The Relationship Between Social Media Use and Self-Esteem

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Introduction

Does social media usage affect our self-esteem? Does it make us feel better about ourselves as a result of positive feedback and attention in the form of likes, followers/friends, and comments? Does lack of positive feedback and online social comparison lower our self-esteem?

Background and Literature Review

- Kalnes (2013) investigates how social media affects young women’s self esteem and body image. She hypothesized that improving the perceived body image of female students will increase their self-esteem and body satisfaction, and thus reduce symptoms of depression and eating disorder behavior.
- Barry et al. (2017) investigate the correlation between posting selfies on a popular Instagram, self-esteem, and narcissism. High numbers of selfie posts is also considered an attention seeking behavior and narcissism. Narcissism is linked to the desire to have a big social network and the need to get their attention. Low self-esteem can deter individuals from posting selfies.
- Andreassen, Pallensen, and Griffiths (2016) investigated the correlation between social media addiction, narcissism, and self-esteem. They found that social media addiction is most prevalent among young people and women. This is in part because young people have adapted to being constantly online and can learn to use new technologies much quicker than older generations.

Research Question

Does social media usage affect our self-esteem? It is the intent of this study to recruit a diverse sample ranging across genders, religions, ethnicities, ages, and sexualities. Participants will take part in a series of questionnaires on 2 separate days. The first day they will only take the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), a 10-item scale that measures self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. 3 days later they will return and answer a questionnaire about social media usage. It will contain questions regarding frequency of usage, how many different sites they utilize, how many followers they have, how many times a day they post on social media, how many likes they typically get, etc. This will be followed by the self-esteem scales from both days and compare overall self-esteem scores.

To calculate overall self-esteem scores each response will be given a numerical value of 1-4. (Strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, agree=3, and strongly agree=4). Answers are then transferred to an excel spreadsheet with the questions listed at the top of the columns and the participants listed at the beginning of the rows. Participants scores for each question will be listed and added up at the end. Then I will use the formula M=ΣX÷N for each question. I then add up all those numbers and divide by the number of questions which gives me the average self esteem score.

Methods

Participants will be chosen a volunteer basis from California State University, Stanislaus. It is the intent of this study to recruit a diverse sample ranging across genders, religions, ethnicities, ages, and sexualities. Participants will take part in a series of questionnaires on 2 separate days. The first day they will only take the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), a 10-item scale that measures self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. 3 days later they will return and answer a questionnaire about social media usage. It will contain questions regarding frequency of usage, how many different sites they utilize, how many followers they have, how many times a day they post on social media, how many likes they typically get, etc. This will be followed by the self-esteem scales from both days and compare overall self-esteem scores.

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<th>Q1</th>
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1) total +10 9 8 7
2) Divide by n 10/4= 2.5 9/4= 2.25 8/4=2 7/4=1.75
3) Add up 2.5 + 2.25 + 2 + 1.75 = 8.5
4) Divide by number of questions 8.5/4= 2.125 Average Self-Esteem Score

Expected Results

I expect 2 different kinds of results. There will be the extremely confident people whose use of social media only furthers their self confidence and builds their self esteem. I predict these to be the kind of people who post selfies often and they may even tend to be very revealing. They will get a lot of likes and comments on their posts. They will have hundreds, even thousands of followers. People who are more insecure will post less selfies and maybe more group photos, their pictures will be less revealing and I predict these people will get less attention on social media: less followers, likes, and positive feedback. I think I will find a correlation between self-esteem and social media. For people who already don’t have a lot of self confidence, it will affect them negatively. They will compare themselves to other and find flaws in what they post. People with high self confidence will get a confidence boost from the attention they get from their photos.

Significance

We will have a better idea of how social media affects us outside of the screen. It will give a clearer picture of whether social media affects us positively or negatively. This is important information to know because in the last few years social media use has been skyrocketing and only continues to get more popular.

REFERENCES