

Fast, Beautiful, and Fun: Instagram and Motives for Its Use

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Introduction

Instagram is a popular photo and video-sharing form of social media that is growing quickly. While there is a plethora of research on social networking sites, there is little known about Instagram. Through the premise of Uses and Gratifications Theory, the goal of this particular study is to determine motives, understand behavioral outcomes, and gain knowledge about the general usage of Instagram.

Factor 2: Documentation	M	SD
To depict my life through photos	2.98	1.09
To remember special events	3.53	1.11
To share my life with other people	3.56	1.04
To document the world around me	2.91	1.23
To commemorate an event	3.46	1.11
To remember something important	3.12	1.19

Research Questions

RQ1: What are the motivations for using Instagram?
RQ2A: How do life position indicators and narcissism relate to motives for Instagram use?
RQ2B: How do life position indicators, narcissism, and motives predict behavioral outcomes of Instagram use?
RQ3: Which of the aforementioned factors can best predict why people do not use Instagram?

Method

- Participants were 239 undergraduate students (104 men; 133 women)
- Participants answered questions about narcissism, life satisfaction, social activity, and interpersonal interactions

Factor 1: Surveillance/Knowledge About Others	M	SD
To interact with friends	3.63	1.06
To see “visual updates” of my friends	3.54	1.14
It is fun	3.52	1.07
To follow my friends	3.65	1.12
To see what other people share	3.61	1.03
To “like” my followers’ photos	2.90	1.19
To creep through other people’s posts	3.26	1.33

Factor 3: Coolness	M	SD
To become popular	1.74	.92
It is cool	2.92	1.33
To self-promote	2.10	1.10
To provide “visual status updates” for my friends	2.87	1.21

Results

RQ1: In order of significance, the motivations for using Instagram are Surveillance/Knowledge about others, Documentation, Coolness, and Creativity.
RQ2A: Positive relationships were found between interpersonal interaction and creativity, coolness, and surveillance. Other positive relationships include social activity linked to documentation, and narcissism linked to using Instagram for coolness and surveillance of others.
RQ2B: Narcissism is positively and significantly related to amount of time spent editing photos before posting as well as the motives coolness and creativity. In addition, all motives were positively and significantly related to the amount of time spent on Instagram.
RQ3: Gender best predicts why people do not use Instagram as men are less likely to use the social networking site.

Factor 4: Creativity	M	SD
To find people with whom I have common interests	2.48	1.31
To create art	2.48	1.44
To show off my photography skills	2.21	1.24

Conclusion

This study contributes to other research on social networking sites in that it solidifies the concept that people use social media with coolness and surveillance as motives. The results also provide new motives for using social networking sites including documentation and creativity.
In addition, this study shows that based on various life position indicators, people will use Instagram for different reasons and partake in different Instagram behaviors.
Lastly, gender plays a major role in predicting who will and will not use Instagram in the future.

References

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