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**THE EFFECTS OF INSTAGRAM ON STUDENT'S SELF ESTEEM  
AT DJILALI BOUNAAMA UNIVERSITY**

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LMD Master in English Language and Communication

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# **The Effects Of Instagram On Student's Self Esteem At Djilali Bounaama University**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicatethis dissertation to myfamily and friends.

Wissam

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This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my dear grandmother. To all those who have been a part of my achievement : my family and friends, and all members of Winnelka Khemis Miliana. I would especially like to thank my supervisor, Mr. Bessidhoum Mahfoud, for his assistance, support, and guidance not only during this research but also throughout our studies. Finally, to all of the difficulties and circumstances that Wissam and I experienced in completing this work on time.

Marwa

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I dedicatethis dissertation to mydear parents, to Marwa and Wisam for everything.

Wafa

# **The Effects Of Instagram On Student's Self Esteem At Djilali Bounaama University**

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## Abstract

*Social media has helped to connect people all over the world. New platforms are being discovered all the time ; some are useful, while others are not. However, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between social networking sites, especially Instagram, and self-esteem in both genders (girls and boys), as well as to determine which gender is more affected. A mixed methods research design was adopted at Djilali Bounaama University on 50 first-year students (25 girls and 25 boys). Represented in two questionnaires along with the Rosenberg self-esteem scale and the Netherlands social comparison orientation survey. The research findings confirmed that females spend more time on Instagram than males and are readily fueled by what they see on phone displays. In addition, results showed that they have lower self-esteem and a stronger need to compare themselves to others, whereas males do not. As it also revealed a link between Instagram use and self-esteem, which indicates that the latter declines as a result of their total use of Instagram. Implications and limitations of this research as well as suggestions for future research are also discussed accordingly.*

*Keywords: Instagram, Mixed methods, social media, Self esteem, social comparison orientation.*

## Résumé

Les médias sociaux ont aidé à connecter les gens à travers le monde, de nouvelles plateformes sont découvertes tout le temps, certaines utiles, d'autres non. Cependant, le but de cette étude est d'étudier la relation entre les sites de réseaux sociaux, en particulier Instagram, et l'estime de soi chez les deux sexes (homme et femme), ainsi que de déterminer le sexe le plus touché. Le but de cette étude est d'étudier l'association entre les sites de réseaux sociaux sur Internet, en particulier Instagram, et les niveaux d'estime de soi pour les deux sexes (filles et garçons), ainsi que de mieux comprendre la relation entre les deux et lequel des sexes est le plus touché. Une conception de recherche diversifiée a été adoptée à l'Université de Jilali-Bounama sur 50 étudiants de première année (25 filles et 25 garçons) qui ont été représentés dans deux questionnaires avec l'échelle d'estime de soi de Rosenberg et l'échelle de Holland pour guider la comparaison sociale. Les résultats de la recherche ont confirmé que les femmes passent plus de temps sur Instagram que les hommes et sont facilement influencées par ce qu'elles voient sur les écrans de leur téléphone. De plus, les résultats ont montré une diminution. Elles ont une faible estime d'elles-mêmes et ont tendance à se comparer aux autres, contrairement aux hommes. Il a également révélé un lien entre l'utilisation d'Instagram et l'estime de soi suggérant que cette dernière est en déclin en raison de leur utilisation complète d'Instagram. Les implications et les limites de cette étude ont également été discutées, ainsi que des recommandations et des suggestions pour de futures recherches.

Mots-clés: Instagram, Méthodes mixtes, réseaux sociaux, Estime de soi, orientation de comparaison sociale.



## ملخص

ساعدت وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الربط بين الناس عبر جميع انحاء العالم، يتم اكتشاف منصات جديدة طوال الوقت، بعضها مفيد والبعض الاخر ليس كذلك. ومع ذلك، فان الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو التحقيق في العلاقة بين مواقع الشبكات الاجتماعية خاصة الانستغرام، وتقدير النفس عند كلا الجنسين (الذكور والاناث)، وكذلك لتحديد الجنس الأكثر تاثرا. الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التحقق من الارتباط بين مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي على الأنترنت وتحديد انستغرام، ومستويات إحترام الذات لكلى الجنسين الذكور والاناث، فضلا عن أنها تهدف إلى فهم أفضل للعلاقة بين الإثنيين وأي من الجنسين هو الأكثر تأثرا، تم اعتماد تصميم بحثي متنوع في جامعة الجليلي بونعاما على خيمس طالب في السنة الأولى ليسانس (25 ذكر، 25 أنثى) تم تمثيلهم في إستبيانين جنبا إلى جنب مع مقياس روزنبرغ لتقدير الذات ومقياس هولندا لتوجيه مقارنة إجتماعية. أكدت نتائج البحث أن الإناث يقضين وقتا أطول على الإنستغرام من الذكور ويتأثرن بسهولة بما يرونه على شاشات الهاتف بالإضافة إلى ذلك أظهرت النتائج إنخفاض إحترام الذات لديهم كما يميلون لمقارنة أنفسهم بالآخرين على عكس الذكور. كما كشفت أيضا عن وجود رابط بين استخدام إنستغرام وإحترام الذات مما يشير إلى أن هذا الأخير يتراجع نتيجة لإستخدامهم الكامل لهذا الموقع، كما تمت مناقشة الآثار والقيود الخاصة بهاذه الدراسة إلى جانب التوصيات والإقتراحات الخاصة بالبحوث المقدمة في المستقبل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: انستغرام، الاساليب المختلطة، وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، تقدير الذات، التوجه الاجتماعي للمقارنة.

**List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**LMD : Licence, Master, Doctorat**

**QCA : Qualitative Content Analysis**

**RSES : Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale**

**EFL: English as a foreign language**

**SCO : Social Comparison Orientation**

**SSES : The State Self-Esteem**

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# **The Effects Of Instagram On Student's Self Esteem At Djilali Bounaama University**

## **General Introduction**

Nowadays, people's daily lives are tightly linked to social media ; it is increasingly shaping the way they interact with one another. It is considered to be highly addictive, described as being even more addictive than cigarettes and alcohol (Cramer, 2017). Instagram has about 1 billion monthly visitors, and most of these users are adolescents (Lup et al 2015). Indeed, it is rapidly gaining popularity, especially among young people.

This new phenomenon changed how individuals communicate with one another on all scales in the modern world. Traditionally, when anything happens in someone's life, only close family or friends would be informed of it. With the tremendous progress of media and technology that the world is currently facing, nothing is considered private anymore. People are posting their entire lives on social media, allowing other users to comment, judge, and give their opinions, as well as compare their lives to others. This constant comparison can lead to major psychological issues including depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011 ; Kelley & Michela, 1980 ; Kircaburun & Griffiths, 2018). Humans are social beings, we need to communicate and be in touch with the world around us, and the power of this connection can have a significant impact on our happiness and mental health. Being active on social media can relieve stress, and anxiety and prevent depression, boost self-esteem, provide joy and comfort, keep you less lonely, and change your whole life just by clicking on social platforms. However, the misuse of this social connection can negatively affect your mental health.

## Chapter One, Introduction

### 1-1- Background of the Study

According to Tiggemann and Zaccardo, people use social media to portray the ideal version of themselves that they want others to see (2015). They then make comparisons between their lives and the unrealistic and frequently misleading portrayals of the individuals they follow. This causes people to think about their own lives, which can lead to psychological problems including sadness, anxiety, loneliness, and dissatisfaction. Valkenburg, Koutamanis, and Vossen (2017) also conducted the first continuous investigation of the association between social networking site use and teenage self-esteem. The main objective of their study was to look at the concurrent and long-term connections between teenagers' usage of social networking sites (SNSs) and their social self-esteem. The second goal was to see if the intensity of the feedback that teenagers get on social media sites may explain these connections. They proposed that future research should focus on the effects of various forms of social networks, as well as different ages, on self-esteem.

Social media users may find it simpler to emotionally manipulate people because of their dependency on superficial validation. W. E. B. Du Bois invented the phrase "double consciousness" to describe the combination of the "online you" (the one you represent on social media) and the "real you." To put it another way, your admired self on social media is always looking for additional reinforcement through digital likes rather than real-life interactions. While presenting what you want others to see and what you believe they want to see, as well as obtaining positive reinforcement in the form of likes and comments, the pleasant façade shown online may become a problem for individuals and disturb their offline social lives. Some studies show that by comparing themselves to their profile and contemplating the split between the online and real you, social media users are getting progressively depressed (Flores, 2014). In other words, if a person's reality differs from the digital image they project on their social media pages, they may feel as though they are not living up to their "best" self. It's reality vs. Online life self-evaluation. Users may be feeling cognitive dissonance in this way, which is defined as a state in which one's thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes are inconsistent or contradictory.

Many studies have also found that people who use social media make negative social comparisons with the people they follow or are friends with on those platforms, resulting in

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negative identity (Vogel, Rose, Okdie, Eckles, & Franz, 2015 ; de Vries & Kühne, 2015 ; Vogel, Rose, Roberts, & Eckles, 2014). When we see people on social media posting about how happy they are and how perfect their life is, it does not mean this is their reality. People often tend to sugarcoat and fake everything they post online, particularly when it comes to happiness.

In contrast, some studies have revealed the opposite result, they found that social networking sites may not necessarily have a detrimental impact on self-esteem ; in fact, social media use boosts users' self-esteem. Studying the possible influence of social media on individuals is a crucial topic to research now that it has evolved into more accessible online platforms and has become more significant in many people's daily lives, the influence they may have on persons is a crucial topic to investigate.

We all have a natural urge, whether intentionally or unintentionally to compare ourselves with others, it can happen online or offline. Such comparison helps support us in evaluating our own achievements, personality, abilities and feelings ; this, in fact, impacts how we perceive ourselves. Consequently, social comparison has an impact on both our actions and our psychological well-being. On social media platforms, it is extremely easy to invent an exciting presence or enhance certain parts than it is in real life. Many researchers believe that the use of social media, which allows us to share content in which we always appear in our best light, has magnified unrealistic comparisons.

### **1-2- Statement of the Problem**

Instagram, which was launched in 2010, is a recent social media network that has just lately gained traction, which is why there is little research on it. One of the little studies on this social media platform, titled Instagram #Instasad: Examining the Relationships Between Instagram Use, Depression, Negative Social Comparison, and Strangers Followed looked at the links between Instagram use and depressed symptoms using negative social comparison processes, which were controlled by the number of strangers one followed (Lup, 2015). Previous research has shown that people who often post ; only share the good side of their lives, portraying life as a whole in a positive light, which is in fact not an accurate reflection to their reality (Kelly and Michael, 1980). When such unrealistic Instagram posts are viewed, viewers may become frustrated and jealous toward their reality and their lives (Kelly and Michael, 1980) Furthermore, Kirkaburun and Griffiths (2018) reported that using social networking is linked with negative social factors, such as loneliness, poor quality of life satisfaction, low psychological well-being, and high rates of depression, sleeping problems,



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and social anxiety. Looking at other people's information makes people appreciate what they have less, which can lead to low self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). Coulthard and Ogden (2018) discovered that social media can be detrimental to the mental health of young people.

However, despite all of the studies and the importance of this area, there is still more research that needs to be done about it, as there is a lack of research that talks about it in our country. We want to fill this gap, and our motivation comes from observations, as well as our own experience with Instagram, where we've seen a lot of cases of low self-esteem among adolescents and teenagers, as well as university students, parents, and teachers. It's also an interesting issue to investigate. Additionally, to gain a better understanding of the need for programs and therapies to assist this group that is strongly influenced by social media.

### **1-3- Aim of the Study**

As the amount of time spent on social media grows, technology is becoming increasingly important. As a result, several studies have been done to study the negative effects of social media. Valkenburg, Peter, and Schouten (2006) found that positive feedback on teenage profiles increased their self-esteem whereas negative feedback decreased their self-esteem. Unlike previous studies, our study focuses on and aims to:

Investigate if Instagram has an influence on how students view themselves and evaluate their self-worth based on the number of likes, interactions, and by comparing their lives to those of others on the social media platform.

The self-esteem of each participant will be measured using a self-esteem survey developed by Rosenberg and focus group questions about Instagram use and Netherland social comparison orientation.

### **1-4- Research Questions**

In today's world, anything may impact adolescent self-esteem, and social media is at the top of the list ; being surrounded by individuals of many races and backgrounds can be both beneficial and detrimental.

Despite the importance of this field and the amount of studies that have been conducted on it, there is still a lack of research in our country ; so, our study contributes to the literature by investigating the following two questions. :

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- What is the relationship between self-esteem and Instagram use ?
- Which gender is the most likely to be influenced by Instagram ?

## **1-5- Hypothesis (ses)**

In the light of the research questions:

1. We hypothesize that there is a significant connection between self-esteem and Instagram, since using social media encourages users to make negative social comparisons with others they follow or are friends with on social media platforms, which has a negative impact on self-report (Vogel, Rose, Okdie, Eckles, & Franz, 2015)
2. We hypothesize that females have lower self-esteem than males have (Bleidorn et al., 2016).

## **1-6- Research Methodology and Tools**

### **1-7-1-Research approach**

As this research dictates and to answer the research questions, the mixed-method approach was used because the primary goal of this study was to determine whether or not Instagram affects the self-esteem of Algerian students.

### **1-7-2-Research design**

The research design is based on the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Two self-esteem and social comparison questionnaires, as well as a focus group, were apparently considered the most appropriate for this type of study. Certain instruments can be a quick and simple way to get results.

### **1-7-3-Population and sample**

The population for this study is first-year English license students who were chosen at random to assist in the completion of this research by answering two different questionnaires and providing more information during a focus group.

### **1-7-4-Data analysis methodology**

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The study used a descriptive method for the questionnaire to ensure its appropriateness and a qualitative content analysis for the focus group to analyse the data collected.

### **1- 8- Definition of Key Terminology**

In this section, we define terms or phrases that are ambiguous or need an operational definition.

Self-esteem is a person's sense of self-worth and confidence in their lives, which is mainly based on their accomplishments, excellent relationships, and happiness (Jejunum, 2003).

Social comparisons, or comparisons of oneself to others, are a basic psychological mechanism that influences people's judgements, experiences, and behaviors. People are always comparing themselves to others. When individuals are faced with knowledge about how other people are, what they can and cannot do, or what they have accomplished and failed to do, they link it to themselves (Dunning & Hayes, 1996).

### **1-9-Significance of study**

As social media becomes more dominant in everyday life, it is critical to be aware of and understand the triggers that may lead to addiction or mental illness. According to the social change component, happier people are more productive and have better interpersonal interactions (Lopez, Pedrotti, & Snyder, 2018). People would be more aware of potential hazards and would avoid them if they were aware of the consequences of increased social media use. Many people follow strangers on Instagram, which leads to them having false and negative beliefs about their own lives (Lup, Trub, & Rosenthal, 2015). Social media use is strongly related to mental health problems. If it is known that social media can have a negative impact on self-esteem, there may be ways to prevent this from happening. For example, educating people from different age ranges about the effects of social media or forming social groups to discuss the negative aspects of social media may make them more aware that they should have control over how they feel about themselves.

### **1-10- Summary**

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why Instagram is the most popular social networking platform. Every day, people spend a significant amount of time on Instagram comparing their lives to those they follow. As a result of the constant comparison, others may

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begin to self-reflect. Previously, researchers concentrated on other social media sites, married people, and emerging adults over the age of 30. In this study, we investigated how Instagram influences college students' social lives and self-esteem. We examined the problem statement, the study's aim, the research questions, and the study's significance. We also discussed the terms and their definitions, as well as the theoretical framework and the purpose of the study.

### **1-11- Structure of the Dissertation**

This section presents a summary of the chapters included in this thesis, as well as as an insight into the overall structure of the dissertation.

#### **- Chapter One**

The Introduction is the first chapter of the thesis, which provides a background to the study and the research process. Furthermore, the the objectives, the research questions, and the area of study are defined in the introduction chapter.

#### **- Chapter Two**

The methodology is the second chapter, which contains the methodology of research applied in this thesis This chapter discusses the methods chosen, research strategies, approaches, research process, data collection, sampling, and analysis methods. The research process through Literature study and empirical studies are also explained in detail.

#### **- Chapter three**

The literature review is the third chapter and its aim is to conduct a literature study and to provide a theoretical basis through defining rhe concepts included in the area of research arevast. The secondary research phase the following follows in this chapter aimed at setting out a phase of investigation based on from this, the future analysis within the area of research will be formed. Results and Analysis: In the analysis chapter, the findings of the primary research as an empirical part of the study are presented and analyzed.

#### **- Chapter four**

The conclusion is where the analyzed data from both of the research phases are put together in the final chapter of the thesis. Following a comparative approach, the results of empirical

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research and literature study as a whole are discussed and then final points as conclusions are added.

## **Chapter Two, Literature Review**

### **Overview**

Many theories have been proposed to explain how social media affects users' mental health and particularly their self-esteem. The goal of this study is to see whether Instagram has an effect on self-esteem in Djilali Bounaama University students. Despite the fact that the literature includes a wide range of such theories, this review focuses on five major emerging themes that appear repeatedly throughout the reviewed literature. These are the themes: social media, Facebook, Instagram, and gender influence and its effect on self-esteem, as well as the theoretical framework that discusses social comparison theory. Although the literature depicts these themes in a variety of contexts, this thesis will primarily concentrate on Instagram.

#### **2-1- Theoretical structure**

##### **- Social comparison theory (1954).**

The concept of social comparison is useful in describing how the media might impact people's opinions of themselves. "Social comparison theory, in which individuals evaluate themselves in relation to others, has also been used to explain media effects" (Benowitz-Fredericks, Garcia, Massey, Vasagar, and Borzekowski, 2012, pp. 693).

The theoretical framework for this study was Festinger's (1954) social comparison. The theory addresses how college students view their self-esteem, body image, and well-being in relation to the degree of media exposure. The idea of social comparison holds that how people compare themselves to others influences their identity (Lee, 1998). People go through a somewhat constant self-evaluation process to determine whether they are healthy. They reflect

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on their qualities, strengths, and talents in order to form a consistent and ordered impression of themselves, and they subsequently use this identity process to enhance self-understanding and consistent, successful actions (J. K. Thompson et al., 1999). However, objective forms of comparison are not always accessible for self-evaluation, so individuals compare themselves to others. Festinger's social comparison theory is based on the process of self-evaluation in comparison to others in a social context (J. K. Thompson et al., 1999).

This theory has a strong influence on the current study because social media encourages Instagram users to present their best selves for all to see, especially on a photo-sharing app like Instagram. Participants were asked specifically how they feel when they publish the same photo as one of their colleagues and their peers receive more positive feedback than they do, based on the number of likes they get. What impact has it had on a person's psychological state? As an illustration of Social Comparison Theory being used on social media, Putten and colleagues (2018) did a study on Facebook likes and also how they influenced its users. The authors believed that receivers view being "liked" on Facebook as socially gratifying, and that likes also operate as an additional reward, triggering social comparison procedures and their effective effects when evaluating one's own relative position in relation to other Facebook users. However, the Social Comparison Theory may be utilized in situations when the user gets or does not receive great reviews from other users (likes).

Another study has been conducted to investigate the impact of social media on self-reported via social comparison. A recent study investigated the indirect association between Facebook use and negative social comparison and if that relationship differs based on whether the individual was originally pleased or dissatisfied (de Vries & Kühne, 2015). The study of 231 people aged 18 to 25 revealed that Facebook use was associated with a higher level of negative social comparison, which was associated with worse self-perceived social competence and physical attractiveness. The researchers discovered that unfavorable social comparison on social networking sites was negatively associated with self-perception, particularly among sad people.

Experimental research has also revealed a correlation between the two uses and social comparisons. In one experiment, researchers tested the social comparison orientation (SCO) of 120 female college students to see if they pay too much attention to themselves in contrast to others (Vogel et al., 2015). Participants were then invited to either explore the Facebook profiles of acquaintances of the same age and gender, their own pages, or engage in an activity that did not engage in social comparison. After engaging in a short social comparison

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on Facebook, participants with a high SCO reported weaker identity, lower self-esteem, and higher negative impact balance than their low SCO peers.

Another experimental study (Vogel et al., 2014) used social media to investigate social comparison and self-esteem. There were 128 students, 94 females and 34 males, at the university. Results revealed that people had decreased self-esteem after being exposed to those with more social media user activity, although personal data was not significant. Participants were instructed to look at a profile generated by the research that purported to belong to some other student of the same gender at their university. The use was tied to the number of "likes" and comments connected to the user's submitted image.

Recent studies looked at the link between social media and social comparison. According to the findings, Facebook users have a higher level of unfavorable social comparisons and low self-esteem (De Vries & Kühne, 2015). Other research proposed a causal association between Facebook addiction and social comparisons. The researchers used 120 female college students who use Facebook to see if they pay attention to themselves in comparison to others. According to the findings, participants with high social comparison had low self-esteem (Vogel et al., 2015).

Instagram is a new social networking platform that appeared 12 years ago. More research on Facebook has shown a significant relationship between social comparison and social media. However, there has been some research on Instagram. The social comparison communities on Facebook are mostly made up of a person's family or friends, where he compares himself to similar people. Instead, the Instagram social comparison category contains people who are extremely wealthy and renowned. # Instasad was one of the few Instagram studies that looked into the relationships between Instagram use, social comparison, depression symptoms, and strangers. 117 people between the ages of 18 and 29 took part in the study. The findings revealed that more active Instagram use and more random people's following were strongly associated with depression symptoms (Lup, 2015). As a result, the number of people a person follows is strongly proportional to unfavorable social comparison. Strangers might be individuals their own age who they don't necessarily know in person, or celebrities or media personalities with greater wealth and social position than they. Following strangers, such as media people or celebrities, may lead a person to have poor self-esteem due to viewing photographs of their wealthy lifestyle and excellent physical form (Lup, 2015).

According to the findings of the preceding study, the number of strangers a person follows corresponds with low social comparisons. We don't have a clue who they are following. It

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might be other people of their generation that they don't know personally, or it could be celebrities or other well-known people. Following strangers changes their social comparison group, whether they be users with similar demographics, socioeconomic levels, and so on, or celebrities with significantly more money and social prestige than them. This might have an effect on other elements of their lives, such as self-esteem or general happiness. By watching the images celebrities provide on a regular basis of their affluent lifestyles, "perfect" bodies, and attractive features, people may develop low self-esteem and discontent with their existence. Studies on the effects of exposing females to photographs of models indicated that those who saw the images had considerably poorer body satisfaction and self-esteem than those from the comparison groups who were not introduced to any models (Clay, 2005).

Low self-esteem is supposed to be caused by social comparison. Because the idealistic information available on social media has heightened social comparison norms, the more time individuals spend on social media, the more likely they are to believe that people are living their best lives, reducing their self-esteem (Stapleton et al., 2017). Furthermore, social comparison may lead to the belief that environmental circumstances or socially accepted benchmarks are more essential than inner and personal characteristics. The sense of self-esteem decreases as one sees his or her innate traits to be less relevant in achieving social acceptance (J.B. White et al., 2006). As with the previous studies, the results showed that social comparison raises the chances of having low self-esteem and other psychological issues. However, there have been a small handful of studies that talked about Instagram. In our modest contribution, our study aims to test this theory and whether it affects self-esteem and how people view themselves when using Instagram. We aim to see if our results match previous studies.

In the next section, we are going to talk about studies that were conducted in the past about social media and self-esteem. From the emergence of social media to its consequences, they captured the researcher's attention through time and were an interesting topic to search through.

### **2-2- Literature review**

#### **Social media and self-esteem**

Social media has been defined as the simplest and quickest way to acquire information and communicate (Donde, Chopade, & Ranjith, 2012). According to Johnson (2018), the majority of Facebook users use the site to see how old friends are doing, what they are looking at, and how they live. Furthermore, social media users assume that others have better lives and are happier than they are. They see cheerful photographs shared by others on social media and believe their lives are always perfect, which has a detrimental impact on their overall well-being



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(Chou & Edge, 2012). Which led researchers to study the side effects of these sites on human beings' mental health, and the results were disturbing.

Hagi and Samaha (2017) studied 396 students at Notre Dame University—Louaize in Lebanon. They investigated the correlation between the two addictions, self-esteem and life happiness. The findings revealed that there was no significant relationship between social media addiction and self-esteem. However, university students with high levels of social media use had lower levels of self-esteem than students with low levels. These findings simply that, regardless of culture or gender, there is a negative association between self-esteem and social media usage.

Similar results were found in another study. An open web-based poll with the Norwegian Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) and the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-16 was completed by 23,532 Norwegians. Age, not being in a relationship, being a student, level of income, and narcissism were all related to higher BSMAS scores. Although the majority of effect sizes were small, the findings supported the idea of addicted social media usage as a desire to feed the ego and an attempt to prevent poor self-evaluation (i.e., self-esteem).

According to current research on the association between social media and self-esteem, people who spend more time on social media have lower levels of self-esteem (Vogel, Rose, Okdie, Eckles, & Franz, 2015). A considerable number of studies have contributed to the understanding that media affects self-esteem, body image, body satisfaction, and eating behaviors.

Because of social comparison, social media may bring up a slew of concerns. Individuals may compare numerous characteristics on Facebook, such as "beauty, dress style, love life, or social calendar," according to Schufreider (2015), and the more time users spend on Facebook, the more time they will compare to others. People also attach a great deal of emphasis and self-worth to the feedback they get on social media. Blachnio, Prezepiorka, Pantic, and Albooshi (2015) conducted significant research on the detrimental influence of social media on a person's self and self-worth and discovered that Facebook users who are hooked on the site are less content with their lives than those who are not. Adolescents are especially vulnerable since their self-image is greatly impacted by peer influence and receiving a large number of negative comments on their social media posts or photographs can have a detrimental impact on their well-being.

Additionally, Chen and Lee's study indicates that communication overload links Facebook interaction with reduced self-esteem. In Tazghini & Siedlecki & Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky's study, they found that introverts can compensate for the difficulties they experience in

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face-to-face interactions through online social networks. It was shown that those with lower self-esteem profited more and had more social capital as a result of Facebook use than those with higher self-esteem (Tazghini & Siedlecki, 2013).

However, studies show that people with poor self-esteem are more likely to accept friend requests from someone they don't know well (Tazghini & Siedlecki, 2013). For people with low self-esteem, connecting with new acquaintances and communicating via Facebook is simpler than having direct contact with peers. This can work in their favor, as it helps incoming college students acquire social capital by lowering the barriers to involvement and allowing users who may be hesitant to initiate a conversation to reply to others and form online relationships (Ellison, 8 ; Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). In an intriguing study conducted by Lee, Moore, Park, and Park, it was shown that the link between poor self-esteem and the number of Facebook friends was apparent only among people with greater degrees of public self-consciousness. Those who are more bothered with their public image may participate in the act of trying to contact other Facebook users in order to satisfy their desire for social recompense. They may also mistake the number of Facebook friends for popularity and try to increase their Facebook relationships to compensate for their low self-esteem (Lee, Moore, Park, & Park, 2012).

Alternatively, according to research conducted by Valerie Barker, introverts use Facebook further to divulge more details about themselves on their Facebook pages and to engage with others. Barker (2009)

According to a similar Skues study, people with high self-esteem use Facebook for different reasons than introverts. Extroverts depend more on their social competence and are less concerned with self-promotion. Introverted people use Facebook to seek social recompense, but extroverts utilize it to strengthen connections (Skues, Williams, & Wise, 2012). According to Kraut et al., introverts who use the Net are more prone to feeling lonely and isolated than extroverts. Extroverts using the internet report less loneliness and greater community participation (Kalpidou, Costin, & Morris, 2011). Introverts provide more personal details about themselves on Facebook than extroverts. According to Amichai-Hamburger and Vinitzky (2010), extroverts depend more on their interpersonal skills and do not feel any need to sell themselves in order to make friends on social media sites.

Kross et al. Investigated the impact of Facebook subjectively on well-being by addressing two components : emotional well-being and cognitive well-being. It was discovered that the more individuals used Facebook, the worse they felt, although people don't use Facebook more or less based on their feelings or mood. It

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was also revealed that increased Facebook usage is associated with a decrease in life satisfaction. Loneliness was a big factor in Facebook usage. People used Facebook more when they were lonely. Thus, this study demonstrates how Facebook use is associated with decreases in psychological well-being, including how individuals feel in the moment and how content they are with their life (Kross et al., 2013).

However, contrary to the results of the previous studies, several investigations showed no significant link between Facebook use and depression, including a one-week study of older teens at a university in 2011. (2012) (Jelenchick, Eickhoff, and Moreno). According to studies, Facebook use provides some benefits for self-esteem. According to one study, Facebook can increase "social self-esteem," which includes judgments of one's physical appearance, relationships, and romantic appeal, especially when one receives positive feedback from peers, specifically Facebook friends (Gonzalez & Hancock, 2011). Facebook profile can increase self-esteem through self-presentation by providing individuals with control over what is posted and shared online. Gonzales and Hancock discovered in their study that Facebook can boost self-esteem, specifically if a person is permitted to change the content on their page. Facebook appears to allow one to show their ideal self, and because one's ideal self is on display, this leads to favorable emotions of self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011).

Some research has found a favorable association between social networking use and life happiness. For instance, an Australian study with 274 university students looked at social connectivity via Facebook and psychological well-being, despair, and anxiety. According to the findings, Facebook social connectivity is related to less sadness.

Other research suggests that social networking sites may not necessarily have a detrimental impact on self-esteem; in fact, social media use boosts users' self-esteem. Another longitudinal study found that self-esteem was a moderator of Facebook addiction and social ties (Steinfeld, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008). The gains gained through social contacts and interactions are referred to as social capital (Coleman, 1988).

The link between self-esteem and social media is relative. Many studies revealed opposite results, but we hypothesize that there is a link between the two and that one affects the other. According to current research on the association between social media and self-esteem, it has shown that people who often spend more time on social media have lower levels of self-esteem (Vogel, Rose, Okdie, Eckles, & Franz, 2015).

Since the emergence of Instagram, researchers are still trying to figure out how it affects teens' self-esteem. Meikle (2016) defines social media as an Internet-based networked

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communication platform that enables personal and public communication. This definition applies to social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which have become the mainstays of popular culture. At the same time, while social media has been around for more than a decade, debates about self-esteem, beauty standards, and confidence have persisted. Teenagers, mostly females, have felt insecure and frequently compared themselves to social media influencers, particularly on Instagram. It may be difficult to remember their own unique beauty when confronted with photos of "perfect" girls on social media. The primary longitudinal study on the relationship between social networking website use and adolescent pride was undertaken by Valkenburg, Koutamanis, and Vossen (2017). They suggested that further research should focus on the effects of various forms of social networking used at various ages and how this can affect vanity.

### **2-3- Instagram studies**

The impact of social media on students' self-esteem is a frequently discussed topic. Researchers have been discussing Instagram and its psychological impact on users in general, but they did not deal with university students. Therefore, our study aims to contribute to filling the identified gap by investigating the role of Instagram in students' self-esteem and whether it is linked to self-esteem level.

Briana Trifiro (2018) showed in her study that social media has become an integral part of modern society in the last ten years. Instagram has grown in popularity among adolescents and young adults. Despite this widespread adoption, the literature on the potential effects of social media, particularly image-based platforms, remains divided. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between social media usage patterns and the subsequent effects on user self-esteem and well-being. However, the study's findings show that, contrary to previous research, the intensity of Instagram use acts as a moderating variable in this relationship. The study's findings show that user outcomes are determined by the intensity of use rather than usage patterns. Finally, the findings demonstrate that individuals who use Instagram more frequently have higher levels of self-esteem and well-being than users who do not use the application frequently.

Golbeck (2015) defines formalization as Instagram, like other platforms, has its own set of features that users can access. For instance, on Instagram, "likes" can be compared to a form of currency, and the ability to like a picture is a way to express directly to

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that individual that you like their post. Instagram has made a minor change in some parts of the world, removing the ability for users to see how many likes they received on their posts. This change has not yet been implemented for all users, but it is an idea that has been discussed in order to reduce the possibility of negative psychological effects such as negative thoughts about body image, particularly among young women (CNN, 2017). If the like feature is removed, it has the potential to change the entire application and how users interact with it.

Lup and colleagues (2015) looked at the distinction between public and private users. Their findings were intriguing: higher levels of strangers followed on Instagram were related to high level of depression through social comparison as a mediator, whereas lower levels of strangers followed were associated with lower levels of depressive symptoms via social comparison as a mediator. The study aimed to investigate the relationship between the frequency of Instagram use and depressive symptoms, and the study concluded that there was a trend that Instagram use was correlated with depressive symptoms. The study looked into this claim as well, but it is important to note that the reasons why Instagram causes low self-esteem and depression may differ from what they proposed. For example, looking at the number of likes per post a person receives and comparing it to peers can potentially lead to depression and low self-esteem. As a result, the current study may call their findings into question. Furthermore, the current study looked into social comparison and fear of missing out as factors that contribute to feeling psychological consequences when using the Instagram app.

According to research, social comparison is directly related to greater comparison with "ideals" and negative feelings about one's own body image. Brown and Tiggemann (2016) discovered in an experimental study that exposure to Instagram images of appealing and thin famous people and peer groups was associated with higher levels of body dissatisfaction, which was mediated by social comparison. Similarly, Kleemans et al. (2018) discovered that manipulated Instagram photos had a negative impact on female adolescents' body image, which was guided by social comparison. The amount of followers, feedbacks on published videos or photos provide additional primary and secondary data about others' admiration and may thus contribute to self-evaluation in comparison to others (Vogel et al. 2014).

This corresponded to a more recent study conducted in 2019 by Mackson, Brochu, and Schneider. Their research looked into the links between the social media app Instagram and the psychological well-being of its users. In contrast to the current study, participants in this study were Instagram users who investigated lower self-esteem and social comparison

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variables, as well as anxiety, loneliness, and participants' body image in their study. Participants reported lower levels of depression, which is similar to the current studies.

In addition, Vishranti Raut and Prafulla Patil (2016) conducted a study that investigated the relationship between social media platforms and their negative influence on teens. They found that the use of social media has had a positive impact on society. However, it has started to have a negative impact by permeating today's society.

Another study that managed to run concurrently with the current one was one conducted by Kok Ping Chung in August 2018. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Instagram use and college students' adjustment. According to the study, disordered Instagram use was not related to positive affect, homesickness, or other aspects of personality. Participants completed measures of shyness (Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale), academic habits and achievement (College Adjustment Test), overall sleep quality (Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index), personality (Big Five Inventory), and Instagram use (modified Social Media Disorder Scale).

Pittman and Reich (2016) conducted another study that looked into loneliness. Their research looked into image-based social media platforms such as Instagram. There was a link discovered between visual social media sites and a reduction in loneliness. Again, it did not specifically mention self-esteem, but one could argue that loneliness and lower self-esteem are similar. As a result, the findings in this study are similar to those in the current study.

A recent study took place in the research field. Federica Pedalino and Anne-Linda Camerin conducted a study in January 2022. They tested a mediation model linking Instagram use to body dissatisfaction. Their final model results showed that browsing on Instagram was associated with lower levels of body appreciation, fully mediated by upward social comparison with social media influencers. Being an adolescent female (compared to an older woman) and having a higher BMI were associated with worse body appreciation.

Instagram has become the most popular social networking site on the planet, which may explain why the great bulk of extant research material is almost entirely focused on the consequences of Instagram use on teenagers. However, it is needful to notice that they all appear different for a reason and that all of their features are appealing. As a result, they must learn how to maintain a positive relationship with social media. While social media can be a useful tool, it can also be detrimental to one's mental health if certain boundaries are not set. Holland and Tiggemann (2016) determined that social networking sites trigger psychological

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issues such as body dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, and jealousy. According to them and much research, the results were mostly negative about the use of such social media platforms.

The impact of social media on students' self-esteem is a frequently discussed topic. Instagram and its psychological impact on users have been discussed by researchers in a variety of contexts, including marriage, age, ethnicity, religion, and cultural background (Yael Trietel, Walden University 2020). But they did not deal with university students. Therefore, our study aims to contribute to filling the identified gap by investigating the role of Instagram in students' self-esteem and whether it is linked to self-esteem level.

### **Gender influence**

Recent empirical studies have been on various possible physical and psychological repercussions of media images, and research indicates that both men and women are increasingly experiencing pressure to comply with the norms established by their same-sex peers in the media. Self-esteem is relatively high in childhood for both genders, drops during adolescence, and then gradually rises throughout adulthood before declining in old age (Bleidorn et al., 2016). Additionally, there is a difference in gender, how males and females perceive self-esteem. Men tend to have high levels of self-esteem, whereas women have lower levels of self-esteem (Bleidorn et al., 2016). Females had lower self-esteem and used social media more frequently than males. The Instagram platform is used to connect people through image sharing. Females who spend the majority of their time online posting pictures are constantly striving for the "perfect" image in order to compete with other concepts of "perfect" images. The stress of achieving perfection has an underlying weakness that has a negative impact on self-esteem (Vogel et al., 2014). Gender difference is one of the major subjects studied while researching self-esteem (Zuckerman, Li, & Hall, 2016). Boys often report greater levels of self-esteem than girls, according to research (Birndorf, Ryan, Auinger, & Aten, 2005 ; Bleidorn et al., 2015 ; Sprecher, Brooks, & Avogo, 2013).

According to Gentile et al. (2009), there was no notable change in attractiveness and self-esteem during the 1970s, but the difference began to show after the 1980s, and they speculated that one potential reason for the rise in gender differences was that the media began to place more emphasis on appearance. One of the explanations given for the gender gap in self-esteem throughout adolescence is that adolescence occurs sooner in females than in males, so their physical appearance changes dramatically during those years, making adolescence a more sensitive period for females (Kling et al., 1999 ; Zuckerman et al., 2016).

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Furthermore, studies have shown that females are more likely to make physical appearance comparisons and, with the pressure of publishing images online, they are more active on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. Girls tend to engage in more self-relevant social comparisons online, which can be detrimental to their self-worth and lead to higher levels of despair and worse levels of self-esteem (Nesi & Prinstein, 2015).

The other five previous studies looked into the role of gender in SM usage and self-esteem. Four of these studies revealed no impact (Blomfield Neira & Barber, 2014; Kelly et al., 2019; Koir et al., 2016; Meeus et al., 2019), whereas one study discovered a larger negative SM-self-esteem relationship among females than boys (Barthorpe et al., 2020). Teenage boys and girls may differ in their overall sensitivity to the effects of SM time and the valence of SM encounters on self-esteem. Female teenagers have lower self-esteem than male teenagers, use social media more frequently, and are more vulnerable to social influences on their self-esteem (Meier et al., 2011). As a result, we studied how gender influences the effect of SM time spent on self-esteem (RQ1a) as well as the intensity of SM experiences (RQ1b).

Furthermore, researchers hypothesize that young women who follow fitness icons on social media are more likely to report severe weight loss strategies, such as extreme dieting or an intense exercise regimen. According to the findings of this study, social media may influence young women to participate in social comparison with others, resulting in feelings of poor self-esteem (Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016). Researchers have also found a relationship between social media and low self-esteem among young women. According to a study of over 100 adolescent girls, the more women post images online and use Photoshop, the worse they feel about their appearance and report a low level of self-esteem (McLean et al., 2015).

Men with poor body esteem and self-worth view ideal physical images of many other men or pictures of men with high status. Hobza, C. L., Walker, K. E., Yakushko, O., & Peugh, J. L. (2007) conducted a study about the effects of social media and self-esteem. The research revealed significant group differences in the Physical Condition and Physical Attractiveness subscales of the Body Esteem Scale. The State Self-Esteem (SSES) test found no statistically significant changes. Limitations, applications, and future research are all noted.

Spurr, Berry, and Walker (2013) carried out a qualitative study and assembled a focus group of teenagers to examine their sentiments and perspectives on positive ideals and wellbeing. One of the male teenagers in the group mentioned that the media has a detrimental impact on guys as well; « the media impacts boys the same way it affects other individuals. They see that toned and strong image on TV and want to believe that (Spurr, Berry, & Walker,



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2013, pp. 27). It has also been discovered that « a higher level of men's magazine readership corresponds with a stronger desire to improve one's body, particularly one's muscularity » (Morrison & Halton, 2009, pp. 59), and « expectations are realized as a sculpted, lean, muscular body » (Wright, Halse, 2009, pp. 59).

This subject is worth researching since there is a vacuum in previous research on the gender-specific effects of Instagram on self-esteem. The majority of studies in this field focus on body image and self-esteem. There has been a lot of research done on the effects of social media on teens and married couples, but there haven't been any studies on the gender-specific effects of social media on university students. Adolescent studies have indicated that female self-esteem is typically somewhat lower than male self-esteem, with the gap being largest around the age of 16. (Kling et al. 1999).

Several studies have been undertaken to study gender discrepancies in social networks, such as why both genders utilize social media. According to one study, women use Facebook to communicate with existing connections, whereas men use it to form new ties. Other research has discovered that males are less responsive to SNS than females and might be activated by it. The impact of social media on its users' self-esteem, 14 Y. (2011). Given that males and females utilize social media for diverse reasons, does this simply mean that social media may affect males and females separately ?

According to the findings of previous studies, we aim to see which gender is likely to be influenced by Instagram as our hypothesis claims that women are more affected by such networking sites.

There has been little research into the effects of Instagram, in particular on self-esteem and mental health. The majority of past studies in this area focused on the media or the Internet in general, rather than a specific site. The goal of this research is to see if there is a relationship between Instagram comparison and self-esteem.

### **2-1- The present study**

There has been an increase in attention toward the use of social media platforms among students. Social media plays an important role in the lives of most teenagers. The way young people engage with technology and with one another has changed dramatically as technology has advanced. Posting images on social media is a relatively modern form of communication. Instagram is one medium that has grown in terms of popularity. The goal of this website is to post photos that the user can take to show different elements of their life. People may follow certain people to remain up to date on their images and provide criticism if they choose.

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Given the current growth of social media use, it is important to understand how social media can be integrated effectively into people's mental health. Research has been conducted on this area in many countries around the world, yet in our country, Algeria, there is no study carried out. Thus, the purpose of this qualitative and quantitative method was to explore the impact of Instagram on students' mental health here in Algeria. Moreover, this study was conducted to investigate the use of this younger generation on social media platforms, specifically Instagram. The study also highlights the drawbacks and challenges associated with using social media. Exploring these perceptions could be used to better understand what may occur to a person's mental health when using social media sites. In order to achieve these goals, two research questions guided the study :

What is the relationship between self-esteem and Instagram use ?

Which gender is the most likely to be influenced by Instagram ?

Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms, with users comparing themselves to those they follow or are friends with.

We hypothesize that there is a significant connection between self-esteem and Instagram, since using social media encourages users to make negative social comparisons with others they follow or are friends with on social media platforms, which has a negative impact on self-reported (Vogel, Rose, Okdie, Eckles, & Franz, 2015).

We hypothesize that males have more self-esteem than females. (Bleidorn et al., 2016).

The next chapter contains the methodology of research applied in this thesis. This chapter discusses the chosen methods and strategies in research, approaches, research process, data collection, sampling, and analysis methods. The research process through literature study and empirical study is also explained in detail.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter included a detailed review of the relevant literature on social media's cognitive effects. An in-depth review of previous literature is presented, as well as how the research was conducted. We explain why each variable was chosen as a potentially powerful determinant, as well as prospective future research possibilities. The second chapter built on previous research on social media, toxic comparison, and other potential psychological issues that can arise. We also discussed the theoretical framework that guided the study.

### **Chapter Three, Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

After discussing the methodological and theoretical aspects of the study in previous chapters, this section focuses on the empirical part of the study by looking into two main questions :whether social media, specifically Instagram, has a positive or negative impact on students' self-esteem ; and which gender is more likely to be influenced by Instagram, in order to answer the research questions and test the hypothesis' credibility. In terms of research methodology, design, sample size, data collection technique, and data analysis techniques,

This chapter examines the research techniques used in the under-researched study in detail. We must either prove or disprove the validity of the facts we are about to examine. This is accomplished by converting qualitative research findings into numerical statistics and arithmetic numbers. Also, by presenting the study's findings and attempting to interpret and

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analyzed them in light of each of the study's hypotheses, we unloaded the data by calculating the frequencies of each question and then the percentage of all questions to arrive at a general conclusion. Finally, we presented a comprehensive analysis and explanation of the data collected through structured questionnaires designed for freshmen students at Djilali Bounaama University in Ain defla.

### **3.1. Research Methodology**

The current study's primary goal is to analyze the usage of the Instagram app in shaping students' personalities as well as to highlight some changes in their lives. To gain a better understanding of the relationship between self-esteem and Instagram usage, we used mixed methods approaches and a correlational research design because it best fulfills the nature of the study. Furthermore, this approach is appropriate for answering the study questions and ensuring the achievement of its objectives. Mixed methods research gives us a more complete picture than a single quantitative or qualitative study since it combines the advantages of both.

### **3.2. Research Plan**

In order to address our research questions, we integrated components of both quantitative and qualitative research. According to Dr. Allison Shorten, School of Nursing, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, "Mixed methods is a research approach whereby researchers collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data within the same study." This is why we started with self-esteem questionnaires that are quantitative in nature. Also, a qualitative research method, which is a focus group, was chosen in accordance with the mixed-method approach used in this investigation. As it offers the best chance of quick, strong, and specific responses from the participants. We used a focus group because they provide additional insight into people's emotions and experiences, allowing for a much more detailed and stronger understanding of their attitudes toward ideas and so on. The focus group strategy is used since the present study aims to understand and describe the relationship between the use of social media and its impact on self-esteem.

### **3.3. Sampling**

The current research was conducted at Djilali Bounaama University in Ain Defla's Department of English. Fifty ( $n = 50$ ) students were chosen at random from first-year EFL students as the sample population for this case study. Therefore, this was considered the most appropriate level for the purpose of gaining insights into the study.

The sample size for the in-depth focus group was fifty. but in batches of ten (10), with the youngest member being 17 and the oldest being 21. A total of twenty-five (25) females and

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twenty-five (25) males were questioned. This sample was chosen at random and is based on the idea that because all teens have an Instagram account and are the ones who are addicted to and affected by social media, they will aid in acquiring the necessary data for the issue.

### **3.4. Pilot research**

The questionnaire was pre-tested in February, and five (05) samples were filled out to see if there were any difficulties with it, as well as whether the questions were easy to understand and answer. It was discovered during pre-testing that all respondents felt comfortable responding and found the instrument entertaining. However, because they were in the middle of a break, they suggested that it would be better if they submitted it online since they didn't have time to finish it in class. Also, because some of the students who responded to the questionnaire expressed difficulty answering certain questions, we made some changes to the questions. Yet, pupils were not asked for their self-esteem scores.

#### **3.4.1. Instruments for research**

We may say that we used two study tools to obtain as much data from students as necessary, namely a questionnaire and a structured focus group given to first-year EFL students. We came to the conclusion that three major surveys were required: the first one is on self-esteem, the second one is on social comparison, and the third one is on Instagram usage.

#### **3.4.2 Questionnaire**

According to Brown (2001 :06), a questionnaire is "any written instrument that presents respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they must respond either by writing out their responses or by selecting from a list of available responses." This is why two separate questionnaires are used in this study as a data-gathering tool, in order to discover how students' personalities are influenced by their use of social media. As previously stated, fifty (50) freshman students (L1) who use Instagram appreciated two questionnaires in the form of a Likert scale because the answers are presented in a specific order that facilitates the mission. The latter was initially conducted online, but due to a lack of emails and some technical problems, we reverted to the traditional approach of randomly distributing papers to first-year students. The survey included twenty-five males and twenty-five females; all of them responded.

The purpose of the survey was to learn more about the impact of students' use of Instagram on their self-esteem as well as how often they compare themselves to others.

#### **\*The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, or SES (Rosenberg, 1965),**

Rosenberg's (1965) self-esteem scale, which is the most commonly used survey measure to assess general, trait-like levels of self-esteem, was used in the majority of studies on the

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between-personrelationshipbetween SMU and self-esteem. Adolescents wereasked to evaluatethemselves in general or over a specificperiod of time in thesestudies.

The Self-Esteem Scalewasdesigned by Dr. Morris Rosenberg to evaluate self-esteem. It is a widelyused self-report tool for evaluatingindividual self-esteem and wasstudiedusing item responsetheory. T. D. Hancock, B. Gray-Little, V.S.L. Williams, and B. Gray-Little, 1997. The survey has ten questions on a four-point Likert scalethat must beanswered. Statementslike "I believe I am a person of worth" are assessed on a 4-point scale on this 10-item scale (1 = stronglyagree ; 4 = stronglydisagree). A greater sense of self-worthisreflected in higher scores. The ratings go fromstronglyagreeing to stronglydisagree, with the moststronglydisagreeingbeing the least agreeing. The higher the number on the scales, the more likely the participant agreeswith the statement.

### **\*The Social ComparisonScale (Festinger, 1945)**

Social comparisons are a valuable source of self-knowledge. This information isneeded by people in order to evaluatetheirabilities and opinions, enhancetheir performance, and maybeboosttheir self-esteem (Festinger, 1954). It assesses social anxiety as well as one's self-perception of social status. This scaleis made up of 11 bipolar components thatrequire participants to make a global comparison of themselves to otherindividualsusing a ten-point scale to rate wheretheyfall on the scale'svarious components. The higher the participant's score, the bettertheyfelt social, whereas a low score indicated social anxietywheninteractingwithothers.

### **3.4.3 Discussion group**

In thisstudy, the focus group is the second supportive instrument utilized to acquire qualitative data. In 2008, Paul J. Lavrakasstated, "... focus groups offer crucial insights intopeople's feelings and thoughts, and hence a more deep, nuanced, and broadergrasp of their opinions on ideas, products, and policies." It consists of nine (9) closed-ended questions thatrequirestudents to providespecificresponses by selecting an answer, either "yes" or "no," or selecting one of the suitable responses. On the other hand, one of themallowsstudents to express themselves by explainingtheirselections. Theywerealso permitted to providedemographicresponses to gender and age questions such as "how old are you ?"

### **3-4-4 piloting validation :**

The researcherpre-used the first draft of the students' questionnaire afterconstructingit to ensureitsvaliditybeforeadministeringit. Fundamentally, five (5) first-year LMD studentsfrom Djilali Bounaama'sUniversityweregiven the pilotingdraught in March by hand. In fact, the

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main objective of the questionnaire's piloting stage was to test the complexity and ambiguity of the questions, as well as the attractiveness of the layout, and see whether there were any questions that had been repeated, also including feedback and comments, and taking them into account when planning and beginning the final administration.

Students took 3 days to complete the questionnaire due to their busy schedules. Therefore, when the student returned the questionnaire, they suggested that it would be possible to submit it online because they did not have time to complete it in class. Moreover, significantly, most students were encouraged to provide honest answers and give their opinions and help to correct any ambiguity and unclear points in the draft.

After completing the questionnaire, students were asked to respond to the following interpretative questions :

1. Are there any difficulties in answering the questions ?

Yes or No ?

If yes, please mention them.

Do you think that the design of the questionnaire is interesting and attractive ?

Yes or No ?

If not, do you have any suggestions to make it look attractive ?

3. Are there any questions you find unclear ?

Yes or No ?

If yes, please mention them.

4. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions you want to add ?

Yes or No ?

If yes, please mention them.

Some of the students who responded to the questionnaire said they had difficulty answering some questions, and others stayed neutral and agreed on almost every question, which in fact was not very helpful for us. Overall, they did their best to collaborate with us and enjoyed this experience. The following table shows the students' replies to the evaluative questions :

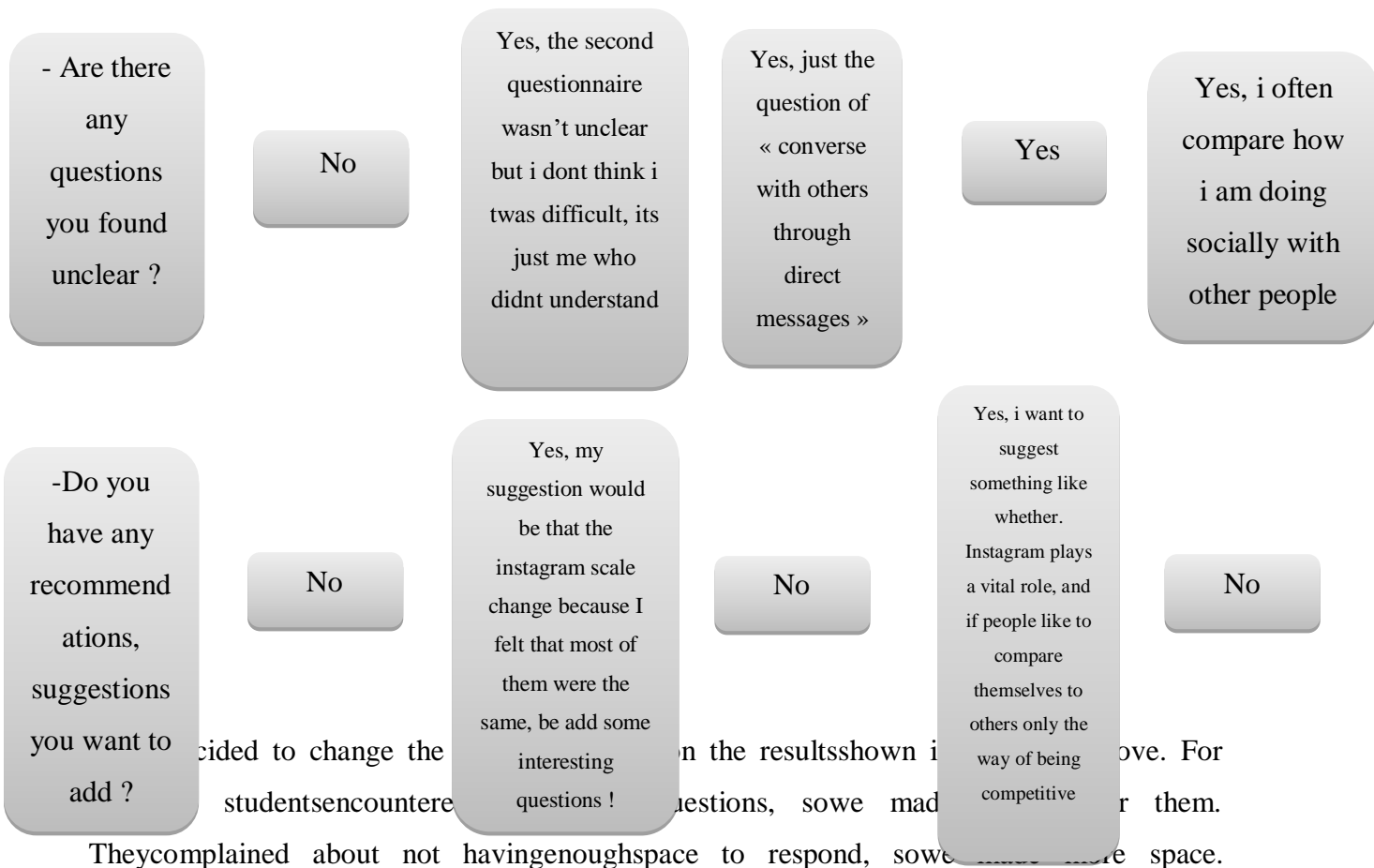
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Table :

Evaluative Questions	Respondent 01	Respondent 02	Respondent 03	Respondent 04	Respondent 05
-Are there any difficulties in answering the questions	Yes, most questions in the Instagram scale	No	No	No	No
- Do you think that the design of the	Yes, most questions in the	Yes	Yes, but if you could add a place to	Yes	Yes, actually the design is perfect, I just wanted to suggest to give more chance to



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decided to change the Instagram questions because they are similar to each other. They complained about not having enough space to respond, some students encountered some unclear questions, so we made some more space. Furthermore, they discovered some unclear questions at first until we reread the questions. Last question was about any recommendations or suggestions they add most of the participants answered with no, two of them wanted to change the Instagram questions because they are similar to each other.

## 4. Data Analysis

The methods used to examine the quantitative and qualitative data received from the surveys and focus group are presented in this section. The study used descriptive method to evaluate and analyse the quantitative data collected. While Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used to understand the qualitative data. The goal of qualitative content analysis is to achieve a

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research goal that can be answered by looking at the content of communications (Altheide, 1996 ; Mayring, 2000).

The quantitative data collected from the questionnaire's closed-ended questions was analyzed by using a descriptive methodology.

The qualitative data gathered from the focus group was analyzed using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). It is defined as "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making endeavor that aims to discover core consistencies and meanings from a large volume of qualitative data" (Patton, 2002 :453). We gathered data from a group interview to do content analysis, which allowed us to better comprehend and analyze qualitative data and break it into categories and themes.

### **5-Ethical consideration**

In this research, all ethical considerations were taken into account because of the importance of ethical concerns and enforcing them throughout research. The study's data collecting began once our supervisor had reviewed and approved the survey to ensure it was appropriate and included all necessary information. This study employed a pilot study since it had newer, simpler, and straightforward questions.

There were several ethical concerns that needed to be addressed. One of the key issues was the age of the participants. We had to ensure that all participants must be at least 17 years old and utilize social media. Participants had to agree to take part in the study and to have their data used in the study in order to continue and engage in the study. The students would be unable to participate in the survey if they refused to agree. They were reminded at the start of the questionnaire that all data collected would be kept private. We made certain that the printed copies of the pamphlets were anonymous. Permission was obtained immediately before beginning the questionnaire by providing a brief explanation of the research topic. Respondents were informed that completing the questionnaire was entirely voluntary. Students then were thanked for their participation in the study.

### **6.Summary**

The survey method used to carry out our investigation was provided in this chapter. First and foremost, it presented the study method which is mixed method methodologies research, as well as the participants. The data gathering tools which included two questionnaires and focus group,

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were then presented. It also covered the methodologies for analysing quantitative and qualitative data. The latter was analysed and the hypothesis was tested using the descriptive method. Alternatively, the qualitative data was analysed using (QCA). These techniques aid in the understanding of the study problem.

### **Chapter four : Results and Findings**

#### **Introduction**

Here is an experimental chapter. It is concerned with the representation of the results of questionnaires given to (50) first-year undergraduates who are using the Instagram platform. It also includes the findings of a structured focus group with ten students from the English department at DJILALI BOUNAAMA University of Ain Defla. The results are discussed in percentages and represented in tables and pie charts for clarity and accessibility. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the results of a structured focus group, which are examined using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). The second and third

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sections contain the findings of the SELF-ESTEEM, and NETHERLANDS SOCIAL COMPARISON ORIENTATION questionnaires.

### **4-1- Part one :**

#### **1-Focus group answers**

Most people compare themselves from time to time with others. They may, for example, compare the way they feel, their opinions, their abilities, and / or their situation with those of other people. This form of comparison is neither positive nor negative, and some individuals engage in it more than others. We'd want to know how frequently teens compare themselves to others.

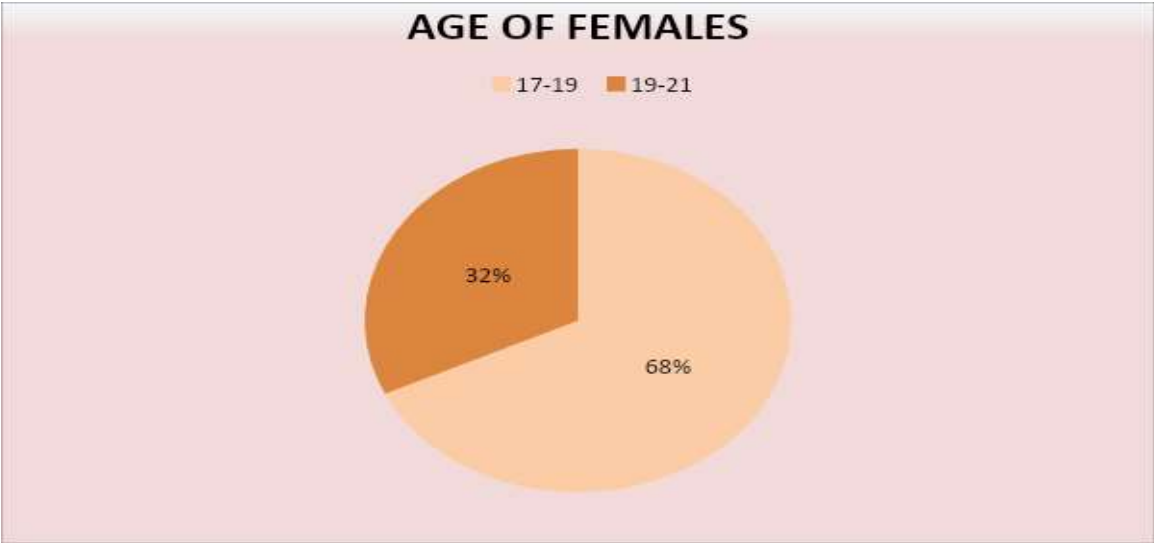
A number of questions on Instagram usage were posed to all participants. In the tables below, overall frequencies and percentages of replies to these questions are presented.

#### **Question one**

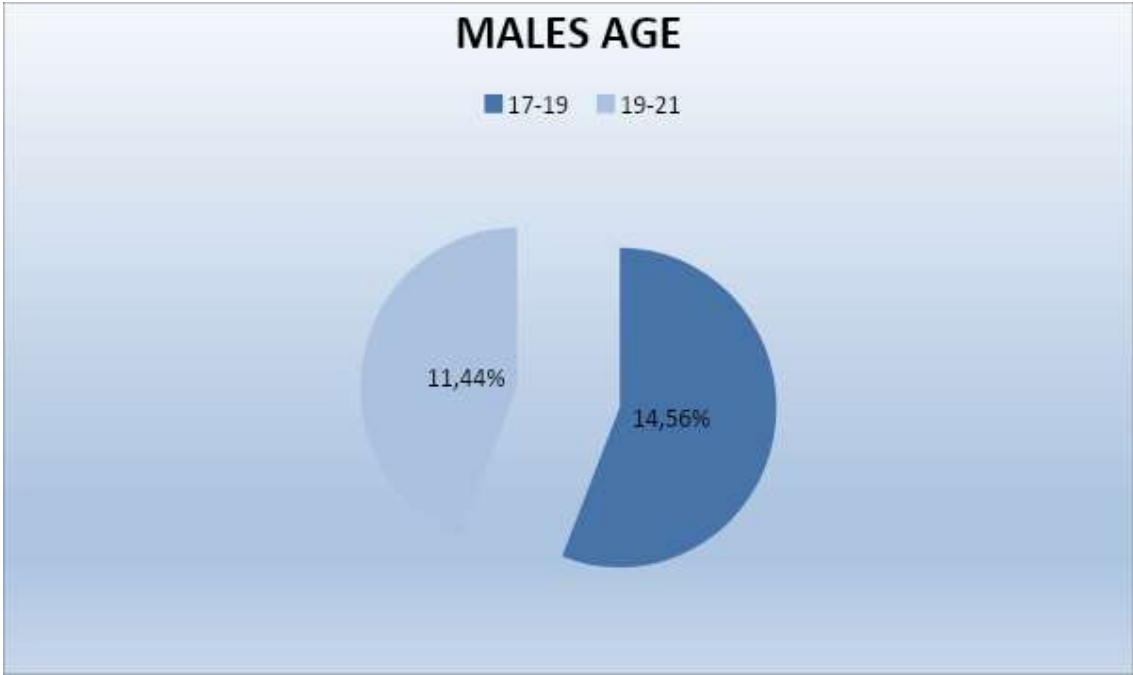
The first thing participants were asked was their age, and the question was :

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How old are you ? The average of the participants is depicted in the graph below :



We took a sample of fifty (N=50) students, it includes 25 female students and 25 male students. The results show that 17 girls representing (68%) are aged between 17 and 19, whereas 8 of them representing (32%) are aged between 19 and 21.



In contrast, males are 14.56% aged between 17 to 19, whereas as seen in Table 01, fourteen males (56%) ranged in age from 17 to 19, and (44%) aged between 19 to 21

AGE	FEMALES	MALES
17-19	17	14

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19-21	8	11
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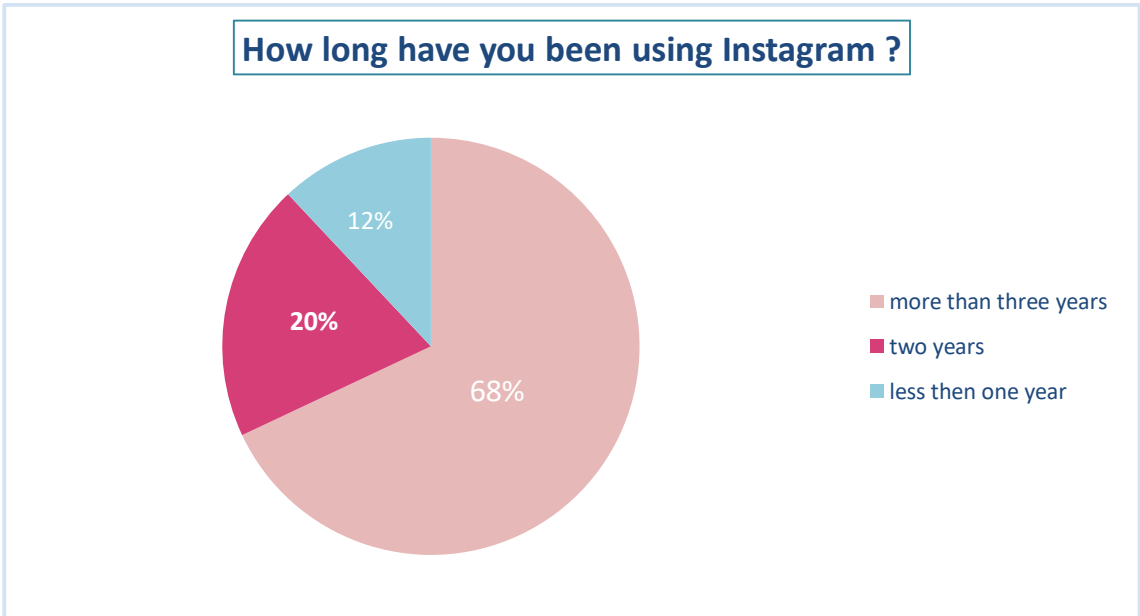
**Table (01) : Students’ age**

Table 01 shows that the majority of students for both genders are over the age of 18 (the age of majority) which means that they are considered adults and are responsible now.

**Question two**

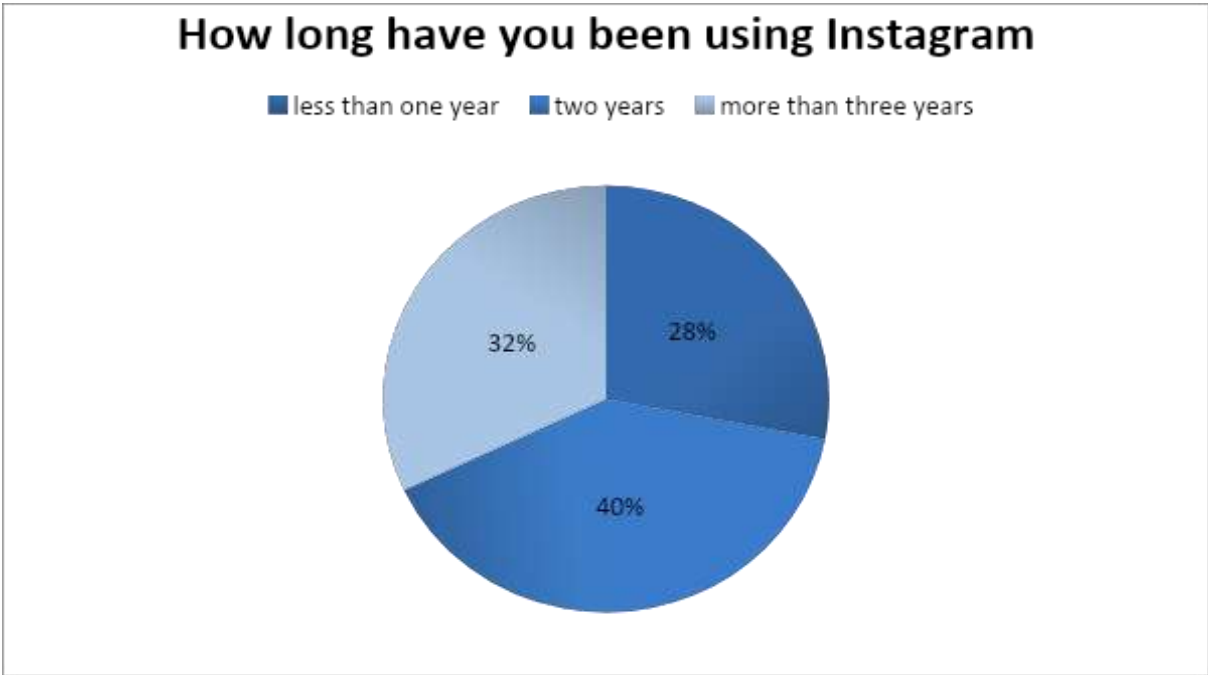
The second question was, "How long have you been using Instagram ?"

It is remarkable that most of the students have been using Instagram for more than three years.



The majority of the females participants, seventeen (17), representing 68%, have had an Instagram account for more than three years. While only five (05) of them (20%) have had it for two years, and three (03) have had it for less than a year.

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Graph (02) shows that ten males (10), or 40%, do have an Instagram account for two years. Whilst eight of them (32%) have been using it for more than three years, seven (28%) had this for only around a year.

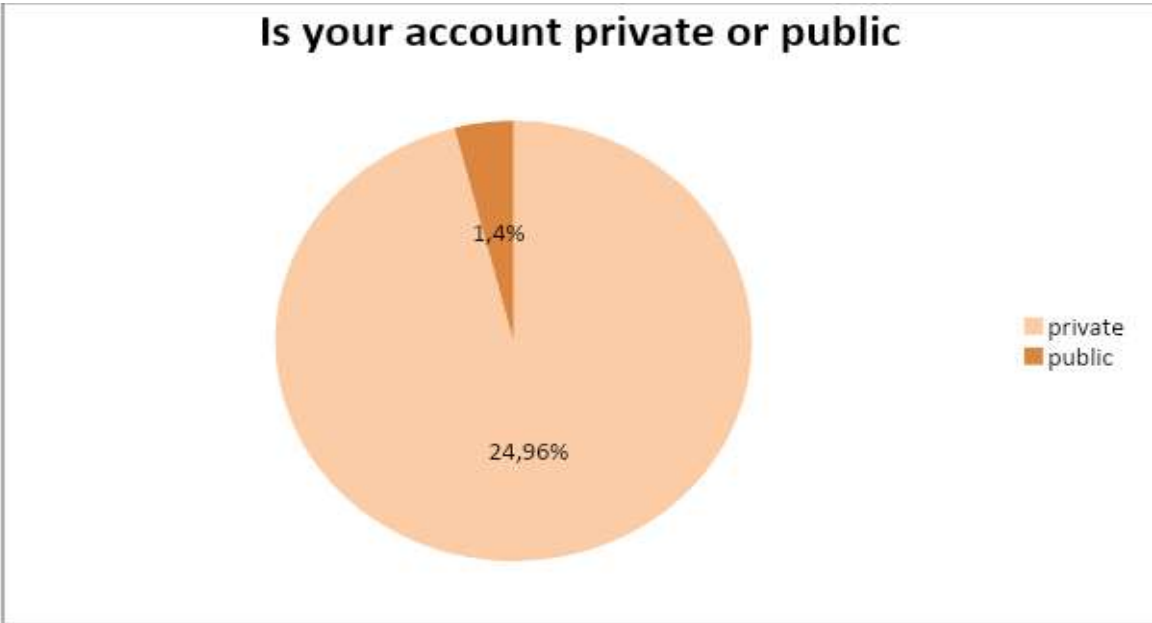
Duration	Females	Males
Less than one year	3	7
Two years	5	10
More than, three years	17	8

Table (02) : Students’ instagram Usage time

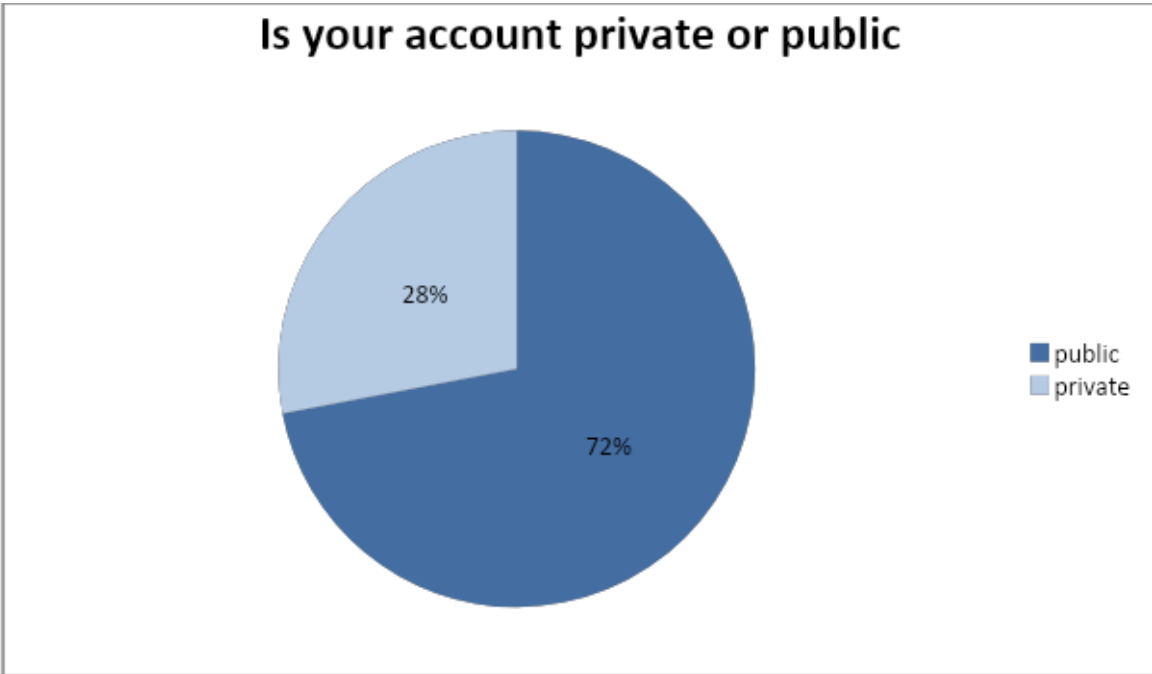
Table (02) shows that half of participants have an Instagram account, and are using it for more than three years, and 15 students are having it for two years, the rest have only recently joined Instagram (less than one year)

**QUESTION THREE**

The third question was, "Is your account private or public ?"



Graph (05) demonstrates that the majority of the girls who took place in the survey (96%) have a private account, while only 4% have a public one.



In comparison to females, graph (06) shows that 72% of males who participated in the survey have a public account, while 28% have a private account.



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	Females	Males
Private	24	7
Public	1	18

Table (03) : students' account

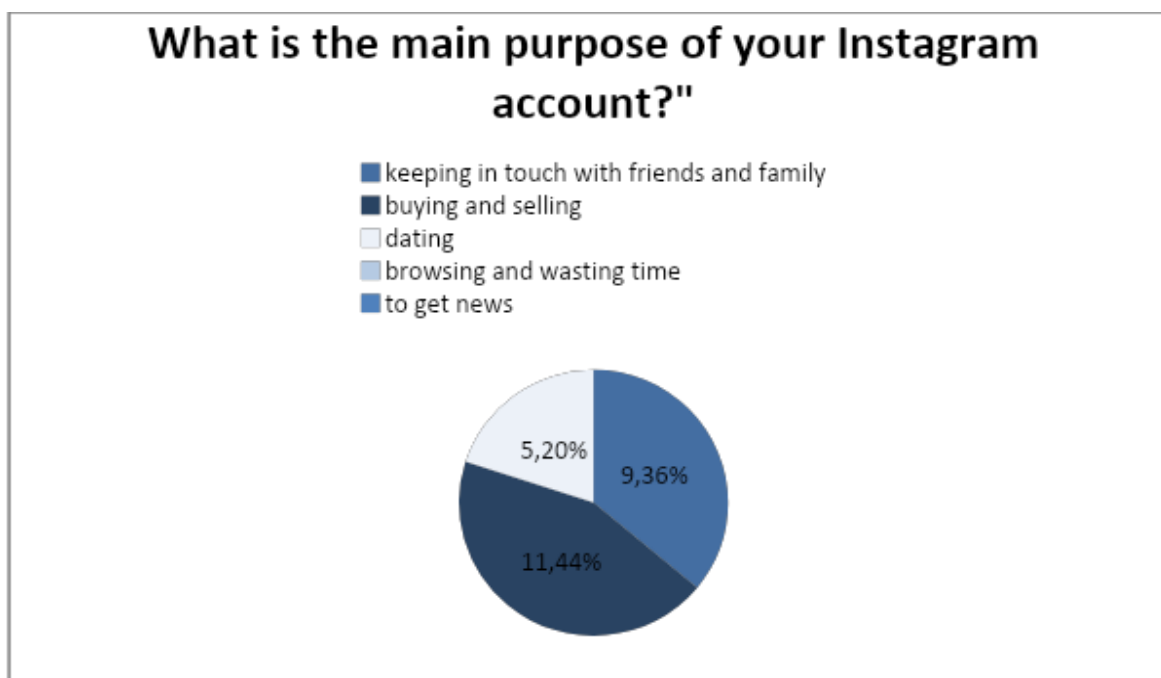
Table (03) illustrates that almost all of the participants have private accounts, 24.96 % of girls are making their profiles private. They don't want their lives to be visible to everyone. In contrast to boys who doesn't care about that.

**Question four**

The fourth question was, "What is the main purpose of your Instagram account ?"



According to graph (07), 56% of females' primary goal is to stay in touch with friends and family. Dating comes in second place with 28%, getting news comes in third place with 12%, buying and selling comes in the fourth place with 4% , and browsing and wasting time comes in last place with 0% .



On the other hand, buying and selling is the primary goal of males with 44% , Then keeping in touch with family members and friends comes in second place with 36%, dating in the third place with 20% , While no one chose to read the news or browse the internet and wasting time.

**Table (04) :** The main goal of students' Instagram

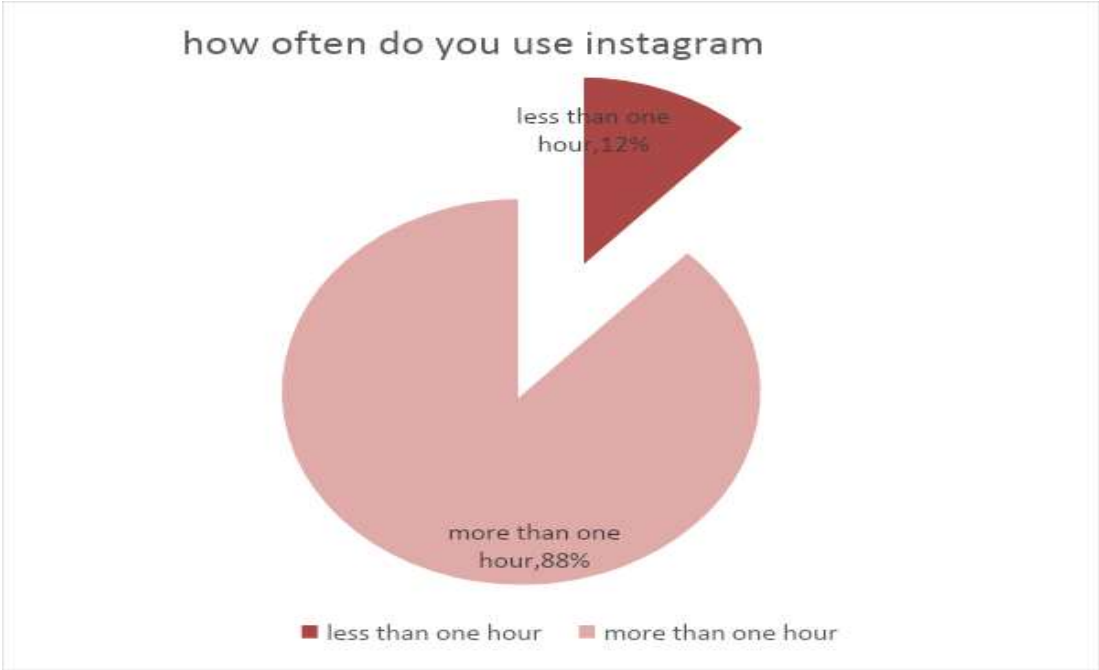
	Females	Males
Keeping in touch with friends and family	14	9
Buying and selling	1	11
Dating	7	5
Browsing and wasting time	0	0
To get news	3	0

Most of the participants agreed on that the main reason behind using Instagram is to keep in touch with friends and family for both genders, buying and selling in the second position, getting news in the third position. Finally no one chose to waste time.

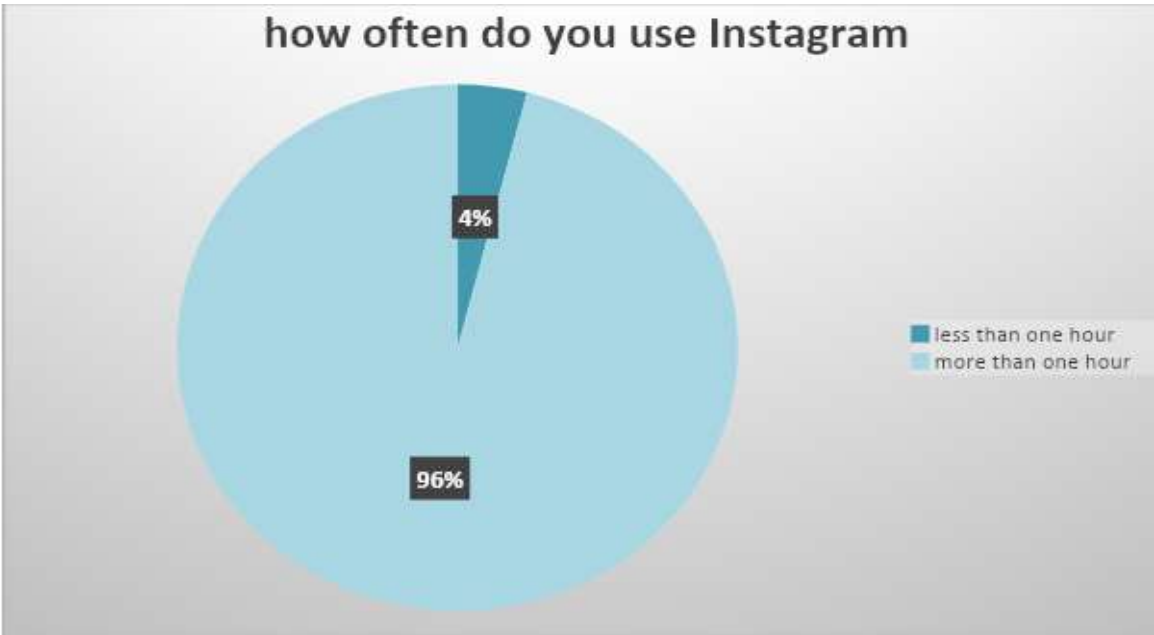
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Question five

The fifth question was : how often do you use Instagram ?



Females who use Instagram for more than one hour account for 88%, while those who use it for less than one hour account for only 12%.



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96 percent of males saidthey use Instagram for more than one houereveryday, whileonly 4% saidthey use it for lessthan one hour.

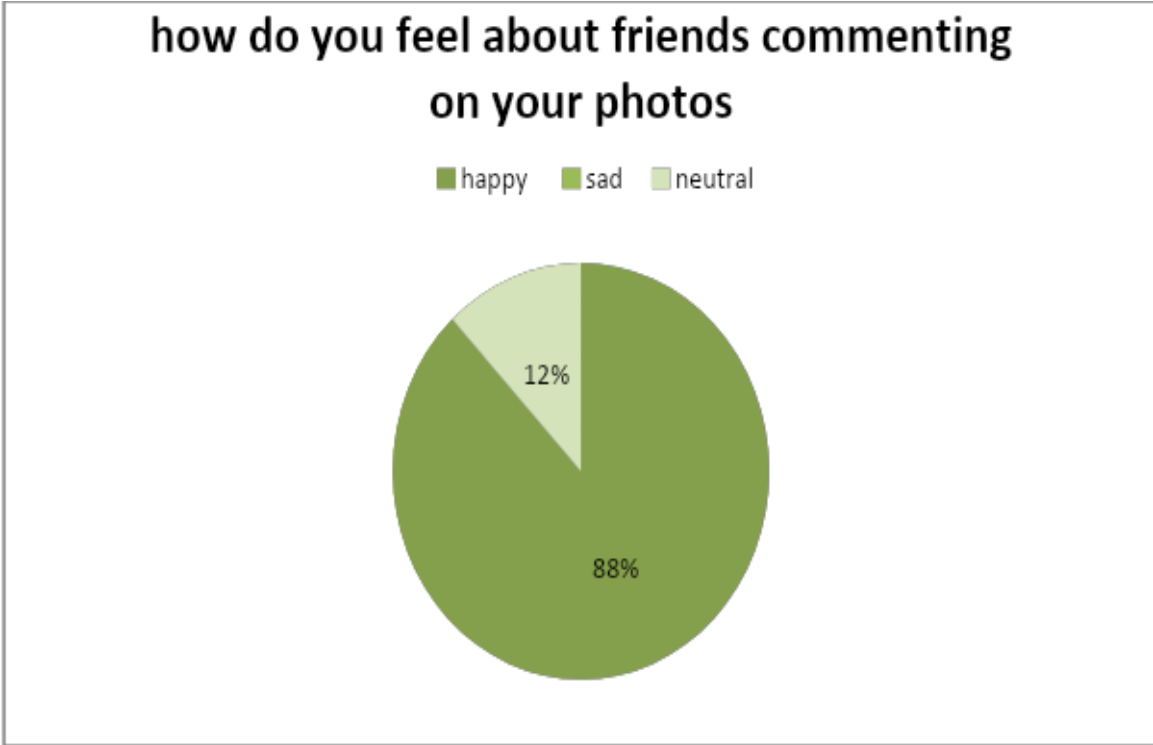
Table 05 : StudentsFrequency of usingInstagram.

Hours	Females	Males
Lessthan one hour	3	1
More than one hour	22	24

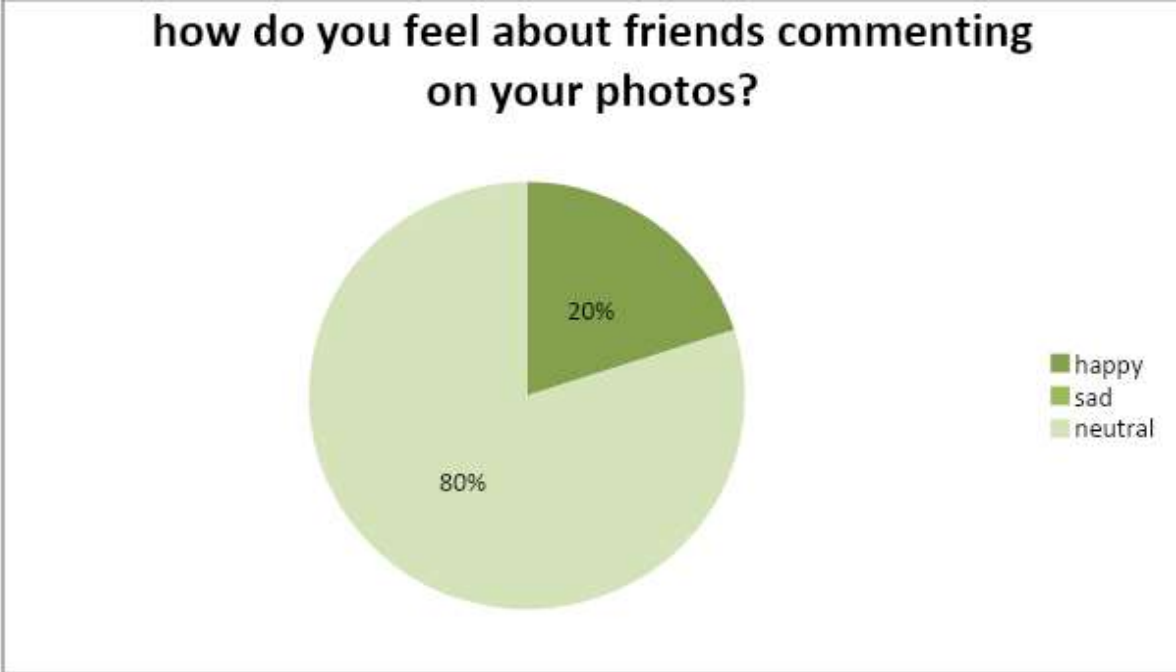
According to the graphs and table (05), the vastmajority of participants, bothfemales and males, saythatthey use Instagram for more than one houereveryday, with 99 percent of males and 88 percent of femalesagreeing.

**Question six**

The sixth question was : how do youfeel about friendscommenting on your photos?



Whentheirfriends comment on theirphotographs, 88 percent of girls are pleased. Only 12% of people are depressed about it.



On the other hand, a higher percentage of boys (80%) are neutral, and 20% said reading comments from their friends on their images makes them happy. No one is sad.

**Table (06)** : student’s feeling about their friends comments

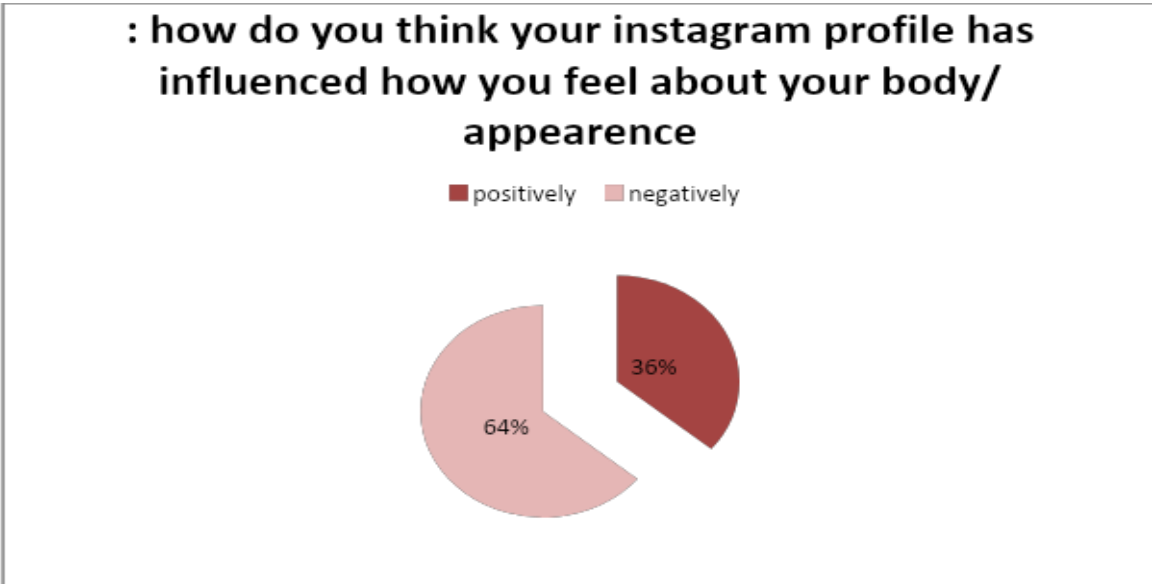
	Females	Males
Happy	22	5
Sad	0	0
Neutral	3	20

When reading responses from friends, males are either neutral or happy, as seen in table (06). However, the majority of girls are happy, while the rest are indifferent.

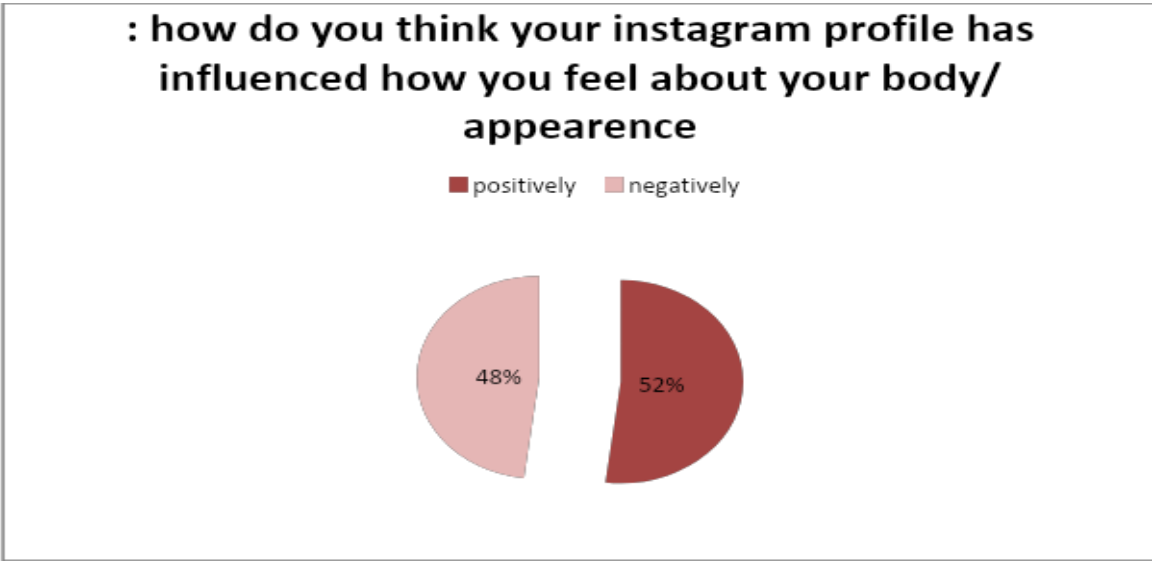
**QUESTION SEVEN**

The seventh question was : how do you think your instagram profile has influenced how you feel

About your body/ appearance ?



64 percent of females believe that Instagram has had a negative impact on their lives. Positive influence is felt by 36% of those respondents.



For guys, 52 percent believe that Instagram has favourably changed how they feel about their appearance. This isn't confirmed by 48%.

	Females	Males
Positively	16	13
Negatively	9	12

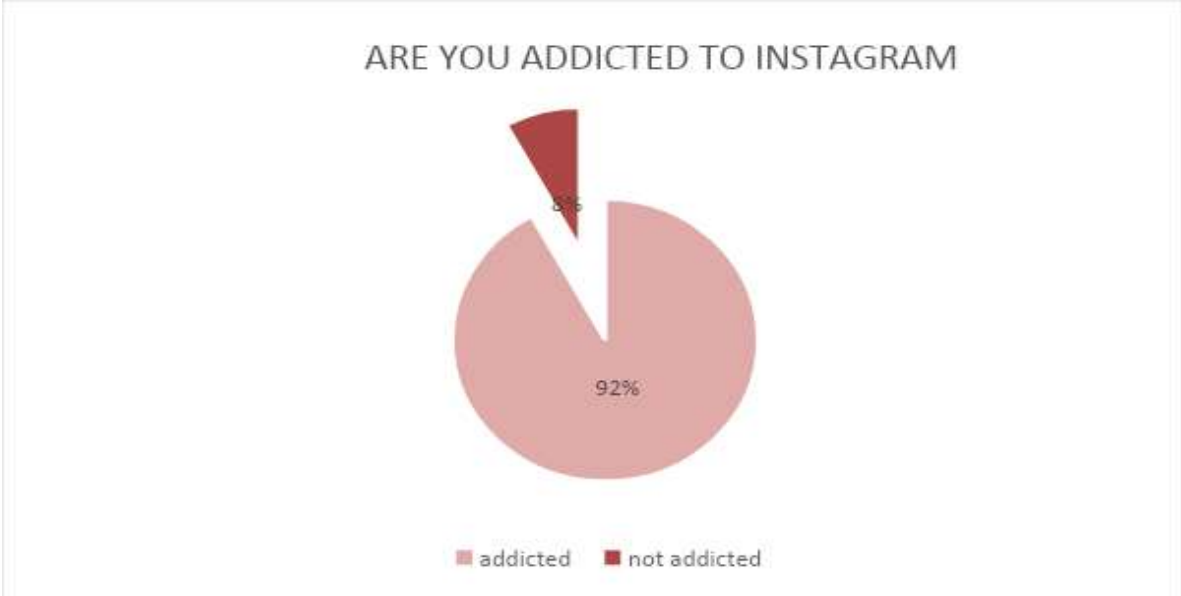
Table (07) : influence of instagram on students body

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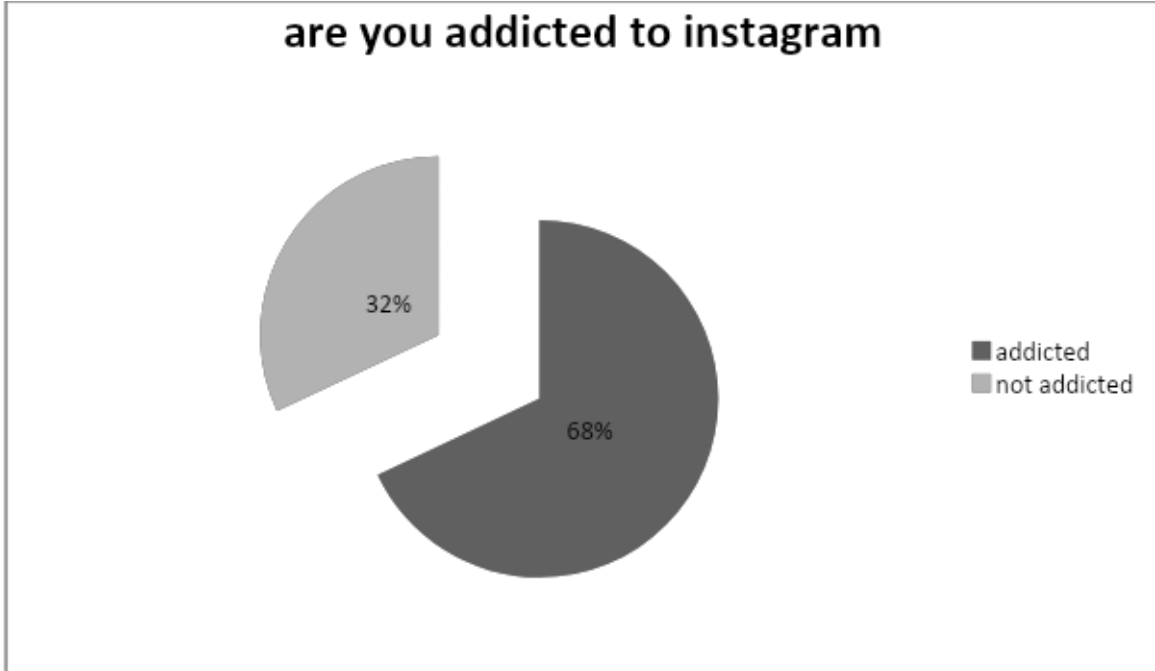
Participants of both genders believe that Instagram has had a positive and negative impact on how they feel about their appearance.

**QUESTION EIGHT**

The eighth question was : do you consider your self addicted to instagram ?



92 percent of Females consider themselves to be instagram addicted .Only 8% of those questioned disagree.



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INSTAGRAM ADDICTION tend to affect 68 percent of males, and 32 percent do not believe they are addicted.

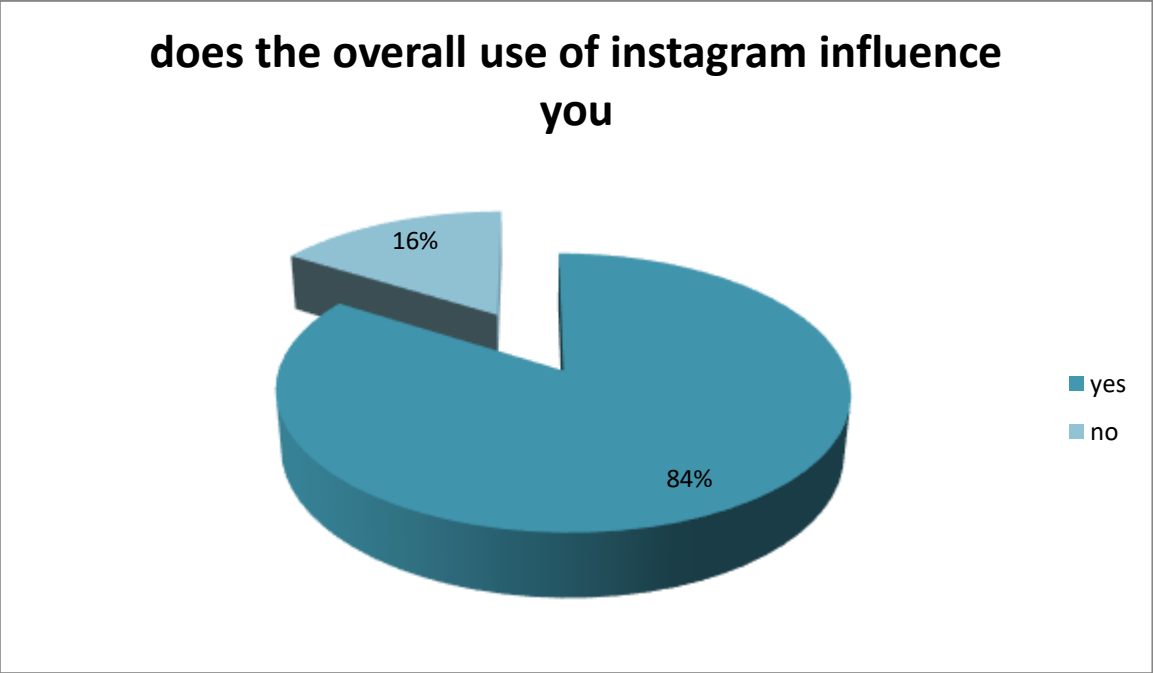
	Females	Males
Addicted	23	17
Not addicted	2	8

Table (08) :Instagram addiction among students

Overall, females are more likely than males to be addicted to Instagram.

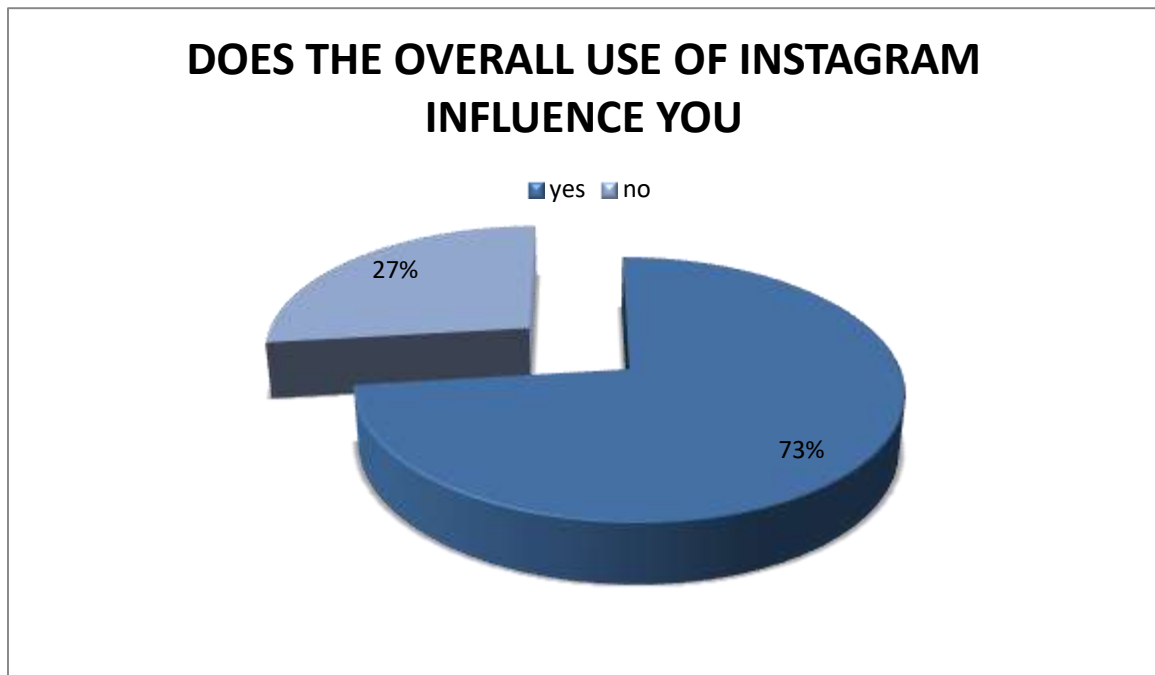
**QUESTION NINE**

The last question was : does the overall use of instagram influence you !



Only 16 percent of girls are not influenced by Instagram, whereas 84 percent of girls are.





According to the graph below, males are regarded to be influenced by instagram in 73 percent. As a result. And just 27% who do not believe that they are influenced

	Females	Males
Yes	21	19
No	4	6

Table (09) :Instagram's overall influence on students

As can be seen from table nine above, the majority of participants are influenced by instagram

#### 4-2- PART TWO :

##### The questionnaire answers

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the findings of this study. The questionnaires were done according to the specific objectives and hypothesis in order to answer the research questions. Results were represented using tables for ease of looking and texts to explain the table values for easier comprehension for young people’s self esteem and their social comparison.

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### **1-Self-Esteem Questionnaire :**

Self-esteem, as measured by the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, is described in this section. As the data was measured using Likert scales, which may be considered to be interval in nature (Norman, 2010). To do this, we asked participants to rate how much they agreed with each of the statements below.

### **1-2 Self Esteem Test findings**

The following table shows the findings of self esteem test in terms of questions in order to draw a clear picture about the level of self-esteem of both boys and girls. The mean score of the global degree is 60,8%.

### **1-3 Females responses**

All male participants were asked a series of questions relating to Instagram usage and self-esteem. The frequencies and percentages of the responses to these questions are listed in the following tables below :

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**Table (10) :** Question, Levels of agreement and disagreement, average and percentage of the girls questionnaire.

N <sup>o</sup>	Questions	Stronglyagree	Agreesome how	Disagreesom how	Stronglydisag ree
1	I feelthati'm a person of worth, at least on an equal part withothers	17	3	2	3
2	I feelthat i have a number of good qualities.	10	2	10	3
3	I sometimesthink i am a failure.	14	6	5	0
4	Iam able to do things as well as most people do.	9	2	14	0
5	I feel i do not have much to beproud of.	16	2	7	0
6	I usually compare myselfwithothers.	20	5	0	0
7	On the whole i am satisfiedwithmyself.	20	5	0	0
8	I wish i could have more respect for myself.	18	2	3	2
9	I certainlyfeeluseless at times.	18	4	3	0
10	At times i think i am not good at all.	10	10	5	0
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>15,2</b>	<b>4,1</b>	<b>4,9</b>	<b>0,8</b>
	<b>Percentage%</b>	<b>60,8</b>	<b>16,4</b>	<b>19,6</b>	<b>3,2</b>

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• Table Number (10) indicates that the questions presented to the participants who are estimated 25 girls in total, shows a clear difference between the column of Strongly agree and the other columns, in which they reached a percentage of 60,8 %.

While a percentage of 3,2% was achieved as a lower score in the column Strongly disagree where the maximum number of students involved is 3.

### 1-4-Males responses

All male participants were asked a series of questions relating to Instagram usage. The frequencies and percentages of the responses to these questions are listed in the following tables below.

**Table (11)** : Questions, Levels of agreement and disagreement, average and percentage of boys achievement in Self esteem Questionnaire.

N o	Questions	Strongly agree	Agreesome how	Disagreesom how	Stronglydisag ree
1	I feel that i'm a person of worth, at least on an equal part with others	9	10	3	3
2	I feel that i have a number of good qualities.	4	5	10	6
3	I sometimes think i am a failure.	17	0	8	0
4	I am able to do things as well as most people do.	5	5	10	5
5	I feel i do not have much to be proud of.	19	0	3	3
6	I usually compare myself with others.	17	3	3	2

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7	On the whole i am satisfied with myself.	17	3	3	2
8	I wish i could have more respect for myself.	20	5	0	0
9	I certainly feel useless at times.	20	5	0	0
10	At times i think i am not good at all.	18	2	3	2
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>14,6</b>	<b>3,8</b>	<b>4,3</b>	<b>2,3</b>
	<b>Percentage%</b>	<b>58,4</b>	<b>15,2</b>	<b>17,2</b>	<b>9,2</b>

Based on table (11) above, it is clear that the highest score has been achieved in the column Strongly agree as well, except that is lower than the score achieved by the boys with a percentage of 58,4%, marking higher marks in The 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Questions.

Followed by the column Disagree Somehow with a percentage of 17,

2% as a result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> questions mainly. In the third place the boys somehow agree on some questions especially the first one achieving a 15,2 of a percentage, then comes in the last position the strongly disagree with a 9,2%.

### 2--Social Comparison Questionnaire

#### 2-1- Females responses

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree some how	Disagree some how	Strongly disagree	Neither dis agree
I often compare myself with others with respect to what i have accomplished in my life.	10	10	5	0	
I always pay attention to how i do things compared with how	20	5	0	0	

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others do things					
I often compare how my loved ones are doing with how others are doing.	25	0	0	0	
I always like to know what others in similar situation would do.	25	0	0	0	
I am not the type of person who compares often with others.	0	0	19	6	
If i want to find out how well i have done something, i compare what i have done with how others have done.	19	6	0	0	
I often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences.	25	0	0	0	
I often compare how i am doing socially with others.	20	2	0	0	
I constantly compare myself and how i look to others.	25	0	0	0	
<b>Mean</b>	<b>16,9</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>2,4</b>	<b>0,6</b>	
<b>Percentage%</b>	<b>67,6</b>	<b>9,2</b>	<b>9,6</b>	<b>2,4</b>	

*Table (12): Questions, Levels of agreement and disagreement, average and percentage of girl's achievement in social comparison Questionnaire*

As it is seen in the table (12) which is concerned with females' social comparison. We note that most of the answers strongly agree, got the largest percentage with 67.6%. As for the answers, i agree and disagree got 9.2% and 9.6% respectively. While answers of strongly disagree and Neither disagree nor agree got 2.4% and 1.2%.

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### 2-2-Males responses

**Table (13):** Questions, Levels of agreement and disagreement, average and percentage of boys’ achievement in Self esteem Questionnaire

°	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree somewhat</i>	<i>Disagree somewhat</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Neither disagree nor agree</i>
	I often compare myself with others with respect to what i have accomplished in my life.	3	2	10	7	3
	i always pay attention to how i do things compared with how others do things	0	3	4	15	3
	I often compare how my loved ones are doing with how others are doing.	0	0	20	5	0
	I always like to know what others in similar situation would do.	0	1	10	6	8
	I am not the type of person who compares often with others.	1	16	4	7	0
	If i want to find out how well i have done something, i compare what i	1	7	15	2	0

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have done with how others have done.					
I often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences.	10	10	0	0	5
I often compare how I am doing socially with others.	0	0	20	5	0
I constantly compare myself and how I look to others.	0	0	19	3	3
<b>Mean</b>	<b>1,5</b>	<b>3,9</b>	<b>10,2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2,2</b>
<b>Percentage%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15,6</b>	<b>40,8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8,8</b>

Including in Table 13, the majority of the responses Disagree somehow, with the highest number of 40.8 percent. I strongly agree received the least number of 6%. while, I agree received 15.6 percent of the vote, strongly disagree and neither disagree nor agree received 20 percent and 8.8 percent, respectfully. For both genders, we can state that there is a significant difference in social comparison ratings. Boys highly disagree with a percentage of 40.8, whereas girls disagree with only 9.6%. And when girls disagree with 69.6%, boys disagree only with 6%.

### Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from questionnaires completed by fifty (50) first-year students who use Instagram, as well as a direct focus group held in the department of English at Djilali Bounaama University.



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We can draw the conclusion from the results that the majority of the students are addicted to and influenced by Instagram. These findings will be discussed in depth in the following part, with interpretation and explanation provided.

### **Chapter Five, Findings**

#### **Overview**

In order to answer the current study's initial hypothesis which is that there is a fairly significant correlation between self-esteem and Instagram. Males have higher self-esteem than females, according to the second hypothesis. The current study administered two surveys and a focus group to undergraduate students enrolled in Djilali Bounaama University to investigate the impact of instagram usage on teen self-esteem. Questions from the Rosenberg self-esteem measure and the social comparison scale were included in the survey.

The findings are discussed in light of the literature review and the social comparison theory, as stated in the first chapter. The goal of this analysis is to answer the research questions and confirm or deny the advanced hypothesis of the general introduction. In fact,

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this chapter is divided into two major sections. the first section discusses the results of the questionnaires. The second section goes over the results of the focus group.

### **5-1-Self esteem questionnaire:**

Self esteem is an important aspect to be considered nowadays when talking about the influence of any application this idea is confirmed by most of the participants who answered the questions. In the same line, when it was girls turn the column of Stronglyagree, reached a percentage of 60,8 %.

20 studentstronglyagreed on the statement : ' I usually compare myselfwithothers.' No matter how good a personis, thereisalwaysbetterthanhim, welthier, prettier, more hard working or simplyluckier, people come fromdifferent backgrounds and go throughdifferent stages on life, and thatiswhat adolescents especiallythosewho use instagramshouldbeaware of. Theyalways tend to compare themselves to others and thatismentallyexhausting for itmakesthemfeellless in everything, and thatisusually due to low self-esteem.

18 studentstronglyagree on the statment : ' I wish i could have more respect for myself '. Among the things people envyother people for is "confidence », feeling love and respect towardsyourselfis a sign of confidence and self-esteem that a lot of adolescents lackthesedays, theyenvyother people for being confident about themselves or whatthey do and wishtheywouldbelikethem but feelliketheycan'tbecausethereisalwaysomedeficiencythatkeeps one frombringing out the best in them, and thatcouldbementallydraining.

Also 18 studentagreed on the statmennt : 'I certainlyfeeluseless at times'. Instagram usersusually tend to sharetheirlifestyleswith people, manyindividuals use it as a platform to make money by sellingtheirsmall business, or even sharing their talents and hobbies with the world, and thatmakes a lot of adolescents feeluseless, seeingoother people beingsuccessful and productive caneithermotivate one to do better and brings out the best in them, or makethemfeellikethey are insufficient or "not enough".

When boys answered the questionnaire wegotquitesimilarresults as girls, 17, 20, 20, boy respectivelystronglyagreedwith 58.4% on the threementionedstatementsabove.

### **5-2-Social ComparisonQuquestionnaire**

All the girls answersstronglyagree on the followingstatements, with the largestpercentage of 67.6%. Twenty five girl stronglyagreed on : 'i constantly compare myself and how i look to others'. It couldbebecausetheyare following a lot of idols and celebrities on Instagram, and they perceive them as role models, so they attempt to imitate them in any manner possible,

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such as the way they act, dress, or behave... in order to gain more recognition and be loved and appreciated more as they are.

The second statement: 'often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences strongly agreed by all females' participants. To get information about something, or to get a piece of advice, teenagers tend to ask people who are older and wiser than them.

Every woman who took part in the study strongly agreed on the third statement: 'I often compare how my loved ones are doing with how others are doing.' Teens tend to compare themselves with others who are in their age group, with knowledge and abilities with others and so on.

Many adolescents have low self-esteem because they constantly compare themselves to other girls, especially celebrities, which makes them more self-aware and makes them feel like they are not enough. It is more of an issue for girls than boys because females in general are more recognised for their looks.

### **5- 3-Focus group questions**

#### **- QUESTION ONE**

The first thing participants were asked was their age, and the question was :

How old are you ? The average age of the participants is depicted in the graph below :

(68%) are aged between 17 and 19, whereas (32%) are aged between 19 and 21. In contrast, males are 14.56% aged between 17 to 19, whereas as seen in Table 01, fourteen males (56%) ranged in age from 17 to 19, and (44%) aged between 19 to 21. As it is shown in the data, girls have higher percentage in the Instagram use from the age 17 to 19, This is true in general, and it does not apply to all women or all men, but women are more talkative in general, therefore it stands to reason that they use social media more frequently. At this age, girls are very curious and starting to develop their personality based on their feed,

#### **Table (01) : Students' age**

Table 01 shows that the majority of students for both genders are over the age of 18 (the age of majority) which means that they are considered adults and are responsible now, indeed Instagram is quite important in the lives of young adults. Since

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Instagram highlights the spontaneity of the moment, photographs and videos in their feeds create an immediate bond to that individual or group. Young adults tend to use it to follow celebrities, fashion news, and bloggers...etc. In this age, they are very influenced by new trends and being on such an app makes them always updated.

### - Question two

The second question was, "How long have you been using Instagram?"

It is remarkable that most of the students have been using Instagram for more than three years.

The majority of the female participants, seventeen (17), representing 68%, have had an Instagram account for more than three years. While only five (05) of them (20%) have had it for two years, and three (03) have had it for less than a year. Graph (02) shows that ten males (10), or 40%, do have an Instagram account for two years. While eight of them (32%) have been using it for more than three years, seven (28%) had this for only around a year. The finding shows that the participants are familiar with this app and had been using it for a while, we see that girls are using Instagram for more than three years, while boys are not very excited about this app.

### Table (02) : Students' Instagram Usage time

Table (02) shows that half of participants have an Instagram account, and are using it for more than three years, and 15 students are having it for two years, the rest have only recently joined Instagram (less than one year). The findings show that the participants are familiar with this app and have been using it for more than two years, as technology develops every day, young adults like to be updated.

### - Question three

The third question was, "Is your account private or public?"

Graph (05) shows that the vast majority of females in the study (96%) have a private account, while only 4% have a public one. In comparison to females, graph (06) shows that 72% of males who participated in the survey have a public account, while 28% have a private account. Girls choose to keep their profiles private for privacy reasons, judgements, and

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fear of blackmail from strangers, as well as because their parents are highly protective and girls at this age require parental surveillance. However, boys have much freedom in the Algerian society, which is very common that they make their profiles public.

Table (03) illustrates that almost all of the participants have private accounts, 24.96% of girls are making their profiles private. They don't want their lives to be visible to everyone. In contrast to boys who doesn't care about that.

### **- Question four**

The fourth question was, "What is the main purpose of your Instagram account ?"

According to graph (07), 56% of females' primary goal is to stay in touch with friends and family. Dating comes in second place with 28%, getting news comes in third place with 12%, buying and selling comes in the fourth place with 4%, and browsing and wasting time comes in last place with 0%. On the other hand, buying and selling is the primary goal of males with 44%, then keeping in touch with family members and friends comes in second place with 36%, dating in the third place with 20%, while no one chose to read the news or browse the internet and wasting time. Each gender has a specific purpose when using Instagram, for girls, communication is number one, as they have a lot to say such as fashion, cooking recipes, chatting and gossiping with friends, however, dating comes in the second place, and that is because girls were shy to open up about their dating life. In contrast, the major reason why boys use Instagram is business.

### **Table (04) : The main goal of students' Instagram**

Most of the participants agreed on that the main reason behind using Instagram is to keep in touch with friends and family for both genders, buying and selling in the second position, getting news in the third position. Finally no one chose to waste time.

### **- Question five**

The fifth question was : how often do you use Instagram ?

Females who use Instagram for more than one hour account for 88%, while those who use it for less than one hour account for only 12%. In the other hand, 96 percent of males said they use Instagram for more than one hour every day, while only 4% said they use it for less than one

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hour. Girls are very active on Instagram due to their free time unlike boys, they spend most of their time outside.

Table 05 : Students Frequency of using Instagram.

According to the graphs and table (05), the vast majority of participants, both females and males, say that they use Instagram for more than one hour every day, with 99 percent of males and 88 percent of females agreeing. Young adults are quite active on social media these days, and Instagram is one of the apps in which everything is accessible out and about, whether that is advertising a company or relaying news, and people are engaged on Instagram and utilize tools such as - to keep up with what friends are doing, to stay up to speed with news and information, to look for amusing or enjoyable stuff, Connecting with others in general, to distribute pictures and videos to others, and to express one's viewpoint.

### - Question six

The sixth question was : how do you feel about friends commenting on your photos ?

When their friends comment on their photographs, 88 percent of girls are pleased. Only 12% of people are depressed about it. On the other hand, a higher percentage of boys (80%) are neutral, and 20% said reading comments from their friends on their images makes them happy. No one is sad. Boys are measured with who they are and what they do and how much they make, that is why most of them don't give much attention to their looks because they know that even if they weren't very attracted, they could make up for the "deficiency" with money

Whereas girls especially adolescents, they feel like the more attracted they are the more wanted they become. And this makes them more self aware and seeking more attention and love and recognition in social platforms especially Instagram.

**Table (06) :** student's feeling about their friends comments

When reading responses from friends, males are either neutral or happy, as seen in table (06). However, the majority of girls are happy, while the rest are indifferent.

### - Question seven

The seventh question was : how do you think your Instagram profile has influenced how you feel About your body/ appearance ?

64 percent of females believe that Instagram has had a negative impact on their lives. For guys, 52 percent believe that Instagram has favourably changed how they feel about

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their appearance. This isn't confirmed by 48%. Following the newest fashion trends and possessing a specific style are becoming social expectations. Young women who are unhappy with their appearance feel compelled to alter their photographs so that they appear slimmer, have sharper features, and have a beautiful complexion. They "edit" themselves in order to gain more followers and improve their reputation.

Table (07) : influence of instagram on students body

Participants of both genders believe that Instagram has had a positive and negative impact on how they feel about their appearance.

### - Question eight

The eighth question was : do you consider yourself addicted to instagram ?

92 percent of Females consider themselves to be instagram addicted .32 percent do not believe they are addicted. While it tends to affect 68 percent of males, and 32 percent do not believe they are addicted. The overall finding shows that girls are highly addicted to instagram more than boys because it has become like a reference to many life choices, it's like a race of who wins the best life , everyone feels the need to share with their followers details about their lives and how much luxury they have , which places they visited , which restaurants they ate at and what new clothes they got and that explains why girls are more addicted to this social platform than boys, it is like their lives are based on what people think about how they look like and what they have that it started to feel more like a lifestyle or a job to share every information about their lives with their followers and checking what other people post.

Table (08) : Instagram addiction among students

Overall, females are more likely than males to be addicted to Instagram.

### - Question nine

The last question was : does the overall use of instagram influence you positively or negatively !

84 percent of girls are influenced According to the graph, males are regarded to be influenced by instagram in 73 percent. Students spend the majority of their days browsing the internet, particularly Instagram, which often depresses them because they see people posting about the money and freedom they have in their lives, whereas theirs is dull and grey ;

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it make them feel unfortunate and sad that they can't have a life like the one they see behind the screen. The majority of participants are influenced by Instagram

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented the discussion of the findings from questionnaires completed by fifty (50) first-year students who use Instagram, as well as a direct focus group held in the department of English at Djilali Bounaama University.

## **Chapter Six, Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to see if there was a link between self-esteem and Instagram use. People with this information would be aware of the possible negative consequences of social media and would adapt their social media use accordingly. The researcher focused on how university students used social media and how it related to their self-esteem. Students at this age are extremely impressionable during their physical and mental growth, and their self-esteem may be quite fragile. As a result, any parts of their lives that may have an impact on their self-esteem should be identified and freely acknowledged. The study hypothesizes that Instagram and self-esteem have a relationship. And girls' self-esteem is more likely to be influenced by Instagram than boys'.

In order to prove the above hypothesis, we tested the social comparison theory. First-year university students were given two surveys : one on self-esteem and one on social



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comparisons in the Netherlands. The self-esteem survey generated a self-esteem score, which the researcher used to see if there was a link between the participants' self-esteem scores and Instagram. The survey was designed to evaluate our theoretical framework, social comparison theory, and if it causes students to feel awful about their circumstances when compared to others.

The present study revealed that people with strong self-esteem received more likes on their postings than those with low self-esteem. They also waited longer after posting anything on social media to check how many likes they received. Others with strong self-esteem do not have to check their social media straight away, but people with poor self-esteem must. It is probable that participants with high self-esteem did not obtain as many likes on their postings as they expected, as seen by the negative association between self-esteem ratings. However, most of the participants had private accounts, which means they don't get that much feedback or attention because of their different purposes or use of Instagram. Yet they admitted that positive feedback does impact their self-esteem and boost it, while negative feedback raises their anxiety.

This qualitative and quantitative correlational study was to determine if there was a connection between Instagram usage and self-esteem. This chapter is arranged into five sections. In this chapter, we have already discussed the purpose of the study, a further review of the research questions, and the findings. Then we interpret the results in the context of the literature review and the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter Two. The theoretical orientation we used was social comparison theory (1954) to examine if there is a connection between Instagram usage and self-esteem by looking at the variables mentioned above. We distributed two questionnaires to participants along with focus group questions, and the responses are in Chapter 3. Finally, we will discuss the study limitations as well as the recommendations for further research. We asked each participant how much time they spent on Instagram everyday, with alternatives such as one hour, two hours, or more. Following that, the participants completed the social comparison orientation as well as the Rosenberg self-esteem scale. The score scale is then calculated and used to operationalize the variables of the research. When we adjusted for the other variables, we found a significant relationship between Instagram and self-esteem in all of our variables.

Instagram has grown fast since its inception in 2010. However, scholarly research on this medium is limited (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Only a few studies have looked at the impact of Instagram use on consumers' mental health. This study broke new ground in its

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investigation of the social mechanism behind the influence of Instagram use on self-esteem in the setting of Algeria.

An interesting finding is the mediating impact of social comparison. According to our findings, more frequent Instagram use is connected with a greater degree of social comparison. Users of social media can develop personal profiles and have access to data about other people's daily lives (Fardouly et al., 2015). Instagram, as a photo and video-sharing social networking platform, provides several chances for self-presentation, which may promote viewers' social comparison (Yang et al., 2018). It is also customary to have public accounts on Instagram, allowing users to follow, watch, like, and comment on people they do not directly know, such as influencers and celebrities. And the usage of hashtags might increase social comparison because all photographs with the tag are shown together.

Our findings also revealed that social comparison lowers self-esteem. Users of social media frequently compare their looks, talents, status, and social skills to those of others (Feinstein et al., 2013). Such comparisons elicit powerful psychological responses, especially when others provide more favorable information selectively (Yang & Robinson, 2018). Instagram offers a variety of filters to alter and improve photographs, and exposure to others' idealized images might elicit unpleasant feelings, contributing to low psychological well-being such as anxiety issues (Sherlock & Wagstaff, 2018).

Our findings also revealed that, while Instagram use is connected with poor self-esteem, students already have a negative view of themselves, and social media increased their anxiety. Although research by Barry et al. (2017) found that low self-esteem was frequently the outcome of excessive Instagram usage, the scientists did not determine if Instagram was a predictor of self-esteem, whether high or negative. Low self-esteem is frequently associated with this craving for approval. According to Holowka (2018), the number of "likes" on an image correlates with self-esteem, despair, and loneliness. According to Holowka (2018), Instagram users are continuously seeking approval from not just their friends but also strangers. Although many individuals want to be socially accepted, Flaxington (2016) believes that the stress of being accepted in society may be too great for others, leading to low self-esteem.

Another finding showed that girls are more likely to be influenced by Instagram, that they constantly compare themselves to others, and have low self-esteem. The reason was based on several factors, such as how girls tend to be more emotional and

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easily influenced when seeing other women posting pictures showing their best lives. Our results were matched with Lee, Kim, and Kwahk (2016) and Perrin (2015). They found that women were more likely than men to spend more time on social networking sites. They also stated that, up until 2014, these disparities were minor, with around 68 percent of all women accessing social media compared to 62 percent of all males. In the social comparison orientation, girls scored higher in negative comparison than boys. The same findings of Vogel et al.'s study found that after engaging in a short social comparison on Facebook, participants with a high SCO reported weaker identity, lower self-esteem, and higher negative impact balance than their low SCO peers.

It is also worth noting the impact of social media on self-esteem. According to our findings, social comparison dramatically lowers self-esteem. This finding is consistent with prior research, which found that people with a stronger social comparison orientation had a poorer self-perception, lower self-esteem, and more negative moods (Jang et al., 2016). According to the social comparison theory, social comparison is regarded to be a source of poor self-esteem. Because the idealistic information available on social media has heightened social comparison norms, the more time individuals spend on social media, the more likely they are to believe that others have better lives, are happier, and more successful, reducing their self-esteem (Stapleton et al., 2017).

In contrast, some research has found a positive association between social networking use and life happiness. For instance, an Australian study with 274 university students looked at social connectivity via Facebook and psychological well-being, despair, and anxiety. According to the findings, Facebook social connectivity is related to less sadness. Other research suggests that social networking sites may not necessarily have a detrimental impact on self-esteem; in fact, social media use boosts users' self-esteem. Another longitudinal study found that self-esteem was a moderator of Facebook addiction and social ties (Steinfeld, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008). The gains gained through social contacts and interactions are referred to as social capital (Coleman, 1988). However, our study found a massive connection between social media and self-esteem problems as well as mental health problems. And Instagram heavily impacts students' self-esteem, according to our results. They feel bad and negative about themselves when using social media. Our findings corresponded to a recent study conducted in 2019 by Mackson, Brochu, and Schneider. Their research looked into the links between the social media app Instagram and the psychological well-being of its users. Participants in this study were Instagram

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users who investigated lower self-esteem and social comparison variables, as well as anxiety, loneliness, and participants' body image in their study. Participants reported lower levels of depression, which is similar to the current studies.

Furthermore, it is critical to recognize the limitations of a correlation when researching a complicated emotion like self-esteem in this study. As previously stated in the literature study, several elements might influence a person's self-esteem and self-image (gender, depression, anxiety, social context, etc.). A simple correlation is difficult to draw clear conclusions from, which is why future research must additionally investigate a causal relationship between social media use and self-esteem. Other tests include mediation analysis, which examines the impact of a constant variable on a dependent variable, and regression analysis, which examines the link between variables through an alternate, mediator variable.

A future study might also concentrate on the positive impact that social media interaction can have on users' broadening sense of social network use and psychological well-being. Instagram users might benefit from increasing their knowledge of the impact of social media on relationships and sentiments such as sadness, social anxiety, loneliness, and so on. An experimental investigation should also be conducted to determine the cause. If Instagram use was held constant in respondents with various baseline SCO levels, then it may be presumed that SCO's influence on self-esteem is in conjunction with Instagram use. This might help the user who already has a predisposition to social comparison to have a better grasp of the damage social media use can cause.

This study's findings confirm the association between Instagram use and self-esteem as well as highlight the need for more research on Instagram use and low self-esteem. The unclear results of this study might be attributed to the study's limited sample size, and a substantial association could have been discovered if more people took part in this study. This information was gathered a few weeks before exams at Djilali Bounaama University when undergraduates were surveyed. The results might have been influenced by the pressure and stress of other classes, and the survey may not have been a focus for students in terms of time. This might have impacted the accuracy of the data. Although the accuracy of each scale was good, there may have been a misinterpretation of a few Instagram use elements if the user was not enthusiastic about each new component of Instagram (e.g., story postings, story replies). Although our data revealed a link between the two factors, additional study is required to go deeper and examine the reasons for This

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frequent comparison can lead to psychological disorders such as despair, anxiety, and low self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011 ; Kelley & Michela, 1980 ; Kircaburun & Griffiths, 2018) and explains why individuals make comparisons on social media.

Unfortunately, the current study did not investigate such emotional characteristics. As a result, the findings presented here should not be interpreted as implying that Instagram has just a positive influence on users. Future studies should adopt an experimental, long-term approach to particular Instagram behaviors and sensations following each use. It is also interesting to go beyond Instagram and test other social networking apps such as TikTok.

### **General Conclusion**

Despite its limitations, the current study aims to show that Instagram might have a detrimental impact on students' self-esteem and mental health. The findings should support the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and Instagram, because using social media encourages people to make comparisons with others, and these comparisons may have a negative effect, and girls' self-esteem is more likely to be influenced by Instagram than boys'. These findings would significantly broaden earlier studies on Instagram's influence on people's mental health.

Finally, we want to summarize the results of this thesis. First, Instagram use, in general, has an impact on students' self-esteem ; it's the use itself, not the amount of time spent on the platform. Second, individuals make social comparison even when they are not utilizing social media. Third, while drawing upward comparisons with Instagram postings, individuals judge themselves based on their personality. Optimistic individuals feel motivated to

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improvetheirself in the future, whereas pessimistic people view themselves more adversely, resulting in emotions of jealousy, a drive to copy others, and poor self-esteem.

This research, hopefully, contributed to a better understanding of the issue on which we worked, and its results and suggestions can serve as a foundation for future research projects because of the importance of this area.

### **Recommendations**

Take a break from any platform you're using now and then.

Unlike/unfollow/unsubscribe accounts that make you feel confident and good about yourself.

Reading a book, going for a walk, appreciating the little things you have, hanging out with friends, spending time with your family, and so on

Spend time with positive people who dream big.

Write down all the qualities you like about yourself and never write your quirks but simply fix them, accept your imperfections because no one is perfect.

Try something new and stay healthy—physical activity may improve both physical and mental health.

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**Appendix A:**

**Netherlands Social Comparison Orientation Scale**

**Response scale for all items:**

1. I disagree strongly
2. I disagree
3. I neither agree nor disagree

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4. I agree

5. I agree strongly

**Read then answer:**

Most people compare themselves from time to time with others. For example, they may compare the way they feel, their opinions, their abilities, and/or their situation with those of other people. There is nothing particularly ‘good’ or ‘bad’ about this type of comparison, and some people do it more than others. We would like to find out how often you compare yourself with other people. To do that we would like to ask you to indicate how much you agree with each statement below.

1. I often compare myself with others with respect to what I have accomplished in life

2. I always pay a lot of attention to how I do things compared with how others do things

3. I often compare how my loved ones (boy or girlfriend, family members, etc.) are doing with how others are doing

4. I always like to know what others in a similar situation would do

5. I am not the type of person who compares often with others

6. If I want to find out how well I have done something, I compare what I have done with how others have done

7. I often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences

8. I often compare how I am doing socially (e.g., social skills, popularity) with other people

9. I constantly compare myself and how I look to others

**Appendix B:**

	Strongly agree	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Strongly disagree
1. I feel that I’m a person of worth. At least on an equal par with others.	3	2	1	0



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2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	3	2	1	0
3. I sometimes think I’m a failure	3	2	1	0
4. I am able to do things as well as most people do.	3	2	1	0
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	3	2	1	0
6. I usually compare myself to others.	3	2	1	0
7. On the whole I am satisfied with myself.	3	2	1	0
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	3	2	1	0
9. I certainly feel useless at times.	3	2	1	0
10. At times I think I am not good at all.	3	2	1	0

### AppendixC:

#### Focus group questions

#### Question Two

1-How old are you?

-17-19

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-19-21

## **Question Two**

2-How long have you been using Instagram?

-Less than one year

-Two years

-More than, three years

## **Question Three**

Is your account private or public?

-Private

-Public

## **Question Four**

What is the main purpose of your Instagram account?

-Keeping in touch with friends and family

-Buying and selling

-Dating

-Browsing and wasting time

-To get news

## **Question Five**

How often do you use Instagram?

-Less than one hour

-More than one hour

## **Question Six**

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How do you feel about friends commenting on your photos?

-Happy

-Sad

-Neutral

### **Question Seven**

How do you think your instagram profile has influenced how you feel About your body/ appearance?

-Positively

-Negatively

### **Question Eight**

Do you consider your self addicted to instagram?

-Addicted

-Not addicted

### **Question Nine**

Does the overall use of instagram influence you positively or negatively!

-Yes

-No