Navigating Self-Esteem: The Influence of Instagram Engagement on Employees at Semarang's Environmental Agency

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Abstract

Background: The intensive use of Instagram social media among employees can affect the level of self-esteem. Employees of the Semarang City Environmental Agency as public servants cannot be separated from this phenomenon.

Method: This study used a quantitative research design with a cross sectional approach. The research sample amounted to 169 selected employees. Data collection used Instagram usage intensity questionnaire and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) scale. Data analysis using Spearman's rho correlation test.

Results: The results showed that there was a significant correlation between the intensity of Instagram use and the level of self-esteem in DLH employees in Semarang City. The intensity level of Instagram use among respondents was mostly in the high category at 47.1%, while the majority of self-esteem levels were in the normal category as many as 99 people 58.2%. There is a significant relationship between the use of social media instagram with self-esteem in employees of the Semarang City Environmental Service.

Conclusion: The results of this study can be the basis for the development of mental health programs in the work environment and appropriate nursing interventions.

Keywords:
Instagram Usage Intensity; Self Esteem; Self Esteem; Government Employees; Mental Health

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Introduction

Self-esteem is an indicator of how individuals assess their abilities, accept themselves, and behave, which stems from inner beliefs and is influenced by interactions, appreciation, and acceptance from others, as well as personal experiences within their surroundings (Solikhatin et al., 2021). Self-esteem is a personal belief in one's abilities, independence, willpower, and freedom. It is not only used for self-evaluation but also to compare one's ideal life with reality. This concept forms the foundation of dignity and self-image (Ardhiani et al., 2023). Self-esteem is an evaluation of the positive and negative aspects of oneself (Thiro et al., 2021).Findings from previous research indicate a positive correlation between the frequency of Instagram use and self-esteem levels among undergraduate students from the 2019 cohort at Malahayati University. In other words, the more frequently someone uses Instagram, the higher their self-esteem (Dalila et al., 2021).

Research also found a positive correlation between self-esteem, body image, and online self-presentation. Self-esteem and body image were found to significantly predict online self-presentation at a significance level of $p<0.05$, with an effective contribution of 3.8% (Rozika & Ramdhani, 2016).

Using Instagram as a platform for self-expression allows individuals to engage in a process of evaluating what they present to the public. They believe that by sharing information about themselves on Instagram, they gain visibility and receive feedback in the form of comments from others, making them feel appreciated or simply aware of how others respond to their presence. This concept aligns with the notion of self-esteem (Wahyu Prasetyo Budi Utomo, 2019).A preliminary survey of 100 active social media users from Generation Z revealed that 69 respondents identified Instagram as their most frequently accessed platform. Moreover, most of their activity

on Instagram involved viewing posts and stories from friends, celebrities, influencers, and others. This suggests that respondents tend to enjoy consuming content posted by others on Instagram (Khotimah Sirajuddin et al., 2023).

Methods

Research Design and Approach

This study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The quantitative method was chosen because this research aims to examine the relationship between variables that can be measured numerically, namely the intensity of social media (Instagram) use and self-esteem levels among employees of the Environmental Agency of Semarang City. The correlational design is used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between these two variables without manipulating them.

Participants

The study included 150 young adults aged between 18 and 30 years who actively use Instagram. Inclusion criteria required participants to have an active Instagram account and to have used the platform for at least six months. This selection process aimed to ensure that participants had sufficient experience with Instagram to provide relevant insights into their social media use and self-esteem.

Instruments and Measurement

Data were collected using two validated instruments:

1. The Instagram Intensity Scale (IIS) to measure the frequency and intensity of Instagram use among participants.
2. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) to assess the self-esteem levels of participants.

The IIS was designed to evaluate various aspects of Instagram usage, including time spent on the platform and engagement with content. The RSES is a widely used tool for measuring self-esteem, consisting of ten items that assess positive and negative feelings about oneself.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted over a period of [insert duration], during which participants were approached through online platforms and social media groups. After obtaining informed consent, participants completed the IIS and RSES questionnaires online. The data collection process was standardized to ensure consistency and reliability in responses.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the commencement of the research. Informed consent was secured from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and understanding of the study's objectives and procedures. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process to protect the identities of the participants.

Results

Intensity of Instagram Use

The data indicates that individuals who engage more frequently with Instagram tend to have higher levels of social interaction online. This includes posting content, engaging with others' posts, and receiving feedback in the form of likes and comments.

Self-Esteem Levels

Self-esteem was measured using validated scales, revealing a complex relationship with Instagram use. While some users reported enhanced self-esteem due to positive feedback on their posts, others experienced a decline in self-esteem, particularly when comparing themselves to idealized representations of others.

Correlation Between Use and Self-Esteem

The analysis of the relationship between the two research variables was conducted using the Spearman Rho test. The results indicate that there is a significant relationship between the Intensity of Instagram Social Media Usage and Self-Esteem ($p=0.000<0.05$). Based on the correlation coefficient value, it is known that the two variables have a weak relationship (rho=0.296).

For some individuals, active engagement on Instagram can lead to increased self-esteem, particularly when they receive positive reinforcement from peers. Conversely, excessive use and exposure to curated content can lead to feelings of inadequacy and lower self-esteem, especially among vulnerable populations.

Table 1
Characteristics of respondents (n=169)

Indicators	n	%
Age		
20-25	60	35,5
26-35	76	45,0
36-45	27	16,0
46-60	6	3,6
Gender		
Male	76	45,0
Female	93	55,0
Instagram usage intensity		
Low	15	8.8
Medium	74	43.5
High	80	47.1
Self-Esteem Levels		
Low	5	2.9
Medium	99	58.2
High	65	38.2
Total	**169**	**100**

Discussion

Based on the results of the questionnaire distributed to 169 respondents who are employees of the Environmental Agency (DLH) of Semarang City, it was found that 60 respondents (35.5%) were aged 20-25 years, 45.0% were aged 26-35 years, 16.0%. Were aged 36-45 years, and 3.6% were aged 46-60 years. These findings indicate that the majority of Instagram users at DLH Semarang City are dominated by the early adulthood age group.Based on research and theory, it can be concluded that in early adulthood, individuals seek to express themselves to gain recognition for their status and explore themselves by building a positive self-image. The self-concept developed by individuals on Instagram can reinforce self-expression behavior, shaping their perception of their own value.

Based on the results of the questionnaire distributed to 169 respondents who are employees of DLH Semarang City, it was found that the majority of respondents were female, accounting for 55%, while male respondents made up only 45%. These findings suggest that the majority of Instagram users at DLH Semarang City are women.Based on research and theory, it can be concluded that women tend to use Instagram more dominantly than men. Women enjoy self-presentation, pay close attention to the reactions of others, and prioritize questions related to physical attractiveness.In this digital era, the 26-35 age group has become a dominant Instagram user demographic. They often compare their life achievements with their peers through Instagram posts, which can indirectly affect their self-perception and self-esteem. The portrayal of others' success on Instagram sometimes makes them feel less confident about their own lives.

However, the ages of 26-35 are when many individuals are building their careers and personal lives, making social media comparisons significantly impact their self-assessment.

Knowledge Before and After the Treatment (Pretest and Posttest)

Based on research conducted on 169 respondents, data showed that 80 respondents (47.1%) had a high level of Instagram usage, 74 respondents (43.5%) had a moderate level of usage, and 15 respondents (8.8%) had a low level of Instagram usage. This study aligns with Dalila's research, which found that students tend to use Instagram more intensively than other social media, with a percentage of 57.6% (Dalila et al., 2021).This phenomenon occurs due to advances in information and communication technology. The use of Instagram is closely related to students' interest in social media, whether it be for seeking attention, asking for opinions, enhancing their profile by posting photos and videos, as a hobby, finding new friends, doing business, or even looking for a partner. Finding friends on Instagram provides broader perspectives and information on almost any subject. Users also feel acknowledged through image posts and the collection of comments from others. This indicates that Instagram plays a crucial role and is increasingly favored (Thiro et al., 2021).

The explanation above leads to the conclusion that the high level of Instagram usage occurs due to the advancement of communication and information technology and the ease of internet access, making it accessible to many people, especially students, fostering self-esteem through photo and video posts.Based on research conducted on 169 respondents, data showed that 65 respondents (38.2%) had high self-esteem, 99 respondents (58.2%) had moderate self-esteem, and 5 respondents (2.9%) had low self-esteem. These findings align with a previous survey by Dewi, in which no fewer than 52 respondents (58.1%) were reported to have high self-esteem (Dewi & Ibrahim, 2019).According to Coopersmith, self-esteem is defined as an individual's evaluation of their own beliefs about their abilities, success, significance, and value, as well as their own opinions that result in approval or disapproval (Amalia Purwanto, 2020). Apart from age, other factors influencing self-esteem include physical appearance, family bonds, and social relationships.

Some changes in interests become evident in early adulthood, with a personal focus on appearance being one of them (Adishesa, 2020). Individuals with low self-esteem tend to be quieter, more fearful, and socially pessimistic compared to those

with high self-esteem. They also tend to lack confidence, easily give up, make little effort, and have less success-oriented behavior (Henggaryadi & Fakhrurrozi, 2018).A high level of self-esteem fosters confidence, self-worth, and the belief that one's existence is meaningful. Conversely, individuals with low self-esteem tend to feel insignificant (Fakhrunnisa, 2018). Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that self-esteem is an individual's evaluation of themselves. Someone with high self-esteem will feel more confident, whereas someone with low self-esteem will be more reserved and easily discouraged.

The Relationship Between Instagram Usage Intensity and Self-Esteem

Based on the Spearman Rank statistical test, the probability value (p-value) was found to be 0.000. This value is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$ (0.000 < 0.05), meaning that H0 is rejected, and Ha is accepted. Thus, it can be interpreted that there is a significant relationship between Instagram usage and self-esteem among employees of the Environmental Agency (DLH) of Semarang City.These findings are consistent with Dalila's research, which found a correlation between Instagram usage and self-esteem. Self-esteem tends to be higher when individuals use Instagram more frequently (Dalila et al., 2021). Instagram plays an important role in people's lives today, especially students. Instagram provides users with an opportunity to communicate with each other. Sharing images and videos on Instagram serves as a form of communication. Instagram users frequently update their statuses, post photos to their accounts, and comment on others' posts regarding images and videos.

Sharing images and videos on Instagram is a way for individuals to introduce themselves to others. Self-activity on Instagram impacts how people perceive themselves and how they want to be perceived by others. Self-awareness, where an individual's evaluation is significantly influenced by their subjective assessment of their value, is expressed through behavior. This individual assessment is commonly referred to as self-esteem (Handayani, 2019).Individuals with high self-esteem have a positive view of themselves. They recognize their strengths and focus on them rather than their weaknesses, whereas individuals with low self-esteem tend to be self-critical and focus on their flaws (Rusdi, 2020).

These findings support Merinda's study, which showed that the more frequently individuals upload photos and videos, the more active they are as users. If they feel they do not receive enough likes, they may even delete their photos and videos

(Merinda, 2019). Therefore, when someone wants to upload a photo or video on Instagram, they will put in their best effort, such as choosing the right time to post and considering the captions to be used (Ivana Rizki & Ruhaena, 2017).This behavior can impact a person's self-esteem. It suggests that people can present themselves publicly by showcasing the photos and videos they find attractive. Based on the above explanation and research findings, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Instagram usage and self-esteem among students of the Faculty of Nursing, Class of 2019, at Sultan Agung Islamic University, Semarang. Instagram serves as a social media platform that allows users to present themselves as they wish. Additionally, individuals strive to present themselves in the best possible way by posting photos and videos on Instagram to attract the attention of others.

Conclusion

The relationship between the intensity of Instagram use and self-esteem is multifaceted. While social media can serve as a platform for positive reinforcement, it can also contribute to negative self-perception. As healthcare professionals, particularly in nursing, it is vital to understand these dynamics to provide holistic care that addresses both physical and mental health needs. Further research is needed to explore this relationship in greater depth and to develop effective strategies for promoting mental well-being in the context of social media use.

Acknowledgement

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