

Show me your Instagram and I'll tell you who you are

The company one keeps isn't the only way to learn about a person. Individuals have been afforded the opportunity to experience a digital world founded on engagement and social interaction. The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of how interpersonal trust, enjoyment, escapism and regulated self-presentation all relate to self-disclosure specifically on Instagram. This social networking site's (SNS) progressive features have positioned it as a platform that fulfils both individual and social needs.

Today, the absence of an Instagram account raises questions such as: Why would you avoid building relationships with people from all over the world? Why would you exclude yourself from engaging in relevant content that you could possibly enjoy? Why would you choose to live in reality alone when you can also escape into a virtual world and be a part of the experiences of other users? Why would you hide your true self from the world? For Instagram users, the answers to these questions address the importance of this study, in that it seeks to clarify the rewards and costs of online self-disclosure. Such an understanding of social media behaviour in the form of self-disclosure is relevant for both brands and researchers interested in social media consumption.

A self-administered online questionnaire was made available through an Instagram bio link, where respondents were invited to participate. The non-probability convenience sampling technique resulted in 170 usable responses. The results indicated that enjoyment and escapism have a relationship with online self-disclosure, while interpersonal trust and regulated self-presentation do not. Essentially, this means that Instagram users are motivated to share more about themselves online because of how the SNS provides enjoyment and temporary escape from their regular lives. It also means that online self-disclosure isn't based on trust amongst users, nor is it based on users regulating their presentation of self. Thus, it is recommended that brands continuously find new ways of enhancing enjoyment and escapism to improve their interaction with customers online and that researchers prioritise the discovery of what online activities result in feelings of

enjoyment and escapism. Additionally, SNS should educate users about the importance of interpersonal trust for general safety reasons.

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