# The Correlation Between Time Spent on Instagram and Self-Esteem

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1 Background

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects that Instagram has on self-esteem.

- Previous research has shown that women who spend more time using highly visual social media sites, like Instagram, are more likely to report body image concerns (Marengo, Longobardi, Fabris, & Settanni, 2018).

- As body image concerns are often associated with lower self-esteem in adolescent girls (Clay, Vignoles, & Dittmar, 2005), we hypothesized that there would be a negative correlation between the amount of time spent on Instagram and the body image of female college students.

- The objective for our research study was to examine the effects that Instagram has on the self-esteem of females. More specifically, we aimed to determine if the amount of time spent on Instagram negatively correlates to a female's self-esteem.

- A survey measuring self-esteem and number of hours spent on Instagram was completed by 282 female college students from Old Dominion University

- Our findings did not support our hypothesis. It was discovered that there was no statistically significant correlational between the amount of time female college students spent on Instagram and self-esteem.
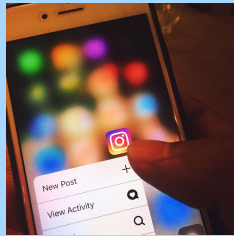
2 Methods

Participants

Participants were 283 female college students enrolled at Old Dominion University. They ranged in age from 18 to 52 ($M = 25.45$).

Materials

Social Media Use
Participants estimated the number of hours (0 – 100) spent on Instagram each week.

Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (1965)
Participants rated their level of agreement (4-point scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) on ten statements. For example:

1. *On the whole, I am satisfied with myself*
2. *At times I think I am no good at all* *
3. *I feel that I have a number of good qualities*

The self-esteem score was computed by summing the responses to each question (* reverse coded). Higher scores indicated higher levels of self-esteem.

Procedure

Participants completed an online survey containing these materials as well as other measures of social media use and person perception.

Responses were anonymous and were completed by the participants at a time and place of their choosing. It was estimated that it would take most participants approximately 5 minutes to complete the survey.

3 Results

A Pearson's correlation revealed no significant relationship between time spent on Instagram and self-esteem,

$r(281) = -.025, p = .673$
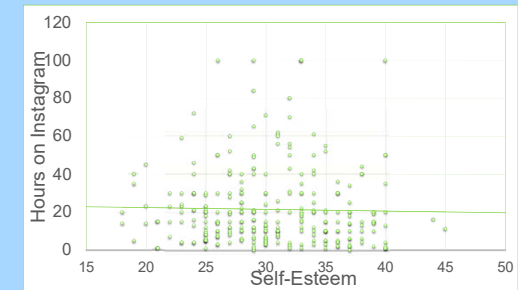
4 Conclusions

Our results did not support our hypothesis; they were also inconsistent with previous research focusing on adolescents.

One possible explanation for this disparity is that college students are less influenced by highly visual social media sites than adolescents and are therefore less likely to experience a decrease in self-esteem as their use of the site increases.

Another possible explanation is that the use of self-reported time spent on Instagram resulted in incorrect responses.

5 References

Clay, D., Vignoles, V. L., & Dittmar, H. (2005). Body image and self-esteem among adolescent girls: Testing the influence of sociocultural factors. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 15*(4), 451–477

Marengo D., Longobardi, C., Fabris, M. A., & Settanni, M. (2018). Highly-visual social media and internalizing symptoms in adolescence: The mediating role of body image concerns. *Computers in Human Behavior, 82*, 63-69.

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