psychological well-being in a bad direction.

On the other hand, Instagram also brings positive effects to users. From the assessment taken from interviews and observations, it was found that Instagram can improve someone's psychological well-being in the real world. Instagram can inspire someone to have a better life. It can be seen when someone sees a post or story on Instagram about the values of life and spirituality that makes a person have a view to a better life. The next advantage is it can lead someone to find various information and knowledge which is useful for provision in his life. It can be found when someone receives information about scientific knowledge, scholarship, training, global knowledge, etc. The last advantage could be Instagram can motivate someone to do good or useful activities shared on Instagram, for

instance, when a friend posts a story or picture about learning activities, we could be inspired to do the same activities as our friends do.

Psychological Well-being

According to Doyle, Hanks, and McDonald in psychological thesis well being, women working with married and unmarried status perform differently. Lakoy (2009) stated that psychological well-being is a reflection of happiness, emotional well being, and positive mental health.

Emotional well being is the mind and attention regarding problems of depression, anxiety and frustration, life expectancy, the ability to relax, and happy life (Bolang B.D.A 2012: 13). Ryff (1989) defines psychological well-being as a condition in which an individual has a positive attitude towards himself and others. It can make his own decisions and regulate his behavior, as well as has a purpose in life.

Ryff and Keyes, in their scientific journal entitled "The Structure of Psychological Well Being Revisited" (1995), state that humans have two positive functions to improve their psychological well-being. First, people can distinguish positive and negative things that could provide happiness in their lives. Second, people can emphasize the purpose of their lives as the main key to well-being.

According to Ryff (1989), humans can have good psychological well-being if they are free from negative mental health indicators, such as being free from anxiety to achieve happiness. But more importantly, it is to own self-acceptance, have positive relationships with others, and have the ability to sense a personal growth and development on an ongoing basis.

In general, psychological well being is a sense of well-being, which is associated with happiness, mental health, and physical health. It can be seen from the ability to meet the needs of clothing, food, shelter, education, work, etc. Thus, it can be concluded that psychological well-being is a condition or level of individuals to have a positive attitude towards themselves and others, to make their own decisions for their life goals, and to regulate their behavior so as to create an environment that is compatible with their needs and make their lives more meaningful, be optimistic and able to deal with social pressure by controlling the external environment.

The influence of using Instagram on someone's psychological well-being

From theories mentioned by experts about psychological well-being and the use of Instagram, then the researcher tries to link several hypotheses to support the research. The hypothesis is based on observations and assessments. The researcher links the relationship between the use of Instagram to someone's psychological well-being as a form of reinforcement of the themes raised by the researcher about the challenges and opportunities for someone's psychological well-being in the digital age. The reason

is, the researcher wants to examine the use of Instagram and the condition of someone's psychological well-being from various sources. The researcher believes that the use of Instagram can affect someone's psychological well being. First, the researcher saw people around him using Instagram as a reflection of their daily conditions. Some people use Instagram as a tool to express happiness about something and that they express it through their posts and stories on Instagram. There are also some people who use Instagram as a tool to express sadness or a broken heart. They shared their feelings through Instagram.

Second, the writer heard a story from his friends that they feel Instagram can affect their psychological condition. Some friends admitted that they are motivated by others when they see posts or stories of someone on Instagram when it relates to good things and positive things. Like a motivation word, seeing other people succeed, know the actual news, to increase their knowledge when they see a post by other people or their friends on Instagram. It can give a spirit in life. But there are also people who feel that Instagram can be a handicap. It happens because many people said Instagram could be addicted, and so they pay little attention to what they do in real life. Third, the data show that Instagram is the first social media that can affect mental health.

Based on some reasons mentioned earlier, the researchers are interested to conduct research about the use of Instagram and its impacts on someone's psychological well being.

Methodology

The current research is qualitative research using sampling in determining results. The participants were 20 Instagram users aged between 20 and 30 years old. The participants use the Instagram application in their daily lives.

Procedure

First, the researchers observe the phenomenon happening in society today about the use of Instagram. From the observation, it was found an alleged relationship between the use of Instagram on the condition of someone's psychological well-being. Then, the researchers conducted an assessment to support the study using interviews and observation. It was conducted on the 20 participants. One thing to be noted, the participants access Instagram as social media daily. The results of the assessment obtained several hypotheses. The hypothesis contained the advantages and disadvantages of using Instagram on the participants' psychological well-being. Then, the researchers began to research with qualitative sampling methods using both open interviews and closed interviews, supported by observation.

Result

The results of this study indicated the positive and negative effects of the use of Instagram that affect someone's psychological well-being. On the positive side, Instagram can make people increase their knowledge and find a lot of useful information. Instagram can also act as a medium of self-actualization to others, business venues, entertainment, as well as learning, etc. These advantages can support a person's psychological well-being needs.

For the negative effects, Instagram can make someone's life no better than others when they see other people posting interesting things on Instagram. Instagram can cause a sense of social inequality towards others, which causes individuals to feel their lives are no better than others. Instagram users feel that Instagram can lead someone to do bad things, such as spreading hate comments and false news (hoax), or even commit suicide, etc.

After doing assessment and research from 20 participants, the research results are obtained and then interpreted as the final results. The researchers interpreted 20 interviews and observations with 20 different results; 13 participants admitted that the use of Instagram was helpful to their psychological well-being and seven participants revealed that the use of Instagram did not help their psychological well-being.

Below are the details:

Advantages :

Four participants said that Instagram could inspire someone to have a better life. It can be found when someone sees a post or story on Instagram about the values of life and spirituality that makes a person have a better view of life.

Six participants argued that they could find various information and knowledge that is useful for provision in their lives through Instagram. It can happen when someone receives information about scientific knowledge, scholarship information, training, global knowledge, etc.

Three participants admitted that Instagram could motivate and make someone interested in doing good activities that are shared on Instagram. For example, when a friend posts a story or picture of learning activities, other people become interested in doing the same activities.

Disadvantages :

Three participants stated that Instagram could cause a sense of social inequality towards others. Individuals feel their lives are not better than others.

Four participants mentioned that Instagram users feel that Instagram can lead someone to do bad things, such as spreading hate speech, receiving hoax news, committing suicide, etc.

Discussion (Data Analysis)

From the research, it can be explained that some participants were describing the weaknesses of Instagram, while some others were describing the

advantages of Instagram. The data obtained then were linked to various theories that have been explained previously. The knowledge on the effects of social media is growing rather it is focused on the perceptions of psychological well-being (Jordan et al., 2011; Kross et al., 2013; Lee, 2014; Heliyon 5, 2019). Social comparison with others can lead to both positive and negative effects, depending on the interpretation of comparative information (Van der Zee et al., 2000; Heliyon 5, 2019). Evidence shows that the psychological perceptions of someone who uses Instagram can affect his real-life (Dibb and Yardley, 2006; Heliyon 5, 2019). From the theory above, it is explained that social media can influence the psychological well-being conditions that can produce positive or negative effects. It is in accordance with the result of this study. There were two results that comprised the negative and the positive effect of using Instagram towards the condition of psychological well-being.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the use of Instagram can affect someone's psychological well-being. There are two effects, namely positive influence that can support someone's psychological well-being in their daily lives and also a negative influence that can interfere with someone's psychological well-being. In this digital era, the use of Instagram is like a double-edged knife. We have to be wise in using it because it can be beneficial in psychological well-being and can also be detrimental in psychological well-being.

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