INFLUENCE OF INSTAGRAM ON YOUNG ADULTS' PERCEPTION OF SELF: A STUDY OF STUDENTS OF MOUNTAIN TOP UNIVERSITY.

BY

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE

DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION,

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, MANAGEMENT, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,

MOUNTAIN TOP UNIVERSITY, OGUN STATE

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) IN MASS COMMUNICATION

August 2022

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this research project was conducted and written by **AJAYI GLORY ABIMBOLA,** Matriculation Number **18020601025,** in partial fulfillment of the award of **Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.)** in Mass Communication**.**

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to Almighty God, for his guidance and protection throughout my stay at Mountain Top University. I will forever be grateful.

To my wonderful parents, Prof. and Mrs. Ajayi, who have always believed in me and supported me financially and through prayers. To my siblings Temilorun and Praise, I love you guys.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

Young people get exposed to different kinds of personalities that they tend to hold in high esteem on Instagram, whose posts sometimes make them feel inadequate or uncomfortable in their bodies. This feeling of inadequacy leads them to lose their self-confidence and want to be so much like the person they see on Instagram. Thus it is on this premise that this study is examining young adults' perceptions of Instagram's influence on themselves. Uses and gratification, social comparison, and sociocultural and selective perception theory were adopted to support this research. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of this study consists of undergraduate students from Mountain Top University. The cluster sampling method randomly chose a sample size of 140. 140 copies of the structured questionnaire were administered while 120 copies were retrieved accumulating 85.71%. The results of this study showed that young adults use Instagram regularly to have a sense of belonging. Also, the majority of the respondents' self-esteem decreases when there is a lack of engagement in their posts on Instagram making them feel like they are living below standard. Although, the majority of the respondents do not feel bad about comments made on their posts because it is full of positive energy from their friends, they still feel self-conscious whenever they come across posts of fit-bodied men and women. Consequently, this study recommends among other things, that teenage girls should ensure that they do not have the notion of competition and should not worry about the thought of others as long as they are doing what is right and do not feel bad about it.

KEYWORDS: *Instagram, Perception, Self-esteem, Young adults, Social Comparison.*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Social media is a significant Internet innovation that allows people to connect on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and other talking systems. These social platforms enable individuals to engage with one another without physically being in the same area at the same time, transforming the world into a "Global village." As a result, the communication distance barrier has deteriorated significantly. Social media's dynamic and distinctive qualities have drawn a great number of users, particularly young adults, who are the most engaged and energetic members of society (Akpan, 2013; Andrea, 2010 Ellison, 2007).

The introduction of Instagram in 2010 brought about a new chapter in the evolution of social media (Idongesit, 2020; Salomon, 2013). Instagram's platform allows people to convert their pictures into enhanced images, which are then shared on the Instagram application as well as other social media platforms such as Twitter, Flickr, Facebook, and Tumblr. Instagram users are encouraged to enhance their selected photo/video, using what is classified as filters. (Idongesit, 2020).

Congruent with the growth of social media use, there are also increasing worries that social media might lead to social anxiety in users. Social anxiety is one's state of avoiding social interactions and appearing inhibited in such interactions with other people. Studies have indicated that social anxiety could arise from managing a large network of social media friends, feeling jealous of their lives, and the "fear of missing out" on activities in online interactions.

Most young adults nowadays cannot spend a day without using social networking sites (SNSs), which have become a vital part of their life. Since 2004, Facebook has enjoyed a significant increase in its popularity among SNSs as a worldwide and social phenomenon. It remains one of the most popular social networking sites in the world, with 2.4 billion monthly active members in the second quarter of 2019. (Statista, 2019). As a result, the majority of study has thus far concentrated on the usage of Facebook (Feng et al., 2019; Assuncao & Matos, 2017).

However, nowadays, the younger generation has leaned toward Instagram actively, thanks to its attractive and enhanced visual functions, even if they have a Facebook account (Shane-Simpson et al., 2018).

Like other technology, Instagram has pros and dangers, particularly in terms of how it affects youth. Instagram may be a lifeline for individuals who feel alone or excluded, which is a big benefit it has over teens. In other words, especially during the Covid-19 epidemic, Instagram makes it easier for teens to feel more connected and less alone. Teens' mental health may suffer greatly as a result of Instagram's consequences. Teens who use apps excessively run the risk of experiencing many negative effects including cyberbullying, problems with their bodies, technology addiction, etc., which means they spend less time engaging in activities that are healthy and are considered to be real-world activities.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to ascertain how Instagram affects young people's self-esteem and confidence. Although technology offers numerous benefits, it may also be deadly when used improperly. (Njoroge, 2013) Young people frequently conduct experiments by doing what they and their companions find enjoyable or interesting while bypassing adult

supervision. Teenagers may passionately embrace the internet world because it makes them visible to their peer groups and enables them to communicate successfully without constraints or parental supervision. (Njoroge, 2013).

With the majority of current research focusing on highly visual social media sites like Facebook and Instagram, the data focusing on the effects of Instagram on well-being can be skewed. There is a lack of research identifying the overall positive and negative impacts of Instagram on the self-esteem and self-confidence on young adults in Nigeria. Social media describes certain acquisitions online as what success is all about, what beauty or intellectual advancement is all about. Do young adults think that they need to aim for these things to feel accomplished? Does Instagram make them feel like they have not achieved enough in life? Are they happy with themselves given what social media describes as success or a good life? This study seeks to find answers to these questions. This study aims to increase knowledge of the influences that Instagram has on the well-being of young adults and also aims to know if they are satisfied with their status or standing on Instagram.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research study aims to explore the impact Instagram has on the social behavior, self-esteem, mental health, and well-being, of young adults in Nigeria. This research also zeros into cyberbullying, social media comparisons, and teenagers' attempts at avoiding actual reality by spending an unhealthy amount of time on Instagram. The specific objectives for the realization of the broad objective are itemized as follows:

1. To find out how often young adults in Nigeria use Instagram.
2. To understand the factors responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and well-being among young adults on Instagram.

3. To know the extent to which Instagram elements enhance or diminish the sense of self-satisfaction or self-worth among young adults in Nigeria.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions shall guide the focus of the study to achieve the set objectives:

1. How often do young adults in Nigeria make use of Instagram?

2. What factors are responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and well-being among young adults on Instagram?

3. To what extent do the elements of Instagram enhance or diminish the sense of self satisfaction or self-worth among young adults in Nigeria?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted to bring awareness to various effects Instagram use and the contents viewed on the platform have on young adults.

This research will add to the plethora of papers and seminars written and delivered on the subject matter while giving necessary knowledge on the problems surrounding the topic. It will further serve as a guide in understanding how Instagram or other social media influence young adults.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This work is focused on young adults in Nigeria who are all Instagram users. This study is also restricted to only undergraduate students in Mountain Top University. It has paid no attention to the influence other social media platforms have over its users.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINATION OF KEY TERMS

Influence: The effect or power someone or something has on the way a person thinks or behaves.

Instagram: This is a social media platform that allows users to share images and also interact with people.

Young Adults: An individual in his adolescence years.

Perception: How things are seen.

Self: An individual's identity.

Undergraduate: A university student who has not yet received his bachelor's degree.

Study: A detailed analysis on a situation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

An important and vital part of every study is the literature review. A survey of the available literature aids in the researcher's development of a full grasp of the problem.

Social media, self-satisfaction, and self-worth are all topics covered in this chapter. Additionally, it examines relevant research by other scholars and describes how influential Instagram is among different demographics. The chapter includes theoretical frameworks to understand the study as well as insights into the various types of Instagram impact.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

According to Scott (1999) studying a concept entails focusing on the variables where meaning is established. The Oxford Learner's dictionary (n.d) defines a concept as "an idea or a principle that is connected with something". The conceptual review is an assemblage of notions that are related or linked to specific behaviors, circumstances, conditions, and events.

2.1.1 Overview of Instagram

Instagram is a mobile application where users can post photos and videos with attached captions. In response to these posts, other users are encouraged to like, comment, and engage with one another (Trifiro, 2018). Instagram is one of the social media platforms with the quickest growth, but due to its youth, little study has been done on the particular social and

psychological consequences it could have on its user base as a whole. Compared to other social networking sites, like Facebook, Instagram is significantly different. Instagram differs from other text-based social media sites like Facebook and Twitter in that it emphasizes visual content. (de Vries, Moller et al, 2017).

Instagram's ability to improve photographs using a variety of enhancement filters is one of its distinguishing features. The way people display themselves online has altered as a result of this feature, and peer representations of idealized beauty may have an impact on viewers' emotional and psychological reactions. (Jiang & Ngien, 2017; Chua & Chang, 2016).

2.1.2 Social Media Comparison

In social comparison, people assess their appearance by contrasting it with the limited societal standards of beauty that are promoted in the media; nearly usually, this results in an upward comparison in which people fall short, leading to unhappiness with their own body and look. Additionally, those who are already struggling with mental health difficulties, nervous about how they look, or have body image concerns are more likely to be impacted by social comparison, which will lead to even greater body dissatisfaction. (Tiggemann et al, 2018).

People who often use social media may compare themselves to others to judge their talents and beliefs. Depression is said to be caused by social comparison and jealousy (Keles, McCrae & Grealish, 2020). Self-comparison on social media has been shown to negatively impact one's physical and mental health since it allows users to compare themselves and seek acceptance (Stefanone, Lackaff & Rosen, 2011).

The relationship between one's physical appearance and oneself starts at conception since it is a significant component of one's identity. (Walker, Krumhuber, Dayan, & Furnham, 2019). Instagram prioritizes photographs and videos over text more so than other social networking platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Instagram's visual, photo-focused status entices users to browse and remark on other users' photographs who post them to their accounts, fostering social acceptability. (Anand, Urolagin, & Mishra, 2021; Walker et al., 2019) Regarding how other people see, like, and remark on these photographs, a person's attractiveness might be quite important.

Social comparison was positively related to social interaction anxiety, as well as the fear of public scrutiny. (Jiang & Ngien 2017; Weeks et al 2009). Social comparisons play an important role in influencing social anxiety disorder.

When someone has self-esteem, they either think highly or poorly of themselves. It may also be referred to as the degree to which a person feels they are valuable. People with low self-esteem frequently engage in less social interaction, which makes it difficult for them to forge close bonds with others, which are crucial for a person's wellbeing. People with poor self-esteem frequently rely on social media endorsements to feel more successful. They see sincere comments from others as aggressive or degrading because they think they are being looked down upon, which may exacerbate their social anxiety. They become prone to self-victimization and blame others for their social failures, instead of taking responsibility for their personal decisions. Such tendencies would cause avoidance of people, unfamiliar contexts, and a general social detachment, increasing the risks of social anxiety (Jiang & Ngien, 2017).

2.1.3 Body Image and Digital Alteration on Instagram

The American Medical Association 2011 advised governments and industry bodies to stop using manipulated pictures of models since the youths are vulnerable to advertisements that portray models with a body shape that can only be achieved with photo editing software. (Media Smart, 2016).

Body image has to do with how we view our body shape and also how we compare ourselves with others thereby carrying out various measures to achieve such standards set out by people we place in high esteem in society. The perfect beauty presented in advertisements today presents a woman who is without imperfection.

Social media sites provide photo-sharing features that have become a critical medium of communication by giving the users the chance to continually examine or compare themselves to others by viewing photographs. Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest, and other photo-based social networking sites have gained popularity amongst young adults who share personal photos with the social media community (Klein, 2013).

Youth's exposure to 'doctored' photographs on social media sites and other media has led to various concerns which include health and psychological concerns – eating disorder, low self-esteem, body dissatisfaction, bulimia, and anorexia. (Grose, 2009). Social networking has had a great impact on negative body image (Ahern and Schultz, 2013). Young adult users of social media who see manipulated photographs of thin models may be influenced to be wanting to be like the model in the photograph which eventually leads to starving themselves.

Media industries should try to project healthy body image, as well as promote various body shapes and sizes which most women can identify with since research supports that satisfaction or dissatisfaction with body image relates to exposure to a media image.

It is fair to say that a woman's self-esteem can be affected when most posts or advertisements they see on either the television or on social media sites are of models who are considerably smaller than they are. Photo-editing software on social media apps can also add to self-esteem issues in women.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is a structure that can support a theory of a research study. It is a foundational review of existing theories that serve as a roadmap for one's arguments. It introduces and describes the theories that explain why the research problem under a study exists. The theories selected for this study include uses and gratification theory, social comparison, sociocultural theory, and selective perception theory. These theories help in presenting the research questions used in this study.

2.2.1 Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and gratifications theory (UGT) is the approach that is used to understand why individuals seek social media to satisfy specific needs and how they use social media to satisfy those needs. The question UGT seeks to answer is: why do people use social media and what do they use them for?

Elihu Katz first proposed this theory in 1959. He was more interested in how individuals utilized the media than in how it affected them. What Do People Do With the Media? was a

question that Katz's theory aimed to address. According to this notion, people don't expose themselves to media messages only for fun. This theory was developed to close the gaps between the audience's requirements and the media's expectations. Every person has requirements, which are met by both media and non-media sources. Gratifications are wants that are fulfilled by the media in some way. (Idongesit, 2020)

According to the notion, a user deliberately searches out the media that best meets and fulfills his wants, and if a medium makes the user happy, they will choose and use it more frequently (Momoh, 2015). This would explain the success of social media apps like Instagram, which was developed in October 2010 as a photo-sharing app and had one million users by December of that same year. This figure has steadily increased yearly, making Instagram the preferred app for sharing photos and videos. (Woods, 2013).

Accordingly, the theory provides a helpful explanation of the reason behind young adults' interest in and exposure to Instagram in the research of their use of the platform. In the modern world, many young people's lives seem to revolve on Instagram. As a result, the theory holds that social media has the ability to meet a variety of target audiences' needs. Young adults frequently claim that Instagram helps them keep in touch with friends they don't see very often, as well as that it enables them to find jobs and business opportunities and make new online friends. They also frequently claim that Instagram helps them with self-fulfillment, importance, expectation, fame, health-related issues, and social wellbeing.

2.2.2 Social Comparison Theory

Leon Festinger, a psychologist, developed the concept of social comparison theory in 1954. He was interested in the notion that people have a natural inclination to judge their own social and personal worth depending on how they compare to others. Through social comparison,

people can judge themselves in a variety of ways. Social comparison is the act of comparing oneself to others who one feels are either better off than oneself or worse off than oneself. Social comparisons may be made higher or lower.

The upward social comparison takes place when people evaluate themselves against others they perceive to be superior to them. A person's current situation may get better as a result of this comparison, or it may make them feel less valuable. When someone compares oneself to those who are worse off or inferior to them, it is known as a downward social comparison. This kind of comparison helps people feel better about their general talents and self-worth. People's perceptions of themselves and others, as well as their behavior, are significantly influenced by social comparison. As a result of the procedure being disliked, it affects behavior through altering a user's attitude, motivation, and self-belief.

Festinger thought that in order to assess and identify themselves, humans engage in this comparing process. A young girl may be inspired to work harder and develop her skills if, for instance, she discovered that her appearance and aptitude were inferior to those of her peers. Alternatively, she would feel worse about herself and have a lower sense of self-worth.

Corcoran et al., (2011, cited in Idongesit, 2020) noted that "Social comparison is a remarkably ubiquitous process which influences how people think about themselves, how they feel, what they are motivated to do, and how they behave". Social comparison consequences range across all core arenas of human psychological functioning. "Not only do social comparisons influence cognition, affect, motivation, and behavior, they are also shaped by cognitive, affective and motivational factors" (Corcoran et al., 2011; Idongesit, 2020).

Using this theory in line with the major components of this study, examining the level of social comparison among Instagram users and its effect on users' will be beneficial to this research project.

2.2.3 Sociocultural Theory

In every way, the sociocultural perspective is what its name implies. It's the notion that a person's social environment and the groups they are a part of shape how they develop, think, and act. (Rahmatirad, 2020).

According to sociocultural theory, women's dissatisfaction with their physical appearance is caused by three factors: (1) the thin body ideal that is promoted in Western societies; (2) the propensity of women to adopt a "body as object" rather than "body as process" orientation; and (3) the thin is a good assumption, which emphasizes the benefits of being attractive (i.e., thin) and, consequently, the costs of being unattractive (i.e., fat). (Morrison et al. 2015). Because of the many emphases the media makes on women's bodies, this tendency to view them as objects exists. The bulk of plus-size persons are left out of fashion and fitness journals' creations, which makes them feel like they don't belong.

Applying this theory to this study, explanations are offered on how Instagram can influence an individual's thoughts and behavior concerning certain issues.

2.2.4. Selective Perception Theory

This term explains that no two persons can react to the same message the same way. Selective perception is a term applied to the tendency for people's perception to be influenced

by wants, needs, attitudes, and psychological factors. It would be wrong for a communicator to assume an intended meaning for a receiver. (Anaeto et al, 2008).

According to Berelson and Steiner (1964), the perception theory explains that the procedure of understanding a message is difficult and the goals may be difficult to achieve.

Using this theory in this study, the perception people have about Instagram's influence on themselves and the way they view others can never be the same. Some people may feel Instagram restricts or constrains them, others might feel liberates them and enables them to be themselves.

2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Without a doubt, research works or studies have been made available on the area of influence of social media be it Instagram, Facebook, or other social media platforms, on its users. Njoroge (2013) examined the Impacts of Instagram among the youths: a case study of university students in selected universities in Nairobi, Kenya. She concluded that indeed, social media to a very large extent; plays a major role in the behavior change of youths.

Idongesit (2020) when investigating the Impact of Instagram on Nigerian youths, acknowledged that Instagram's effects on the well-being and self-esteem of youths can be traced back to how much dependence they have on the platform. Also, when surveying to know how youths feel when their posts are not being interacted with, she found out that the majority of the youths said they felt useless whenever their posts are not being followed. Her survey is closely related to my second research question which is what factors are responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem among teenage girls on Instagram.

Furthermore, Jiang & Ngien's (2017) findings in The Effects of Instagram Use, Social Comparison, and Self-Esteem on Social Anxiety: A Survey Study in Singapore, showed that

social comparison increases one's social anxiety. Whenever social media users compare themselves with others' appearance, ability, popularity, and social skills, it often results in psychological responses especially when those people have more positive information.

Instagram does not directly affect social anxiety in its users, it is mediated through social comparison and self-esteem.

Borzekowski & Bayer (2005) in Body Image and Media use among Adolescents, asserts that; the strongest media impact appears among those who are most vulnerable; from cross-sectional to experimental designs, the groups who are most affected by thin-ideal media images are those who already are at risk for weight concerns and eating disorders. Adolescents who already feel pressure from family and peers to be thin may be more susceptible to the social comparison process that is promoted by print and video images of body-ideal men and women.

Akintola (2021), Impact of Social Media on Teenagers: Nigerian Experience, findings showed that respondents expose themselves to social media information to enhance their lives in different ways such as for news, friendship, business, and academic purposes.

Social media influences users' behavior, feelings, and perception about themselves and the people they interact with on various social networking sites. This is obviously what these researchers have established. This research work set out to discover the influence Instagram has on young adults in Nigeria, thereby giving room for the findings to make way for further research work on the subject matter and other related works.

2.4. CONCLUSION

This literature review has explored the many conceptual clarifications in the areas of social media, Instagram, wellbeing, self-esteem, and the supporting theories of the study's key

factors. When discussing the study's premise in more detail, it was revealed why Instagram is so popular among young people when compared to other media.

Finally, the study aims to comprehend and determine whether or not Instagram use has an impact on young people' sense of self-worth and general wellbeing in Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research method used in gathering the data for this study. It explains the research design, the population of the study, the sampling technique, the unit of analysis, the data collection, and the method of data representation.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The word "research design" refers to a number of choices made about data before it is gathered. It offers instructions that point the researcher in the direction of addressing the issue, and it may change based on the type of issue being researched.

There are two types of research design: quantitative and qualitative. A descriptive survey design was employed for this study. Surveys explain and specify the causes of certain events

(Wimmer and Dominick, 2013). A questionnaire is used to conduct the survey, enabling accurate conclusions about the population under study.

The justification for using a descriptive research strategy is the notion that it makes it easier to comprehend a population's features.

3.2 POPULATION OF STUDY

Population in research refers to the total sum of all the variables, elements, and members of the research context necessary to conclude. The students at Mountain Top University students who number 1,265 make up the population of this study. However, the population target for this study are undergraduate students of the Mountain Top University.

3.3 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Multi stage cluster sampling was the method utilized to choose the sample for this investigation. When there are clear internal heterogeneities but mutual homogeneities in a statistical population, cluster sampling is a useful sampling technique. In this sampling technique, a population is divided into smaller clusters, and a sample is then randomly chosen from each cluster.

This study also utilized the convenience sampling technique employed to reach respondents who are available and willing to participate in the study. With the use of the convenience sampling technique, questionnaires were sent out in printed forms to students of Mountain Top University, who are willing and available to participate in the survey.

The survey employed analytical Likert scales to rank replies. In 1932, Likert created the Likert-scale as a solution to the problem of evaluating character and personality traits. (Idongesit,2020). A set of questions with alternative responses—strongly agree (1), agree (2), neutral (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5)—can be used to assess attitudinal scales according to the approach devised (5). The data analysis is based on the attitudinal assessment scale that is created by combining the composite scores of the respondents' answers to the questions.

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE

Wimmer and Dominick (2013) define the sampling frame as the complete list of members in the population. A sample size is a fraction of the population chosen by the researcher as a representative of the entire population to allow for generalized reasoning. The sample size is required since it may not be viable to examine the entire population owing to size, cost, or other constraints.

There are two (2) colleges at Mountain Top University (MTU): The College of Basic and Applied Sciences (CBAS) and the College of Humanities Management and Social Sciences (CHMS). There are 17 departments in total under both colleges and the sample size is 140 out of 1267 students which is the total population of the students in MTU.

College of Basic and Applied Sciences

Department of Biochemistry

Department of Biological Sciences

Department of Chemical Sciences

Department of Computer Science and Mathematics

Department of Food Science and Technology

Department of Geosciences

Department of Physics

College of Humanities, Management, and Social Sciences

Department of Accounting and Finance

Department of Business Administration

Department of Economics

Department of Fine and Applied Arts

Department of Languages

Department of Mass Communication

Department of Music

Department of Philosophy and Religion

All the departments were listed and chosen from each college by separation of two spaces. Three departments were picked from CBAS – Departments of Biological Sciences, Computer Science & Mathematics, and Geosciences while four departments were picked from CHMS – Departments of Business Administration, Fine and Applied Arts, Mass Communication and Philosophy and Religion.

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The research instrument employed is the structured questionnaire which contained questions generated based on the research questions and objectives. All departments will be treated as equal by administering 20 copies of the questionnaire to each. The copies of the questionnaire will be administered physically. The questionnaire has two (2) sections. The first part features

the demographics of the respondents, while the second part features general questions aimed at understanding the respondent's use of Instagram. It also includes questions that will help to understand the respondent's views on how Instagram has impacted them in various ways and how they feel about the app.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The amount to which the instrument fully measures the variables of interest is referred to as validity. According to Allen and Yen (1979), validity is a technique's capacity to properly assess and evaluate what it promises to assess. When research has a high level of validity, it indicates that the findings are applicable to real-world elements in the physical or social environment. To verify and assure the dependability of the instruments, the research instruments: questionnaire items were examined by the supervisor, who ensured that the instrument satisfied the material validity requirements.

3.7 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher employed the use of a questionnaire as a data collecting instrument. The questionnaire was structured in paper format and was administered physically to the available respondents.

3.8 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is how the data collected is presented, analyzed, and interpreted in ways by which explanations are given for observation. For the data collected in this research, analysis is done with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as it is convenient for this type of research. Data collected is arranged, sorted, and collated, and the findings are presented using simple frequency tables and percentages through which a conclusion was drawn. These conclusions drawn is used to provide answers to the research questions:

> I.   How often do young adults in Nigeria make use of Instagram?

II. What factors are responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and well-being among young adults on Instagram?

III. To what extent do the elements on Instagram enhance or diminish the sense of self-satisfaction or self-worth among young adults in Nigeria?

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter clearly defines the research method, design, and instruments adopted by the researcher for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the tabular representation and interpretation of data gathered through the use of questionnaires in this study. The chapter equally included the discussion of findings. One hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires were worked upon and used in reaching a decision.

4.1. PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1.1 SECTION 1: Demography

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics and classification of the sample respondents.

Age	Frequency	Percent
16-19	66	55.0
20-25	40	33.3
25 and above	14	11.7
Total	120	100.0

Gender

Female	70	58.3
Male	50	41.7
Total	120	100.0

Department

Fine Arts	8	6.7
Philosophy	15	12.5
Geosciences	17	14.2
Business Administration	20	16.7
Biological sciences	20	16.7
Computer Science and Mathematics	20	16.7
Mass communication	20	16.7
Total	120	100.0

Are you on social media?

Yes	120	100
No	0	0
Total	120	100.0

Which social media do you use the most?

Facebook	23	19.2
Instagram	47	39.2
WhatsApp	15	12.5
Twitter	13	10.8
Snapchat	13	10.8
Tiktok	9	7.5
Total	120	100.0

Do you have an Instagram account?

Yes	120	100
No	0	0
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2022).

The table indicated that 55% of the respondents are between the age of 16-19 years, 33.3% are between the age of 20-25 years and the remaining 11.7% are aged 25 years and above.

The table indicated that 58.3% of the respondents are female and the remaining 41.7% are male.

Also, the table indicated that 6.7% of the respondents are from the department of Fine Arts, 12.5% are from Philosophy, 14.2% are from Geosciences, 16.7% are from Business Administration, 16.7% are from Biological Sciences, 16.7% from Computer science and Mathematics and 16.7% from Mass communication. The table indicated that 100% of the

22

respondents are on social media. This implies that the all of the respondents are on social media.

More so, the table indicated that 19.2% of the respondents use Facebook most, 39.2% use Instagram, and 12.5% WhatsApp. 10.8% Twitter, 10.8% Snapchat and 7.5% Tiktok. The table indicated that 100% of the respondents have an Instagram account. 10.8% of the respondents spend less than 2 hours daily on the app, 42.5% 2-5 hours and 46.7% spend more than 5 hours.

4.1.2 SECTION B: ANALYSIS BASED ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

RQ1: HOW OFTEN DO YOUNG ADULTS IN NIGERIA MAKE USE OF INSTAGRAM?

Table 2: How many followers do you have on your Instagram account?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	less than 1k	47	39.2	39.2	39.2
	Less than 5k	59	49.2	49.2	88.4
Valid	Less than 10k	3	2.5	2.5	30.9
	10k and above	11	9.1	9.1	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2022).

The table indicated that 39.2% of the respondents have less than 1k followers on the app, 49.2% have less than 5k followers, 2.5% have less than 10k and the remaining 9.1% have 10k and above followers.

Table 3: Do you follow only profiles of people you know on Instagram (i.e., friends and acquaintances not celebrities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	43	35.8	35.8	35.8
Valid	No	77	64.2	64.2	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2022).

The table indicated that 35.8% of the respondents follow the profile of friends and acquaintances alone and the other 64.2% do not just follow them

Table 4: Do you follow a celebrity or public figures, in addition to profiles of people you know, on Instagram

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	54	45.0	45.0	45.0
	No	66	55.0	55.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2022).

The table indicated that 45% of the respondents follow public figures and people they know on Instagram, while 55% do not do that.

Table 5: How many likes do you get per post on average?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 1k	26	21.7	21.7	21.7
	Less than 5k	43	35.8	35.8	57.5
	Less than 10k	30	25.0	25.0	82.5
	10k and above	21	17.5	17.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2022).

The table indicated that 21.7% of the respondents' average less than 1k likes on a post, 35.8% have less than 5k, 25% have less than 10k, and 17.5% have 10k and above.

RQ2: What factors are responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and well-being among young adults on Instagram?

Table 6: Factors responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and wellbeing among users.

I feel anxious when I don't receive likes as other users	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	36	30.0
Agree	41	34.2
Undecided	15	12.5
Disagree	14	11.7
Strongly disagree	14	11.7
Total	120	100.0
The more I see posts about rich people's lifestyles, the more I feel useless		
Strongly agree	44	36.7
Agree	27	22.5
Undecided	12	10
Disagree	25	20.8
Strongly disagree	12	10.0

Total	120	100.0
I need to look like the pictures I see on Instagram for other users to like me		
Strongly agree	37	30.8
Agree	29	24.2
Undecided	12	10
Disagree	29	24.2
strongly disagree	13	10.8
Total	120	100.0
I feel like I'm not living my life up to the standards I see on Instagram		
Strongly agree	44	36.7
Agree	37	30.8
Undecided	7	5.8
Disagree	18	15
Strongly disagree	14	11.7
Total	120	100.0
I compare my pictures to that of celebrities and influencers on Instagram		
Strongly agree	33	27.5
Agree	52	43.3
Undecided	4	3.3
Disagree	20	16.7
Strongly disagree	11	9.2
Total	120	100.0
I need to change how I look to gain more attention on Instagram		
Strongly agree	39	32.5
Agree	37	30.8
Undecided	7	5.2
Disagree	28	23.3
Strongly disagree	9	7.5
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2022).

The table indicated that 30% of the respondents strongly agreed that they feel anxious when they don't receive likes like other users, 34.2% agreed, 12.5% were neutral, 11.7% disagreed and 11.7% strongly disagreed. The table indicated that 36.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the more they see rich people's posts, they feel useless. 22.5% agree, 10% neutral, 20.8% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed.

In addition, the table indicated that 30.8% of the respondents strongly agree that they need to look like pictures on Instagram to get likes, 24.2% agree, 10% neutral, 24.2% disagree and 10.8% strongly disagree. The table indicated that 36.7% of the respondents strongly agree

that they feel like they live below the Instagram standards, 30.8% agreed, 5.8% were neutral, 15% disagreed and 11.7% strongly disagreed.

Lastly, the table indicated that 27.5% strongly agreed that they compare pictures with celebrities and influencers, 43.3% agreed, 3.3% were neutral, 16.7% disagree and 9.2% strongly disagree. The table indicated that 32.5% of the respondents strongly agree that they need to change their look for getting more attention, 30.8% agreed, 5.8% were neutral, 23.3% disagreed and 7.5% strongly disagreed.

RQ3: To what extent do the elements on Instagram enhance or diminish the sense of self-satisfaction or self-worth among young adults in Nigeria?

Table 7: The extent to which Instagram's elements enhance or diminish the sense of self-satisfaction or self-worth among users.

Posts showing fit women's bodies make me conscious of my body	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	37	30.8
Agree	41	34.2
Undecided	8	6.7
Disagree	17	14.2
Strongly disagree	17	14.2
Total	120	100.0

Comments under my posts make me feel bad about myself		
Strongly agree	10	8.3
Agree	12	10
Undecided	10	8.3
Disagree	49	40.8
Strongly disagree	39	32.5
Total	120	100.0

I am truly able to express myself on Instagram without worrying about what people might think		
Strongly agree	38	31.7
Agree	46	32.3
Undecided	9	7.5
Disagree	11	9.2
strongly disagree	16	13.3
Total	120	100.0

Instagram makes me feel good about myself and my body image		
Strongly agree	45	37.5
Agree	41	34.2
Undecided	14	11.7
Disagree	10	8.3
Strongly disagree	10	8.3

Total	120	100.0
I use filters on Instagram to look better in my pictures		
Strongly agree	41	34.2
Agree	41	34.2
Undecided	14	11.7
Disagree	12	10
Strongly disagree	12	10
Total	120	100.0
I feel good about myself even when no one engages with my posts on Instagram		
Strongly agree	37	30.8
Agree	39	32.5
Undecided	11	9.2
Disagree	16	13.3
Strongly disagree	17	14.2
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2022).

The table indicated that 30.8% of the respondents strongly agree that posts showing fit women's bodies make them body conscious, 34.2% agreed, 6.7% were neutral, 14.2% disagreed and 14.2% strongly disagreed. The table indicated that 8.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that comments on their posts make them feel bad, 10% agreed 8.3% were neutral, 40.8% disagree and 32.5% strongly disagree.

Additionally, the table indicated that 31.7% of the respondents strongly agree that they are truly able to express themselves on Instagram without worries, 38.3% agree, 7.5% neutral, 9.2% disagree and 13.3% strongly disagree. The table indicated that 37.5% of the respondents strongly agree that Instagram makes them feel good about themselves, 34.2% agreed, 11.7% were neutral, 8.3% disagreed and 8.3% strongly disagreed.

Lastly, the table indicated that 34.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that they use Instagram filters on their pictures, 34.2% agreed, 11.7% were neutral, 10% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. The table indicated that 30.8% of the respondents strongly agree that

they feel good about themselves even when there is zero engagement, 32.5% agree, 9.2% neutral, 13.3% disagree and 14.2% strongly disagree.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study findings are divided into three, providing answers to the research questions in this study; How often do Instagram users get engaged on the social media site, the factors responsible for the increase or decrease in self-esteem and wellbeing of users, and the final part of it is understanding the extent to which elements of Instagram enhances or diminish the sense of self-satisfaction.

The first part, **How often do young adults in Nigeria make use of Instagram?** revealed that a lot of people use Instagram frequently, they spend time a lot on the social media site and build followers, create mutual and then a sense of belonging is formed and created as a result of the time spent on the social media site. This finding is in line with the research paper by Akintola (2021), 'Impact of Social Media on Teenagers: Nigerian Experience'.
Also, this finding supports the tenets of uses and gratification theory, because through this finding that young adult in Mountain Top University use Instagram to form relationships and form a sense of belonging.

The second part, **What factors are responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and well-being among young adults on Instagram?** tackled the factors that are responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and it was seen that lack of engagement on posts made decreases self-esteem, seeing others live a life that is not affordable for respondents lowers their esteem, and the notion of them being below standard and the act of comparing oneself with others that are met or seen on Instagram. Muqaddas et. al (2017) revealed that when

people feel like they do not belong here and start comparing themselves to others in the space with the, they begin to lose their self-valuation and esteem.

An assumption of the Social comparison theory suggests that people often evaluate their personal worth with that of other people to see if they measure up to their peers. By this order, undergraduates in Mountain Top University, often compare themselves to other users on Instagram which makes their self-esteem lessen. This paper also works in accordance with the findings of Idongesit (2020), Impact of Instagram on Nigerian Youths', which acknowledged that the effect of Instagram on the well-being and self-esteem of youths can be traced to how useless youths feel whenever their posts are not interacted with. It can also be related to the finding of Jiang et al (2017), The Effects of Instagram Use, Social Comparison, and Self Esteem on Social Anxiety'.

The third part answered the question, **To what extent do the elements of Instagram enhance or diminish the sense of self-satisfaction or self-worth among young adults in Nigeria?** It can be said that when your comment sections are filled with love and pure energy, you feel good about yourself and all that comes attached to it. Reflections of others like when they post a picture of their body, make users feel more conscious about their bodies. Pantic (2014) asserted that when one is in a place where there is less consciousness of flaws and more positive connection and energy, self-esteem and self-worth are on the increase in such a place.

This finding works in relation to the Sociocultural theory which assumes that females tend to feel self-conscious in their bodies whenever they come across posts or pictures of other females with a different body type. This finding is also in line with the findings of the study by Borzekowski & Bayer (2005) 'Body Image and Media use among Adolescents'. The researchers discovered that adolescents who already feel pressured into being thin by family

members can easily fall prey of social media comparison whenever they come across posts or videos of body-ideal men and women.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary and conclusions of the study to examine the influence of Instagram on young adults' perception of self.

5.1 SUMMARY OF STUDY

The study objective was to examine the influence of Instagram on young adults' perception of self. The study targeted the Mountain Top University Ogun state, by distributing questionnaires to gather data relating to the problem. Issues that led to carrying out this study

include the observed competition and habit of comparing which is on the rise among young ones at this time coupled with conflicting findings in previous empirical studies.

The study has five chapters. Chapter one of the study explained the background of the study, statement of the problem, the aims, and objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and operational terms were also defined. The research focused on the following research objectives:

i.   To find out how often young adults in Nigeria use Instagram.

ii. To understand the factors responsible for increased or lowered self-esteem and well-being among young adults on Instagram.

iii. To know the extent to which Instagram elements enhance or diminish the sense of self-satisfaction or self-worth among young adults in Nigeria.

Chapter two presented the general literature review on Instagram on young adults' self-perception. The chapter presents an overview of the conceptual review which includes; an overview of Instagram, social media comparison, body image, and digital alteration on Instagram. The related theories' theoretical framework with specifics to Uses and Gratification Theory and Social Comparison Theory. Empirical review based on previous studies which are about this study. The essence of this chapter is to critically examine previous studies done by scholars or claims they have made as well as findings they have established. This study focuses on the influence of Instagram on young adults' self-perception.

Chapter three clarified, explained, and presented the framework underlining the research objectives. The chapter highlights the research design, population of the study, sampling technique, sample size, instrument for data collection, and method of data presentation and analysis.

Chapter four which is the core of the study deals with the presentation and analysis of data collected through the questionnaire administered to the students of Mountain Top University. The data collected were presented in tabular form and a simple percentages method was used in interpreting the data with aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 20.0) software.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the stated objectives and the study carried out, the following findings were made:

i. Instagram users used the app frequently to build mutual relationships and form a sense of belonging

ii. Lack of engagements on posts lowered the self-esteem of most of the young Instagram users while others felt it did not have any effect on them whatsoever.

iii. The study revealed that young women are more conscious of their bodies whenever they come across posts of people with different body types.

5.3 CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Instagram creates a perception of self in its users, they feel keen and would want their pictures to be loaded with likes and comments, they need to feel among by being like them, trying to do things that they do, and shape themselves into one who will be accepted into the life that is lived on the gram and showcased to the public. They compare themselves to famous people on Instagram and try to look like them, dress and do things the same way they do, and feel the need and urge to change their current self into what they see online to gain more followers and likes.

Also, the study concluded that when there is positivity around a person on Instagram, her self-worth and esteem are in good shape and rapid growth, however, when there is negativity, comparison, urge to become who they see on Instagram, the sense of self-satisfaction and worth diminishes. This can be seen as the majority of respondents do not feel bad about the comments made on their posts, because it is full of positive energy and pure vibes towards them, and those who try to enjoy social media without thoughts of what people think enjoy it also, however, once an individual starts getting stressed about getting few likes and followers then begin to think of who among the famous influencers that can be imitated and the abandon his/her natural self, then the self-satisfaction begins to diminish and self-worth becomes nowhere to be found.

5.4 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

i. Instagram users should know that social media is just for them to enjoy and relax, not a place to compete with people or a place where standards you have to meet are set. Users of Instagram should use the site as a place for connection and enjoyment and not a competing ground.

ii. Everyone is unique in their way. Instagram should not be a place where you mirror yourself and start shaping your mind to become what you are not because you want to feel accepted and have a large number of followers and likes not because you like to be or do that thing. It is recommended that users should always be themselves and not try to copy others on social media because they have built followers and fans by being who they are.

iii. Instagram users should surround themselves with people who they know and ensure positive energy is the only energy they share and is shared among them. That way, their self-esteem, and self-satisfaction are aided and guided well.

iv. Users should ensure they do not have the notion of competition and should not worry about the thoughts of others as long as they are doing what is right and they do not feel bad about it.

5.4 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Due to restraints of time and money, this study is mainly restricted to the influence Instagram has on young adults, and how they perceive themselves and other people on the platform.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER FINDINGS

The objectives set for this study were fully achieved. However, it is important to note that the researcher does not see this study as an exhaustive study on the influence of Instagram on young adults' perception of self, concerning Mountain Top University. Thereby suggests that further studies should be carried out on the influence of Instagram on the perception of self while using other institutions or colleges in Nigeria.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ON INFLUENCE OF INSTAGRAM ON YOUNG ADULTS' PERCEPTION OF SELF.

Dear Respondents,

My name is Ajayi Glory Abimbola, a final year student of the Department of Mass Communication, Mountain Top University, Ibafo, OgunState. I am currently conducting a

research on 'Influence of Instagram on young adults' perception of self' in partial fulfillment of the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) degree in Mass Communication.

Kindly respond to the questionnaire in a manner that best reflect your opinion. All responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used solely for the purpose of research.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHY (PLEASE TICK THE APPROPRIATE OPTION)

1. Age: 16 – 19 [ ] 20 – 25 [ ] 25 and above [ ]
2. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
3. Department: _____
4. Are you on social media? Yes [ ] No [ ]
5. Which social media do you use the most?
   Facebook [ ] Instagram [ ] WhatsApp [ ] Twitter [ ] Snapchat [ ] TikTok [ ]
6. Do you have an Instagram account? Yes [ ] No [ ]

SECTION B: PLEASE TICK THE MOST SUITABLE RESPONSE

A. HOW OFTEN DO INSTAGRAM USERS MAKE USE OF INSTAGRAM?
7. If yes, how often on average do you use Instagram?
   _____ hours per day
   Less than one [ ] Between 1 and 2 [ ] Between 3 and 4 [ ] more than 4 [ ]
   _____ day(s) per week
   1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5 [ ] 6 [ ] 7 [ ]
8. How many followers do you have on your Instagram account? _____
9. Do you follow only profiles of people you know on Instagram (i.e., friends and acquaintances not celebrities): Yes [ ] No [ ]
10. Do you follow only profiles of people you know on Instagram (i.e., friends and acquaintances not celebrities): Yes [ ] No [ ]
11. Do you follow celebrity or public figures, in addition to profiles of people you know, on Instagram? Yes [ ] No [ ]
12. How many likes do you get per post on average? _____

Please indicate your answers by ticking one of the opinions provided to the following items.

Where SA =Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree.

B. WHAT FACTORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR INCREASED OR LOWERED SELF-ESTEEM AND WELL-BEING AMONG USERS?

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I feel anxious when I don't receive likes as other users					
2	The more I see posts about rich people's lifestyle, the more I feel useless					
3	I need to look like the pictures I see on Instagram for other users to like me					
4	I feel like I'm not living my life up to the standards I see on Instagram					
5	I compare my pictures to that of famous					

38

	celebrities and influencers on Instagram					
6	I need to change how I look to gain more attention on Instagram					

C. TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE ELEMENTS ON INSTAGRAM ENHANCE OR DIMINISH THE SENSE OF SELF-SATISFACTION OR SELF-WORTH AMONG USERS?

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Posts showing fit women bodies makes me conscious of my body					
2	Comments under my posts makes me feel bad about myself					
3	I am truly able to express myself on Instagram without worrying about what people might think					
4	Instagram makes me feel good about myself and body image					
5	I use filters on Instagram to look better in my pictures					
6	I feel good about myself even when no one engages with my posts on Instagram					

Thank You for your co-operation.